Best Feet Forward: Some Moves for the Campus Interview

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HAVING recently taken the leap into discussing the job-search process (Stivale), I began to think beyond the screening interview about the next phase, the campus visit and interview. On reflection, I came to realize that my experience with this phase is extensive: as a candidate, I participated in ten campus visits (batting .500, with five job offers, at both junior and senior ranks). As a faculty member, I have been a member of about a half dozen search committees, sometimes with MLA interview responsibilities, always with campus host activities. Finally, as department chair, I organized searches that resulted in hiring a dozen new faculty members and thus entailed visits to campus of approximately thirty candidates. I provide this history not merely to list credentials but also to admit to my share of mistakes as well as some success, mostly in attracting talented teacher-scholars to Detroit. One can certainly learn from a job well done, but the mistakes tend to offer more food for thought and for revising one's approach to the most crucial phase of the job search.

Given the importance of the campus visit, it is not surprising that many commentators have devoted considerable attention to the campus interview.[1] However, few of these valuable reflections consider the specific concerns of the foreign language job search, and most are limited to entry-level positions, admittedly the most common type available, in contrast to the search for more advanced candidates. I comment here on different moves, both well- and ill-advised, at all levels of the job search. These moves concern matters to which all candidates should be alert in preparing for and undertaking the campus visit, including the endgame (whether negotiating an offer or deciding not to accept) and, should no offer be made, regrouping.

Some Preliminaries

Before I address the details of this phase, some models may help us envisage the process as a whole. Alas, most metaphors that I believe to be accurate provide little comfort to candidates. A crapshoot and a rigged poker game are two such models. The former implies the chance elements inherent to any candidacy resulting in a hire; the latter indicates the extent to which candidates must reveal their respective hands while the hiring institution and department members can be no more forthcoming than they wish or need to be. An even more precise, albeit somewhat bizarre model is that of a marathon bridge tournament with additional color commentary audible to everyone but the candidate. That is, it's not enough that the candidate must lay his or her hand faceup on the table (a common position in bridge, but with an unfortunate name: the dummy). The player-candidate must also endure extraordinary scrutiny of the hand being played as well as of every word and gesture made. As this game unfolds, the player-candidate knows all the while that the buzz about these actions and statements just out of earshot provides the basis on which the final recommendation for hire will be made.[2]

To this rather dire portrait of the candidate's situation I must add a few qualifications. First, the plain fact of nearly any search is that they—the school and the department—want to hire you, or someone like you, as intensely as you and your fellowcandidates want to be hired.[3] In good economic times as well as bad, if the position still exists in January and February (i.e., it has not been canceled for one of a variety of reasons), the institution very much wants to bring the search to successful closure. Indeed, a not insignificant

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statistical trophy brandished annually by deans is the number of hires made in relation to the number of searches initially authorized. In this context, the successful search reflects on the responsible chair and committee as well.

Second, in order to achieve this goal, the institution and the department must sell themselves to candidates at least as much as candidates must present themselves in a favorable light. Hence, during campus visits there usually is no end of goodwill on the part of the department members, or at least those who are already favorably inclined toward a candidate. While some cranky exceptions may exist, while some colleagues who favor another candidate or remain uncertain may evince reserve or a questioning attitude, courtesy usually prevails. Candidates should be aware that "We must put our best foot forward" is a phrase often intoned in mantra-like fashion by department chairs who are not (yet) allowed simply to tell colleagues, "Just you behave!" Still, in the candidate's case, *both* feet must be engaged in the process of moving qualities, talents, wit, and enthusiasm to the forefront.

Warm-Up

Before being allowed to engage in this fancy footwork, the candidate must receive the Call. Following the screening interviews at the MLA convention, the usual experience is to wait by the phone, or nowadays *with* the phone that one can carry anywhere.[4] One may have little time to decompress from the convention trip on returning home, since the semester usually starts up quickly thereafter, requiring that attention be paid to course preparations and other details. Also, one is tempted to live simultaneously in several time-space quadrants, trying to calculate what stage in the decision process the campus search committees have reached, when they may make their short list, when they are going to place the Call.

But this is not the time to indulge in superstitions by thinking that preparation for the Call (better still, the Calls) will jinx one's chances of receiving any at all. When you hear from a department, be ready to seek information immediately, some specifics of which are offered by Kimberly Delgizzo and Laura Malisheski:

> With whom will you be meeting? What is the schedule for your visit (and will there be a short break before your presentation to allow you to prepare)? Who will be your audience for your talk or teaching demonstration? What social events or meals will you be attending? Be certain to clarify the logistics. Who will make arrangements for your travel and accommodations? Will the department cover your expenses? (par. 4)[5]

Follow-up calls are permitted, of course, and e-mail now provides a ready means of communication, not just with the committee or department chair but with other colleagues, especially the basic course coordinator with whom one must work to prepare the teaching demonstration.[6]

Another valuable preparatory step is research about the department and institution extending the invitation. Some research prior to the screening interview was necessary, but the campus visit increases the importance of the information one can gather. This data should include the list of faculty members (with year and institution of PhD as well as publications and research interests), curricula of different departmental programs and those of any other units (e.g., comparative literature, cultural studies, women's studies) in which one has an interest, and some background on the administrative officers and organization (e.g., liberal arts and sciences in larger institutions) to which the department belongs. All this information is now available (or should be) on the school's Web site, and to this source one should add information gleaned from friends, colleagues, and mentors about the department and institution to be visited. Entry-level candidates usually need not go beyond the information I suggest here, since one's time is better spent on preparing for the public presentation and the demonstration teaching (see below). Candidates for more advanced and senior positions, however, would do well to seek additional background information and, time permitting, to read selected publications from the works of the colleagues they will soon meet (or see again). Even if, once on campus, this more extensive preparation provides no opportunity for direct exchange on the subjects reviewed, the candidate still has been able to assess the department's collective critical brilliance, as it were, as well as individual contributions to that glow.

Standard Moves on Campus

Since every move at the campus interview is part of an elaborate performance piece, one needs to prepare well even materially, especially for the unexpected. Take important papers with you. Take a change of clothing, if possible, in carry-on luggage. Make sure

you have an umbrella and clothes appropriate to the seasons on the host campus. Bring syllabi and other professional documents but plan to make copies in the department office before the different performance events. Prepare responses appropriate to the situation—that is, short replies for the meetings that provide relatively little time with individuals or small groups (e.g., a series of thirty-minute interviews with different faculty members) and longer replies for one-on-one meetings, as with the chair, the dean or associate dean (see Delgizzo and Malisheski; Baron, "Campus Visit").[7] Most immediately, the preparation on the Web and through personal contacts will, if adequately pursued before departure, reduce the extent of one's disorientation in the new location and throughout the rigorous array of meetings and activities.

Among these meetings is the public presentation of scholarly research, purportedly the high point of the visit. I say "purportedly," because I believe that too much weight is placed on this scholarly performance followed by questions and answers. The visit is better understood in its many facets, social as well as institutional and scholarly (since they are all performative). Still, as so many colleagues do focus on this event as the sine qua non for judging a candidate's merit, careful preparation for the talk is essential. For the entry-level candidate, mastery of the material is rarely a problem, since recent PhD recipients (and current candidates as well) are filled to the brim with their particular subject matter. The problems that may arise are in the delivery—it might be too rapid or too disconnected from the audience—and also in the selection of an accessible segment of a broader topic. In many circumstances, a candidate must make the topic comprehensible to a nonspecialist audience in a relatively brief amount of time. Prior rehearsal, especially to colleagues on campus before the trip, can be invaluable in working through possible difficulties.[8]

For the candidate in a more advanced position, selecting the proper presentation topic from several ongoing projects usually entails a similar process of segmentation and truncation. Whereas the entry-level candidate may find it difficult to speak enough (perhaps having given only twenty-minute talks at conferences), the advanced-position candidate must attend to limiting the presentation, usually considerably. A rule of thumb on length is forty minutes maximum; a thirty-minute presentation is ideal, allowing plenty of time for questions and discussion. But not just any thirty to forty minutes will do. One senior candidate who visited us could not be bothered to prepare a talk specifically for the interview. The talk, part of a manuscript chapter, began awkwardly in medias res and ended abruptly and without a conclusion. Another senior candidate failed to prepare handouts to translate citations of his foreign-language references and effectively left most audience members in the dark on significant sections of the talk. Several other senior candidates made comparable mistakes: although they were serious in their presentations, they took the campus visit as an occasion for trying out exploratory material for projects that they had barely begun. To hark back to the words from the mid-1980s of the late Clara Peller, faculty members want to know, especially from senior candidates, "Where's the beef?!" Although one cannot always expect to please everyone with a job talk, a serious candidate's preparation should be respectful of the process, and the content should reveal substantively the candidate's scholarly acumen and plans for continued research.

Language Moves

The preceding observations are hardly specific to the foreign language search. The most obviously distinctive aspect of this kind of search is the focus on and use of a foreign language! In general and especially in social situations during the campus visit, a candidate should go with the flow of language use. If colleagues all speak the foreign language for which one is being interviewed, by all means one should converse in that language. As both candidate and interviewer, I have noticed confusion on this point during the campus visit. For example, one colleague returned to English at a meal during which the others continued in French, giving the candidate mixed signals. In such cases as a candidate, I stayed with French whatever the linguistic ebb and flow.

The fundamental principle is that such performance events do not really lend themselves to natural conversation. There is always a certain degree of forced bonhomie that results from the dual nature of the event, at once a subtle testing through careful scrutiny (remember the bridge tournament) and a sense of respite, at a meal or any social occasion with these strangers. Add to this the varying levels of anxiety that many colleagues (faculty members and students alike, but especially undergraduates) feel about conversing in the foreign language. So the candidate has quite a number of elements to consider in such an encounter. The artificiality is hardly mitigated for an advanced-level candidate. The

main difference is that this candidate in all likelihood is already employed, usually in a tenure-track or tenured position, and therefore can take the measure of the interviewers with considerably less anxiety.

Ability with a foreign language comes most pointedly to the fore, of course, in the formal performance events: the scholarly talk and the teaching demonstration. One should not deliver the scholarly talk in the foreign language if some audience members are not fluent in the foreign language or if the project from which the talk is drawn does not lend itself to delivery in that language. Translating into the foreign language a project begun with an American academic press or journal in mind would be an artificial, indeed excessive exercise for the circumstances. If one determines through prior inquiry that the department members place great weight on scholarly communication in the foreign language, one must prepare carefully lest the choice of presentation language offend.[9]

As for the teaching demonstration, language skills may be the least, or certainly only one, of a candidate's concerns. The candidate must focus also on the class preparation and, during the demonstration itself, on instructional delivery and classroom management skills. To prepare, one can and should take advantage before the campus visit of the basic course coordinator's wisdom, since the coordinator will certainly welcome any questions that indicate the candidate's awareness of pedagogical issues, especially as regards teaching methodology. Because almost everyone claims to use the communicative approach, it is simply a mistake to turn up on campus with a lesson based predominantly on grammar explanations or translations. One needs to demonstrate in the class—through the lesson plan, the meaning-focused activities selected, and the multiple skills that they address—an active, engaged understanding of the communicative approach.

Additional questions to ask in advance include, How does the instructor usually handle grammar explanations, in English or in the target language? How much emphasis does the instructor (or the program) place on grammar? What are the students' level(s), and can the class be conducted effectively entirely in the target language?[10] Where does the class session that one is to teach fall in the course sequence, and what kind of transition should the demo class constitute in order to move the students effectively from one lesson to the next? What are the students' assignments for that day, and for what subsequent assignment(s) should the demo class prepare the students? The coordinator and the hiring committee will appreciate all efforts a candidate can make to ensure that the class runs smoothly.

I emphasize this point, because in my experience as department chair the teaching event most sharply demarcates the stronger candidates from the less strong and usually determines the success or failure of a candidacy. Admittedly, this outcome may seem quite unfair. After all, the candidate must meet a new class, teach a new lesson in the middle of an ongoing course, create immediate rapport with the students, and—oh, yes—also be the model teacher everyone at the institution has been looking for, while one or several faculty members observe the class! No one said this would be easy. What a candidate should expect, and what an attentive and compassionate search team can provide, is sufficient resources and information to ensure the possibility of the candidate's success in the teaching exercise. But the candidate alone can transform this material into a convincing classroom performance.[11]

What good candidates have going for them is knowledge of the material, organization of a simple but effective lesson plan, and enjoyment of teaching and building relationships with students. In the demo class, one can expect the students to be attentive (although not necessarily prepared), since they will understand the special nature of the demonstration event, however the candidate approaches the lesson plan. The worst outcome is that the regular course instructor loses a day in the syllabus as a result of a poorly executed lesson. The second-worst outcome is that even if the material was covered adequately, the instructor must spend time correcting errors introduced by the visitor into the grammar lesson or practice. In intermediate language course demonstrations on literature or advanced grammar, an additional problem may be that of losing the students partially or completely, either by the complexity of activities requested of them or by the lack of clarity in an explanation or interpretation. If one is going to risk inviting responses to an open-ended discussion about a literary text, one had better prepare questions so that the discussion does not devolve into a search for the correct answer known only by the visiting instructor, especially when conducted in the target language.

On the thorny issue of making linguistic errors, especially in the social setting, I recall Nancy K. Miller's memorable words, "The whole point of the French mistake is that it is intersubjective and social; and like a fart or any other failure of politeness, it never goes unnoticed" (49). Throughout the campus visit, all is

social and all is performance. The scrutiny that a candidate must endure extends to all aspects of his or her comportment, most notoriously in the realm of self-expression.[12] Since the business of the foreign language teacher is linguistic correctness, our field tends to codify it even in the job advertisement with "Native or near-native ability required." Yet with a few memorable exceptions, my interlocutors have been more interested in what I have had to say than in my (usually) pointedly correct manner of saying it. As a "near-native speaker" who has on occasion engaged in intense verbal sparring with French-born speakers, I simply focused what I had to say and then just did my best to communicate it. Long ago, I decided that life is too short to allow myself to be traumatized by the "French mistake." Also, I love French too much to turn it into some tedious daily chore or a ritual for self-flagellation.[13]

My own self-help motto for the campus visit has been a variant of carpe diem: "Enjoy the moment!" Once I have taken care to prepare for as many moves of the visit as I can, then all that is left is to enjoy myself, to meet as many people as possible, and above all to attempt to make some genuine connections in an admittedly forced and uncomfortable performance setting. Whatever mistakes I made during different campus visits, I took comfort and some strength in the idea that I had met at least one person with whom I would remain in contact in the future, if not as a campus colleague, then in the profession. Even when that hope was not realized, I still felt enriched by having extended myself in a challenging and professionally rewarding setting.

Such consolation is even more valuable in searches at the advanced level, for it is not just one's current research that is under scrutiny but one's entire career. Moreover, some members of the host department may be particularly critical of an advanced candidate: an appointment with tenure is likely in such cases, and colleagues must therefore consider how the candidate's research approach, field, and future projects will (or will not) fit into the department's goals while enhancing its prestige. Following one unsuccessful candidacy that included a campus visit, I was glad in retrospect not to have received the offer, when I saw how well the successful candidate (a friend in my field) fulfilled the department's expectations in ways and directions that, quite frankly, I was unprepared to pursue. Making lasting contacts through a campus visit may seem a slim straw to grasp after all the effort expended in a search. But maintaining a positive attitude in this way provides strength in undertaking another search, should one be so inclined, while returning in the meantime to daily life and work.

Moving In or Moving On

After all the footwork, hoops jumped through, tall or small buildings leaped at the interview, a candidate must still pay attention to detail and even to behavior, both while on campus and after departure. Some of my biggest gaffes during campus visits occurred not in the formal performance events but at in-between moments, especially by getting a bit too loose, too relaxed, expressing myself a bit too freely after completing a demanding portion of the visit. I had to remind myself at those moments that even when I thought that I was done, I really was still "on" as long as I remained on the campus. Let me repeat: everything is performance during the campus visit and is always subject to scrutiny and judgment. Each move of the candidate's performance is likely to be examined in fine detail, since the decision process requires faculty members and administrators to interpolate the future based on the limited data of the present.

Final discussions with the department chair before departure should include information about the time frame for the decision-making process. If the subject does not come up, candidates certainly should ask, especially if they will be unavailable during the following weeks (e.g., at other job interviews). Indeed, it often is in a candidate's interest to let the chair know discreetly that other campus visits (if any) are planned—there's nothing like the appearance of demand to whet a department's appetite. Final discussions may also include the salary issue. During one drive to the airport, a department chair made it clear to me how limited the resources were for salary, preparing me for the low figure that he would subsequently pitch when offering the position.

A candidate, whether junior or senior, really is on the thinnest ice in such a discussion. Another chair asked me point-blank if I would accept the position were I offered a particular salary. Rather than answer the question, I had the presence of mind to ask, "Are you offering the position to me for that amount?" When she answered no, that this question was just preliminary to the committee's making its decision, I replied that I did not think it appropriate for me to comment on a hypothetical offer and that I would respond only if an actual offer was made. While I did

not get the offer, I would make the same response again, because the question's implicit entrapment showed such a low level of professionalism that I questioned whether I wanted to join that department at all. What would our relations be once I was employed? What would the treatment of personnel be like, if this chair was willing to pose such a question even in the interview stage—when she presumably was trying to convince me of the department's merit as I was trying to convince the department of my own?[14]

In any event, unless the chair (or dean) raises the salary question, the candidate should just steer clear of it and, if it is raised, should be careful not to make statements that could preclude further consideration for the position. However, if a candidate has definite demands that must be met, it is only considerate for all involved that these be known—particularly at the advanced level, when spousal hire issues are involved. But the search at any level creates tensions between the personal and professional that may need open consideration. Still, what is considerate for all involved may not be prudent for the candidate: in the end, one does want to receive an offer and have the option then to make a careful decision according to one's professional *and* personal needs.

After one has returned home, the search moves into the final phase. (The negotiation is another subject altogether.)[15] I want to consider two aspects of this ultimate phase: how one copes with not receiving an offer and how one handles the decision not to accept an offer. Both situations can be excruciating, but for entirely different, almost opposite reasons. In the first case, after all the warmth and affirmation of a welcoming search committee on an agreeable campus, one must expect a chasm of silence to ensue, since the institution is in its most vulnerable phase of the search, trying to secure a prompt acceptance from its first candidate. If one hears nothing, whether from the lone campus visited or even from several, candidates must not assail themselves with self-doubt and anguish over possible mistakes made. In its decision the institution takes a number of factors into account, and sometimes the least important of these factors is the candidate's performance. As long as candidates remain satisfied with how they met different tests during the visit, the campus performance itself can be deemed a success, however the next phase unfolds, that is, the phase entirely beyond their control.[16]

The middle position of anguish occurs when one receives an offer from a less-than-favorite institution, all the more excruciating if one is waiting in vain for an offer from a preferred department. Here, candidates are free to act—to call the chair at the preferred school, to say that an offer was made, and to ask how the school wishes to proceed. If the preferred department does not make an offer, or if it already has offered the position to another candidate, then one can act decisively on the offer in hand. But one should not play games with schools—for example, extend to the maximum the waiting period allotted for a decision, especially if one has little intention of accepting the offer. There are other candidates waiting to hear from the same school, and the institution would like to move quickly and compassionately with them as well.

Finally, should one accept just any offer? The answer depends obviously on one's circumstances. When options are limited, the choice may already have been made: one needs to eat, to provide for one's family, and to advance in a career track however one can. In other cases, one might be tempted not to pursue the opportunities that a new position would present and stay instead in a location or situation that is well-known and comfortable, even if its possibilities for growth are limited. Perhaps the most valuable advice I received was from the department chair at the University of Illinois in 1980, Paul Gaeng. While I had an offer from another institution for a position as instructor, I was sorely tempted to stay at Illinois for another year as a GTA, mainly because the financial aid was there—and I was comfortable with how things worked in those surroundings. Gaeng suggested that I seek advice from friends and then sleep on the decision. But he also asked me to consider the paradoxical truism, worthy of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, that to get hired somewhere, one already has to have been hired somewhere. This truism may be a more complicated formulation of the simpler "bird in the hand" axiom. In the end, I opted for the unknown bird, became an instructor, and undertook an initial teaching experience that served me well.

However, circumstances permitting, the decision to decline an offer might be the best course, despite the difficulties that making such a decision may entail, especially in the case of an advanced position. Family considerations are often crucial here, and one is well advised to ask pointed questions about benefits, particularly retirement contributions and health care, before making any decision. Another important consideration is locale: if the spouse is not in academe but would seek employment, what are the opportunities? Are there opportunities for a spouse in academe, if not at the hiring institution, then nearby? Also, however

attractive the position might be, could you really live that far from a major city or a major source for your favorite cuisine, leisure activities, or getaway? Honest answers at this point, however painful, can save you from misery later. Last but not least are the relations with future colleagues, not just in the immediate department or program but also across the campus. Since we lack a crystal ball to predict the outcome of such decisions, one must be uncannily attuned to, for lack of a better term, the vibes one picks up during the campus visit and in other collegial contacts. The fundamental question really is, Does the new position truly offer an improvement to your current situation and future prospects? All that glitters in a new job may not be gold but just the dazzle of the different.

So, after the visit, what does one do about the contacts made on campus? If you have been offered and accepted the job, obviously, contacts now are more important than ever, since you will be initiating dialogue with new colleagues. If the search did not work out or if you declined to accept, there is no reason to cease contact with colleagues you met there. Some of my closest friendships in the profession commenced during campus visits, and several flourished precisely because I made clear that there were no hard feelings, that I understood the department's need to make its own decision. Whatever the postvisit outcome, the campus interview—poker game or bridge set, miniseries or survival adventure, dance performance or performance art—is one of the defining experiences of our profession. While a difficult rite of passage, the visit can, with proper perspective, also offer lessons to help create new moves and to assist others in joining the road show of academe.

Notes

[1]Material on campus interviewing is available in a number of sources, including Baron "Campus Visit" and "Job Search"; Dalton; Formo and Reed; Goldsmith, Komlos, and Gold 103–10; Heiberger and Vick; Showalter et al.; and Wilbur. The *Chronicle of Higher Education Career Network* is publicly accessible, without subscription, and provides weekly updates. On a pointedly lighter note, see Ms. Mentor, "What to Do" and "I'm Perfect." My thanks to Catherine Barrette, Les Essif, and Don Spinelli for their insightful comments on this essay.

[2]Baron likens the search to reality TV, with the campus visit constituting "the 36 hour miniseries" or, from the candidate's perspective, "*Survivor*, without the rats" ("Campus Visit").

[3]I say "any search," but I admit to knowing of and even having participated in at least one search in which a candidate, inside, was effectively selected in advance. I believe, however, that this is the exception rather than the rule. See Dowdall on internal candidates.

[4]Less usual is the invitation to campus extended before a candidate leaves the convention proper. As department chair, I was allowed by the campus search committee to invite any candidate immediately whom the screening interview team at the MLA convention unanimously favored. This permission was possible only because a member of our team was Associate Dean Donald Spinelli. This option is an excellent way to show commitment to a candidate from the start; to allow the candidate to begin at once to reflect on his or her research presentation on campus; and, most important, to give the candidate a sense of accomplishment while still at the convention. As a candidate myself, I received one invitation before leaving the convention hotel. That experience confirmed for me the value of this search strategy.

[5]I have found that the optimal order of information in one's planning is as follows: length of stay and available dates; travel (arrangements, payment method), lodgings on campus, airport pickup (or directions, if you should drive); schedule for the visit, with a list of all important appointments, institutional and social; and the circumstances of your main performance activities—that is, type of teaching demonstration (course level, textbook and pages, specific syllabus, ancillary materials, contact person and e-mail address for preparation questions) and public presentation (preferred language based on expected audience, length of talk, any limitations foreseen, such as in technology or a time limit in the conference room). See Heiberger and Vick 138–40 for a thorough checklist for the entire campus visit.

[6]One reason that it is good to know the itinerary, especially for advanced candidates, is to be able to request meetings that the organizers may have overlooked. One usually meets the dean or the dean's designee. But meeting the members of the specific language area (if such departmental organization exists) in which one will be working is important. Other individual meetings might be with the graduate director, the basic course coordinator(s), the foreign study program director, the language lab director, and colleagues in other departments with similar research interests.

[7]For the social occasions, such as receptions, lunches, and dinners, I recommend preparing a third genre of reply, one that is learned in a pithy fashion but also sociable. My behavior in various social situations—and I never seem to overcome it—is to launch into an involved reply to a seemingly serious question, only to be cut off by the usual movement of the reception, lunch, or dinner table: the waiter interrupting, another colleague joining the conversation in mid-reply. This genre of response must do double duty, at once nimble in its flexibility and weighty enough to provide a semblance of an adequate reply and reflect well on your ability to go with the flow.

[8]Goldsmith, Komlos, and Gold provide different perspectives on the importance of the scholarly talk during a campus interview (103–06); see also Heiberger and Vick 135–36. Even so simple a step as securing one's own bottle of spring water before a talk can make an enormous difference in reducing the stress level and in helping one feel somewhat in control of the event. It also helps to be able to swallow as one talks!

[9]Preparation and distribution of materials are essential for the scholarly presentation, especially when given in a foreign

language. Candidates should reflect on the kind of delivery they would want to hear in such a talk were the situation reversed, if the speaker were fluent in a language in which they were not. Many careful and considerate scholars prepare handouts with translations of key citations and even include lengthier citations in English if their density will present conceptual challenges.

[10]One must negotiate the fine line between employing enough of the target language and too much of it. In intermediate and advanced classes (should one ever get to teach the latter as a demo), there probably is no such thing as too much, but since most demo classes occur in the basic language sequence, the choice of proportion needs to be carefully calculated.

[11]I have come to understand through discussion with colleagues that we have perhaps placed too much emphasis on basic language teaching skills in our decision making. Yet I feel also that if we are to pay more than lip service to our commitment to excellence in teaching, these skills must be the sine qua non of a candidate's acceptability. Brilliance in research and scholarship does not a teacher make.

[12]Clothing and grooming issues, though separate from linguistic matters, are nonetheless closely related as modes of self-expression. Conservative but comfortable is the rule of thumb. If candidates feel the need to make a bold sartorial or grooming statement during the campus interview, then so be it, but they must accept the outcome stoically. There is no obligation on the candidate's part to take a truth-at-all-costs approach in this matter, at least not during the campus visit. Once one has successfully secured a full-time position, the new colleagues will have ample time to learn the fine points of cowboy boots, piercings, four-day beard, and other forms of accessorizing that complete one's lifestyle manifesto. See Schneider; Goldsmith, Komlos, and Gold 92–93, 108–09; although Papp's observations relate specifically to the screening interview (48–49), they apply to the campus visit as well.

[13]The flip side of this coin is the pressure on a candidate who is a native language speaker. A frequent demand in a department is for this person to serve as a resident native informant for all things culture- and language-related. The need to be diplomatic and open to such requests comes not just in the campus interview but also when one is hired and installed in the new department. Scrutiny during the campus interview, then, may focus not only on how well the candidate speaks the language but also on how well, once hired, he or she will function in the informant role.

[14]I must admit that this exchange occurred in the context of an advanced-level search, at which point I had tenure and therefore the luxury to stay where I already was teaching. This luxury would not be available to a candidate without tenure who privately took issue with the chair's actions, but also needed the employment, whatever the subsequent treatment might be.

[15]Smith and Wilbur each offer some advice on negotiations and closure of the search, and Heiberger and Vick devote a chapter to offers and negotiations.

[16]On being rejected, see Pannapacker; Heiberberger and Vick.

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