

**Annual Report of the
Interactive Language Resource Center
2000-2001**

Submitted by Daniel E. Meyers, Director

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The Interactive Language Resource Center (ILRC) at Miami University is a restricted reference laboratory open to students, faculty, and staff of the following departments: French and Italian; German, Russian, East Asian Languages, and Hebrew; Spanish and Portuguese; and Classics.

The ILRC's mission is to serve the four language departments in actively implementing computer assisted language learning technology into foreign language education, to act as a central repository of foreign language related materials and multimedia resources, and to promote technological advances related to foreign language education through workshops, individualized assistance, conferences, and regular announcements.

Based on the results of several research projects this year, the ILRC Director has been able to ascertain a statistical sampling of estimated student usage of previously undocumented attendance statistics from the time the ILRC first came into existence. Data came from known language lab attendance figures and enrollments of language courses, both of which were found in previous College of Arts and Science annual reports. With the assistance of Michael Hughes in the Statistical Consulting Center, it was ascertained that the best relevant sampling model was to use a curvilinear model, but only using data not far removed from the period in question. Since the downward trend in usage bottomed out in 1975, Mr. Hughes fit a curvilinear model to the pre-1976 data. This model fit better than either of two previous models he had tried, and yielded the following estimated usages (with 95% confidence bounds on the estimates).

Academic Year	Fall Term	Spring Term	Yearly Totals	Totals to Date
1956-1957	-	-	27,948	27,948
1957-1958	-	-	28,444	56,392
1958-1959	-	-	28,754	85,146
1959-1960	-	-	28,877	114,023
1960-1961	-	-	28,813	142,836
1961-1962	-	-	28,563	171,399
1962-1963	-	-	28,127	199,526
1963-1964	-	-	27,504	227,030
1964-1965	13,424	10,451	23,875	250,905
1965-1966	16,517	12,889	29,406	280,311
1966-1967	13,123	10,602	23,725	304,036
1967-1968	13,783	11,083	24,866	328,902
1968-1969	12,291	7,720	20,011	348,913
1969-1970	9,229	11,092	20,321	369,234
1970-1971	8,448	9,544	17,992	387,226
1971-1972	7,666	7,995	15,661	402,887

Academic Year	Fall Term	Spring Term	Yearly Totals	Totals to Date
1972-1973	7,855	3,693	11,548	414,435
1973-1974	7,272	4,327	11,599	426,034
1974-1975	5,395	3,369	8,764	434,798
1975-1976	2,234	3,555	5,789	440,587
1976-1977	10,128	4,140	14,268	454,855
1977-1978	9,324	5,014	14,338	469,193
1978-1979	9,324	9,675	18,999	488,192
1979-1980	7,983	7,082	15,065	503,257
1980-1981	9,701	3,530	13,231	516,488
1981-1982	8,106	3,887	11,993	528,481
1982-1983	7,979	2,984	10,963	539,444
1983-1984	8,829	3,487	12,316	551,760
1984-1985	10,430	4,787	15,217	566,977
1985-1986	12,664	5,598	18,262	585,239
1986-1987	8,127	4,709	12,836	598,075
1987-1988	9,273	4,137	13,410	611,485
1988-1989	5,881	2,676	8,557	620,042
1989-1990	5,698	2,302	8,000	628,042
1990-1991	6,936	4,492	11,428	639,470
1991-1992	5,349	3,497	8,846	648,316
1992-1993	5,800	3,512	9,312	657,628
1993-1994	8,679	4,403	13,082	670,710
1994-1995	9,621	7,147	16,768	687,478
1995-1996	11,801	8,146	19,947	707,425
1996-1997	10,754	7,567	18,321	725,746
1997-1998	13,830	10,169	23,999	749,745
1998-1999	8,539	7,421	15,960	765,705
1999-2000	12,105	10,385	22,490	788,195
2000-2001	10,979	7,646	18,625	806,820

Total officially logged attendance figures for this year indicate that **18,625** students visited the ILRC facilities. This brings an estimated **806,820** students who have visited the ILRC and its predecessor, the Language Laboratory, since these facilities began operations in the late 1950s. Attendance figures for this academic year by language and activity are shown on the next page.

Attendance Figures for 1999-2000 Academic Year

Language	Fall 1999	Spring 2000	Totals
Chinese	120	49	169
Classics	37	204	241
French	2,419	1,341	3,760
German	2,503	2,356	4,859
Hebrew	4	3	7
Italian	465	176	641
Japanese	870	905	1,775
Portuguese	2	2	4
Russian	142	74	216
Spanish	4,413	2,527	6,940
Guest	4	9	13
Totals	10,979	7,646	18,625

Attendance Figures by Day of Week and Time of Day

Day	Fall	Spring	Totals	Time	Fall	Spring	Totals
Sunday	343	98	441	08-09 am	549	465	1,014
Monday	2,078	1,505	3,583	09-10 am	1,389	1,252	2,641
Tuesday	1,878	1,247	3,125	10-11 am	1,247	1,319	2,566
Wednesday	1,931	1,289	3,220	11-12 pm	980	686	1,666
Thursday	3,160	2,310	5,470	12-01 pm	1,146	748	1,894
Friday	1,589	1,197	2,786	01-02 pm	1,351	1,041	2,392
Saturday	0	0	0	02-03 pm	1,127	777	1,904
Totals	10,979	7,646	18,625	03-04 pm	1,049	615	1,664
				04-05 pm	797	311	1,108
				05-06 pm	647	203	850
				06-07 pm	330	188	518
				07-08 pm	367	41	408
				Totals	10,979	7,646	18,625

Attendance Figures by Activity

Activity	Fall	Spring	Total
Audio Listening	5,623	2,368	7,991
Computer Usage	2,918	3,890	6,808
General Homework	141	244	385
Satellite Viewing	15	13	28
Tape Duplication	1,547	592	2,139
Testing	2	12	14
Video Viewing	733	537	1,270
Totals	10,979	7,646	18,685

Attendance figures are the results of raw numbers of students working in the ILRC. The time that students worked in the ILRC ranged widely, from an average of 20 minutes for students checking their E-mail to several hours for students working on term papers or students listening to the audio component of their assigned homework. No attempt was made to justify students on an hourly scale (for example, one student working in the lab for three hours would equal three visits).

During the course of the semesters, several classes had reserved the computer classroom. Attendance figures under “computer usage” incorporate students present for these classes. While the classes were in progress, a student assistant made a head count of participants in that particular class and logged them in under the appropriate language and activity. Likewise, several classes had reserved the audio laboratory. Attendance figures under “audio usage” incorporate these students in like manner.

Attendance figures for satellite conferences and for faculty and staff using the ILRC facilities were not incorporated into these figures. For reference purposes, however, these figures are given by the activity requested:

Activity	Fall	Spring	Totals
Video Duplication	155	97	252
Audio Cassette Duplication	99	56	155
SCOLA Taping Request	20	19	39
Miscellaneous Equipment Checkout	7	9	16
Materials on Reserve Request	18	13	31
Attendance at Satellite Teleconferences	0	0	0
Totals	299	194	493

Montgomery File Server Statistics

Listed below are statistics for the Montgomery File Server Project (<http://montgomery.cas.muohio.edu>). The Montgomery file server project houses several foreign language initiatives, the largest being the “Virtual ILRC.” Every audio tape, most videos, and several multimedia projects which could be found in the ILRC this past academic year could also be found on the Virtual ILRC. This has led to all ILRC materials being available to students 24 hours a day, seven days a week so long as the server did not crash during the evening or late night hours. Along with the Virtual ILRC, the Montgomery File Server also housed several other projects, such as the Virtual Sculpture Gallery by Judith de Luce, the Zenobia Project by Judith de Luce and the American Classical League, and several GREAL projects: German Concrete Poetry, German Reading Strategies, and The Holocaust Project.

Of relevance to this report is that individual login data for each student viewing or listening to materials were not counted in the attendance figures above. Since the server does not yet have the capability to track individual usage, the following tables are listed to reference total usage of the Virtual ILRC as compared to other projects housed on this server.

For this academic year, the data obtained from the file server indicates that the 81% of total number of pages seen by users belonged to the Virtual ILRC. Of total file transfer requests by the server, 59% belonged to those using the Virtual ILRC, but 99% of the data transferred over the internet by the file server were files located in the Virtual ILRC. This is due to the large amount of file sizes of digital audio and video materials housed on the Virtual ILRC. Conversely, the remaining 41% percent of files transferred on the server amounted to 1% of total data transferred by the server.

Directory Report	#Pages	#Requests	GB Data
Virtual-ILRC	75435	202227	246.25
Help	1694	17643	0.56
Root	8653	44656	0.22
Zenobia	6072	71184	0.13
Sculpture Gallery	1056	3839	0.05
Other	622	2196	2.02
Totals	93532	341745	249.23

Hourly Summary	#Pages	#Requests	GB Data
12:00 AM	3103	10374	9.45
1:00 AM	1843	6317	4.44
2:00 AM	1340	3721	2.67
3:00 AM	1021	2537	1.25
4:00 AM	914	1544	0.94
5:00 AM	937	1934	0.60
6:00 AM	1121	2536	0.51
7:00 AM	1485	3580	0.85
8:00 AM	2329	7623	4.93
9:00 AM	3477	13397	9.69
10:00 AM	4813	17809	12.08
11:00 AM	5523	20359	15.51
12:00 PM	5102	19913	17.12
1:00 PM	5383	18798	11.86
2:00 PM	5450	22578	11.98
3:00 PM	6503	23959	14.61
4:00 PM	6107	22504	18.13
5:00 PM	4935	19024	14.24
6:00 PM	4523	17926	11.25
7:00 PM	5998	23722	17.90
8:00 PM	5750	22552	18.01
9:00 PM	5793	21919	17.62
10:00 PM	5492	20396	17.56
11:00 PM	4590	16723	16.03
Totals	93532	341745	249.23

Daily Summary	#Pages	#Requests	GB Data
Sunday	14708	53067	44.85
Monday	18044	67956	52.90
Tuesday	15675	63086	43.55
Wednesday	12638	49320	33.09
Thursday	14715	54880	39.44
Friday	9981	33076	26.62
Saturday	7771	20360	8.79
Totals	93532	341745	249.23

Monthly Report	#Pages	#Requests	GB Data
June 2000	314	1037	0.01
July 2000	123	483	0.01
August 2000	1746	6498	0.90
September 2000	11431	43958	23.87
October 2000	5269	21115	10.36
November 2000	7975	42122	17.82
December 2000	5849	23057	5.51
January 2001	10437	44253	20.08
February 2001	19685	69109	74.19
March 2001	14750	46026	45.97
April 2001	15820	43823	50.50
May 2001	133	264	0.03
Totals	93532	341745	249.23

Services Provided by the ILRC

In addition to the topics already mentioned, the ILRC provides many different services to students, faculty, and staff throughout the academic year. The most common services performed are:

- Audiocassette and video tape duplication and distribution
- Video translation from PAL or SECAM into NTSC format
- Provision of foreign language materials, dictionaries and reference resources
- Archival of weekly SCOLA broadcasts in foreign languages
- Digital camera, camcorder, tripod, and video editing services
- Scanning, printing, digital video conversion, and server maintenance services
- Computer classroom upkeep and maintenance
- Various workshops on aspects of technology related to foreign language learning
- Technical support services to students in the ILRC
- Basic technical support services to faculty and staff in language departments
- Promotion of various satellite teleconferences and guest lectures
- Assistance to language classes utilizing ILRC resources
- Procurement of funding opportunities when available

Accomplishments Held This Academic Year

Committee Meetings and Commitments

Throughout the year, the Director of the ILRC was involved in several committees and university commitments. Several department chairs and an associate dean enlisted the assistance of the ILRC Director in the investigation of a possible NEH grant. It was hoped that through residual funds generated from the Graduate School due to this grant that the ILRC could gain funds to update its computers or purchase a new Tandberg Language Learning System. This project fell through, however because of lack of commitment from all four language departments and from time constraints placed on the associate dean and department chairs.

The ILRC was also involved in several Miami Computer and Information Systems committees this year. In the fall semester, the director was part of the Inventory/Purchasing committee, which investigated cost savings and bulk purchases of computers, peripherals, and software. Due to political conflicts and time constraints, the Director requested to be removed from this committee and placed onto another committee. In spring semester, the Director was moved to the Macintosh OS X implementation committee, which investigated the eventual incorporation of Apple Computer's newest operating system onto Miami University computers. Topics ranged from hardware requirements to software development and beta testing of commercial applications. In addition, the Director was asked to serve on an MCIS search committee for the Knowledge Base Coordinator position. Five candidates were interviewed in this process and recommendations were made for two finalists. The chair of the committee and the supervisor of the coordinator position took the committee selections and made their final recommendation to the provost.

The ILRC Director was also involved in regular weekly meetings with the College of Arts and Science's Computer Technical Services Group and with the monthly Technical Service Representative group meetings

Conferences, Services, and Workshops

The ILRC Director was involved in several projects and workshops this academic year. Beginning in the Fall semester with several orientations for Italian courses, the Director assisted many students and faculty in several technical projects such as graphic and text scanning assistance, Microsoft PowerPoint development, and Adobe PageMaker assistance in the development of brochures, signs and newsletters for the French and GREAL departments.

Special services to faculty in the four language departments included the coordination of a videoconference with the Heinle & Heinle Corporation and technical assistance for a videoconference between German students and students in Munich, Germany. The ILRC also took part in two technical events sponsored by Apple Computer. During these events, Apple Computer unveiled their new operating system, Mac OS X, and gave Miami University a "sneak peek" into the technologies that Apple would be supporting in the near future. The ILRC Director also was involved in the troubleshooting and maintenance of several computer problems the faculty were facing when they could not get in contact with their designated TSR in Arts and Science.

Throughout the academic year, the Director assisted several faculty in the development of web pages for their sites. Namely, the directors of the German Language Floor and the Webmaster for the French Department enlisted the assistance and advice of the Director. The ILRC's own web pages undertook a major overhaul in the spring semester. Among the major changes of the web site was that of the ILRC's help guides, which are now being housed on Miami's Knowledge Base server. This was done to provide consistency among help topics, to provide easier lookup of other help topics housed in the Knowledge Base, and to promote the Knowledge Base as an official Miami supported service.

Due to several repairs of the Tandberg Language Learning System (which will be mentioned in detail later), the ILRC Director's budget was constrained so that no conference opportunities were available this year. It is hoped that the Director may be allowed to attend several conferences in the next academic year.

ILRC Equipment and Furniture Updates

The Montgomery File Server Project, which began full production this academic year, showed major promise in the delivery of digitized materials to students and faculty across campus and on

Miami's satellite campuses. Several positive comments centered on the availability of materials after the ILRC had closed for the evening or during the weekends when the ILRC was closed. Problems persisted in that the file server crashes when one is logged directly into the server. Efforts have been made to reduce this form of login, with the preferred login method being either through the Web interface or through an FTP interface. Apple Computer representatives could not pinpoint the exact problem with the server crashes. Hopefully these problems may be alleviated in the forthcoming academic year when Mac OS X and OS X Server 2.0 are released.

With much thanks and gratitude to John Hughes, Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Science, the ILRC was able to purchase 11 new Macintosh G4 computers for the ILRC. The original allocation of the ILRC's equipment request was one computer. Because of John Hughes' lobbying efforts, the ILRC was able to replace one half of the computer classroom's computers with more modern machines. Existing machines were moved to form a smaller computer cluster in the back of the Audio Lab room so students could work on computers while the computer classroom was reserved for classes or projects.

Issues pertaining to the ILRC

As just mentioned, one major problem that the ILRC has faced this year is the constant crashing of the Montgomery File Server. When the machine did crash, the ILRC director would restart the machine as soon as a crash was detected. Some problems have occurred when the server would crash in the middle of the night and the Director would not notice the crash until the next morning. This would lead to several hours where the server would not be available. It is hoped that software upgrades may alleviate this problem.

Another major problem that faced the ILRC this year was a complete meltdown of the Tandberg Language Learning System on the day before spring semester classes started. Tandberg technicians were called and repairs were made as quickly as possible. However, given the emergency circumstances and the high costs of replacing parts that are no longer manufactured, the total repair bills for fixing the outdated system were high enough to prevent other functions and services from being offered. In order to pay the repair bills of the system, the ILRC Director had to forego two conference trips this year. In addition to the repairs of the system, several tests had to be retaken or scrapped altogether. Among them were the Speak Tests that were administered by the Department of Speech Pathology. These tests gauge the proficiency of non-native English speaking graduate assistants at Miami University. Due to the Tandberg Problems, the Speak Tests had to be administered twice to the same group of students in the fall semester. Things went better in the spring semester, though the system suddenly stopped working for unknown reasons in the middle of the Spring Semester testing. In addition, the French 361 courses, which were to use the system on a weekly basis, had to cancel their class reservations in the ILRC because of the system's inability to function reliably. After using the system for three weeks at the beginning of each semester, the professors gave up in frustration because of the unpredictability of the system. The only solution to this problem is to either purchase a new system or to scrap this system altogether and convert to a completely digital solution. Either solution will cost upwards of \$120,000+ dollars.

The most disturbing problem the ILRC faced this academic year was the theft of a \$3100 data/video projector that was located in the computer classroom. During a Wednesday evening between 11:30pm and Thursday morning at 9:00am, someone either gained entry through an unlocked window (which was prepared in advance) or through keyed entry to the ILRC. The thief attempted to cut through the security cable system three times, but then gained access to the video projector by pulling off the dongle that was secured to the projector. This was the only piece of equipment that was stolen in the ILRC. Police were called upon discovery of the theft

and a report was filed. Sergeant Stephen Truitt was assigned to the case. No recovery of the data/video projector has been made so far.

Acknowledgements

The smooth operation of the ILRC would not be possible were it not for several people who have helped and assisted at various times. The director wishes to acknowledge Paula Fogt from Arts and Sciences for her insight and generous help with complicated technical support issues and for serving as the Technical Support Representative to the four language departments, John Hughes for his guidance with space, budget, and funding issues, Reed Anderson for his guidance in matters of protocol and administrative issues, and to Guy Moore for giving his ever-helpful insight to potential solutions on various technical matters. The director also acknowledges the work performed by the various student assistants and graduate assistants in the ILRC. Were it not for their assistance, the director would not be able to work on a personal and serviceable basis.

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