

## Meeting 03 • 12 January 2010 • Tuesday

Version:  
1/12/10

## Today

numbers in ( ) = minutes planned for activity/ topic

√ = topic / activity that was adequately dealt with during the class

+ = topic needs more attention &amp; will be resumed at next / subsequent meeting(s)

- = a topic / activity that was proposed but not carried out (but will be taken up later)

~~Struckthrough text like this~~ = a topic / activity that was proposed but not included / is not going to be taken up after all*Italic text like this* = comments after the meeting

	Main topic(s): Introduction to Assessment; the FL and AL Cultures
(5)	(possibility a regular feature:) assessment in the news! Today: well, in personal news anyway: My late-night ACTFL proposals and the SG the readers use. But also: an illness in the assessment community.
(10)	Media clips: failing a German Coast Guard ESL test; failing a German high-school Shakespeare & ESL test; (caution advised) passing (or failing?) a low-level Spanish OPI at the Mexican border; to sample the larger collection of such (caution advised), go to my language-related media page.
(30)	ACTFL Guidelines (speaking and writing) - general issues (history, structure, criticism). Guestimate levels of learners you have encountered. Some bibliography (some just abstracts, due to © issues: Liskin-Gasparro (2003), history and survival of Guidelines (0390abs); Fischer (1984), on testing and curriculum in GER 10X (0054); Swender (2003), answers to real-world questions (0391abs)
(15)	The OPI (media clips) - structure, examiner stance, question types
(10)	How to adjust the course: issues related to Applied Linguistics, ESL, and the TOEFL? See the "schedule" page (weeks 2-) for what we did in the previous version of the course, and "upcoming assignments" below
(10)	Demographic "survey": backgrounds and professional interests of instructor
(10)	Demographic survey: participants' previous coursework and work experience; language inventory
(15)	Assignments - checking in and up: 1) reading, see the "schedule & assignments" page (under modification); 2) written assignment #1: reflection about a newspaper article. Two examples from previous years
(5)	Announcements, debriefing and summation

pp 2-9 are  
ACTFL Speaking  
Guidelines 1999  
final page is  
Humboldt Project  
abstract

## Upcoming class meetings

14 January: the OPI - principles and lots of examples and practice

## Upcoming assignment(s)

This section offers a PREVIEW, not activated assignments. Assignments are made, with announcement of their deadlines, both in class and on the "schedule" page. The next topic (week 2, 12 & 14 January) is "Language 'gold standards': ACTFL Guidelines, the standards and test instruments of the European, •?? and the TOEFL Test. Also information about where to find other widely-circulated tests. The FL participants will get an assignment that emphasizes ACTFL Guidelines; •?? the AL participants will get one that focuses on the TOEFL. All participants will rate themselves (or someone else) on the ACTFL scale, by comparison to its profiles. •?? All participants will examine items from the TOEFL test.

## Announcements

The Alexander von Humboldt Project: Improving Learner Outcomes in K-12  
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**Summary:** The Project aims to improve learner outcomes by developing, for the many schools named for Humboldt, curriculum enrichment using his explorations and research in sciences and social sciences, his activities in the humanities, and his advocacy of human rights. The Project also supports languages (ESL, German, French, Spanish and indigenous).

The "Humboldt Project" supports better learning and teaching, for all students and in all subject areas. It does so by developing pedagogically sound and learner-centered curriculum enrichment resources based on the life and work of Alexander von Humboldt, the great German scientist, scholar, pioneer of ecology and environmentalism, explorer of the Western Hemisphere, and early advocate of human rights. The Project's activities are directed primarily but not exclusively at schools in North America named for Humboldt. The Project seeks to network them with each other, and to like-named schools in Latin America and Germany.

**Content:** The Project has two roots: 1) a desire to strengthen the endangered American Germanistik by finding radically new applications for its classical figures; 2) the presenter's long-time work with K-20 issues (curricula, standards, assessment) in all subject areas, not just languages. It began as an experiment in a college course about "Reason and Revolution" in the Enlightenment: students were challenged to develop curricular modules for use in Humboldt-named schools in the US, including their home city of Portland, OR. There are several dozen such schools or entire districts in the US, and they enroll thousands of pupils, many of them disadvantaged and minorities, whether in city or rural locations. The typical module is a "Humboldt Box", resembling his original expedition crates but containing student and teacher materials to support, for example, environmental studies. The Project is currently in the stage of networking the schools, creating sample modules, and securing grants.

**Method:** Presentation from Project website, which surveys the possible Humboldt subject areas, discusses pedagogy (hands-on instruction, team/place-based learning, etc.), offers sample instructional modules, catalogs Humboldt-named schools (including possible partners in Latin America and Germany), lists grants (awarded or possible), and provides background information about Humboldt and his work. Closer focus on learner outcomes (critical thinking, numeracy, environmentalism, internationalization – and languages!). Specific examples of "Humboldt Box" modules: "Earth Day with Alex", "Endangered Species: *Cyanea humboldtiana* (Hawaii)", "Yuk! The Humboldt Squid and All Those Humboldt Molluscs", "Shocking! Humboldt and the Electric Eel". Special attention to languages: ESL, academic English, academic Spanish for heritage learners, German and French for the AP, languages across the curriculum. Participants will be invited to brainstorm their own modules in, for example, scientific illustration and French, or ethnomathematics (astronomy developed by Native Peoples of South America), with accompanying modules for Spanish and familiarization with indigenous languages and cultures.