

Learning Languages

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning

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Learning Languages: The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning is the official publication of NNELL. It serves the profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of languages. The journal reflects NNELL's commitment to promoting opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own. See the inside of the back cover for more information on NNELL.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, both practical and scholarly articles are published. Practical articles describe innovative approaches to teaching and the administration of effective language programs for children. Scholarly articles report on original research and cite both current research and theory as a basis for making recommendations for practice. Scholarly articles are refereed, i.e., reviewed anonymously by at least three readers. Readers include members of the NNELL executive board, the editorial advisory board, and invited guest reviewers who have expertise in the area. Refereed articles are identified as such in the journal. Write to the editor at the address below to request a copy of author guidelines for preparing articles.

Submissions: Deadlines are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1. Articles, classroom activities, and materials offered for review may be submitted to the appropriate contributing editor (see below). Send announcements, conference information, and original children's work (such as line drawings, short stories, and poems) to the editor. Children's work needs to be accompanied by written permission from the child's parent or guardian and must include the child's name, age, school, and the teacher's name, address, and telephone (add fax and e-mail address, if available).

Submit a favorite classroom activity for the "Activities for Your Classroom" section by sending a description of the activity that includes title, objective, materials, and procedure. Include pictures or drawings as illustration, if available. Send with your name, address, and phone number to the Classroom Activities editor listed below.

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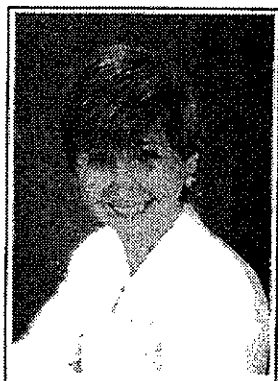
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Notes from the President



We have accomplished many goals because of your "can do" attitudes and tireless efforts.

Although we are in the fall of the year, NNELL continues to spring forward with accomplishments, membership, and enthusiasm. We have begun the school year and are eagerly looking forward to our annual meeting in Philadelphia on November 22. This issue of *Learning Languages* reflects the professional pride, excitement, and forward looking attitude of NNELL's 800 members who make us strong.

The NNELL "to do" list has four important items that we all need to note:

- **Membership renewal.** NNELL's membership and voice have grown enormously over the years. Renew your membership and *reach out to at least one other colleague to encourage him or her to join us as we seek ways to improve and enrich K-8 education.*
- **Annual meeting, November 22, Philadelphia.** We know that everyone cannot attend, but questions, suggestions, and requests can be sent directly to me, any of the officers, or your state and regional representatives. There is an updated list of state and regional representative in this volume and they are waiting to hear from you.
- **NNELL Exhibit.** We will have a booth in the Exhibit Hall and we hope that you will stop by.
- **FLES Swapshop Breakfast Meeting on November 23.** This event during the ACTFL Conference in Philadelphia planned by Mary Lynn Redmond and Patti Ryerson will feature opportunities

to network and view materials from publishers and distributors who specialize in K-8 materials.

Congratulations are in order to several outstanding NNELL members. Senator Paul Simon has been, and will continue to be, a tireless advocate for early language learning. We celebrate his retirement and know that he will continue to work for increased opportunities for foreign languages. We congratulate Martie Semmer as recipient of the ACTFL Award for her model work to increase community interest in foreign languages. And last, but not least, we welcome and congratulate Christy Brown, NNELL's newly elected Second Vice President.

As I get ready to pass the presidential gavel to Mary Lynn Redmond, 1996-1997 NNELL President, I would like to thank you all—too numerous to mention individually—for your hard work and dedication. We have accomplished many goals because of your "can do" attitudes and tireless efforts.

There is still much to be done and I look forward to working with Mary Lynn as she leads us into our tenth anniversary year. We are growing in numbers and influence, and with your continued membership and involvement, NNELL's voice will continue to advocate early language learning for all children.

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Minneapolis and Brittany: Children Bridge Geographical and Social Differences through Technology

Refereed Article

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The new foreign language standards, developed from input from foreign language teachers around the country, represent the recent focus on teaching communication in a cultural context.

Learning scenarios included with the National Standards describe several lessons that use computer-mediated communication (CMC), the process by which people send and receive information using a networked computer. CMC serves as a medium for students to contact other students and retrieve information from the target country. The standards suggest, therefore, that the technology of CMC is useful in meeting foreign language goals. This article presents examples of how CMC affects language learning and describes a successful CMC project carried out by a school in Minnesota and a school in France.

Use of Computer-mediated Communication in Language Learning

CMC, accessing information and communicating with others over a computer network, can take place over a local-area-network (LAN), computers linked together locally in a computer lab, or a wide-area-network

(WAN), computers linked to other computers around the world, such as the Internet. Activities that can be carried out over a LAN or WAN include: 1) exchanging electronic mail (e-mail) messages sent from one computer to another computer to be read at a later time; 2) simultaneous "chat" or teleconferences where messages are exchanged in real time; and 3) use of electronic bulletin boards where all participants' messages are posted for everyone to read or respond to at leisure.

E-mail use has been found to be a powerful teaching tool that enables students to increase their written communication skills (Golden, Beauclair & Sussman, 1992; Riel, 1991-92). Several studies that evaluated students' messages exchanged over a LAN and WAN (Golden et al. 1992; Riel, 1991-92) indicated that students wrote more accurately in an authentic situation where they had the opportunity to write to a real audience. Messages written by students to be sent over a network to a real person tended to have fewer mistakes (Riel, 1991-92) and more clearly stated ideas (Moore, 1991) than those submitted to an instructor to be evaluated for grammatical errors. Increased communication in a foreign language

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was also found to be a result of network use (Cononelos & Oliva, 1993; Beauvois, 1992; Kern, 1995).

An electronic network activity must have a solid structural design to be successful. The director of the activity must clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the participants: who is participating, the purpose of the group task, and who will have access to the information exchanged. The student will need an incentive, a required assignment to encourage regular use of the network (Golden et al., 1992).

Stapleton, Levin, and Waugh (1992) describe two types of factors of structured network activities—simple and complex—that lead to successful educational telecommunications activities. The simple activities required few responses and tasks from the participants, such as responding to a prompt, or questionnaire. The complex structured activities were those that required a longer period of time to complete and involved a particular project or goal.

A computer network is useful to foreign language educators for more than an improvement of language skills. Students using a WAN are able to connect with people around the world and to have access to doorways to other cultures. Damarin (1990) asks us to rethink educational technology to emphasize the "interconnectedness of learning and lived experience, and nurturance of the learner as a real live gendered individual person..." (p. 183).

Damarin would clearly applaud the communication exchange over a computer network between a middle school in Minneapolis, Minnesota and an elementary school in Brest, France that resulted in an exploration of two distinct cultures.

Description of a Computer-Mediated Communications Project

Mireille Bardy, a junior high French teacher from Breck School in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Michel Malgorn, who taught the *cours moyen* (equivalent to fourth and fifth grades) at Paul Dukas School, Brest, France, directed their students in a two-year e-mail exchange that resulted in the production of a student-written bilingual, multicultural play. The data used to describe the project includes 396 e-mail messages exchanged between teachers and students, captured text from two teleconferences,¹ documents prepared by Bardy for her school, and personal contact with Bardy by the author. (Note: E-mail messages presented in this account were translated from French by the author unless indicated otherwise.)

Getting Started

The e-mail exchange between 23 seventh grade students from Breck School and 22 *cours moyen* students from Paul Dukas School began in October 1991. Both schools used the French Minitel service EDUTEL.² The schools were paired through the French Consulate's office in San Francisco. In the beginning, Bardy was doubtful whether pairing of the two schools could succeed because the ages and backgrounds of the students were so different. Most of the Minneapolis students, 12 and 13 years old, came from middle and upper income backgrounds, while the students from Brest, 9 through 11 years old, were primarily from lower income immigrant families. Bardy, described the Brest school in a memo to her administration:

[About half] of Paul Dukas students are of "Maghrebine" extraction, which is Arabic from the former

French colonies in North Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Parents, when they are employed, do blue collar types of jobs. As in many such places in the world, there is a lot of unemployment. The other students are French, some Portuguese. Beyond race and cultural background, the common heritage of the children at Keredern (a low-income neighborhood in Brest) seems to be poverty. However, there is a way out when there is support from families, because of the school and the social services. The experience of some of these children could be compared to the experience of Hmong children in the Twin Cities, or Asian refugees who do succeed when given chances. Unfortunately, not all children receive support from their families who have their share of socioeconomic difficulties. A lot of the children at Paul Dukas come from "social cases" families where alcoholism, drugs, and abuse are rampant. (1992, p.2)

Although there were differences in the children's ages and backgrounds, Bardy and Malgorn decided to proceed with the communication exchange because of their strong desire to offer their students an opportunity to write regularly to a foreign school. During their two-year correspondence, the schools exchanged e-mail messages almost daily and participated in five teleconferences.³ Teachers and students supplemented on-line activities with faxed messages, mailed letters, documents, and videotapes.

Year One

Messages exchanged by Bardy and Malgorn were the major source for the description of the first year of

the exchange. Most of their initial messages discussed the cost of maintaining the exchange. Bardy was required to find funding for using the Minitel service (approximately \$15/hr). Malgorn's Minitel use was funded by the French government. Both teachers expressed their students' excitement as they began to learn about each other. Student lifestyles slowly unfolded as the children described their daily activities to their keypals.⁴ When Breck students explained what they did for Halloween, Paul Dukas students replied with this description of *La Toussaint*, All Saints Day:

We don't celebrate Halloween. But for "La Toussaint" we go to the cemetery to put flowers on the family tombs. It is really a sad holiday in Bretagne. (Paul Dukas students, October 22, 1991)

During the beginning of the first year, Bardy and Malgorn explored directions for the exchange between their students. Bardy wrote to Malgorn:

I had long, sometimes magical, sometimes deceiving, sometimes exciting discussions with my seventh graders about the exchange and where they would like it to go. They spoke about culture(s), how to get to know each other, what they had to offer, what they wanted to receive. Here are some of the conclusions: There is definitely a group of boys who are interested in sports and who would like to talk sports with your students. All of them would like to know each other more thoroughly. They are beginning to guess that France is not only castles, berets, and croissants and they have a lot of stereotypes.

During their two-year correspondence, the schools exchanged e-mail messages almost daily and participated in five teleconferences.

*... the content
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from both sides
of the Atlantic
were indistin-
guishable from
each other,
except for the
students'
names.*

They have hardly begun to guess that the U.S. is not the only country to have more than one culture. They don't yet realize that some of your students are not baguettes and croissants. . . . (Bardy, November 11, 1991)

The teachers typed students' messages, as written, to reduce time spent on-line. Messages were short and simple in the beginning, and most, from both schools, were in French. Students identified themselves, giving their ages and interests. It is interesting to note that the content of messages from both sides of the Atlantic were indistinguishable from each other, except for the students' names. Girls tended to write about friends, family, pets, school subjects, sports, and activities. The boys wrote about sports, cars, foods, family, and pets. Although students were from different cultural and economic backgrounds, they were all interested in rock music and video games. They were also curious about life, weather, and activities in the other city. For example, Brest students wanted to hear everything about the northern wilderness winter. Malgorn wrote to Bardy following a description of a Minneapolis winter:

It is really true that you excite our jealousy with your enticing descriptions of Minnesota in winter. If that continues we will all arrive there with our skis and cameras. But . . . wait for the month of May and we will take you on picnics on our beaches. (Malgorn, November 25, 1991)

After Breck students received a much awaited package from Brest containing student pictures and letters, Bardy wrote to Malgorn:

We must not forget that the kids are kids before being a certain nationality. It is heart warming to see that. (Bardy, December 10, 1991)

When Brest students learned that Minneapolis students had watched their video,⁵ Malgorn wrote to Bardy:

We are waiting. We are waiting to see your faces on the screen. When they knew that they were watched by you and that their video pleased you, you should have seen their eyes. This is extraordinary. (Malgorn, January 8, 1992)

By the end of January, 1992, a plan was beginning to crystallize into a project that would involve and reflect students from both schools. Bardy described her vision of the project in an e-mail message to Malgorn:

Now is the time to dream and to follow the dreams. . . . After the initial hello/how are you/good-bye messages, the students. . . have gotten involved in an exchange about their own cultures and a reflection on what culture means. They discovered that both of their classes do not represent really one given culture but more some kind of a "salad bowl"—in the words of Michel—where each culture contributes to the life of the whole, where each individual reflects on her/his own cultural background and shares it with others who do not know it. The children, quite spontaneously, and with almost no given direction from the teachers, have genuinely discovered their own vast cultural wealth and are

enthusiastic about learning from each other. As many cultures are represented in each class, this experience could become a microcosm of a more global experience. It is especially exciting as it is inspired, run, and directed by the children themselves. (Bardy, February 2, 1992, message originally in English)

On March 6, 1992, the students participated in their first teleconference. The teleconference required the schools to choose a date and hour when they could be on-line at the same time. During the teleconference, participants were able to see all questions, answers, and comments written on the screen the moment they were submitted. The following are some of the questions Paul Dukas students asked the Breck students to prepare responses to before their teleconference:

What do you like best, Adidas?
Reebok?
Do you have school festivals?
Do you have foreign
neighborhoods in your city?
Do you have Mardi-Gras?
Guess who has the bad ear in
CM (*cours moyen*) ?
Do you have fights?
Over what?
Do you have fun games at
schools?
Do you have animals at
school?
Is the ice castle melted?
Do you have accidents during
the snow?
What is Mrs. Bardy like? (Paul
Dukas students, May 5, 1992)

In addition to exchanging questions and answers, the idea of preparing a bilingual play, to be written cooperatively by the students of

Minneapolis and Brest, began to evolve. The plans for the project were discussed on-line during the second half of the first year. Details of the project were finalized that summer when both teachers were able to meet for the first time at a conference in Strasbourg, France, where they presented a report on their exchange.

Year Two

The teachers planned that the bilingual play would be jointly written by their students using e-mail, letters, and videos. The central theme of the play was the experiences of a French immigrant who moved from France to Minnesota. The students in Brest wrote and produced the portion that took place in France, while the students in Minneapolis were responsible for the portion that took place in Canada and the U.S. Each portion was partially written in French and partially in English.

Bardy described the play in a communication to her school administration to obtain financial support:

The play, as a work of art, will be a medium used to give a voice to children in both schools. A voice to express what they have shared together about their own culture, and the discovery and sharing of each other's cultures, through their Minitel correspondence. Both groups contain members who have experienced uprooting, change of cultures, growing up in conflicting cultures, confused feelings about country/culture of origin, and country/culture they live in. Both groups are made of children from very diversified backgrounds. The children have initiated this sharing practically on their own, without a specific direction given by the teachers. Their genuine exchanges have left

Their genuine exchanges have left their teachers with feelings of [awe] and excitement and the strong desire to give them a voice.

their teachers with feelings of [awe] and excitement and the strong desire to give them a voice. (Bardy, 1993, p. 1)

Brest students described to Minneapolis students how they believed the plot should be designed:

Hello. How are you in Minneapolis? Here is our outline of the play:
Hervé Quemeneur and Françoise Joseph are married.
Their life.
Their meeting.
Their child, François.
François is poor. He goes to Brest and takes the boat. He crosses the Atlantic.
He arrives at Quebec.
Life in Canada, that's the part you play.
Afterwards, we will do something about everyone's life. Is that okay?
On Saturday we are going to learn how to play baseball. That's neat. (Paul Dukas students, November 18, 1992)

Several scenes in the play reflected the students' own lives.

According to Bardy (personal communication, December 1994), François Quémeneur, son of Hervé and Françoise, actually did emigrate from Brittany to Canada between 1665 and 1700. However, that is where reality ended and creativity began. Several scenes in the play reflected the students' own lives. A scene where François was required to pass customs, for example, was based on the experiences of Maghrebine families entering France.

Bardy's students wrote their part of the play in cooperative groups. Also used in the process were peer editing, individual journaling, and the reading of texts such as diaries and poetry. To avoid copyright issues, the music for the play was written by the

students, with the support of musically competent adults, or it came from the French or U.S. public domain (Bardy, 1993). Bardy's students decided to present their part of the play as a video. It was filmed at Murphy's Landing, a historical Minneapolis site. The video included student-written lyrics and choreography. The video, lasting 12 minutes, required 40 to 50 hours of editing (Bardy, 1996).

In order to complete the project, Bardy (personal communication, December, 1994) integrated the project into her regular curriculum. The writing of the play and the research and collaboration with the Paul Dukas students replaced or complemented students' reading, writing, and cultural activities. Some of the play was rehearsed as an in-class activity. Other aspects of the project replaced participation in the French Contest, in which students would normally have participated. Each school was responsible for providing costumes and props for their portion of the play.

The grand finale of the computer-mediated exchange came when the two groups of students actually got to meet each other. Malgorn contacted local, regional, and national government agencies to raise money to finance his students' and six chaperones' travel expenses to Minnesota. Once in Minneapolis, they stayed with families of Breck students. The following message sent April 6, 1993 from Breck to Paul Dukas expresses the excitement of the upcoming meeting between the two groups of students:

We
are
definitely
waiting
for
You You You You You You

Youpee Youpee Youpee
Youpee Youpee. (Breck students,
April 6, 1993, message sent in
English)

The students' visit lasted 14 days. During that time they visited Breck school and rehearsed their play. The play was presented at Breck School, Minneapolis, Minnesota, on April 15, 1993, to an audience of 150 adults and students. According to Bardy (personal communication, April 1996), the students' visit was a wonderful educational, cultural, and emotional experience. Afterwards, at the airport, there were many tears as the French students departed. After his visit to Minnesota, a Paul Dukas student wrote to his friends at Breck School during their last teleconference.

Good bye.
You offered us a super
adventure
that we will never forget.
Send us a photo of the group.
We will remember you even when
we are 80 years old. (Teleconfer-
ence, May 28, 1993)

For a variety of reasons, the students did not remain in regular, organized e-mail contact with each other after the exchange. Yet, in the summer of 1996, three years later, six Minnesota students who participated in the project traveled for the first time to France. They spent a week in Brest where they became reacquainted with some of the students formerly from Paul Dukas School (Bardy, 1996):

Discussion and Conclusions

The electronic exchange between Breck and Paul Dukas schools can be described as a very effective networking activity. Bardy and Malgorn found that student written

language production improved as students participated in the e-mail exchange. The e-mail messages showed an increased use of the target language from the beginning of the activity to the end by both schools. The students' messages also were longer at the end of the exchange. Bardy (personal communication, December 1994) remarked that the quality of the children's writing increased dramatically during the two years. Malgorn wrote in an e-mail message at the beginning of the exchange that his students, who usually wrote very little, showed a much stronger interest in writing to their electronic pen pals. Bardy and Malgorn's informal findings support those of previous studies (Golden et al., 1992; Riel, 1991-92; Moore, 1991; Connelos & Oliva, 1993).

When Breck and Paul Dukas schools began the e-mail exchange, neither teacher had a definite plan as to how it would proceed. Bardy and Malgorn were both new to using a computer network with their students. Exchanges began around small activities like student introductions and questions about the other school's city. The schools also exchanged traditional letters and student videos. According to Bardy (personal communication, December 1994), the exchange became an integral part of each day's class, with discussions on what the Paul Dukas students would be doing and what they might think about what was being taught.

The final joint project, the production of the bilingual play written and presented by the students from both schools, was a very successful aspect of the exchange. The play fits the description by Stapleton et al. (1992) of a complex structured activity. This particular activity, however, was more than a motivator for students to correspond. It provided students with a vehicle to

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dramatically
during the two
years.*

share themselves, their cultures, and their similarities and differences.

The exchange between Bardy and Malgorn's students and the creation and production of their bilingual play is an excellent example of a project that meets the five foreign language goals of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities (National Standards, 1996). Breck and Paul Dukas students communicated with students from another culture to produce and present a play that reflected themselves and their way of life (Goal 1, Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3). The bilingual play, entirely written by the students, reflected cultures of the United States and France, and also the individual cultures of the students involved (Goal 2, Standards 2.1, 2.2, Goal 4, Standards 4.1, 4.2). The production of the play required students from both schools to work together to integrate costumes, music, and stage settings (Goal 3, Standards 3.1, 3.2, Goal 5, Standard 5.1).

In conclusion, it should be stressed that Bardy and Malgorn were not passive facilitators. Bardy and Malgorn spent an extraordinary amount of personal time and energy from their first debate about whether to begin an exchange between students of such diverse backgrounds to the final production of the bilingual, multicultural play. They created an international classroom that encouraged student communication in the target language. They nurtured in their students an appreciation of differences and similarities in children from other cultures.

It was the power of computer-mediated communication and the energy and imagination of two remarkable educators that allowed Breck and Paul Dukas students to

bridge geographical and social differences.

Notes

¹ Teleconference: a text exchange where two or more parties are on-line at the same time. Sending and receiving messages is instantaneous, and all parties are able to read messages sent and received on one screen.

² The term "Minitel" originated as the name of a computer terminal used to access French data services. Minitel now represents the services in videotext format that are accessed. This form of telecommunications requires a computer, a modem, and telecommunications software or a Minitel terminal. The user has access to on-screen information provided by a variety of services. Because of its graphic interface, it is very easy to use. EDUTEL is a French videotext service operated by the French government for educational purposes.

³ For a teleconference both schools were on-line at the same time, usually at 7:30 a.m. for Minneapolis students and 2:30 p.m. for Paul Dukas students.

⁴ Keypals are pen pals over a computer network.

⁵ Breck school had the video equipment to translate to and from the French standard.

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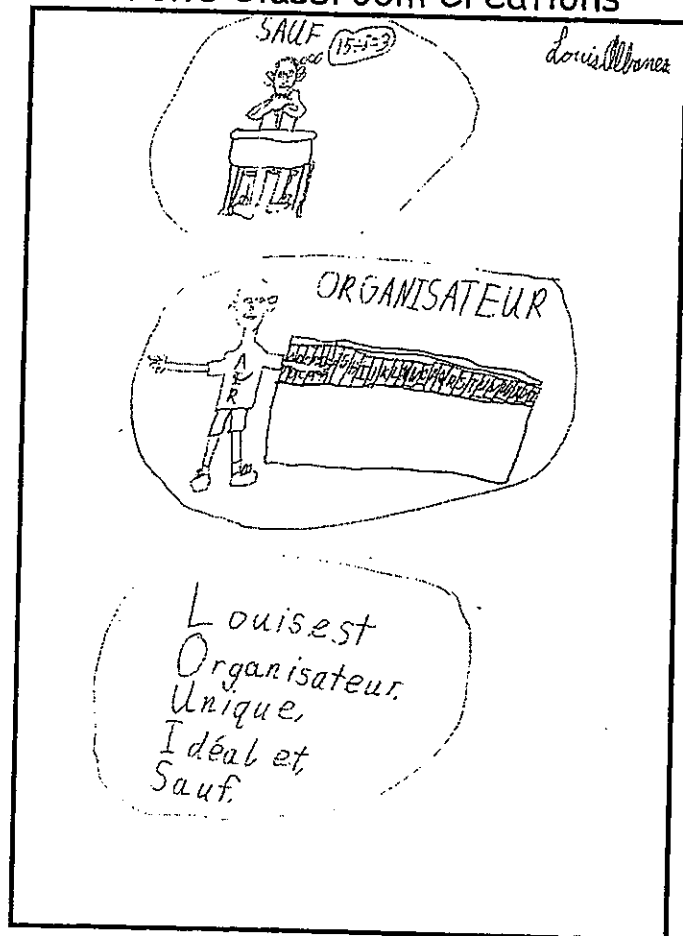
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Children's Classroom Creations



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Activities for Your Classroom

— ¡Eh! ¡Boogy, Boogy! —

An Action Song From Spain

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Objective:

Students respond physically to oral commands as they sing the action song, ¡Eh! ¡Boogy, Boogy! to the tune of the Hokey Pokey (as learned from Silvia Lopez of Barcelona, Spain).

Materials:

- an overhead transparency or a handout with the words of the song in Spanish
- a visual of the body with the body parts numbered in the order in which they are used in the song
- an audio or videotape for which you ask native speakers to sing and move to the song (optional)

Song:

¡Eh! ¡Boogy, Boogy!
¡Eh! ¡Boogy, Boogy! ¡Eh!
¡Eh! ¡Boogy, Boogy! ¡Eh!
Con el brazo izquierdo adentro
(With the left arm in)
Con el brazo izquierdo afuera
(With the left arm out)
Con el brazo izquierdo adentro
(With the left arm in)
Y lo hacemos rodar.
(And we turn it around.)
Bailamos Boogy, Boogy.
(We dance the Boogy, Boogy.)
Media vuelta ya. (Turn around now.)
Volvemos a empezar.
(We return to the beginning.)

Substitute the following expressions one by one for the underlined phrase in the song:

con el brazo izquierdo/derecho
(with the left/right arm)
con el pie izquierdo/derecho
(with the left/right foot)
con la pierna izquierda/derecha
(with the left/right leg)
con la mano izquierda/derecha
(with the left/right hand)
con la cabeza (with the head)
con los ojos (with the eyes)
con la espalda (with the back)
con el trasero (with the backside)

Procedure:

Have students stand in a circle. Sing or play the tape and demonstrate the actions; have students imitate the actions. Reinforce the new vocabulary by showing a visual of the body with the body parts numbered in the order in which they are used in the song, or show students the words on an overhead transparency or handout. Students listen, perform actions, and finally sing along. Next, isolate actions, such as, *con la mano adentro* or *media vuelta ya* in order to reinforce new vocabulary.

Comprehension Checks:

- Cover up key words on the overhead transparency and ask

students to provide the target language word.

- Create a pocket chart with sentence strips and turn over one in the series or mix up the order and have students produce the text of the song in the correct sequence.

Cultural Integration:

Introduce idiomatic expressions which incorporate a body part (see below). Have students create a visual to illustrate an expression. The visuals may later be used in guessing games or can be displayed on an attractive bulletin board about Hispanic cultures.

1. *Tiene más cara que espalda.*
2. *Entré con el pie derecho.*
3. *¡Estoy hasta las narices!*
4. *¡Qué cabeza más dura!*
5. *No tener pelos en la lengua.*
6. *Me costó un ojo de la cara.*
7. *Estás tomando el pelo.*

Teach these proverbs or sayings:

En boca cerrada no entran moscas.

Más vale pájaro en mano que cien volando.

Teach the expression and gesture:

¡Ojo! (if said while pointing to the eye means "careful!")

Assessment:

1. Do students place the appropriate body part in the circle while performing the action song?
2. Can students indicate the appropriate body part when playing "Simon Says"?
3. Can students match the spoken or written word with a visual of a body part?

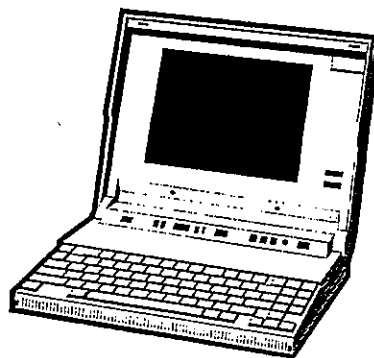
Florida NNELL News

Congratulations to Sue Bizerra (NNELL Florida State Representative) and Carine Feyten (NNELL Southern Regional Representative) who have put together a wonderful two-page newsletter "Florida NNELL News."

The newsletter includes the NNELL goals; provides information on what Florida NNELL will be doing this year, and includes some useful facts written by Mary Lynn Redmond on how to become an informed advocate for elementary school foreign language.

Plans are to publish this mini-newsletter three times a year.

If you are interested in receiving a copy, write to Sue Bizerra, 3410 Flamingo Lane, Mulberry, FL 33860.



Immersion List On the Web

The list of total and partial immersion language programs in the U.S., which is compiled every two years by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), is now available on the World Wide Web.

The address is: <http://www.cal.org/cal/db/immerse/summary.htm>

Legends of Mexico:

A New Publication for Elementary Teachers

The goal was not only to direct the story to the appropriate age level, but also to learn how to tell a good story.

The Legends of Mexico Program at the University of Cincinnati is offering a 240-page manual containing 26 legends and accompanying activities for teaching language and culture to learners of Spanish. The units are designed for children and adolescents grades K-8, but are easily adaptable for older learners as well.

The Legends of Mexico program is a two-year institute funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the University of Cincinnati, with additional support from the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, and the Central States Conference. The project directors are Susan Bacon at the University of Cincinnati and Nancy Humbach at Miami University (Ohio).

In the summer of 1995, 25 teachers of Spanish, grades K-8 from Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky participated in the five-week summer institute on Mexican legends. Participants spent one week working with Mary Ann Brewer (bilingual storyteller), Mari Haas (expert in children's literature), and the co-directors to learn ways to make Mexican legends comprehensible to children. The goal was not only to direct the story to the appropriate age level, but also to learn how to tell a good story.

The following four weeks were spent in Puebla, Mexico with Bacon, Humbach, and professors Aitor Bikandi-Mejias (Spanish language), and Francisco Jimenez (scholar of

Mexican civilization and writer of stories in Spanish for children). They focused on how the legends were expressed orally and in written form, how they reflected Mexican history and civilization, and how they could be used as a vehicle for teaching language, culture, and content.

Each participant chose a legend, provided its socio-historical context, and prepared supporting activities and materials to teach content (such as mathematics, social studies, music, language arts) through the legend. All of the units include a web, pre-teaching, comprehension, and extension activities.

The units have been bound into a 240-page manual which the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) will include in its national data base. In addition, copies of the manual are being offered free of charge (including postage) to the first 100 teachers who request them. Additional copies will be made available at cost (\$15.00).

Please submit requests for a copy of the units in writing (letter, fax, or e-mail). Include the following information: your name, school, subject and grades taught, telephone, and mailing address.

Send requests to: Susan M. Bacon, NEH/UC Legends of Mexico, Department of Romance Languages & Literatures, University of Cincinnati; PO Box 210377, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0377; Fax: 513-556-2577; E-mail: susan.bacon@uc.edu

Student Reasons for Studying Language: Implications for Program Planning and Development

Refereed Article

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Recent initiatives for restructuring the study of foreign languages in schools have called for earlier and longer sequences of learning within the framework of a K-12 education (National Standards, 1996). In the 1995 volume of the ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series, Rosenbusch (1995) lists a number of national organizations and commissions that have articulated such recommendations. These groups include, among others, the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Governors' Association, the Joint National Committee for Languages, and the House/Senate International Education Study Group. This restructuring will call for innovative policy and planning decisions as school districts attempt to incorporate past or additional language offerings into newer sequences of instruction.

Currently, the majority of American public school students begin a sequence of formal study of a foreign language at the ninth grade level when they experience transition between schools (from junior high schools or middle schools to the high school) (Lambert, 1994). When these students are offered a choice of

several foreign languages, many factors contribute to their final decision to elect to study one language over another. Knowledge gained about the reasons for these choices will inform school districts striving to increase sequence length, introduce new languages into the school system, and increase enrollment parity among languages offered.

This article will discuss findings from a study of students' choices of foreign language across four school districts differing in their approaches to pre-high school foreign language instruction. First, a review of related literature provides a background for this study and frames the main issues to be addressed. Second, a description of the study provides relevant information on the school districts, the subjects, and the instrument utilized to address these issues. Finally, the results of the study are presented as well as a discussion of the implications for foreign language program development and continued related research.

Why Students Choose to Study Foreign Languages: Background of the Study

Recent research provides potentially conflicting implications for

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foreign language program development. Students indicate that the study of a foreign language is commonly viewed as a means for fulfilling academic requirements. Secondary school students have consistently cited the need to satisfy future college requirements while still in high school or imposed high school requirements across studies (Reinert, 1970; Love, 1988; Speiller, 1988; Ramage, 1990; Minert, 1991 and 1992; Watzke, 1993). To a lesser degree than requirements, Minert (1991 and 1992), Speiller (1988), and Ramage (1990) found that students also cited their personal desire to learn to speak a foreign language well to communicate with people in a target language as a reason for study of this subject.

Underlying the motivation for foreign language study as a subject are students' rationale for the choice of one language over another. Students have cited an interest in the culture of the language when asked to identify reasons for specifically studying French and Spanish (Ramage, 1990), German (Minert, 1992), and Japanese (Jorden and Lambert, 1991). Additional motivators influencing choice of a specific foreign language have included the desire to travel to the target culture, future job or career goals, advice from parents or siblings, and the relative ease associated with learning specific languages (Minert, 1992; Ramage, 1990; Speiller, 1988; Watzke, 1993).

In order to inform program development, researchers have also investigated why students avoid or discontinue language study. Studies of student avoidance and attrition have indicated that students' perception of the difficulty of a particular language may influence their choice and decision to continue language study (Pederson, 1993; Ramage, 1990; Watzke, 1993). In

contrast, some students find an appealing challenge in the perceived difficulty of the foreign language and the uniqueness of the culture and elect to study it for these reasons (Jorden and Lambert, 1994; Watzke, 1993).

Purpose of this Study

The origins of these conflicting attitudes may be a matter of concern to school districts attempting to increase enrollments for all languages offered and to present the study of each language as an accessible choice of study for learners of all ability levels. Most importantly, if we are to promote the study of a variety of foreign languages early in the academic sequence, then we must have the ability to identify and address deterrents which may impede or limit student choice.

This study was designed to identify reasons for student choice in foreign language study at the eighth to ninth grade level of transition and to discuss issues relevant to K-12 policy and planning decisions. The authors were interested in collecting student responses to survey items after eighth graders had completed the registration process for their first year of high school study for the following year.

More specifically, the question explored in this study was: what reasons do students give for choosing to study a foreign language?

Methodology

Selected School Districts

Four Iowa school districts were identified for this study. Each district provides instruction in a less-commonly-taught language that was added to an established foreign language program. The school districts represent a broad range of pre-high school foreign language

course offerings and provide a unique setting for the illumination and discussion of potential issues in program development. A summary of the foreign language program sequence for each school district is included here.

The program sequences ranged from no instruction of foreign languages before ninth grade, to sequential instruction of select languages beginning in elementary or middle school, with the opportunity to continue the study of these languages, and an additional language, at the high school level. Table 1 provides an overview of the foreign language program sequences in each of the four school districts.

School District One (SD1) does not offer foreign language study at the pre-high school level. The high school offers an elective foreign language program with course levels I through IV available in each of four languages: French, German, Russian, Spanish. The school district has one high school (1,300 students) and two middle schools (combined enrollment: 1,221 students, grades 6, 7, and 8).

School District Two (SD2) has a required exploratory foreign language program for all eighth grade students which provides four weeks of instruction in each of three languages: French, Japanese, Spanish. These same languages are taught as electives at the high school, with course levels I through IV available in each language. This school district is the smallest one included in the study with one high school (950 students) and one junior high school (500 students, grades 7 and 8).

School District Three (SD3) has a three-year required elementary school foreign language program in which all students in grades four, five, and six receive one year of instruction in each of three languages: French, German, Spanish. Elective, sequential foreign

language study in those three languages begins in the junior high, with the seventh and eighth grade program corresponding to the first year of high school study. An additional four years of study (Levels II through V) are offered at the high school. An elective program in Japanese is also provided, beginning with a one-trimester exploratory course for eighth-graders and Level I through IV courses at the high school. Thus, students may enter a formal sequence of study in French, German or Spanish in seventh grade but cannot enter the formal sequence of Japanese until ninth grade. It is the largest school district included in the study with two high schools (2,500 combined enrollment) and two junior high schools (1,550 combined enrollment, grades 7 and 8).

School District Four (SD4) has a required exploratory foreign language program for seventh grade students. These students receive four weeks of instruction in each of four languages: French, German, Latin, Spanish. The eighth grade students may elect to take a one-year course in one of three languages: French, German, Spanish. The eighth grade foreign language course corresponds to one year of high school study. Those three languages continue with four additional years of study (Levels II through V) available at the high school. Four years of study of Japanese and Latin (Levels I through IV) are also available at the high school. Japanese is not included in the junior high exploratory or sequential foreign language programs. The district has one high school (1,500 students) and one middle school (1,131 students, grades 6, 7 and 8).

Subjects

The subjects chosen for this study were all eighth grade students. They

The [selected] school districts . . . provide a unique setting for the illumination and discussion of potential issues in program development.

The researchers were particularly interested in examining responses from schools with a variety of foreign language sequences and requirements.

ranged in age from 13 to 15 years of age. Students in each of the four school districts completed surveys during the final weeks of the 1993-1994 school year after they had finished registration for ninth grade at the high school level for the following year. The surveys were completed during their language arts classes. In total, 1,716 survey instruments were distributed across the four districts. (See Table 2.)

The Survey Instrument

Because this study's primary purpose was to identify issues for programmatic policy and planning decisions, the survey instrument needed to not only focus on the main reasons for student choices, but also provide a range within these main reasons which moved beyond utilitarian goals to encompass interests and prior exposure.

Response items provided on the survey were selected based on the research literature. They included items addressing the themes of utilitarian reasons, the unique aspects of specific languages, and avoidance and continuance. The integration of these themes provided 11 response items from which students were asked to indicate their top three choices:

- It will be an easy language to learn.
- It would be academically challenging to study this language.
- I am interested in the culture of the country.
- Studying this language will help in a future job or career.
- The following people advised me to study this language: parent(s), counselor(s), friends, brothers or sisters.

- I know someone who speaks this language.
- I have traveled to a country where this language is spoken.
- Future college requirements for foreign language study.
- I heard positive comments about the high school teacher of the language.
- The language is different, unusual, or uncommon.
- I am already studying this language in junior high and I want to continue studying it in high school.
- Other (write in reason) _____

The students were first asked to indicate whether they were currently studying a foreign language and if they had registered to study a foreign language in ninth grade. Students who responded affirmatively to either question were also asked to indicate which language. Next, students were asked to indicate reasons for choosing this specific language. Based on the findings from previous studies, it was expected that students would indicate "future college requirements" most frequently.

To encourage the students to respond to items beyond this utilitarian reason, the students were asked to indicate their top three reasons for choosing this specific foreign language for study in the following year. In the event that students had not registered for ninth grade foreign language study, they were not required to continue the questionnaire beyond identifying that they had not registered for a foreign language.

The researchers were particularly interested in examining responses from schools with a variety of foreign language sequences and requirements.

Results

Calculation of Response Rates

Each school district was mailed survey instruments according to the number of students enrolled in eighth grade for a total of 1,716 instruments. Of those mailed, 1,327 instruments were returned to the researchers (Table 2). One administrator in each school district was responsible for receiving the questionnaires in the mail, distributing the questionnaires and directions to language arts teachers who would administer them to their students, collecting the completed questionnaires, and returning them by mail to the researchers. No information was received from the district administrators that would provide explanations for differences in response rates.

From the 1,327 surveys that were returned, 308 were eliminated based on two criteria: 1) directions were not followed in the completion of the questionnaire, 2) the questionnaire was partially completed and/or student comments were unrelated to the questions presented on the survey. Overall, 23% of the instruments were eliminated from the total number of instruments returned. The rate of eliminations from individual school districts ranged from 14% in SD1 to 28% in SD3. No information was provided from the school districts that would explain these differences in rates of elimination.

The total number of usable surveys returned was 1,019, representing a response rate of 59%. Of these surveys, 765 students indicated that they had enrolled in the study of a foreign language for the ninth grade. Responses from these 765 students provided data for the development of response rates for each item on the instrument.

Calculation of Item Response Rates

Individual relative frequency percentages for each response item were calculated based on the sum of responses for each item and the total responses cited by all students in each school district who were registered to study foreign language in ninth grade. The development of these percentages was consistent with Minert's 1991 study in which students from across the country were presented with a list of responses and asked to check each item which applied. This current study differs from Minert's study in that students were asked to indicate their three most important reasons for choosing to study a foreign language.

Students were asked to select 3 items, resulting in a potential total of 2,295 responses. However, some students did not select all three items. The actual number of responses received was 2,258. The relative frequency percentage of each item is based on this total.

Reasons for Language Selection

Tables 3 and 4 provide a detail of the number of subjects (N) and the total number of responses tallied (R) for each school district. The relative frequency percentage for each item on the instrument is broken down by school district and as a total of all school districts.

In SD1, which has no foreign language offering before 9th grade, help in a future job or career (17.8%) and future college requirements (16.2%) were most frequently selected as reasons for studying the language.

In SD2, where all students are required to take an exploratory language course which includes all of the languages offered in the high school, students most frequently selected future college requirements (19.7 %) and help in a future job or career (15.1%). Advice from others

(15.7%), with parents (32.8%) cited as the primary advice givers, also characterized students' responses from this school district. Already studying the language was selected in 9.8% of the responses.

SD3 has a required elementary exploratory program in three of the four languages offered in the district, and offers seventh grade students the opportunity to begin sequential study in three of the four languages. Students in SD3 most frequently selected future college requirements (23.7%) and the fact that they were already studying the foreign language (14.8%). The response that study of the language would help in a future job or career was selected at a rate of 13.4%.

SD4 has a required exploratory course for 7th grade students that includes four of the five languages available at the high school and an option for eighth grade students to begin sequential study in three of the five languages. Students in this district most frequently selected future college requirements (24.6%) and already studying the foreign language (22.8%) as reasons for choosing to study a foreign language. Help in a future job or career was selected in 16.1% of the responses.

When the responses of each of the four school districts are pooled, the total response rates indicate future college requirements (21.7%) as an important reason for studying a foreign language. Future career requirements (15.3%) was also frequently selected. Already studying the language was chosen at a frequency of 12.5% and advice from others at 10.5%.

Reasons Selected by Students Previously Enrolled and Not Previously Enrolled

The responses of students in SD3 and SD4, who did and did not enroll in

sequential study at the eighth grade level when provided the opportunity, are presented in Table 4.

In SD3, students may begin sequential study of three languages in seventh grade or wait until ninth grade when all four of the district's languages are offered. The most frequent responses from those who were already studying were: already studying the language and wish to continue (24.9%) and future college requirements (22.7%). Less frequent responses included advice from others (7.2%) and that the language would be easy to learn (4.2%). Students who had chosen to begin sequential foreign language study in ninth grade selected future college requirements (25.4%) as an important reason for their choice. Help in a future job or career and advice from others were selected at a rate of 13.5%, and easy to learn at 11.2%.

In SD4, students may choose from three languages to begin sequential study in eighth grade or they may delay entry into the sequence until ninth grade when they can choose from five different languages. Eighth grade students in SD4 who were already studying a foreign language indicated that important reasons for their choice to continue foreign language study in ninth grade were future college requirements (25.1%) and the fact that they were already studying the language (24.0%). Less frequent responses included advice from others (6.5%) and that it was an easy language to learn (7.4%).

Students in SD4 who had chosen to enter the sequence of foreign language study in ninth grade most frequently indicated the following reasons for their choice: help in a future job or career (22.2%), easy language to learn (16.7%), and future college requirements (16.7%). Advice from others was selected at a rate of 8.3%.

Discussion

Implications

As initiatives in foreign language education strive to lengthen language learning sequences and meet the needs of students who live and work in an increasingly global society, many school systems will be faced with a difficult process of program restructuring. This may include adding new foreign language offerings to their curricula, such as less-commonly-taught languages, extending sequences of study, and encouraging enrollment parity among languages offered.

Adding New Foreign Language Offerings and Early Language Study

The results of this study may suggest a bottom-up approach which would introduce the new language at the earliest possible level of instruction, such as the K-8 level. Responses revealed that students who entered a sequence of formal language study in seventh or eighth grade in two of the four school districts, by their own choice, locked into that sequence and were unlikely to select a different language during the transition to high school. In contrast, a top-down approach which introduces the new language only at the high school level would not take advantage of an earlier sequence of study.

The example of changing enrollment patterns of the Japanese programs in SD2 and SD4 provides an illustration of the possible effects of a delayed entry level. As discussed earlier, in SD2 the study of all languages offered in the district, including Japanese, begins with exploratory in grade 8 and Level I in grade 9. In contrast, SD4 offers Level I of French, German and Spanish in eighth grade but does not offer Level I of Japanese until ninth grade. Table 5 compares the enrollment patterns in

each school district. The high school Japanese program in SD2 has shown a strong pattern of growth while the enrollment in SD4 has not. While there are many factors that may have influenced these enrollment numbers, it should be pointed out that these school districts are located very close together, both schools use the same curriculum, and they are taught by the same two teachers of Japanese, each spending half the day at each high school. It should also be noted that the total enrollment in the high school in SD2 is 950 students whereas SD4 has 1,500 students, thus it is the smaller school which has the higher Japanese enrollment.

Restructuring Foreign Language Programs and Early Language Study

School districts planning to extend foreign language programs into the junior high/middle school or elementary school levels should consider the consequence this may have on eventual high school enrollments. Beginning a sequence of formal study in one or more but not all of the languages offered at the high school level may affect enrollment parity. Language sequences beginning later will have fewer students from which to draw enrollments. Enrollment patterns in SD3 and SD4 revealed that only eight students in each school district switched or began the study of a second foreign language at the ninth grade level once earlier sequential study had begun.

These same considerations are important for school districts looking to philosophically and structurally reconfigure education at middle grade levels, such as replacing junior high schools with middle schools. If foreign language options are reduced in some languages, enrollment in the high school program may be affected.

The results of this study may suggest a bottom-up approach which would introduce the new language at the earliest possible level of instruction, such as the K-8 level.

School districts may consider modifying which languages are offered prior to the high school level to encourage higher enrollments in under-enrolled languages.

Encouraging Enrollment Parity Through Early Language Study

School districts may want to address enrollment parity among languages offered when specific languages experience increases and decreases in enrollment. School districts may consider modifying which languages are offered prior to the high school level to encourage higher enrollments in under-enrolled languages. This could, in effect, work to reduce the number of students willing to switch to the study of a different language from the junior high or middle school level and reduce the pool of students who begin their language study at the high school level. Thus, overcrowding, which may inhibit the quality of instruction, and/or low enrollments, which may threaten the existence of a particular language, might be approached from a pragmatic view of early language exposure.

An illustration of this type of intervention for the purpose of building enrollment can be seen in the Russian language program's enrollment pattern in SD1, summarized in Table 6. Until the fall of 1994, SD1 did not offer foreign language instruction at the middle school level. Enrollment in Level II Russian had been very stable for a number of years. In 1994-95 the district provided a Level I course in Russian for eighth grade students. Level I courses in the other languages in that district are not offered until ninth grade. The enrollment in Level II Russian in 1995-96 showed an increase that was unprecedented for Russian in the 20-year history of its existence in SD1.

Continued Research on Early Language Study and Student Choice

Two additional issues identified by this study, which may be described as disturbing, will require additional study. First, in SD3 and SD4, where

sequential foreign language study was available prior to ninth grade, students who chose to begin the sequence early frequently selected future college requirements as an important reason for their choice. These same students indicated with much lower frequency that an interest in culture was a factor in choosing to begin study. Second, students in each of these same two districts, who delayed entry into sequential language study until ninth grade, responded that they chose a particular language because it was perceived as "easy to learn" more frequently than their classmates who began study prior to ninth grade.

These differences may be due to varied programmatic sequencing. Continued research may reveal additional underlying factors and explanations and provide school districts with information for addressing such trends.

Limitations

There are many factors which affect student choice in foreign language study, as prior research has found. The intention of this study was not to identify causal associations, but rather, to identify issues associated with student choice in foreign languages which will inform the decisions, planning, and policy made by school districts. Conclusions suggesting causality of various forms of early language study and student choice are beyond the scope of this study and require more sophisticated data collection and analysis methods. The survey instrument allowed for the quick collection of a large number of student responses with the additional advantage of providing suggested response items which could be included in future forms of the instrument.

Further, this study underscores the need for individual districts to

examine their own foreign language programs and investigate the issues unique to their communities. While students selected for this study represented a group at the same grade level preparing for the transition to the high school level, the four school districts and their communities were not homogenous. It is not clear to what extent each school district's programmatic sequence, school, and local community characteristics affected student choice. It is quite likely that interaction among these elements accounted for variations in students' responses across the four school districts.

Conclusion

The systemic nature of school districts suggests that programmatic changes do not take place in a vacuum, rather, they affect learning, enrollment, and articulation of learning sequences. Outcomes from programmatic changes can be both positive and negative. The ability to foresee these potential outcomes and to include associated issues in the discussion on restructuring language programs is essential, particularly at the local school district level.

The results of this study support previous research citing utilitarian reasons, in particular, the desire to satisfy future college requirements, as the primary influence which motivates students to enter foreign language study at the pre-college level. Students who continue language study from the middle school and junior high school to the high school level will base this decision, in part, on previous experience in the study of this foreign language. An informed comparison of data collected from each of the four school districts in the study further suggests that the structure of pre-high school foreign language programs may have an

impact on high school foreign language enrollment patterns. These enrollment trends must be considered in K-12 programmatic planning, for maintenance or intervention in established enrollment patterns, and in addressing enrollment parity across languages.

Reasons for choices given by students who chose to delay foreign language entry until grade nine, even though the opportunity for earlier entry was available, provide additional information that must be considered in foreign language program planning. It is important that these students have an opportunity to receive accurate information about foreign language study, particularly if they are basing much of their decisions on notions of the perceived difficulty of the study of one foreign language over another.

The results of this study may also contribute to continued research on the nature of how and why students make choices in regard to foreign language study. Most significantly, early language learning experiences and their contributions and affect on student choice should be considered in addition to other motivational factors.

Future instruments might address the themes identified in this article more precisely by separating the survey instrument into separate sections, each focusing on a specific theme: why do students choose foreign language as a subject, why do they choose specific languages over others, and why do they continue or discontinue to study these languages at varying levels? The findings from the past and continued study of these questions will provide important information as our profession takes on the task of restructuring language learning sequences.

... programmatic changes do not take place in a vacuum, rather, they affect learning, enrollment, and articulation of learning sequences.

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Table 1

Comparison of Foreign Language Program Sequence of Four School Districts

School Districts	Levels		
	Elementary School	Middle/J.H. School	High School
SD1	• None offered	• None offered	• Levels I-IV elective: French, German, Russian, Spanish
SD2	• None offered	• 8th grade required 4 week exploratory: French, Japanese, Spanish	• Levels I-IV elective: French, Japanese, Spanish
SD3	• 4th, 5th, and 6th grade required 1 year rotating exploratory: French, German, Spanish	• Level I (7th to 8th grade) elective: French, German, Spanish • 8th grade elective 1 trimester exploratory: Japanese	• Levels I(II)-V elective: French, German, Spanish • Levels I-IV: Japanese
SD4	• None offered	• 7th grade required 4 week exploratory: French, German, Latin, Spanish • Level I (8th grade) elective: French, German, Spanish	• Levels I(II)-V elective: French, German, Spanish • Levels I-IV elective: Japanese, Latin

Table 2

Response Rates: Students Registered for FL Study (N), Total Responses (R)

	All SD's	SD 1	SD 2	SD 3	SD 4
8th Grade Enrollment	1,716	394	240	719	363
Surveys Returned	1,327	312	202	584	229
Surveys Discarded	308	45	49	165	49
Percent Discarded	23%	14%	24%	28%	21%
Surveys Kept	1,019	267	153	419	180
Response Rate (Kept/enrollment)	59%	68%	64%	58%	50%
Students registered for FL study					
in 9th grade (N)	765	167	103	339	156
Total individual responses tallied (R)	2,258	495	305	992	466

Table 3

Relative Frequency Percentages of Four School Districts*

	All SD's	SD 1	SD 2	SD 3	SD 4
	R=2258 N=765	R=495 N=167	R=305 N=103	R=992 N=339	R=466 N=156
Reasons	% of R	% of R	% of R	% of R	% of R
Future college requirements	21.7	16.2	19.7	23.7	24.6
Help in a future job or career	15.3	17.8	15.1	13.4	16.1
Already studying the language, continue	12.5	0.2	9.8	14.8	22.8
Advice from...	10.5	11.8	15.7	10.0	6.6
(parents)	(42.0)	(32.4)	(32.8)	(51.8)	(47.1)
(brother/sister)	(26.2)	(35.1)	(25.0)	(21.1)	(26.5)
(friends)	(25.9)	(31.1)	(23.4)	(24.6)	(23.5)
(counselors)	(5.9)	(1.4)	(18.8)	(2.6)	(2.9)
Easy language to learn	7.1	6.2	7.9	6.7	8.5
Interested in culture	6.8	8.7	8.5	6.5	4.3
Other	6.6	11.0	5.3	5.7	5.1
Know someone who speaks the language	6.0	11.2	2.0	6.0	3.4
Academically challenging	4.4	5.6	3.6	4.5	3.4
Language is different, unusual, uncommon	3.9	5.8	5.3	3.4	2.6
Have traveled to country where spoken	2.8	1.7	3.0	3.5	2.3
Heard positive comments about teacher	2.5	3.9	4.3	2.0	1.1

*Based on the total of responses from each individual district.

Table 4

Relative Frequency Percentages of Students Previously Enrolled and
Not Previously Enrolled in Foreign Language Study Prior to Ninth Grade
in Two School Districts

Reasons	SD3		SD4	
	Previous R=598 N=206	Not Prev. R=394 N=133	Previous R=430 N=144	Not Prev. R=36 N=12
	% of R	% of R	% of R	% of R
Future college requirements	22.7	25.4	25.1	16.7
Help in future job or career	12.5	13.5	15.8	22.2
Already studying the language, continue	24.9	—	24.0	—
Advice from...	7.2	13.5	6.5	8.3
(parents)	(53.5)	(54.1)	(46.3)	(50.0)
(brother/sister)	(19.0)	(21.3)	(32.1)	(0.0)
(friends)	(24.1)	(23.0)	(21.4)	(33.3)
(counselors)	(3.5)	(1.6)	(0.0)	(16.7)
Easy language to learn	4.2	11.2	7.4	16.7
Interested in culture	5.6	6.9	4.0	8.3
Other	5.9	6.1	4.9	8.3
Know someone who speaks the language	5.0	8.1	3.5	2.8
Academically challenging	4.7	3.8	3.0	8.3
Language is different, unusual, uncommon	2.3	4.6	2.6	2.8
Traveled to country where spoken	3.2	3.8	2.3	2.8
Heard positive comments about teacher	1.5	2.8	0.9	2.8

Table 5

Adding a Foreign Language: Impact of Unbalanced Entry and Enrollments
in Japanese Language Programs

Total enrollments	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94
SD2	13	43	78	132
SD4	35	28	30	34

Table 6

Enrollment Intervention: Increase in Enrollment Through Early Entry
for Russian Language (SD1)

Enrollment by Level	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Russian I (8th)	—	—	—	40	52
Russian II	12	13	12	8	38

Elementary School Teachers Awarded 1996 NEH Summer Fellowships

Among the 77 foreign language teachers who were awarded National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Foreign Language Fellowships were the following 16 elementary school foreign language teachers. This group of fellowship winners is the fifth of a program funded by the NEH with additional assistance from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

Since the program started in 1986 under the Rockefeller Foundation, 945 foreign language teachers, and their many students, have felt the impact of

this program. The profession as a whole has benefited from these fellowships and the teachers who have participated in them have become leaders in their schools and communities.

For more information about the fellowship program or this year's group, contact Naima Gherbi, Program Director, NEH Fellowship Program for Foreign Language Teachers K-12, Connecticut College, 270 Mohegan Ave., New London, CT 06320.

Because of recent budget cuts proposed by Congress, this is the final group of K-12 foreign language teachers to benefit from the fellowship experience.

Carolyn Albert-Garvey, Herndon Elementary School, 630 Dranesville Rd., Herndon, VA 22070. 703-437-3500. A Day in the Life of a West African Family.

Gregory W. Anderson, Adams Spanish Immersion School, 615 S. Chatsworth Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102. 612-298-1595. Canción Nueva Movement in Chile.

Michelle Haj-Broussard, Church Point Elementary School, 415 E. Lougarre Street, Church Point, LA 70525. 318-684-5722. Cajun/Acadian Folktales for the FLES Classroom.

Danna Hall, Chapel Hill Christian School, 1090 Howe Road, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221. 216-896-0852. Children's Arts and Literature.

Lori Langer de Ramirez, Polytechnic Preparatory Country Day School, 9216 Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11228-3698. 718-836-9800. The Chibchas and their Oral Tradition.

Maureen McNicholl, Marie Murphy Middle School & Avoca West Elementary School, 2921 Illinois Road, Wilmette, IL 60091. 708-251-3617. Festivals of Provence.

Amit Nellik, Tarbut V'Torah Community Day School, 250 East Baker Street, Costa Mesa, CA 92626. 714-979-1818. Archeology of Jerusalem.

Kathryn Osborn, Fox Hollow French Immersion School, 5055 Mahalo Drive, Eugene, OR 97405. 503-687-3177. Regional Folk Art and Artifacts for the FLES Classroom.

Joyce Pitt, Harrison Elementary School, 212 W. Birch, Enid OK 73701. 405-242-6183. Bolivian Festivals and Music for the FLES Classroom.

Michele Pollard, Academy of the Holy Names, 1065 New Scotland Road, Albany, NY 12208. 518-438-6553. The Guignol Puppet Theater.

Paula Seliga, Bertrand Avenue Elementary, 7021 Bertrand Avenue, Beseda, CA 91335. 818-342-1103. Children's Literature for Grades K-4.

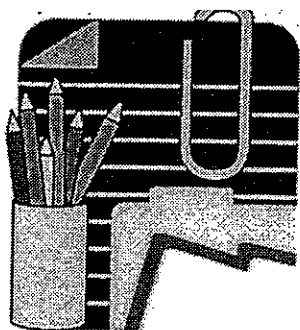
Leann Speta, Buena Vista Alternative Elementary School, 2641 25th Street, San Francisco, CA 94110. 415-695-5875. Costa Rican Games and Songs for the FLES Classroom.

Pablo Valencia, Frank Porter Graham Elementary School, 101 Smith Level Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. 919-942-6491. Bolivian Folk Songs for the K-6 Classroom.

Liliano Valle, Buena Vista Elementary School, 2641 25th Street, San Francisco, CA 94110. 415-695-5875. Puerto Rican Children's Literature for FLES.

Phillippe Vinalmont, C.A. Franklin School, 3400 Highland, Kansas City, MO 64109. 816-871-8840. French Culture in Vietnam.

Nobuku Weeks, Hongwanji Mission School, 1728 Pali Highway, Honolulu, HI 96813. 808-532-0522. Folk Art of Tokushima, Japan.



Classroom Resources

Spanish

Hinojosa, T. (1996). *Cada Niño/Every Child*. Cambridge, MA: Rounder Records.

Available from Rounder Mail Order, #1 Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140; 800-443-4727. Cost is \$15 for CD and \$9.50 for audio tape (+\$3 postage & handling). Please specify Rounder #8023 and whether you want CD or audio tape.



Filled with lovingly rendered songs about life, love, and family, this compact disk (CD) is a wonderful addition to the elementary Spanish classroom. Tish Hinojosa, a popular Tejana folk-singer, has created a charming collection of songs in Spanish and English. A bilingual short story about the origin of each song precedes the lyrics. These stories are a great way to introduce the music and allow the teacher to pre-teach some of the vocabulary to follow.

My fifth-grade students who listened to this CD loved it! They especially enjoyed the melodies and the humor of the songs. They loved the fact that Hinojosa's young son and daughter (ages 7 and 11) played instruments on the album. They also liked the variety of instruments and the inclusion of some lesser-known ones such as cheeks and spoons. They related easily to the content of the lyrics of the songs because they are based on everyday, "real-life" situations and experiences.

The songs are sung in Hinojosa's beautifully clear voice, allowing each and every word to be heard and understood. The artwork that

accompanies the lyrics is all child-created and provides a fun visual addition to the songs. The Spanish used in the songs and introductions is simple, yet not childish, all of which adds to the CD's warmth and usefulness in the classroom. This project is endorsed by the National Latino Children's Agenda.

German

Prövestmann, M. (1993). *Nur Mut, kleiner Saurier!* Esslinger im ÖBV, Esslinger: Schreiberverlag.

Augustin, C. (1993). *Alex und Ayse*. Esslinger im ÖBV, Esslinger: Schreiberverlag.

Lukesch, A. (1994). *Bulli Benders Blabla-Show!* Esslinger im ÖBV, Esslinger: Schreiberverlag.

All are available from Klett Edition Deutsch, Christiane Fredrickson, 7327 Woodrow Drive, Oakland, CA 94611; Tel. and Fax: 510-339-2721.

Here is a relatively new series of children's books, called 1, 2, 3, - *Papagei*. These colorful books, which can be used in both immersion and high school classes, provide great fun for students. Simple texts and colorful illustrations help convey the written meaning.

This series of books comes in three reading levels. Content, length of text, and print are adapted to the students' growing ability in reading and understanding.

Nur Mut, kleiner Saurier! is part of Reading Level I. This reading level consists of four different books. *Nur Mut, kleiner Saurier!* is about a little dinosaur, named "Little Dino" who wants to cross the river to meet his friends and eat luscious ferns. The river is wide and he cannot cross on his own. His quest for help will relate to many students' own experiences.

Alex und Ayse is part of Reading Level II, which also consists of four different books.



Alex und Ayse is about the friendship that develops between a little German boy and a Turkish girl.

This book about prejudice is a great book with a superb message.

Bulli Benders Bla-bla Show! is part of Reading Level III. There are three more books at this same level. *Bulli Benders Bla-bla-Show!* is about Hubert, a boy who lives in a small town. Since he is the only one in town able to receive a TV program showing the latest fashions in the big city, everybody asks Hubert for advice. Suddenly, after a storm, Hubert cannot watch his favorite show any more. You need to read the book to find out how Hubert deals with this blow.

These 1, 2, 3, - *Papagei* books deal with modern topics and have very appealing illustrations. Reading Level I books can be enjoyed by all children, especially beginning German learners. Reading Level II books will appeal to a little older students, and Reading Level III books can easily be used in upper German classes.

French

Dodeman, J., & Thibault, J. (1992).

Bandiagara. Paris: Epigones.

\$24.95

Distributed by Multi-Cultural Books and Videos, 28880 Southfield Road, Suite 183, Lathrup Village, MI 48076; 800-567-2220; Fax: 810-559-2465.

Bandiagara is a beautifully illustrated book about a celebration in a Dogon village in Mali as seen through the eyes of a young village boy. The festival celebrates the end of the mourning period for all those who have been dead for five years. We are taken through the village to see the preparation for the dance that is the culmination of the ceremony



and are finally allowed to see the masked dance itself. The illustrations capture the excitement and the beauty of this important celebration.

The story is extremely simple, just a retelling of this long, full day. The language, however, is poetical and too advanced for most beginning students. The teacher will have to make some adjustments, perhaps recasting the story in simpler language. This is well worth doing, however, because the book is beautiful and evokes a place and a ceremony unfamiliar to most students.

Dear Senator Simon,

Our foreign language teacher told us you do a lot to help children all over the place learn about different languages and backgrounds of different countries. All the children, including myself, at Monroe School in Hinsdale, IL, 60521, appreciate you helping us.

Thanks a lot,

Veronica Quinn

Veronica Quinn



April 15, 1996

Dear Senator Simon,

The members of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNEELL) and their students would like to express sincere gratitude for your tireless work in advancing second language learning. Your leadership and vision over the past forty four years of public service are a model for all. It is not often that we in the foreign language teaching profession have the opportunity to thank someone whose efforts on behalf of language study have made such an impact. Your legislative accomplishments have resulted in thousands of students having the opportunity to study a foreign language. You have convinced many Americans of the critical need for foreign language study.

You are an inspiration to all educators who truly believe that gaining speaking and literacy skills in more than one language is not a luxury for an elite few. I personally know many people whose lives have been made richer and fuller because you have championed the study of foreign languages on many fronts.

Senator Simon, on behalf of NNEELL's membership, I extend our best wishes for a happy, healthy, and very busy retirement. We cannot help but believe that somehow, some way, you will remain involved in advancing the study of foreign languages.

Sincerely,

Eileen B. Lorenz

Eileen B. Lorenz
President



Senator Paul Simon and his wife with scrapbook containing letters received from children — they loved it!

Dear Senator Paul Simon,

3/24/96

Thank you for making it possible for all the kids in the U.S. to study foreign language. My class and I have started speaking French and I'm really enjoying it. I am a fifth grader at Mystic Middle School in Connecticut.

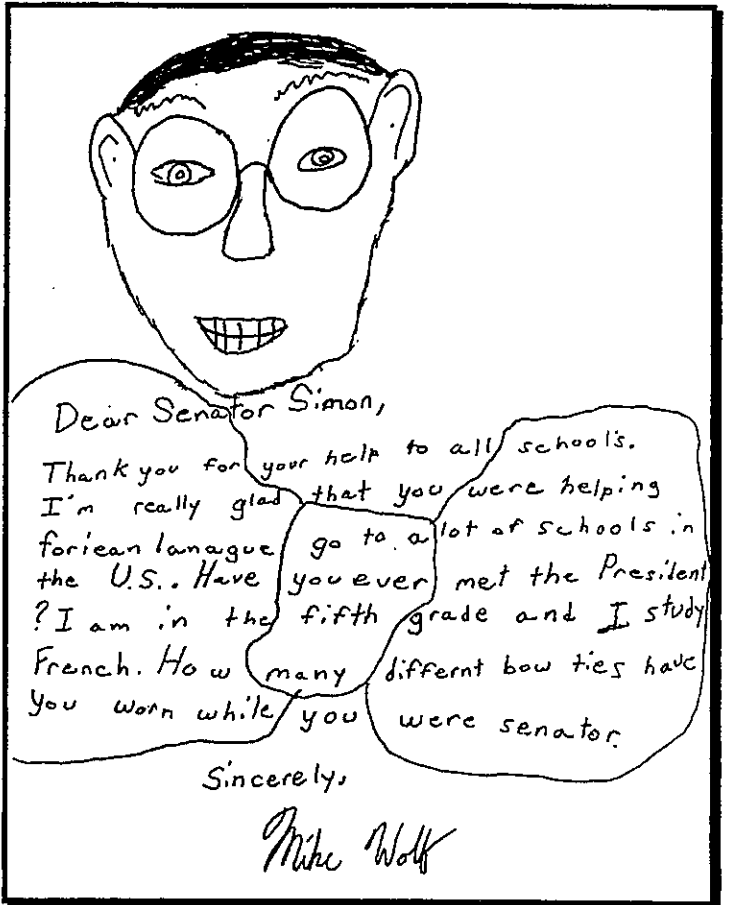
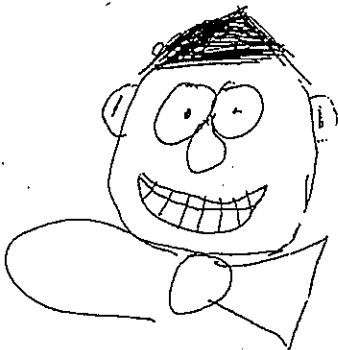
Sincerely,

Nora Blackall

Dear Senator Simon,

Thank you for helping our country so much. You have helped many schools and children. I am a fifth grader in Monroe School in Hinsdale, Ill. 60521. I hope you like my picture.

Sincerely,
Joseph Fan



NNELL Election Results

*Mari Haas
Past President of NNELL*

I am happy to announce that Christy Brown was elected Second Vice President and Marty Abbott was elected to continue her term as Treasurer in the recent NNELL elections.

On behalf of NNELL, I would like to congratulate both, and to extend a warm welcome to our new officer, Christy Brown.

Christy brings with her a wealth of expertise on language learning. She has taught French, Spanish and English as a second language in grades K-12 in the West Hartford, Connecticut, Public Schools, and is the author of many articles on elementary school foreign language education. She currently serves as the K-12 Director of Foreign Language Curriculum and Supervision for the Glastonbury, Connecticut Public Schools.

Christy played an integral role in the creation of the new foreign language standards as the Chairperson of the K-12 Task Force on National Foreign Language Standards. She has served in

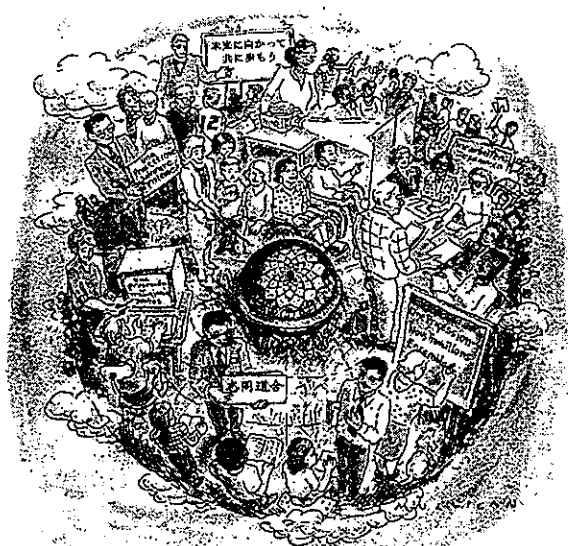
leadership roles in the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers, the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, and ACTFL, where she is currently a member of the Executive Council.

Christy believes that NNELL has a vital role to play in preparing teachers for programs that offer an early start in language learning and in providing leadership and political advocacy at the local, state and national levels. During her tenure with NNELL, Christy plans to reach out to other elementary school organizations to share information about the foreign language profession's work in program and curriculum design, as well as the new foreign language standards. We look forward to having Christy on the NNELL Executive Board. Thanks to all who voted in the elections and to the election committee who helped put together the slate of candidates and monitored the process: Myriam Chapman, Helena Curtain, and Lori Langer de Ramirez. New terms for officers begin in November 1996.

*Thanks
to all who
voted in the
elections . . .*

ACTFL '96

with AATG/AATI/CLTA/NCSTJ/PSMLA



ONE PROFESSION WORKING TOGETHER

Preregistration Deadline: October 7

30th Annual Meeting and Exposition
November 22-24, 1996

Philadelphia (PA) Marriott
ACTFL • 6 Executive Plaza • Yonkers, New York 10701
(914) 963-8830
FAX (914) 963-1275

NNELL Booth will be at ACTFL

ACTFL has donated an exhibit booth at its 1996 annual convention to the National Network for Early Language Learning. All members of NNELL are invited to take a break from conference sessions by spending an hour at the booth, sharing information about NNELL with conference attendees.

NNELL state representatives and committee members are especially urged to participate in the booth.

If you will be able to share in this important public relations and advocacy effort for early language learning, please email Dr. Mary Theis at theis@kutztown.edu, who is coordinating the booth.

NNELL Annual Meeting

Friday, November 22, 1996

10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Convention Center: Room 109B

Come to our annual meeting where you will have an opportunity to meet other NNELL members and your NNELL officers. The officers will present a brief summary on the year's activities that will include reports on advocacy efforts and regional and state activities. They will also share plans for future NNELL initiatives.

In addition, Jan Kucerik, Baypoint Elementary Magnet School, Pinellas County Florida, will share the very successful ways her school has involved the elementary school classroom teacher in the second language class. She will also provide examples of how her elementary school has enhanced its foreign language program through collaboration with a nearby university.

Afterwards, participants will share their language teaching ideas and experiences with their colleagues in a networking session.

NNELL Sponsors **FLES Swapshop Breakfast**

Saturday, November 23, 1996

8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Philadelphia Marriott: Salon E

Join your colleagues for breakfast to discuss effective teaching techniques and resources in the K-8 classroom. *Please bring 200 copies of a one-page teaching activity to share.* Include the following information in the activity: your name and address, language and grade level, lesson topic, objectives, materials, description of activity, and assessment.

Publishers who will be displaying materials for elementary school foreign language programs include Aims International Books, Barron's Educational Series, The Children's French Store, Educate-Educational Materials, EMC Publishing, Klett Edition Deutsch, Languages for Kids, Longman Publishing Group, Midwest European Publications, National Textbook Company, and Sosnowski Associates.

Door prizes include foreign language T-shirts, audio-cassettes, posters, books, and magazine subscriptions, plus much more!

Martie Semmer Receives Award for Advocacy



Congratulations to NNEELL member, Martie Semmer (CO), who was named the 1995 winner of the *ACTFL-NTC Award for Building Community Interest in Foreign Language Education* by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the National Textbook Company (NTC).

Ms. Semmer is currently a Spanish teacher at Breckenridge and Frisco elementary schools in Colorado. In addition to her achievements as a Spanish teacher, Martie has been an extraordinary force in advocating foreign language as an integral part of the elementary school curriculum in her local school district.

One of her primary duties is coordinating the work of the Spanish and elementary school teachers as they integrate Spanish into curricular lessons. Ms. Semmer notes that teaching content lessons in Spanish results in children sharpening their listening as well as their comprehension skills. Consequently, the children's proficiency in not only Spanish, but also English is increased. She hopes that this method might even instill in children the motivation to learn a third language.

Martie Semmer's efforts have not been restricted to the classroom. She has also recognized the importance of a focus on foreign language education at the state level. Her commitment to ensuring that the state of Colorado formulate standards for foreign language instruction resulted in an arduous struggle through political action.

Her hard work started in 1993 when an act was passed for the development of statewide standards and assessments for all content areas *except* foreign languages. She

immediately took up the challenge by corresponding with various state legislators who initially did not favor the idea of including foreign languages. Not discouraged by the negative responses, she continued her attempts to testify to the importance of developing standards for foreign languages.

The Delegate Assembly of the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) in Washington provided her with a wonderful opportunity to strengthen her mission. While in Washington she visited all of her Colorado representatives, distributing student essays which the Honorable Pat Schroeder introduced in the *Congressional Record* in the House of Representatives on May 14. Some of the excerpts included were:

Learning a foreign language weakens barriers that some use to justify resentment.
Karin Wangberg, grade 11, Aurora

I think kids should get a good education, and foreign languages are part of good education. It is just as important as math, writing, and spelling, etc. It is fun, interesting, exciting, and educational.
Caroline Lea, grade 4, Lakewood

Many of today's stereotypes and hostilities between nations lie in a misunderstanding and lack of appreciation for cultures outside of one's own. Learning a foreign language

inspires a respect and an understanding of each other's uniqueness.

Tiffany Shea Wine, college student, Federal Heights

It is good to know how to speak another language to help others who don't know your language. You can teach other people, too, and they could help other people.

Heaven Tapia, grade 2, Denver

On May 30, the Honorable Scott McInnis entered the following information from the ACTFL-NTC awards ceremony into the Congressional Record:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Martie Semmer of Frisco, CO. Martie is the recipient of a national award for building community interest in foreign language education. I would like to outline just a few of Martie's numerous contributions to her profession.

Martie worked tirelessly on all levels to bring her noble profession the attention it deserves. Due to her hard work at the grassroots level, her Summit School District is one of the few to have K-12 foreign language offering. But Martie did not stop there. She introduced her students to unique and practical applications of their knowledge. Summit School District students are writing to Mexican pen-pals, and studying in two languages about migratory birds.

It is a person such as Martie Semmer that inspires us all to take that extra step. Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in congratulating Martie Semmer, a truly outstanding teacher.

Martie Semmer was rewarded for her hard work and perseverance in April 1995 when the Colorado Senate Education Committee voted unanimously for the bill and it was signed into law within a week.

NNELL congratulates Martie Semmer for her award and thanks her for being a role model for effective advocacy for foreign language education and early language learning.

By learning another language, you can discover a whole new world.

*Anne Cook
grade 8
Littleton*

NNELL Introduces its Regional and State Representatives

In addition to its regional representatives, the National Network for Early Language Learning is pleased to announce the naming of representatives for each of the 50 states. The state representatives will support the work of the regional representatives and help further the mission and goals of the organization within their respective states.

The responsibilities of the state representatives are to:

- serve as the NNELL state contact person;
- organize and chair a NNELL networking session at the annual state foreign language conference;
- celebrate and make public the successes of students, teachers, and programs of excellence;
- improve public awareness and support for language programs by sharing with the profession and the community information about

state and local issues that impact the vitality of early language learning;

- advocate action that promotes opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own.

State representatives will maintain close contact with their regional representatives and will provide them with a summary report about language learning in their state. The regional representatives will, in turn, provide a summary regional report to the executive board.

NNELL invites you to join in congratulating our regional and state representatives. To facilitate their work, please let them know of your professional successes and concerns, and your ideas for increasing support for early language learning in your state and region.

National Network for Early Language Learning *Regional Representatives*

Central States

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National Network for Early Language Learning

State Representatives

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Hawaii

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Center for
Applied
Linguistics

Fall 1996

Dear Colleague:

Does your school start teaching foreign languages before grade 7? If so, we need your help!

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is compiling a national directory of early language learning programs, and would like to include your school. Please take a few minutes to complete the form on the reverse side and return it to us. Although we will not be able to reach every program in the country, we would like to include as many schools (both public and private) as possible.

The directory will include schools that start teaching foreign languages before grade 7 (but will not include schools with *total and partial immersion* or *two-way immersion* programs, because these directories have already been compiled and are available from CAL.)

Please return the form by **December 1, 1996** to CAL at the address below. We will send you ordering information for the directory when it is completed in 1997.

Thank you for your efforts! We hope that this U.S. Department of Education-funded directory will help schools to network with other schools around the country that have similar programs and help enhance the teaching of foreign languages to children.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy Rhodes Lucinda Branaman

Nancy Rhodes Lucinda Branaman



National Directory of Early Language Learning Programs

Please complete the following information.

Contact Person _____	
Title _____	
Name of School _____	
Address _____	public _____ private _____
Telephone _____	Fax _____ E-mail _____

1. Grade levels in your school (circle all the apply): Pre-K K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
2. Grade levels that receive foreign language instruction (circle all the apply): Pre-K K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

3. Languages taught in your program (please list all):
--

NOTE:

Questions 4 and 5

If responses are different for each language, please copy this form and fill out separate forms for each language.

4. How many *minutes* per class period? (please circle amount for each grade level):

	MINUTES																		
Pre-K	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
K	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
1	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
2	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
3	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
4	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
6	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
7	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	
8	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	other	

5. How many foreign language class periods per week? (please circle for each grade level)

Pre-K	1	2	3	4	5
K	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	1	2	3	4	5
3	1	2	3	4	5
4	1	2	3	4	5
5	1	2	3	4	5
6	1	2	3	4	5
7	1	2	3	4	5
8	1	2	3	4	5

6. Briefly describe your program (e.g., curriculum, materials, goals, other)

7. Do your language classes meet during the regular school day? YES NO

8. Do your classes last for the entire school year? YES NO

If no to either question, please describe schedule and list total number of weeks of classes:

(If you would like to include other information describing your program, please attach it.)

Thank you for your time!

Please return this form to: Lucinda Branaman, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037 (E-mail: lucinda@cal.org; Tel. 202-429-9292; Fax 202-659-5641)

Political Action and Advocacy

Kay Hewitt
Political Action and Advocacy Chair
Lexington, South Carolina

I learned of threats of severe budget cuts to programs that support foreign languages and international education in fiscal year (FY) 1996.

There are three parts to my report on Political Action and Advocacy: 1) a summary of efforts to curtail federal funding cuts in foreign language education; 2) an introduction of the members of the NNELL Political Action and Advocacy Committee; and 3) NNELL's recent advocacy efforts. Please contact me about your own political action work so that it can be shared in a future issue of *Learning Languages*. I look forward to hearing from many of you!

Budget Cuts Summary

I represented the members of NNELL as the National Political Action and Advocacy Committee Chair when I attended the annual conference of the Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS) on May 2-4, 1996. JNCL-NCLIS serves the profession as the liaison between foreign languages professionals and the federal government.

The conference began with a briefing by legislators on the status of federal legislation that affects foreign language education. I learned of threats of severe budget cuts to programs that support foreign languages and international education in fiscal year (FY) 1996. In a nutshell, the 1996 budget reflected about a 7% overall cut in the funds for various foreign language programs.

Time was allotted for face-to-face visits with each person's state legislators and their staff members. My goal during these meetings was to insist that federal funding for

education be no less than the fiscal year (FY) 1995 budget. Some of the key programs that have suffered cutbacks are:

- The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) funding, which is essential to the establishment of early language programs
- Foreign Language and Area Studies Titles VI funds, which support Professional Development in Language Education
- National Endowment for the Humanities, which has supported language teacher grants to improve their language skills and enhance their knowledge of the culture through study abroad. (At this writing, funding for NEH Grants has been eliminated by the legislature, effective in 1997)
- Goals 2000
- Magnet Schools
- Bilingual and Immigrant Education
- National Institute for Literacy
- Fund for the Improvement of Secondary Education (FIPSE)
- International Education and Foreign Language Studies (Domestic programs, Overseas programs, and the Institute for International Public Policy)
- Fund for the Improvement of Education

- International Education Exchange
- Star Schools

After the meeting with Senator Strom Thurmond and the staff of two other legislators in Washington, DC, I became concerned that little importance will be associated with language education programs unless we diligently inform all federal legislators of our convictions on this matter. I urge all of you to follow this situation closely and contact your legislators in support of funding of foreign language programs.

NNELL Political Action and Advocacy Committee

I am pleased to announce the members of the National Political Action Committee for NNELL:

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Kay Hewitt, Chair
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NNELL Advocacy Efforts

We appreciate the efforts of the members of the Political Action and Advocacy Committee who, over the

summer months, wrote to each of the 100 Senators and 435 Representatives on behalf of NNELL, emphasizing the need for reinstatement of FY 1995 funding levels for Language Education and International Studies Programs.

All members of NNELL should have received in May 1996 a "NNELL Alert" from the NNELL president and me, warning of the immediate concerns about "English Only" legislation that was pending at that time. We stated that it was not clear what the outcomes of this action might be for foreign language education, but that it does run counter to the development of productive, multilingual members of U.S. society.

In response to this situation, and as a model for any advocacy effort, we suggested that you:

- Send your Senator or Representative a personal, handwritten note in which you include information about your work, the number of students that you teach, and how your program was implemented.
- Write a simple statement about your position against English Only legislation and your difficulty in voting for a member of Congress who supports any version of this bill.
- Request a reply from your Senator or Representative.

Note: *If you need information about your congressional representatives, you should find their names and addresses in the "blue pages" of your phone book under "Federal Government." Feel free to contact me if you should need assistance.*

Calendar Fall 1996 Conferences

October 25-27, 1996

Advocates for Language Learning Conference, Detroit, MI. Cliff Walker or Ellen Jones-Walker, P.O. Box 495, Blacksburg, VA 24063-0495; 540-552-3707; cawalker@bev.net

October 31-November 2, 1996

Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers: At the Crossroads of Tomorrow; Winnipeg Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Ontario, Canada. Donald Teel, 960 Wolseley Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3G 1E7; 204-786-4796; Fax: 204-783-7607; E-mail: deteel@minet.gov.mb.ca

November 22-24, 1996

30th Annual Meeting, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages; Philadelphia, PA. ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701; 914-963-8830; Fax: 914-963-1275.

Spring 1997 Conferences

March 6-8, 1997

Southern Conference on Language Teaching with South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers' Associations, Myrtle Beach, SC. Lee Bradley, Executive Director, Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA 31698; 912-333-7358; Fax: 912-333-7389.

April 3-6, 1997

Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, New York City. Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; 717-245-1977.

April 10-13, 1997

Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Columbus, OH. CSCTFL, Madison Area Technical College, 3550 Anderson Avenue, Madison, WI 53704; 608-246-6573; Fax: 608-246-6880.

April 17-19, 1997

Southwest Conference on Language Teaching with Texas Foreign Language Association, Dallas, TX. SWCOLT, Joann K. Pompa, Mountain Pointe High School, 4201 E. Knox Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85044.

NNELL is an organization for educators involved in teaching foreign languages to children. The mission of the organization is to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own; to provide leadership, support, and service to those committed to early language learning; and to coordinate efforts to make language learning in programs of excellence a reality for all children.

NNELL works to accomplish this mission through activities that improve public awareness and support of early language learning; facilitate cooperation among organizations directly concerned with early language learning; facilitate communication among teachers, teacher educators, parents, program administrators, and policymakers; and disseminate information and guidelines to assist in developing programs of excellence.

NNELL holds its annual meeting at the fall conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Its officers are elected by members through a mail ballot election held annually in the spring.

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Membership Form

Please enroll me as a member of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NELL) and send me a one-year subscription to *Learning Languages*. I am enclosing a check for \$15.00. (Overseas rate is \$20.00.) Make checks payable to NELL.
NO PURCHASE ORDERS PLEASE.

Name _____

Title or Grade Level _____

School or Affiliation _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State _____ Zip _____

Check whether this address is _____ Home _____ School _____
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