

IT'S ALL MOTIVATION TO LEARN FOREIGN LANGUAGES Up to YOU

By Dick Newsome

"I'm leaving it all up to you." That's the catchy phrase, for what it's worth, that Mickey McLaughlin has this year for the College Union. Who is Mickey McLaughlin? Briefly answered, as Student Director of the Wren College Union, he is your advocate at the College Union.

What is "I'm leaving it all up to you?" It is definitely not I don't care attitude on the part of Micky, but just the opposite. What Mickey wants the College Union to accomplish this year is solely dependent on what you, the students of Mars Hill College want to accomplish. In other words, "it's all up to you."

September of 1973 was the first time students were totally involved in entertainment at Mars Hill. At the time there were two committees concerned with the entertainment that operated out of the College Union, the dance concert committee and the movie committee. As things turned out, the administration ended up still playing a large role in decisions, especially during the fall. In all fairness to the administration and to Phil Weast in particular, this was due to student procrastination and lack of involvement.

With spring came an increase in student involvement and interest. Spring does that for some reason, but that's another

story. By the end of April, all programming was being totally done by students. Four committees were operating in the area of entertainment. The coffeehouse committee and recreation committee were added to the

previous two.

These four committees are all very much active and alive now. Under Mickey's leadership, the chairpersons and members of these committees are working for you. Each committee is totally responsible for programming in each specific area for this semester, next spring, and next summer. It is their responsibility and their's alone to carry out these programs and to (of course) stay within their budgets. Now that is another story.

An important first is that before December 1st of this year each committee will submit a budget for the year 1975. In these they will outline programs for next year. This is the first time students have had direct input into the budget as far as entertainment goes. The process before had been from Mr. Weast to President Bentley. The importance in this change in process is that it will make it possible for students to know what is proposed and to know where and why these student proposals are changed or denied; if in fact any should be.

One thing Mickey wants the students to know is that this is the best opportunity ever for students to become involved at M.H.C., especially in the area of programming entertainment.

Mickey is always, almost always anyhow, willing to listen to new ideas and suggestions. As mentioned before, "it's all up to you." If there is anyone to blame for a lack of something to do at M.H.C., you can point your finger at no one else but yourself. In other words, as trite as it may sound, get involved!

by Harry Schweitzer

It stands to reason that there is little or no motivation to learn a foreign language if there will be no future application of it. Since English has risen to a worldwide means of communication, the usage of a foreign language and with it the motivation to learn it, have diminished. This argument very often nips in the bud any further ideas why one should learn something which is not immediately applicable. This short essay will deal with such wallflowers among ideas or motivations:

Somebody who is learning a foreign language will very soon notice a deeper understanding of the subject is almost impossible if he is not willing to change his way of thinking. Recognizing the nature and the differences of a foreign language as compared to his own, means to follow and accept its different way of developing thoughts. Such a recognition makes an understanding and tolerance of a foreign culture easier if not on the whole more possible. The only way to recognize our environment, our position, and social significance is by means of comparison. Thus, the learning of a foreign language does not only explain to us a country's culture. It does not only educate us to tolerate and understand people's different behaviors but it allows us to compare ourselves to them. This seems to be highly important because thus we might

find ourselves and our country's relative importance rather than an absolute value.

By learning a new language we extend our vocabulary and at the same time we expand the reality we live in. Since we think in words, the free play of our fancy can be extended only by learning new words. They cause new associations, they give a name to phenomena which were unknown to begin with, and create new "elbow room" for our imagination. I emphasize "associations" and "imagination" because they are the origin of our reality according to a so-called "nominalistic" assertion.

The "Nominalists" affirm that classifications and categories in the world only come into existence when men invent them. We create them by putting one word in relation to another which means that we recognize the genus of bushes only in relation to the genus of smaller plants or in relation to the genus of trees which might represent a higher evolution. This is the way of comparative thinking, which I have already mentioned with a more idealistic aspect.

If I am right, that the bush and its relation towards its verbal expression, but not vice versa, then a new language, presenting new words, also intrudes one into a new world. This would suppose that many of these new words, expressions, or idioms name a thing, action, or mentality, which cannot simply be

translated from a foreign language into English. So I am speaking of linguistic phenomena which in one language have a certain expression, but which in another language have a totally different or even no expression. An example of this is when a German speaker is confronted with two possibilities to say "ich gehe"; i.e. "I go" and "I am going". The latter idiom totally lacks its corresponding expression in German.

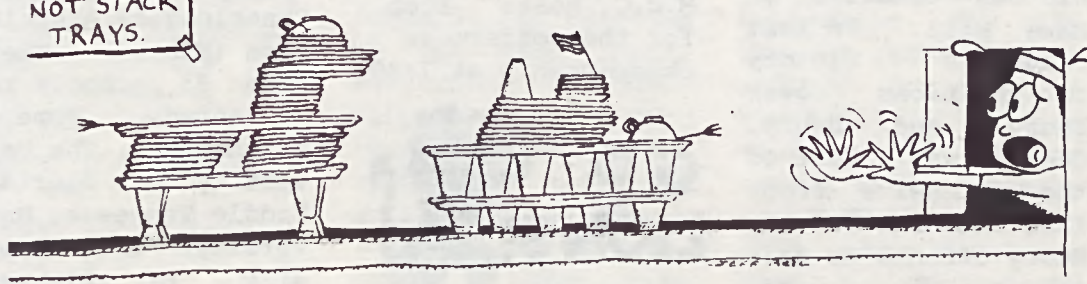
A very obvious gap between two different languages can be shown with the example of Swiss-German and High-German: The oral language Swiss-German has just two verbal tenses, the present and the past perfect. The future or the past tenses with which the Swiss confront in other languages forces them to think in different terms of space and time.

Similar differences exist also between French and English or between any other two languages.

Linguists have counted the number of different words in Winston Churchill's memoirs and they found almost 40,000 while Konrad Adenauer's memoirs only contain 1,200 different words.

Such striking irregularities and the recognition of them will result in a new and widened conception and consciousness of the world. The differences of our civilizations do not rest in the world itself but in the different languages of which one may emphasize what the other does not even mention.

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