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LANGMEDIA, A WORLD WIDE WEB SITE FOR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE, AND THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN ITS CREATION

The Five College Foreign Language Resource Center (FCFLRC) received NSEP funding, for a period of 2 years beginning January 1999, to design a Web site that would realize a new, easily accessed Web-based resource for foreign language and cultural studies, LangMedia. The final results of this project can be viewed at http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu. The offices of Five Colleges, Incorporated (the consortium of Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst) administered the NSEP grant for our Center. I served as project director and Amy Wordelmn, PhD, the Center's Technology Coordinator, designed the site. This paper will examine the impetus for the site, the decisions that went into its design, and the integral role played by international students in the overall construction of LangMedia.

The finished LangMedia site is more extensive than we had originally planned. Initially, the Web site was to have offered only video (hence our original titling of the site as a video archive), but as our designing proceeded, we decided to add both an audio component and a component of video frames and scanned material to complement the video. LangMedia focuses on some of the least commonly taught languages: Arabic, Bulgarian, Brazilian Portuguese, Croatian, Czech, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Romanian, Swahili, Thai, Turkish, and Urdu. We anticipated that the Archive would impact all levels of education from middle school through university as well as provide valuable information for the private sector traveling to any destination covered on the Web site. Preliminary results support our suppositions. On the educational side, the site has been accessed by students as young as elementary school, and we have received unsolicited feedback from around the world.

When we began to create the framework of this project 3 years ago, we were inspired by several factors:

- the paucity of all genre of materials readily available to the average person interested in a language or culture that was not considered mainstream, in other words, anything other than Spanish, Italian, French or German;

- the significant number of Five College students clamoring for the opportunity to do academic or post-graduate work in a field that required one of the least commonly taught languages; and

- the interest of the government in having materials developed and distributed at low cost to government agencies, the military, and international businesspeople, as well as to institutions of higher learning.

We conceived of LangMedia as an answer to these multiple needs. Because of our day-to-day interaction with language materials, we were (and continue to be) convinced that the future of materials development lay in utilization of the World Wide Web. By exploiting the possibilities for global distribution that the WWW affords us, we felt that we were guaranteed to reach the maximum number of individuals with minimal cost (both to those seeking information and to those paying for creation and distribution of the product).

We also wanted our Web site to serve two distinct groups of people: Those with no prior contact with the target language and its culture, and students of that language and culture. In order to achieve that balance within the project (a balance of both English and the target language), we decided to design each Web page to be user-friendly to any type of individual. Users can click around with ease going from a video clip in the target language, to a target-language transcript of the video, to an English translation of the transcript. The audio phrases are simple and represent target-language phrases that a visitor would need in order to function in a particular country. We also decided to include still images showing the potential traveler such things as a phonecard, a bus ticket, or a hotel bill. In order to bring all the resource material together in an organized way, we chose to begin each page with a paragraph in English. In the end, it was this variety of available sources that caused us to change the name of the Archive to the Media Archive instead of the narrower Video Archive (as originally conceived).

One of the guiding principals in our project development was to present authentic language in its original form. We purposefully did not create any language ourselves in the target language. Therefore, the paragraphs of explanation at the beginning of each page are in English. I strongly believe in the usage of only authentic language for projects such as this one. If an individual wants to learn how to conjugate a verb, s/he can consult a grammar. But if the goal is to listen to a particular language as it is used in daily communication, then an individual can consult our site. I wanted our site to reflect the languages and cultures in their true, unaffected form. To that end, I instructed our videographers never to script a scene or to correct grammar or usage. We continued to follow that dictum in our editing and in our creating of transcripts and translations. All language is in its original form — exactly as a traveler will hear the language spoken.

As important as the authentic language is, its environment, the raw video footage, is even more important. When I was a novice teacher 15 years ago, I was already aware of the copyright difficulties that are inherent in trying to adapt footage to fit

pedagogical purposes. For example, although I could easily videotape Italian TV segments off of the satellite, the "fair use" clause in copyright law allowed me to keep them, even for educational purposes, for only 30–45 days, meaning that my pedagogical material was being destroyed almost as soon as it was created. Purchased video cassettes of target-language films present their own difficulties as well. Although, as the purchaser, the institution can keep and use the video for years, one is not permitted to change the format, that is, edit little segments, take clips out of sequence, and so on. The holders of copyright frequently do understand what these constraints mean to educators; however, while some holders of copyright will privately allow their material to be used educationally, they are rarely willing to put that permission on paper. My solution to these roadblocks was to shoot my own video for my classroom use.

Here the question "why not just hire a professional?" is bound to arise. Indeed if one's goal is to obtain the clearest, best quality video possible, then hiring a professional videographer/film maker is the obvious choice. There are, however, tradeoffs involved when professionals enter into the equation. First of all, the professional's own perception of what should be captured and "exported" to us becomes an issue. This was a big issue in the late 80's when professional TV stations tried to provide material from their own archives and re-purpose the video for language learning. For example, one of RAI's (Italian public television) earliest attempts was a monthly videotape series that showcased some of what they deemed to be their most trendy feature stories of the month. Frequently the videos were filled with fashion shows, car races, soccer clips, or Italian-American events taking place in New York. The material was interesting, but practically useless for the language learner unless the word "runway" entered into one's everyday speech! It is natural to want to show the best of one's own country, but the professional videographer frequently does not understand the needs of a language learner any better than a commercial enterprise does. One of our international students, for example, has an uncle who is a professional filmmaker. He wanted to accompany his niece and help her with the video. He sent her back with a professional film that reflected all the scenes we asked to be included, but because he didn't think the people being videotaped were speaking correctly, he overlaid a soundtrack of music on the audio — making the project practically worthless. Because of cultural dynamics in that target country, the niece, whom we had trained and who understood what we needed, was not able to correct her uncle's misconceptions, and we had to re-shoot in that country the following summer.

Except for that particular incident, we have had success in training our international students to do videotaping in their home countries. The first FCFLRC publication, *The Five College Foreign Language Laserdisc Series* (originally from the University of Massachusetts Press and currently reconfigured for Web use on the LangMedia site) is, as its series title indicates, also video-based. The production of that series allowed us to perfect our video gathering technique. The challenge is this: to capture authentic scenes of interaction and instances of speech-making in a natural setting using non-professional informants. At the outset, this means eliminating professional videographers, intrusive microphones, light pods, and other

contraptions that interfere with the basic speech-making. The only person who can penetrate the cultural environment of a target-language country without ruining the spontaneity of that environment is a native-speaking member of that target-language community. Thus instead of the more frequently used agenda of finding a videographer and training him or her in the culture of the country, we start with what we believe to be the most important component: a native-speaking member of the target culture and train that person to be a videographer. Our footage is not that of a professional soundstage, but it is authentic.

We have had much success training bright, international students from the Five Colleges to shoot the video. Because they are native-speakers of the target language and members of the target cultures, they fit right into the environment they are seeking to capture. They have friends and family members who are eager to help them with their project. By going to local enterprises, they are able to videotape the people with whom their families interact in everyday life. Using their and friends' families as liaisons, they are able to gain access to situations that would be forbidden to others. For example, a friend's father who is a bank president will arrange for the student to videotape someone doing business with a teller while a friend's physician mother will give a sample physical exam to the friend and discuss the various payment methods. A further advantage to employing international students as videographers is that the majority of these students have recently undergone the same types of learning processes in the US that we are trying to capture in the target country, so they have an innate sense of what is valuable material.

Because the FCFLRC is the home of the Five College Self-Instructional Language Program (the program that affords students the opportunity to study, in an independently directed format, languages that are not offered in the classroom on any of the five campuses), we are well acquainted with the international students in our community. In many cases, we have already taken care of the paperwork that allows them to work for us (checking visas and getting permissions signed by various deans of international students). Dozens of them are already employed by the FCFLRC as native-speaking conversation partners for the FCSILP. Being hired by the FCSILP is viewed as an honor in the international student community; for every position we offer, we may have as many as 10 applicants, so we are able to choose the best qualified students to work for the program. Through the training that they receive from us, and through their work with the Five College student population, these international students have a good understanding of what it is that foreigners need to know about their home countries

Training a bright, enthusiastic student to capture the needed video is much easier than it might appear. The first task is to identify a potentially good videographer. In the second half of every semester, we send out advertisements to our international students and their associations identifying the countries/cultures/languages for which we need student videographers. The student need not have had experience with either cameras or Web design but must be willing to learn. S/he should be planning on spending the major part of vacation in the home country because getting the videotape shot takes a lot longer than one might think. The student

must also be free of political or ethnic prejudices, which is fairly easy to determine in a half-hour, in-person interview. During my first video project, one of the students brought in her video, and I immediately noticed that some of the best footage had no sound track. She explained that she turned off the camera microphone whenever she encountered individuals of a certain ethnicity because they "didn't matter" in her country. I have learned to include conversation topics in the interview stage that would reveal any such lurking prejudices on the part of the students that might impact the video shoot. After we have met all of our videographer candidates, we outline our shoots, trying to distribute equipment among a variety of countries and/or in diverse regions of a particular country. Therefore, if we have five students applying to go to India and four are from the south and one is from the north, we will choose one from the south and one from the north so as to get a variety of footage. Another consideration is whether or not the student will be able to work with us the following semester. A student with video experience who will be spending the following year on junior year abroad might not be selected if another reasonably qualified student will be returning to the area because we have found it desirable to have one student working with us from start to finish. Each student receives a stipend of $250 dollars for the video shoot and reimbursement for incidental expenses. We pay $10/hour for editing work in our office upon their return, and they usually work 5 or 6 hours per week for a semester or two, depending on how much footage they have shot and on what type of font their target language requires. Getting a site together in Thai takes longer than a similar site in Swahili. Once we have selected our student videographers, we start training them. We have learned that, to facilitate training, the learners should work with us and with student videographers who have experience from previous shoots.

We begin in the FCFLRC by teaching the student videographer the basics of video shooting and editing. I try to get students in groups of at least two so that they can use each other as guinea pigs, and I get one of our student videographers from a previous shoot to train them with me. These fellow students are frequently able to calm fears and answer questions about their experiences in their home countries. One of the most common concerns is the reaction of the target country's customs officials to the in-coming equipment; in reality, this rarely poses a problem, and the experienced students can quickly allay concerns. As for the quality of footage itself, we discuss it theoretically as a group, and I set up hypothetical scenarios to see if our trainees can spot a potential pitfall. Once it is clearly understood what makes video good or bad, usable or unusable (in terms of sound, light, surroundings, size of focus area, color), the students do some practice shooting in the office, and then we look at the video and discuss its merits or problems. Then we send the students out of the office with the camcorder, a tripod, and an external microphone with earphones (for sound control) to shoot signs (immovable objects), crowds of people, and small conversations. The experienced student videographer accompanies them. They return to our office after an hour or so, and again we all look at their footage together. The most frequent initial problems are camera angle, shadows and glares, unsightly, extrinsic material (such as foul graffiti written on a phone booth), and unflattering poses. At this time, we discuss the content of the captured

conversations. Since we are potentially interested in putting the finished video on the Web, we don't want anyone giving out personal information, such as home address or phone number. Most students are savvy enough to have already understood such potential dangers. After this beginning session with us in our Center, the student returns to his/her home campus to make a short (2- to 5-minute) video on a chosen subject. We suggest that the student take advantage of the equipment to make a video for the family showing the dorm, meeting some roommates or friends, and so on. In this way, the student has a vested interest in making the video the best possible because it will be a gift for the family. Having captured the footage, the student then returns to view it in the Center and discuss positive and negative aspects of the footage. By the end of the training, the student videographer is well prepared (mechanically speaking, at least) to return home for either summer or winter vacation and capture the required footage. We send a sheet of video tips along with the student in case questions arise on site (Appendix A).

While the physical process of shooting usable video is important to the finished product, content is equally important. We approach content in several ways. First, the Center has developed a list of suggested topics and situations (Appendix B) that are, in general, pertinent to every culture (e.g., proper greetings and partings), with the emphasis on behavioral standards, body language, and appropriate usage of formulas or honorifics. In Swahili, for example, one must thoroughly understand the importance of including the "Shikamoo" (reply "Marahaba") in a greeting exchange between parties of differing ages. The word "Shikamoo" must appear somewhere in the greeting conversation, which can be long and complex or relatively brief and to the point. In Hindi, on the other hand, body language is as important to the greeting as the words themselves (the younger person bows lower than the elder, and younger males should make a praying motion with their hands while aiming their hands toward their feet as they bow). We discuss all of the topics with our students, trying to make them connoisseurs of their own culture. Because their own introduction to U.S. customs is so fresh in their memories, they usually understand immediately what we are looking for and, indeed, are quick to add their own suggestions to augment our list. We tell all students that our list of topics is only a suggestion list. If they deem any item on our list to be inappropriate for whatever reason, they should omit it. Similarly, they should feel free to add elements that are culturally specific and which we would not have known to include. During the first conversation we had with one of our young women from Bulgaria, she said that the most important thing to illustrate to foreigners in Bulgaria was the difference between nodding (which means "no" in Bulgaria) and shaking one's head (to indicate "yes"). Most students think of such unique cultural aspects even while in our Center in the US; by the time they arrive in their home countries, they've thought of all sorts of necessary shots.

Although the students arrive in their country with letters of introduction from me (as well as the all-important letter for customs regarding ownership of all the equipment), we have found that the video shoots run more smoothly if the students don't need to use those letters. We encourage them to do their shoots in the areas and establishments frequented by their families on an everyday basis. The key to

success is being "inconspicuous." If they ask the local baker if they can film mom buying the family's daily bread as she does every day of her life, the baker will say "sure." If they ask someone in a large supermarket to be allowed to do the same thing, the manager is inevitably summoned, and permission is denied (no matter how many letters of introduction they have from me).

The students also have to pay attention to everyday, volatile, political occurrences in their countries. The student we sent to one country recently had a basically unsuccessful shoot because her visit just happened to coincide with a rash of terrorism and terrorist threats in that city. So each time she took out her camcorder, she was approached by police because, of course, all the prime points of interest for our video — banks, train station, post office — could also have been of interest to terrorist groups. So this student ended up having much more contact with police than she wanted, and she returned with practically no outside shots. Conversely, sometimes positive interest by locals can be just as destructive. A student found that, by the time she had set up her tripod, she had gathered such a crowd that she couldn't do the shoot. Her solution was to leave the tripod at home (creating difficulties in the editing stages) and simply whip the camera out from under her coat and shoot her video before interested bystanders could comprehend what was happening. Our students do understand that their safety and comfort level are the most important considerations to us; if something makes them uncomfortable for whatever reason, they should not do it. Fortunately, in most instances, the video shoot is a positive experience for the international students; they have a lot of fun, they bond with family and friends in creating the video, and they enjoy gaining a new sense of their countries.

The next step in our process happens when the students return to our Center with their video (an average of six hours of video). We make working copies of their video cassettes and then set them up with a monitor and film counter to log their materials. The log looks like this:

1:12:21	Grocery store – buying groceries
1:14:10	Grocery store – paying
1:14:30	Grocery store – paying and getting change (best)
1:14:58	Public transportation – getting in, paying
1:15:24	Public transportation – paying, asking driver

We have found that having the videographer make his/her own log saves time although, in a pinch, another native speaker can work on someone else's video. After the logging is complete, digital editing begins. Each video clip is designed as an individual, stand-alone segment complete with transcript in the original target language and transcript in English. Creating the transcripts elicits the type of dilemmas one can easily imagine. Do we try to translate "cannoli" or describe it or leave it alone? What should we do with grammatically incorrect speech? How should we handle those regional dialects? Our solution is to write a target-language transcript that represents exactly what is being said on the video (grammatically correct or not) and to add parenthetical explanations (in both versions of the

transcript) that explain the meaning of slang, dialect, or those words that are not easily translated. In the end, we try to remain true to our goal of illustrating language as it *is* spoken and not as it *should be* spoken.

Once we have edited the clips and written the transcripts, we are ready to import that material onto the appropriate Web page. We record basic audio phrases for the audio part of the page (using SoundForge in our office), and we scan images of tickets, phone cards, menus, and so on for the section of stills. The last item that goes on a Web page is the paragraph explaining the basics of the topic under discussion. We write the paragraphs with the help of the international students. For example, the paragraph from "How to Use a Pay Phone" in Hungary reads

> Pick up the receiver and then insert either your coin or your pre-purchased phone card. Note that phones will be designed to take either a coin or a card and not both. If you insert coins, you will not get change at the end of your call, so pay attention to how much you are inserting. If you use a phone card, it will remain in the phone card slot until you have finished your conversation. After you hang up, remember to take your phone card with you. Basic instructions about phone usage, costs, and emergency numbers are posted inside the phone booths.

Eventually we have a consulting professor of the target language and culture look over the entire site for errors, but only after we have had several international students proof the target-language text. Finally, we add the language site to the LangMedia homepage and launch it.

Fortunately, these group productions are great fun for all involved, especially for the international students who not only bond with family and friends whom they had missed during their year in the States but who also learn a lot about their own countries. At the end of their work with us, these students completed evaluation forms, some of which are quoted below. Because of issues of student confidentiality, I cannot identify our students either by name or by country, but their observations are worth noting.

Many of the students found that walking around with a camcorder automatically made them a famous director in the minds of on-lookers: "… people thought that I was from MTV or 'Candid Camera.' They were convinced that I was some famous or budding film director… I couldn't convince them otherwise and some followed me from shoot to shoot for hours!" Some students expected a negative reaction from people asked to be in the videos and were pleasantly surprised. "I didn't know what exactly to expect… at most, I expected people to be camera shy. But what I got was completely the opposite. As soon as I would step out onto the street with my equipment, I would attract stares. By the time I took out my camera and decided what it was I wanted to film, there was a crowd of 20 or 30 people around me trying to get into the picture. People were more than happy to oblige me… and the spectators felt free to shout out comments and suggestions to the 'actors.'" Other students who expected cooperation were disappointed with people's reactions. "While shooting this video, I realized how 'particular' we are… I noticed that we are not used to seeing cameras around and that we are suspicious and don't want to

appear in someone else's video…" Most students were encouraged by the attitudes they encountered, and even those who seemed suspicious at first, gave in after being asked nicely. "[Some] people would act tough with me in the beginning, but if I made it seem like they were doing me a favor and if I asked them humbly enough, they would melt… and would usually invite me to sit with them and drink tea."

Probably the more important insights gained by the students were about their own country and the image it presents to foreigners. One student noted, "After doing this project, I noticed that in my country we have different customs (from the US) — how we act in a restaurant, how we board a bus — and that those little details are what make us who we are." Another student remembered how difficult her first few weeks in the US were and tried to put herself in the position of someone new to her country. "When I first came here, it was more the small things that I noticed. For example, I didn't know how to put a dollar bill into a coke machine, and the first time I tried, it spat it back out at me (I must have put it in upside down). I was so embarrassed because there was someone waiting behind me! My everyday experience at college in the US made me more sensitive to what people might find different or strange, or just simply might not know how to do in my country. Being asked 'cash or charge' by an irate salesperson can be scary when you are paying for the first time… I tried to include details of how to do basic things in my video."

Certainly LangMedia as it is currently conceived, and in fact, most of the video work that we have done in the FCFLRC during the past 10 years, would not be possible without the active participation of our fleets of international students. Not only have the students bonded with their video helpers, but so too have we in the Center. We have gotten to know the families and friends of our students through their videos. When parents arrive for graduation, they seem like old friends. Those involved in making the videos in the target countries are eager to see the Web site, and they feel that they have a vested interest in making it the best it can be. We have had target-country individuals contact us to tell us that a particular type of phone card is not longer available so we can adjust the site or that there is a new type of express train that needs to be included. We feel that we have little enclaves of friends all over the world thanks to this project. Still, the people who gain the most through the video shooting are the international students themselves. "I would definitely recommend this [experience] to a friend. You get to meet all sorts of people while doing the job… and it slows you down so that you can get a real look at your country. Sometimes we take things for granted and do a lot of complaining. But there is a lot of beauty at home, even in the things that we crib about."

APPENDIX A:
REMINDERS AND QUICK TIPS FOR YOUR VIDEO SHOOT

1. Take time to set up the shoot — look at the viewfinder to check for problems. Put on the headphones to listen for problems.

2. Change things if there are problems. Example: if you can't see someone because of light problems maybe moving him/her will help.

3. Use the tripod.

4. Use the microphone.

5. Don't move the camera while you are shooting, leave it in one place.

6. Check the lighting situation — make sure people are not in front of or next to large bright things (walls or especially windows). You will not be able to see their faces if they are.

7. Let the camera run for 5 seconds before and after the situation you are taping begins and ends.

8. Turn off any special features on the camera (no time or date display).

9. Remember: we are focusing on the language. Language situations and signs are very important.

10. Have fun!

APPENDIX B:
FIVE COLLEGE FOREIGN LANGUAGE VIDEO ARCHIVE —
CHECKLIST FOR VIDEOGRAPHERS

Note: Not all of these items may apply in every country, and in some countries there may be filming restrictions or demands of etiquette which limit the kind of footage you may take on a topic. You will need to adjust accordingly. Also be on the lookout for topics/situations unique to your country which a visitor would find very helpful or necessary to know.

Telephones
— still shots of public phones and signs related to public phones (sellers of phone cards, etc.)
— videotape a demonstration of how to use a public phone
    — show for example how to insert the phone card
    — close-ups of instructions on the phone or the phone booth
    — have someone make a short phone call to a friend
— at least 3 videos of friends or family members making standard types of phone calls, such as
    — calling a home or office and asking to speak with a specific person
    — calling a hotel to make reservations
    — calling an operator/directory assistance
    — making a long distance and/or collect call
    — calling a friend and having an informal conversation
    — calling someone and having a formal conversation (for example, with a friend's parent)

Banks and/or money exchanges
— signs for banks, money exchanges, ATMs
— if possible bring back a copy of form that you have to fill out to exchange money
— if possible video tape someone exchanging money or getting money from an ATM machine

Post offices
— stills of signs for post offices and for various services, windows, and instructions inside the post office
    — what services can you get at the post office (stamps, packages, phone, etc.)?
— postal boxes around the city: what do they look like? get still shots.
— bring back examples of common stamps
— video tape someone doing business at the post office (mailing a letter or package, buying stamps, etc.)

Signs for public services

— police station
— hospitals and clinics
    — where would you go for a serious emergency?
    — where would you go for a less serious health matter?
— fire stations
— trash and recycling containers (where do you throw things away?)

Toilets

— signs for male and female facilities
— costs and/or tipping customs for using public facilities, if there is an attendant videotape the interaction with the attendant
— show how the toilets work (such as how do they flush?) and other proper etiquette for washing hands, etc.

Local transportation: Bus, subway, taxi, trains, rickshaws, any other local forms of transportation

— what do each of the major forms of public transportation look like? get still shots
— signs for public transportation such as bus stops, subway stops, train, etc.
— bring back examples of tickets and schedules
— video of how/where to buy tickets/tokens, how to get on and off, validate a ticket, etc.
    — show someone buying a ticket, paying the driver, and/or negotiating prices for the various forms of transport
— videotape someone getting a taxi (either on the street, taxi stop, or calling on the phone)
— signs pedestrians would need to know (walk, don't walk, etc.)

Train stations

— signs for the train station
— signs inside the train station (tracks, arrival and departure information., ticket counters, etc.)
— boards/announcements of track assignments and arrival and departure times
— visitors information center/traveler's aid, etc.
— videotape someone either buying a ticket or asking for information about schedules and prices

Airports

— signs indicating "airport"
— signs inside an airport (ticketing, baggage claim, gates, toilets, etc.)
— if possible, customs forms in the local language
— anything else you can comfortably videotape that shows travelers what to expect at the airport

Cars
— signs for car rental places
— videotape someone renting a car and/or asking for information about car rentals
— essential traffic signs: stoplights, stop signs, speed limits, etc.
— signs for parking locations
— gas station signs, show someone getting gas at a station

Hotels
— find a cooperative hotel desk clerk and video tape someone making reservations or checking into the hotel
    — have the person ask about rooms of different types, such as
        — one person, two persons
        — private bath, bath down the hall
        — asking about cost
        — asking about whether or not breakfast is included

Restaurants
— videotape the process of eating in different types of restaurants/food establishments
    — choose the cheaper and medium priced places students would tend to eat
    — for restaurants show seating, ordering, getting the bill, paying, etc.
    — include street vendors, little shops that serve prepared foods, fast food places, etc.
— get still shots of signs for various types of eating places
— menus (bring back if possible)

Shopping
— make videos of people shopping in various types of food shops, markets, supermarkets
    — places where you would buy common foods, such as
        — bread
        — fruits and vegetables
        — milk products
        — meat
— get video of someone buying fruit: who picks it up and bags it, the customer or the vendor? would the vendor be offended if the customer touched the fruit?
— make a video of someone shopping in a pharmacy, show something such as
    — buying aspirin/pain relievers
    — buying medication with a prescription
— show someone buying something in a different kind of market or store
    — if it is the custom to bargain for prices show someone bargaining for something

Common verbal exchanges: Make short videos showing these types of situations

— asking someone for directions
— greetings and good-byes (formal and informal, appropriate honorifics, motions or gestures)
    — also include proper introductions and responses when meeting new people
    — proper manners when visiting in a private home, how do you greet the hosts if you are the guest, etc.
    — proper manners between younger people and older people (children and adults, or adults with older adults)
— proper manners at the table (for instance example, passing food at the table, pleases and thank yous, etc.)
— asking someone "what time it is?" or discussing with someone what time something is scheduled

Cultural specific etiquette

— customs appropriate for your culture, such as
    — are there places you have to take off your shoes before entering?
    — proper forms of dress for certain settings
    — who's allowed where (men, women, children)
— tipping: who should be tipped?

Laundry

— How would someone who is visiting do their laundry (or have someone else do it)?

Computer cafes: If these exist or any other way of public access to the Internet

— if Internet clubs or cafes exist, videotape someone asking about prices and/or "buying time" to use the computers

Entertainment

— What are common forms of entertainment, especially for students. You could for example show someone buying movie tickets, going to a club or coffee place, etc.

Note: There are things that we simply can't know to suggest. Try to think about your country through the eyes of someone who has never been there before (e.g., a friend from your school who came to visit). What practical things about being in your country would they need to learn in order to manage well and to behave in appropriate ways? We will be able to explain some of these things on the Web site, but it is really helpful if you can get demonstrations on video. Also, there may be aspects of life in your country that you have special access to because of family members or friend's employment. For example, one student whose mother is a physician was able to videotape her sister going to her mother as a "patient" looking for treatment for her sore throat. Another person had an uncle who owned a restaurant and he let them do an extended "inside the restaurant" scene. Make use of those connections if you have them.