



Virtual Study Abroad:

Example of a Multi-media Program for 2nd-Year Language Students

Friday, May 30, 2008

10:00-11:30/Phelps 1172

Dr. Lisa Parkes

Director of the
German Language
Program
UCLA

**Brenna
Reinhart**

Graduate Student
Germanic Linguistics
UCLA

Last Applied Linguistics Lecture of the Year

Imagine if L2 students could travel from their home computer to areas or countries in which the L2 is spoken, explore the cities, and discover regional linguistic and cultural variation while honing their language skills. The 'Virtual Study Abroad' program presented here is a multi-media website in development for German that combines video, audio, image, and text on a dynamic, geo-referenced platform enabling students to 'virtually' visit a location, watch a video, and perform interactive proficiency-building tasks. Based on videos featuring native speakers in spontaneous situations as well as students on UC study abroad programs, this program exposes students to authentic German language and, by using UC students as guides through their real-life experiences while abroad, promotes closer cultural understanding in a way that will automatically appeal to students at home. The technology promotes meaningful language acquisition by facilitating instant access to and interaction with authentic language in an integrated program. This program provides a model and could be adapted for use with other languages.