

## **TWO FACETS OF OUR INSTRUCTIONAL TELEVISION**

**PRODUCTION: *Asi se hace el vino***

Oscar Ozete, Lucia Caycedo Garner and Tom Goldsworthy

### **Preface**

In June, 1976 two senior staff members of the UW Department of Spanish and Portuguese (Oscar Ozete and Lucia Caycedo Garner) collaborated with the Director of the UW Labs for Recorded Instruction (T. R. Goldsworthy) to produce a minute, color videocassette tape on Winemaking, entitled "ASI SE HACE EL VINO." This is a bilingual tape with both Spanish and English recorded on separate audio tracks. Because of the way the videocassette player is designed, a student may shift to either the Spanish or English soundtrack at will. The tape is accompanied by a complete script, which covers what is seen or heard on the videocassette. This script is in an interlinear, bilingual format. The videocassette and accompanying script will be available to other schools under certain conditions.

Any modern classroom teacher can and should undertake a video production if he or she has the proper assistance. The primary requisite for a successful videocassette tape is the author-teacher's firm grasp of language and topic to be taught. Therefore, we have directed this article toward teachers rather than to professional television people. The most talented video director in the world has nothing to say or do until you, the teacher, become involved in articulating what needs to be conveyed on the screen. Once you make the commitment, you will find that the technical personnel is willing and anxious to help you, and that local residents (such as shop keepers), whose assistance you may need for obtaining props and costumes, are delighted to lend their help to your effort.

The following two-part article has been produced in the hope that it will contain useful information for our readers who may be planning to produce their own videotapes. We hope you may find herein suitable techniques or ideas which you may adopt or adapt to your situation. We are particularly anxious to present to our readers guidelines by which instructional material produced locally can be shared equitably. It is not far-fetched to envision a time not too distant when many schools, both large and small, both college and lower level schools have the capacity to produce instructional materials at will, due to the continually decreasing cost of color videocameras.

Our article has two distinct parts, representing the expertise which each of us brought to this project. In the first part, the authors and acting talent, Oscar Ozete and Lucia Caycedo Garner discuss the pedagogical considerations that underlie the writing and development of the script.

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In the second part, Tom Goldsworthy, the producer, elaborates on several production details and procedures that bring a teaching concept from an idea to a finished instructional tape.

### **PART ONE: Pedagogical Considerations**

The everyday demands of energy and versatility that teaching requires can be lessened with a videotape presentation prepared beforehand. The videotape should be considered not as a replacement for the teacher, but, rather as a means to demonstrate the language in an esthetically cultural setting. A master teacher does not treat the language as a "subject" per se, but seeks occasions to bring to the student the history, geography, literature—the way of life of a people, and must organize and synthesize this wealth of information. The videotape is an effective tool for accomplishing this synthesization of knowledge while at the same time providing instruction in a novel, appealing context.

Teacher-made videotapes can replace the trite and often outdated foreign language films overtly designed to illustrate all the vocabulary and expressions applicable to a given dialog, e.g., in the library, at the movies, etc. The teacher can now develop videotapes that more closely monitor student interest while at the same time developing a teaching instrument unrestricted to a particular textbook. Furthermore, the teacher now has immediate access to the tape. There is no longer the need to order a film through the mail, schedule it for a fixed date and forego the opportunity to replay the film several days later to reinforce and expand on the information presented during the first showing. In addition to viewing it in the classroom, students can have access to the tape in the language lab as well.

Selection of topic and audience for whom the videotape is intended should be carefully noted at the outset. List of possible topics, submitted by students, can be studied for suitability and interest.

**Winemaking**, the topic chosen for a videotape produced at UW-Madison, evolved from an intermediate Spanish class. Since wine is an integral part of the Hispanic way of life, considered not as a toxic beverage but rather as a normal, everyday, accompaniment to the diet, the topic had strong cultural attraction. Furthermore, the growing interest in wine in the United States made the topic appealing to language students.

Hours spent in the preparation of script along with budgetary consideration persuaded us to gear our production to a larger audience. Our intention was to reach a broad audience ranging in language sophistication from the final weeks of second-semester college Spanish up to the more advanced courses. Although interested in presenting a vital cultural aspect of Spanish-speaking people in an enjoyable form, we wanted the videotape to be more than just a time filler or supplement in the classroom. Thus, we sought to make this a learning experience where students would actively participate.

In order to achieve this aim we included in the beginning of the videotape an advanced organizer where we briefly summarized, in English, the format of the tape and described procedures for students to follow. From the start students are asked to view, hear and repeat a series of key words essential for full comprehension of the presentation. The words are introduced in this manner:

- (a) Teacher (speaker) No. 1 says the English word (momentary pause).
- (b) Teacher (speaker) No. 2 says the equivalent word in Spanish as it appears on the screen (approximately 5 to 8 second pause for students to repeat).
- (c) Students repeat the Spanish word.

To enhance further the student's comprehension, sixteen Spanish words are flashed on the screen, as subtitles, throughout the program. The words, primarily for passive recognition, appear as they are said by the speakers. Toward the end of the tape, students take a 10-item multiple-choice quiz in Spanish. They read the questions on the screen while hearing them read aloud on the sound track. A short pause to give students time to answer follows and then the correct answer (from the 3 offered) is signalled by a small arrow. The purpose of the quiz is not to assign a grade, but rather to offer students an opportunity to summarize the major points of the presentation, and to ascertain their degree of comprehension. The authors have provided in the accompanying script and guide additional exercises.

Writing the script for the videotape necessitated a division of labor. One of us wrote on the historical and social aspects of wine—the introduction and conclusion—while the other concentrated on the body of the presentation, i.e., a demonstration on how wine is made at home. Keeping in mind the level of our audience, we stressed—without trying to contrive the language—major grammatical structures, e.g., *ser/estar*, familiar commands and impersonal *se* constructions. The latter was deemed essential in the presentation since, in Spanish, it is widely used in giving directions and instructions. Meetings with local wine shop owners were very constructive.

In addition, our producer, Tom Goldsworthy, taped a black and white videotape of one of the merchants preparing wine. This helped us simplify the technical explanations found in winemaking books. The willingness of this wine shop owner to share his time and equipment was indeed appreciated.

Once the script was completed we decided to do a couple of black and white tapings of only the demonstration. In a few cases the written script, still too technical and/or wordy for the intended audience, hampered our attempts at a more casual and personable approach to the subject. Consequently, changes were made so that gestures and visuals carried more of the meaning. In addition, comments from our colleagues

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and students persuaded us to move more into a dialog rather than a lecture-approach in the demonstration. To further enliven the explanation, humor in the form of amusing illustrations were interspersed throughout the demonstration. They provided a type of comic relief while avoiding slapstick humor which could detract from the videotape. These illustrations, portraying a jovial medieval monk, proved extremely useful in depicting the time lapse needed at various stages of wine making. The necessity to set up different equipment at these stages required that the demonstration be taped in parts. Final "production" versions of the script were typed on pages divided into 2 columns. On the left column commentaries were made, e.g., places where slides (pictures, illustrations), music and vocabulary words would appear on the tape. On the right column, under each Spanish line, the English translation was typed in script form. This arrangement proved most helpful for film directors who could not understand Spanish; moreover, it helped us pace our speech when later on we dubbed in the English track. The English, in a few instances, perhaps was not the most stylistically appealing; however, it closely paralleled the Spanish. This was an important consideration to keep in mind in case a student, at any moment, wished to switch from the Spanish to the English track.

The gathering of visuals, especially the slides for the introduction and conclusion, proved to be troublesome. In cases where copyright limitations or no adequate pictures existed, we resorted to both an artist and a photographer. Slides taken on vertical slant were not particularly useful since they did not provide the width for the videotape camera to pan the picture and hence, create the sensation of movement. For background music a graduate student who plays the Spanish guitar was hired. His repertoire of songs highlighted the various moods we wanted to evoke throughout the program.

In short, making a videotape is truly a time-consuming effort. Many of the steps summarized below require hours of consideration.

1. Topic selection
2. Research
3. Outline and approach
4. Script writing
5. Meetings with producer and director
6. Gathering props and visuals
7. Consultations with the artist and musician
8. Preliminary black and white tapings
9. Script revisions
10. Final tapings:
  - A. Color videotaping of live segments in Spanish
  - B. Audio recording sessions to tape the English version

C. Audio editing session to mix music with Spanish and English soundtrack

D. Final video-audio editing sessions

Therefore, we strongly recommend that anyone undertaking such a project do so only with assistance in the form of a team, combining pedagogical and technical know-how, and released time from the regular teaching and/or administrative duties.

Although contending with the excessive demands of time that videotape preparation involves, there is the rare satisfaction that a carefully planned teaching/learning experience will not be just a one-day offering, that it will be readily available to future students. Moreover, the incentive to incorporate the videotapes into the lesson is certainly substantial when teachers themselves have prepared them. Colleagues, aware of the effort and merit of such an undertaking, are enthusiastic about using the videotape in the classroom or lab. Students appreciate their teacher's effort, sense of humor and willingness to bring into the class interesting—often overlooked integral aspects of the language.

## **PART TWO: Production Considerations**

**Need for Producer.** I have found, after producing six instructional videotapes, that even simple teaching concepts always grow into complex undertakings. There is more time and work involved in bringing a production to fulfillment than one person can ordinarily devote, while at the same time maintaining a full work schedule of normal teaching and/or administration duties. In order to get more teaching ideas converted into actual videotapes, we have evolved a teamwork approach to share the work load. Being honest, and realizing that "I cannot do everything by myself" is a primary step in creating a videotape. We find that the workload falls naturally into three areas of responsibility: Authors, Producer & Technical Director. Since we do not currently have professional studio production facilities, we subcontract the Technical Directing and actual studio taping to another department on this campus for a fee. I act as the Producer.

I define the producer's role as being responsible for such areas as:

- (1) Assisting Authors
- (2) Organizing Paperwork
- (3) Managing Cost Control
- (4) Insuring the End Product is "sharable" with other schools

Assisting authors and camera talent of course means doing many things; but, I think it most useful to mention —

(1) Prepare authors for the fact that a video production takes more time than you can anticipate. Without trying to scare them off, at the same time try to prepare them for the dent it will take out of their time schedules.

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(2) As a corollary to this, a Producer seeks every opportunity to bring to the Administration's attention the fact that authors should be given released time or extra compensation for videotape productions.

Ideally, this would take the form of summer employment just for the specific purpose of developing instructional television material.

(3) Make authors aware that everybody's work schedules are inter-related, and hence, once a program is set in motion a definite timetable must be adhered to. Such work schedules are developed in one or more planning meeting between Producer, Authors, and Director.

**Organizing the Paperwork.** Even though this production was a team effort of three people, there had to be just one place where all details and paperwork were routed through, so we could be sure we maintained all steps in our production schedule and so no details were omitted. As producer, I attempted to coordinate and monitor schedules through the use of a large three-ring "Project" binder.

The sixteen division index topics within this binder is the heart of my control system. These sixteen divisions are the result of my trying to find a logical place to store and retrieve information of a recurring, identifiable nature during my previous video productions.

The annotated titles in these divisions are:

1. **SCRIPT—FINAL VERSION**  
(The last item completed - for historical reference, in future production)
2. **SCRIPT—DEVELOPMENT**  
(All versions and rewrites before final)
3. **SCRIPT—(PRODUCTION VERSION MARKED FOR CUEING DIRECTOR & FINAL VIDEO EDITING WORK)**
4. **CREDITS FORMAT (OPENING & CLOSING)**  
(See Appendix A for sample)
5. **WORK CHECKLIST—(What Each Person Must Do, and the Sequence and Priority of each step)**  
(This is our Production Schedule. See Appendix B for sample)
6. **PEOPLE—(DIRECTORY)**  
(How to reach anybody and everybody needed in some way for this production; home & office numbers)
7. **COPYRIGHT RELEASE**  
(See Appendix C for sample)
8. **TALENT RELEASES**  
(See Appendix D for sample)
9. **VISUALS: GRAPHICS, SLIDES**  
(Anything related to visuals projected before the videocamera)
10. **MUSIC**

11. SCENERY & PROPS.
12. CORRESPONDENCE: WITH DIRECTOR & ALL OTHER STUDIO STAFF
13. CORRESPONDENCE: WITH AUTHORS & CAMERA TALENT
14. BUDGET
15. TECHNICAL NOTES ON MASTERS & COPIES  
(See Appendix E for sample)
16. PUBLICITY

If you become involved in an instructional television production, you might want to use the above model as a starting point when deciding how to keep track of all the paperwork and details which your project will surely generate.

**Budget-Cost Control.** This production was funded mainly by the Laboratories for Recorded Instruction, with some incidental expenses and typing services by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. As Producer, I exercised my prerogative in several areas to hold down the total cost of the production. Several decisions may be of interest.

In most of my previous productions we have subcontracted the actual studio videorecording work to another department that uses professional quality, two-inch quad master videotape recorders and three very high quality color cameras equipped with exceptionally fine camera lenses for resolution and definition. This studio has a marvelous video switcher and character generator. Inflation has necessarily raised this studio's rates within the past year, consequently, for our latest production, we discussed subcontracting this project to a different production studio on campus that uses the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " U-matic videocassette recorder for its master tape. This studio only has two color cameras available and they are of lesser quality. The video switcher and character generator are similarly more restricted in what they can accomplish. The question we had to decide was: could we achieve our teaching purposes and production desires with less sophisticated studio equipment? We subsequently decided to work with the department that had simpler equipment and correspondingly less estimated cost.

A character generator, as you may know, is the device which allows you to place printed words or messages on the screen, in addition to the picture. We use it to produce foreign language subtitles in selected spots. The character generator we used was simple, but it could supply foreign language accent marks over words. This feature is important, because it saved us considerable time and money in preparing the graphics for the script. Instead of preparing artwork, and then photographing the artwork for slides, we just typed the words on a typewriter keyboard, for storage and later retrieval when we wanted them.

We will not really be able to fully evaluate our decision until next fall when students begin to use the videocassette tape. But past experience has shown us that students are not as critical of technical shortcomings in

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productions where their teacher are the actors as they are of professional and polished commercial productions produced by strangers.

For example, our earliest produced videotape was recorded with two color cameras whose balances were not evenly matched. When the director switched from one camera to another, the object in view changed color. One particularly vivid example was a little stuffed bear which was cardinal red on one camera, and fluorescent orange on the other. The technical crew groaned during replays when they saw what they considered glaring technical flaws because of the color changes. But our students were so interested in the story line and the fact that it was their own teachers producing it for them, that they did not notice the color changes. Because of this experience, I can say that a production need not be of professional broadcast quality with polished technical displays in order to be an effective teaching tool.

Another cost control technique which we used to hold down the budget was the use of black and white videorecording to tape three separate rough versions of the script development. The idea is to record the actors performing the script, and use a wide angle shot at all times. The purpose is not to produce a complete tape, but rather to allow the authors to hear how their script sounds when spoken instead of read, and to show how their movements will look to the viewer. Another purpose is to allow the camera talent to see how they work together, and to point up potential problem areas for the director. It forces the talent to be sure that they are ready for the final recording session. Everybody is better prepared because of the inexpensive black and white run-throughs; this, in turn, reduces the studio expense time when the final version is taped in color.

We feel very strongly that local, departmentally produced, instructional videotapes should be shared with other schools under controlled conditions. With the advances in videorecording technology, and the continually decreasing costs of color videocassette recorders and color video-cameras, it will not be long before many creative teachers will have the capacity to produce their own teaching videotapes locally.

A strong argument for producing materials locally is that costs and restrictions on commercially produced materials simply put them out of the reach of many schools. Commercial producers frequently charge too much for their video productions, and have excessively restrictive clauses in their sales contracts. For example, if you buy a master videotape, the publisher usually does not want to give you written permission to make additional lab copies for use within your department even though you have technical facilities to copy videotape. Many commercial publishers do not want you to obtain perpetual ownership with your purchase; many of them want to re-negotiate terms after two or five years. All these conditions make it difficult, if not impossible for Lab Directors to acquire

commercially produced videotapes legally and in quantity. Another argument for locally produced videotape is that they can be tailored to the teacher's specifications.

The obvious solution is for teachers to make their own materials in such a way that the Lab Director will be free to trade them with other schools under agreeable terms and conditions.

The Producer has to be particularly vigilant that the end product is one which is free of copyright complications. The use of visuals is the major potential problem area. Any slide, or picture from a book or magazine that you want to use in your production is probably copyrighted by someone or their heirs. The producer must insure that the author's script calls for only visuals for which written permission to use has been obtained. In our case, we had to have an artist draw original artwork to illustrate a few points where we could not get written permission for published photographs. In general, we have found it simpler to use slides that we take or those taken by other individuals, rather than rely on commercial sources. However, even for privately obtained slides, the producer should secure a "Release" form from the photographer before such slides are incorporated into the script.

I cannot emphasize enough the necessity of having written releases for any visual material before incorporating it into the script. You cannot afford to "gamble" that a permission letter will probably come, and videotape unsure items before the letter arrives.

What are the conditions under which we envision schools exchanging videotapes? We see eight main terms:

(1) The Producer assures all other users that the tape contains no copyright violations, and declares that it is copyable.

(2) The Producer will agree in writing that the receiving school may make as many copies of the videotape as are needed for internal use only, from the master received.

(3) The Producer will make available to the receiver one or more copies of this videotape for the reproduction costs only; the producer may either provide duplication service at the fixed institution rate, or provide a circulating loan copy of the tape which others can borrow by simply paying postage and insurance expenses both ways.

(4) The Producer will make available one copy of any available script or guide. Reproduction of the printed material is granted for the receiver's use only.

(5) The borrower agrees to request a copy of the videotape only from the original source school.

(6) The borrower agrees to allow the producing school to obtain materials from them under the same terms and conditions, if and when the borrowing school may produce something of interest.

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(7) The borrower agrees that all copies made will contain the complete program including the opening and closing information.

(8) The borrower agrees not to allow anyone else to copy either the videotape (in whole or in part) or the script.

Those with a sharp legal eye may see apparent "loopholes" in this system. But if we can set the trend of professional colleagues sharing the fruits of their labors together, instead of selling them, everyone involved, particularly the students, will benefit.

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