

Learning Languages

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Learning Languages: *The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning* is published in the Spring, Fall and Winter as 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 promote 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 back cover for more information on NNELL.

Articles Published: 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 to request a copy of author guidelines for preparing articles, or retrieve them from NNELL's Web site (www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell).

Submissions: Deadlines are: Fall issue—May 1; Winter issue—Nov. 1; Spring issue—Feb. 1. Articles, classroom activities, and materials may be submitted to the appropriate Contributing Editor. 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, context, objectives, targeted standards, materials, procedure, and assessment. Include pictures or drawings as illustration, if available. Send with your name, address, and phone number to the Classroom Activities Editor.

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Notes from the President



Dear NNELL Members,

Winter greetings for 2001 to all! Whether the second or first year of the new millennium, we should all approach 2001 with optimism and determination.

Let's not forget assertiveness in reaching our shared goals of every child learning a second language in a long and strong foreign language program beginning in the early years. We have made good progress but we must persevere and stay the course. We heard much during the recent presidential campaign about not leaving any child behind. Our challenge now is to work to realize this goal in the area of early foreign language learning. Former Secretary Richard W. Riley of the Department of Education was a strong advocate for foreign language as part of the general curriculum for all students. We look forward to working with Secretary Rod Paige to continue this forward momentum.

How to succeed is the question. The answers for me are advocacy and collaboration. And the good news is that NNELL members already do both. The Web site ([www. languagepolicy. org](http://www.languagepolicy.org)) of the Joint National Committee for Languages—National Council for Languages and International Studies not only has excellent suggestions on advocacy in general, but it also alerts us that, as NNELL members, we need to take action to preserve the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP). It provides us with sample letters we can send to our senators and representatives. If you are not familiar with it, FLAP is federal funding

that is critical to the continued expansion and enhancement of early language programs across the nation. (See the related article on FLAP in this issue of *Learning Languages*.)

Collaboration is another key to our success. We all belong to a long list of professional organizations, both foreign language specific and more general. We also belong to community and civic groups. As we write our checks for dues to these organizations, we should think about how these colleagues might collaborate with us in our advocacy mission. And, of course, our thoughts should lead us to action.

All NNELL members should read the winter 2000 issue of Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) *Curriculum Technology Quarterly* (Vol. 10, No. 2) because the *entire* issue is dedicated to foreign language education. The focus is on the integration of technology into foreign language learning. In addition to highlighting several outstanding foreign language/technology activities, the publication includes a Viewpoint Question/Answer piece with Paul Garcia, 2000 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) president. Kudos to Paul, a NNELL member of course, for his answer to the question on new trends in foreign language education. Paul identified "the most important trend" as the continuing growth of language programs for "all" students in the elementary level. Of course, we NNELL members love to hear this. But the most important thing is that the ASCD publications go beyond a foreign language audience. Superin-

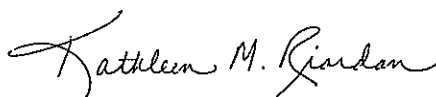
tendents, assistant superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, assistant principals, and teachers at all grade levels in all subject areas are ASCD's audience. This is a powerful example of advocacy and collaboration. Our thanks to Paul for the right message to a broad audience.

More good news! Christine Brown, NNELL charter member and 1999 president, is the president-elect of ACTFL. Christine will serve as ACTFL president in 2002. Congratulations from all of us! We look forward to an ongoing dialogue and collaboration with ACTFL on early language learning issues. Another powerful example of the potential of collaboration.

Building on the success of the NNELL events at ACTFL 2000 in

Boston, the executive committee and regional representatives are planning a quality program for ACTFL 2001 in Washington DC. We look forward to even more attendance at the NNELL sessions and activities, as well as at the early language sessions.

Our best wishes to all for a healthy 2001, a year of ongoing advocacy and collaboration.



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What Teachers Need to Know about Language: ERIC/CLL Special Project

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL) has published on its Web site a paper entitled "What Teachers Need to Know about Language," by Lily Wong Fillmore and Catherine E. Snow. Preparation of the paper was funded by the America Reads Challenge, a U.S. Department of Education initiative, as a special project to ERIC/CLL.

"What Teachers Need to Know about Language" describes the information teachers need about language and how they can use that knowledge to support language and literacy development in their classes. The paper is available at <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers/teachers.pdf>. Other ERIC/CLL publications arising from this special project are listed at <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers>. They include a commentary on the paper's implications for early childhood educators by Sue Bredekamp of the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition at <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers/commentary.pdf>. Also included are three ERIC digests:

- What Elementary Teachers Need to Know about Language: ERIC Digest <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0006fillmore.html>
- What Early Childhood Teachers Need to Know about Language: ERIC Digest <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0007bredekamp.html>
- Teaching Educators about Language: ERIC Digest <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0008teaching.html>

For more information about these or other ERIC/CLL products or services, please contact eric@cal.org.

Foreign Language Teaching: What We Can Learn from Other Countries

Refereed Article

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Introduction

It is well known in the United States that we have not kept up with the rest of the world in providing quality foreign language instruction to our students. During the last two decades, numerous reports and articles have decried the mediocrity of our students' foreign language skills and have called for improved language education (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999; Rosenbusch, 1995; Tucker, 1991). In his testimony before the Senate Government Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services on *The State of Foreign Language Capabilities in National Security and the Federal Government* (September 19, 2000), Secretary of Education Richard Riley stated that strengthening foreign language instruction in the nation will build a better workforce, ensure national security, and improve other areas of education.

In this spirit, a working group at the U.S. Department of Education was formed to promote and encourage the dissemination of case studies and up-to-date information on best practices (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). Their efforts are based on the premise that international comparisons offer much to leaders concerned with the improvement of schooling in the United States. Foreign language education was identified as a policy priority for the United States.

The Center for Applied Linguistics was asked by the U.S. Department of Education to explore what can be learned about language education around the world by 1) reviewing comparative language education studies, and 2) conducting interviews with language education professionals in countries whose policies and practices may inform those of the United States. The overall goal of the literature review and interviews was to look for methodologies, strategies, or policies that could help improve language teaching in this country.

To address this goal, we undertook a small-scale, 3-month exploratory study to collect information on interesting and illuminating features of foreign language education in various countries. Because of its limited scope, the study's goal was to include approximately 20 countries. We identified the countries based on whether they had educational systems similar to ours from which we could learn and whether we had contacts there with local educators. Initial contacts were made with 44 educators. As of the cutoff date for inclusion in the sample, we had received information from 19 countries. The information collected from each country was intended to be a snapshot of foreign language teaching as presented by one or two educators; it does not represent an official or comprehensive response. Hence, the data collected from each country was

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qualitative; the study was not designed to be empirical or to collect quantitative data.

Twenty-three educators from the following 19 countries participated in the study: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Israel, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Spain, and Thailand. Additional information on China, England, and Hong Kong was gathered from published comparative language education reports. The comparative language education studies reviewed include Dickson & Cumming, eds., 1996; Hamp-Lyons, Hood, Sengupta, Curtis, & Yan, 1999; National Institute for Educational Research, 1994; and Nuffield Languages Inquiry, 2000.

This article summarizes the report that was prepared. For a comprehensive version of the report, including a summary of other comparative language education studies, complete results, the list of educators contacted, and a sample protocol, see <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/countries.html>.

Background. This project was carried out by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. CAL collaborated on this study with Alister Cumming, Head of the Modern Language Centre (MLC) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto, Canada. The MLC, an internationally known center that conducts research in language education, has been involved in many international language studies, including the *Language Education Study* of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) that was used as a framework for the present study (Dickson & Cumming, eds., 1996). Other language education experts consulted on this project were G. Richard Tucker of Carnegie Mellon

University and Nadine Dutcher of the World Bank (retired).

Methods. The first task of the project was to identify language professionals in countries whose language education practices could inform those in the United States. Working with the IEA study's list of contacts, along with recommendations from scholars at OISE and the project consultants, we identified a number of such language professionals. From the 44 educators contacted, we obtained responses from 23 experts representing 19 countries.

Our second task was to draft a protocol on best practices to guide the interviews. The major parameters for our interviews were to 1) focus on successful policies and pedagogical principles; 2) include open-ended questions, for example, "Describe what works best in the language programs in your country;" 3) explore practices related to both commonly taught and less commonly taught languages; and 4) include questions that address some of the five focus areas identified at the June 2000 New Visions Conference—architecture of the profession, curriculum, research, teacher recruitment, and teacher development. (The New Visions conference was sponsored jointly by the Iowa State University National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

Next, the data were gathered via this protocol, either by e-mail or telephone interview. Educators from countries that had participated in the IEA study were also asked to update the descriptions of the language policy in their countries from the 1996 report.

The final and most challenging task entailed compiling the data and examining the responses for common elements that could inform U.S. policy and practice. Certain threads ran through many of the countries' responses. Naturally, it is important to keep in mind the unique sociolinguistic

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contexts for language use and instruction in each of the countries, including the profile of linguistic diversity within the country, the influence of neighboring countries with different languages in use, and the international status of the major societal languages. In response to the key question, "What do you think are three of the most successful aspects of foreign language education in your country?", we identified eight exemplary characteristics, six of which are described below. (The other two, technology and assessment, are described in the complete report.)

Overview of This Article. In the next section, "What Works in Other Countries," we present a summary of the results according to the major characteristics identified, so that comparisons can be made between countries where appropriate. These are the six characteristics: an early start; a well-articulated framework; rigorous teacher education; innovative methodologies; strong policy; and maintenance of heritage, regional, and indigenous languages.

In the final section, "What the United States Can Learn from This," we highlight what American educators can learn from these countries and we present nine recommendations that will help the foreign language profession address global educational concerns in the 21st century.

The article concludes with strong recommendations for U.S. educators to be more open to ideas from other countries and to become more involved in international collaboration in language teaching efforts.

What Works in Other Countries

An Early Start. Eight of our contributors, particularly those from European countries, identified an early start to foreign language learning as an important step toward achieving higher levels of language proficiency in multiple languages. Moreover, there

is a trend among all countries toward introducing foreign languages at earlier ages than before.

Table 1 summarizes the students' ages when the first foreign language is introduced to the majority of students. Of the 19 countries consulted, 10 have widespread or compulsory education in additional languages by third grade (age 8 or 9), while another 6 introduce foreign language in the upper elementary grades (by age 11 or 12). In many cases, a second foreign language is offered (or required) in the elementary grades. This contrasts starkly with the current situation in the United States, where, although there have been major increases in the number of early language programs, the majority of students do not start studying foreign language until age 14.

As an example, consider Luxembourg, a multilingual country where proficiency in at least three languages is expected. During one year of optional preschool education, 4-year-olds who do not speak Luxembourgish learn the language through immersion in everyday tasks and play. The same approach, augmented by explicit teaching in small groups, is adopted in 2 years of compulsory preschool education for 5- and 6-year-olds. Literacy is introduced in first grade to all children through the German language. In second grade, children are introduced to spoken French, and in third grade, written French is added to the curriculum. In most cases, German and French are formally taught on an oral and written basis throughout grades 3 to 6, with Luxembourgish remaining a vehicle for communication and interaction. Just 1 hour a week is devoted to oral Luxembourgish, while an average of 6 to 8 hours per week is devoted to the teaching of German and French (ages 7 to 12).

A Well-articulated Framework. Seven contributors noted the importance of a well-articulated curriculum framework that motivates and guides the development of a strategic, coher-

Table 1. Foreign Languages Offered and Age of Introduction

COUNTRY	1 ST FOREIGN LANGUAGE	STARTING AGE	COMPULSORY*	WIDELY AVAILABLE	ADDITIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGES
Australia	French	6		X	German, Greek, Italian, Japanese
Austria	English	6	2X#		French, Italian
Brazil	English	11	X		Spanish, French, German
Canada	French	10	X		German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Punjabi
Chile	English	> 12		X	French, German, Italian
Czech Republic	English and German	9	2X		French, Russian, Spanish
Denmark	English	10	2X		German, French, Spanish
Finland	English or other	9	2X		Swedish, Finish, German, French, Russian, Spanish, Italian
Germany	English or other	8	2X#		French, Spanish, Russian, Italian, Turkish
Israel	English	10	X		Hebrew, French, Arabic
Italy	English	8	X		French, German, Spanish, Russian
Kazakhstan	English	10	X		German, French
Luxembourg	German and French	6 and 7	2X		English, Italian, Spanish
Morocco	French	9	2X		English, Spanish, German
Netherlands	English	10	3X#		German, French
New Zealand	French	> 12			Japanese, Maori, German, Spanish
Peru	English	> 12	?		French, German
Spain	English	8	X		French, German, Italian, Portuguese
Thailand	English	6	X		French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic
United States	Spanish	14		X	French, German, Japanese

* 2X or 3X means that two or three languages are compulsory. # = number of compulsory languages depends on school type and may be fewer than indicated.

ent, and transparent system of foreign language education in their respective countries. Although such frameworks may exist at the international (as in the Council of Europe) and/or national levels and may differ to the extent of their specificity, they bring consistency and coherence to language education as they coordinate the efforts of the organizations and initiatives involved in the various sectors and stages of education (Nuffield Languages Inquiry, 2000, p. 84).

Most European countries have already adapted their foreign language learning and teaching at the national level to the overall frameworks and standards articulated by the Council of Europe's language policy and will continue to do so in the future (Council of Europe, 1996).

In Australia one of the most influential projects undertaken nationally was the Australian Language Levels (ALL) Project (Scarino et al., 1988). This national generic framework influenced further major national curriculum development, particularly in Asian languages, and subsequently provided a framework for collaborative syllabus development and a common exit assessment from senior secondary schooling.

Rigorous Teacher Education. As in all areas of education, well-trained teaching professionals were cited as important contributors to excellence in foreign language education.

Six educators from European countries as well as Morocco described how rigorous pre-service training that integrates academic subject studies with pedagogical studies and teaching practice is one of the most successful aspects of foreign language education in their respective countries.

In Morocco English teachers constitute one of the best-trained corps of teachers in the country. After a four-year degree in English from a university or teacher training college (with one year of specialization in

either literature or linguistics), students spend a year studying language teaching methodology and getting practical training at the Faculty of Education. The majority of the English faculty in universities and teacher training colleges hold doctoral or master-level degrees from British or American universities.

In both the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, the high levels of language proficiency of foreign language teachers are specifically related to study (or work) abroad programs. In the United Kingdom almost all full-time students in specialist language degree programs spend a year studying or working abroad as part of their degree requirements. In addition, the Foreign Language Assistants program enables schools to appoint higher education students from other countries as classroom aides and living exponents of their language (Nuffield Languages Inquiry, 2000, p. 38 and p. 90).

In addition to pre-service training, in-service training for foreign language teachers was considered one of the keys to success in several countries. Specifically, experts from five European countries and Thailand reported that teachers' awareness of additional training and participation in courses, seminars, and conferences is very high, and that most countries have an elaborate system of in-service training in place (for details on Europe, see Eurydice, 1995).

Innovative Methodologies. Ten of our contributors singled out innovative methodologies and methods as key contributors to successful language instruction. Two of the methodologies are integrating language and content learning and incorporating language learning strategies.

1. Integrating Language and Content Learning. Learning academic or other subjects through the medium of a foreign language has become increasingly popular in many of the responding countries. Two ways of integrating language and content learning can be

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identified that differ with respect to their underlying goals and concepts, their student populations, the status of the respective languages being used, and their organization and implementation. The programs in the corresponding countries can be subsumed under Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and immersion programs.

In CLIL, a foreign language is used as the medium of instruction in non-language subjects, frequently at the secondary school level, once students have acquired sufficient proficiency in the foreign language. For example, in Finland, CLIL in English spread rather quickly as a means of improving language proficiency following the recommendations of a national working party in 1990. A survey in 1996 showed that 5% of lower-stage schools (grades 1–6), 15% of upper-stage schools (grades 7–9), and 25% of upper secondary schools (grades 10–12) had CLIL in some form, ranging from a rather limited exposure (a short course or a dozen lessons) to a considerable part of the curriculum (Takala, Marsh, & Kikula, 1998).

In immersion programs or “bilingual programs” in Europe, usually primary school children are taught the subject matter exclusively, or to a large part, in a second or foreign language.

In Canada over the past three decades, one of the most successful and widely researched practices is immersion education, mainly for the English-speaking majority learning French (see Genesee, 1987; Swain & Johnson, 1997; Turnbull & Lapkin, eds., 1999).

In Germany and Australia many schools offer two-way immersion; that is, half the students are German or English speaking, respectively, and the other half are native speakers of the foreign language. The school day is spent with half the instruction in the respective mother tongue, the other in the foreign (or second) language. Berlin, for example, has 14 elementary

schools, with instruction in German and English, French, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Russian, Modern Greek, or Turkish, respectively.

2. Incorporating Language Learning Strategies. Several of our European experts reported that the recent focus on how to learn a foreign language and its incorporation into the curriculum has contributed to successful language education in their countries. Thus, in the Netherlands, learners are increasingly asked to reflect on, and become more responsible for, their own language learning. In Denmark the curriculum for the *Folkeskole* (grades 1–10) not only specifies certain central knowledge and proficiency areas for foreign language education but also students' awareness of language acquisition and appropriate communication strategies.

Strong Policy. Six contributors explicitly mentioned the importance of policy formulation because language and education policies at the national, regional, and local levels can facilitate or inhibit strong language education.

In Australia one of the most successful aspects of foreign language education relates to the National Policy on Languages (NPL) (Lo Bianco, 1987), which provided a framework for language education, initiated pluralism in the languages being offered, and supported projects for indigenous and first language education. The NPL subsequently led to policy development in each of the 8 states/territories of Australia and in turn to the near-universal introduction of languages at the primary level. As a result of public language policies, both awareness and interest in languages in Australia have increased.

In Israel a new language policy, introduced in 1996 and termed “three plus” (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999), requires the study of three compulsory languages—Hebrew, English, and Arabic—in addition to heritage, community, or world languages.

. . . language and education policies at the national, regional, and local levels can facilitate or inhibit strong language education.

Arguably one of the most influential policies with respect to foreign language learning is the status of languages within the school curriculum. In all European countries as well as in Brazil, Canada, Kazakhstan, Morocco, and Thailand, at least one foreign language is compulsory for all students. Frequently, foreign languages claim the same status as mathematics, reading, and writing, and are required for school-leaving examinations and/or university entrance.

Maintenance of Heritage, Regional, and Indigenous Languages. Several of our experts, including those from bilingual and multilingual countries as well as from English-speaking countries, described programs that aim to teach the mother tongue of speakers of languages other than the dominant one. These programs may contribute to foreign language success by helping maintain existing language resources in a country and by fostering language achievement among minority populations.

Some of the most successful practices in Canada are found in heritage language programs, according to our Canadian expert. Following the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1990), several provinces declared multiculturalism policies and about half of them (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan) have heritage language programs in their official school curricula. (For further details, see Canadian Education Association, 1991; Cumming, Mackay, & Sakyi, 1994; Cummins, ed., 1991; and Helms-Park, 2000.) In addition First Nations (or Native) language maintenance programs have been developed to promote specific First Nations languages in several provinces.

In New Zealand so-called "language nests" have been established for Maori, an official language with few first language speakers, and for some

Pacific Island languages. Beginning at the preschool level, children are immersed in the language, which leads them to a choice of bilingual classes or special schools where the language of instruction is Maori.

What the United States Can Learn from This

Start Language Education Early. According to our country experts, starting language teaching early gets good results. Most of the countries surveyed begin compulsory language instruction for the majority of students in the elementary grades, while most schools in the United States do not offer foreign language classes until middle or high school. A review carried out by a group of researchers at the request of the European Commission indicates that early language learning can have a very positive effect on students with respect to fostering language skills, a positive attitude toward other languages and cultures, and increased self-esteem (Blondin, et al., 1998; see also Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, 1999).

Learn from Others. Other countries face issues similar to ours. In particular, countries like Australia and the United Kingdom share the United States' dependence on English, leaving the country vulnerable and dependent on the linguistic competence and good will of others. It is clear from the results of this study that there is much to learn from other countries' experiences.

Conduct Long-term Research. Questions such as the following need to be addressed: At what age is it best to start language instruction? What proficiency levels are reachable by what methods? Does content-based instruction provide substantially better results than language-based instruction? The U.S. education system can benefit greatly by the

development of a long-term research agenda that incorporates longitudinal studies of a variety of early language learning models of instruction.

Provide Stronger Leadership.

Many of the countries described leadership and collaboration between local school authorities and the national level as helping foster a stronger language education program. In Europe the Council of Europe's focus on languages has had a very positive effect on language education and research. A stronger and more coherent governmentwide effort is needed in the United States to create an atmosphere and an opportunity to improve language education.

Identify How Technology Can Improve Language Instruction. Many of the countries surveyed are integrating technology into instruction to increase interaction with other speakers of the language and improve class instruction. But a major question remains about how successful technology really is in improving foreign language instruction. The findings call out for specific research on the best uses of technology to increase students' language proficiency.

Improve Teacher Education. Some countries, especially Finland, recruit teachers from among the best high school graduates. Other countries, like Morocco, report that their (English) language teachers are some of the best-trained teachers in the country. The United States needs to conduct a more in-depth investigation into how some countries are recruiting high caliber students to go into teaching and how others are providing top quality in-service and pre-service training.

Develop Appropriate Language Assessment. Although most countries did not highlight the use of appropriate language assessment instruments as an important aspect of their language

programs, the development and implementation of such instruments is an area on which U.S. educators need to focus additional attention.

Designate Foreign Language as a Core Subject. In almost all the countries reviewed with successful language education, foreign language is a core subject in the curriculum and has the same status as other core subjects such as mathematics, writing, and reading. In the United States, experience has shown that districts and schools with foreign language study as part of a core curriculum have a more rigorous approach to curriculum development, professional development, assessment, articulation, and other key program areas.

Take Advantage of the Socio-linguistic Context. The United States can find a diversity of languages spoken within its borders and in the countries with which it shares borders. American educators need to take advantage of the context in which they live by promoting the learning of languages (often called heritage languages) spoken by the many immigrant and indigenous communities within the United States as well as the languages of neighboring Canada and Mexico (French and Spanish in addition to a wide range of indigenous languages). One promising approach is two-way immersion, where equal numbers of language minority and language majority students study together and become bilingual in both languages of instruction.

Conclusion

It is apparent from this preliminary study that Americans have a lot to learn from the way other countries offer language education in their schools. All too often U.S. parents and educators feel that they do not have anything to learn from other countries and must only look to other examples

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within our own country. Often, for example, when it is suggested to educators to look to Canadian immersion research for rationale in implementing intensive language programs in U.S. elementary schools, the response is that their school boards will not accept research that was conducted outside the United States. The time is now for Americans to open their ears and eyes to the successes of language education around the world. The entire language education profession could benefit greatly from more systematic international collaboration in our language teaching efforts.

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SPANISH POSITION AVAILABLE

The Rippowam Cisqua School is seeking a FLES Spanish Teacher to work with 3rd and 4th grade students in Northern Westchester beginning September 2001.

For further information, contact: **Marylea Franz**
 Rippowam Cisqua School
 325 W. Patent Rd.
 Mount Kisco, NY 10549
 Telephone: 914-666-3018, Ext. 313
 Fax: 914-666-2339
 E-mail: Marylea_Franz@rcsny.org

News from NNELL State Reps: Southern Region

A REPORT TO THE NNELL EXECUTIVE BOARD, ACTFL 2000

Prepared by Jan Kucerik, NNELL Southern Representative

All state representatives in the Southern region were contacted at least four times during 2000. The first mailing was to send each state rep a summary of the minutes of the 1999 Board meeting. Secondly, address lists of each NNELL member categorized by state was sent to each state representative. The remaining mailings were a request for information for regional reports and networking session attendance forms. In an effort to improve communication within the region, an address list of state reps was also established on e-mail.

In a recent request for information, state reps were asked to summarize networking sessions and noteworthy accomplishments as well as challenges and concerns. They were also asked to either commit to continue to serve as state representative or name a replacement. The following summarizes the information from several states received from this inquiry.

Florida

Janice Johnson ended her three-year tenure as Florida state representative by organizing an informative, effective, and very well attended NNELL pre-conference workshop at the FFLA (Florida Foreign Language Association) conference held in Daytona Beach October 12–14. The session, scheduled for 2 hours, extended well beyond the scheduled time as participants shared information about FLES program models, staffing concerns, scheduling, curriculum, and innovations. Four counties shared the backgrounds, philosophies, strengths and challenges of their programs. Connections were made and lines of communications fortified as more than 50 participants learned about NNELL as a valuable resource of information for beginning and sustaining successful programs.

A Saturday morning content-based FLES workshop, presented by Mimi Met, was a highlight of the FFLA Conference, which has demonstrated a commitment to offer more and more high-quality FLES sessions.

The work that Janice has done in her state on behalf of NNELL has resulted in a growing awareness of FFLA members in early language issues and a strengthened network of FLES professionals. She has held a seat on the FFLA Board and has

consistently represented NNELL and early language issues in that body. She is expecting her first child in early December and will be giving up her role as Florida state rep in order to concentrate on her new family. Janice is to be congratulated for the positive results of her dedicated efforts on behalf of NNELL.

North Carolina

Susan Decker is the North Carolina state representative. Susan has been very active on behalf of NNELL in her state, having personally participated in several letter-writing campaigns and using e-mail to encourage members statewide to do the same. Two of her letters were directed to school districts that were contemplating the elimination of their FLES programs. Her third initiative related to the restructuring of the K–12 certification in North Carolina. That issue is still pending, although ALL (Advocates for Language Learning) is working closely with the State Board of Education on the matter.

Susan arranged for a panel of speakers at a continental breakfast during the recent FLANC (Foreign Language Association of North Carolina) to speak about early language issues. Although she was disappointed with the sparse attendance,

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the focus of the discussion was unification of K–12 programs, an important issue in North Carolina. Susan is working to help all foreign language teachers in her state see NNELL and its mission of advocacy as relevant to all K–12 teachers. She believes that if the teachers of North Carolina worked as a K–12 team, instead of being fragmented by the labels of elementary and secondary, they could get closer to realizing their vision of developing real fluency in students. It was at this session that Susan encouraged NNELL membership.

NNELL networking and memberships efforts continued during Susan's session, *Get out your Camcorder!* using video to enhance classroom instruction.

Challenges/Concerns Susan Decker writes: "North Carolina's FLES programs are being steadily reduced in number as districts choose to use their available funds for other priorities. In spite of the 1984 mandate, school districts have the right to offer elementary foreign language or not, depending on their funds and their needs. The districts that see the value, whether they believe in the value of foreign language study or simply need to provide their classroom teachers with a planning time, will keep their programs. Those who choose to do otherwise do not want to listen to advocacy rhetoric."

Believing that school boards will listen more to parents, Susan goes on to identify parents as the group that needs to be targeted by NNELL in order to build strong FLES programs.

Susan reports that another challenge for North Carolina is recruiting new members. Although networking sessions with membership information are held at every FLANC meeting and information and membership forms are included in each issue of the *Catalyst*, FLANC's publication, membership has not increased significantly in recent years. Susan is perplexed by the reluctance of many FLES teachers in

her state to join NNELL and would like to hear from some of the states with large memberships with ideas for attacking this concern.

Susan will continue as the North Carolina state representative.

South Carolina

State representative Dr. Sharon McCullough remains an active NNELL supporter and early-language-issues leader for her state. She sits on the Executive Board of SCFLTA (South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers Association) as the NNELL representative. The 2000 NNELL networking session held in March at SCFLTA was well attended. Rita Couet and Sharon McCullough taught sample lessons from *Teacher to Teacher*, after which teachers were able to purchase copies of the book. Kay Hewitt Hoag spoke on the progress FLES is making in South Carolina and had advocacy packets available.

Sharon has contacted all the foreign language coordinators in her state, asking them to encourage membership in NNELL among their FLES teachers. Sharon also reports that there are two additional districts in her state with new FLES programs. They are Georgetown County and Spartanburg, District 6.

Providing opportunities for students to get above the recall and knowledge levels to more challenging and appealing activities is something Dr. McCullough would like to share with colleagues. She would like to submit an article to *Learning Languages*.

SCOLT will meet in Myrtle Beach next March. At that conference, the South Carolina chapter of NNELL will host a NNELL networking session. The *Teacher to Teacher* publication will be highlighted. Curriculum development issues for elementary programs will also be addressed.

Sharon will continue to serve as the South Carolina state representative.

Advocacy for Foreign Language Education: A Case in Point

Martie Semmer
Breckenridge, Colorado

As a foreign language educator, I was compelled to educate at least one person. . . .

For as long as I can remember the media has supported the value of adults being bilingual and the benefits that adults who know more than one language offer our society. On the other hand, the media does not support academic and long-sequence Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade (PK-12) foreign language education, nor academic programs that provide the opportunity to become biliterate or multiliterate for children whose first language is not English. As a result, students graduate from our schools and are sent into the world as adults inadequately prepared to function fully in a worldwide community.

When I saw yet one more piece on the need for bilingual skills, I was livid! As a foreign language educator, I was compelled to educate at least one person, and that was the one person from the editorial staff of *The Denver Post* whose job it was to read all the letters sent by e-mail! I never thought it would go any further. Then on the evening of Thursday, January 4, 2001, I had a phone message saying *The Denver Post* would like permission to print the article! Wow! I couldn't believe it! The *Post's* editorial and my response appear below; both are reprinted with permission from the publisher.

Bilingual Police Needed

As the population grows so does the need for public servants who can communicate in more than one language.

Bilingual police officers are badly needed. Those who speak Spanish in addition to English are the most valuable because of the state's—and the nation's—large Spanish-speaking populations.

Many area communities also are experiencing an increase in Russian and Asian languages.

Few departments compensate officers extra for such skills. But bilingual officers should be compensated more for providing valuable translation services for their cities.

Departments that provide officers with language instruction are on the right track, but new recruits should already be bilingual or speak a variety of languages.

Having such representatives benefits the police as well as the community. Non-English speakers feel more comfortable cooperating with officers who speak their language, and

police receive fresh information that results in quick problem solving.

Although Westminster pays its officers a bonus for their bilingual skills, Denver and Aurora—cities that have high concentrations of immigrants—do not.

Members of the Denver Police Latino/a Organization have lamented the lack of additional compensation for officers who are often ordered to provide translation services outside their districts to the detriments of their own workloads.

Denver, however, is in the process of making a pitch to divide pay scales in order to compensate those officers who speak more than one language. If passed, the additional pay, expected to be taken up during the next collective bargaining session, could start as soon as August.

Aurora's administration would like to provide additional pay for bilingual officers, but it, too, has to go through a collective bargaining process.

Westminster doesn't have collective bargaining.

Police are public servants, who must be able to communicate out on

the streets. Bilingual skills save us all money and time in the long run.

Support of Bilingual Ed a Smart Thing to Do

Re: "Bilingual Police Needed," Jan. 1 editorial.

"Olé" for *The Denver Post* editorial board in citing the need for bilingual police. But your solution is way too simplistic, even for the short term. Besides, this is just a minor symptom of a much greater ill: that mainstream society does not value language diversity and cultural diversity. In the world of today and tomorrow, the continued arrogance and lack of multiple perspectives and problem-solving skills of our current monolingual and monocultural majority will continue to damage relations with neighbors near and far. It is obvious that we like "foreign things" but not "foreign people." As a country made up of immigrants, we have maintained the ugly tradition of being unfriendly to those who have taken the unwanted, low-paying jobs that bolster the economy.

Our public education system must take the lead so that our young people leave our schools with the multilingual, multicultural, and multiliterate skills essential to succeed in a multifaceted world. It is already understood that all students need to begin the academic basics in preschool and kindergarten, and these skills are tested among the international community. On the other hand, U.S. students don't even participate in international studies/tests to determine their level of international communication skills; perhaps we already know that the United States ranks last.

The increasing number of non-English-speaking families in our communities and their children who

enter our schools are rich resources for enhancing the critical multilingual, multicultural, and multiliterate skills needed to function in and contribute to our pluralistic society. Currently, our schools are doing an outstanding job of killing the non-English heritage of numerous children and their families. Research studies indicate that when children academically develop their heritage language along with English language skills throughout their school careers, they reach a higher degree of proficiency in English and their overall academic performance improves. Real learning of English or a foreign language—which leads to high proficiency levels—is a long-term process, just like learning math or science. The flip side is that English-speaking children are being deprived of the necessary academic English Plus skills, which includes academic PK–12 foreign language education.

Imagine if PK–12 foreign language education becomes an academic basic for all. Imagine if children and the families of non-English-speaking language and cultural background are encouraged to maintain and develop literacy skills in more than one language. Imagine if English Plus is a given. Then we will no longer experience the lack of "bilingual police" or other bilingual employees or bilingual professionals. Then our society will truly advance. Let's make a New Year's resolution to take those first steps towards a multilingual, multicultural, and multiliterate community.

— Martie Semmer
Breckenridge

Announcing a New Resource for K-12 Foreign Language Assessment

Lynn Thompson
Center for Applied Linguistics
Washington, D.C. and
National K-12 Foreign Language
Resource Center
Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

We are pleased to announce the creation of an on-line K-12 foreign language assessment resource entitled *Directory of K-12 Foreign Language Assessment Instruments and Resources* which offers a wealth of information on foreign language assessment. Three different resources are offered through this directory: 1) an annotated listing of the latest foreign language assessment Web sites; 2) an annotated listing of recent printed articles, papers, and books on assessment; and 3) a searchable database of detailed descriptions of more than 200 foreign language assessments currently in use in North America, Guam, Australia, and Europe.

Development of the Directory

The directory is based on earlier assessment collections assembled by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) as part of the Performance Assessment Initiative of the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC) at Iowa State University. In 1996-98, two annotated bibliographies of foreign language assessment resources were developed containing detailed descriptions of foreign language assessment instruments including instruments that are published and available on the Internet. In 1999 these earlier bibliographies were expanded by collecting foreign language assessment instru-

ments for grades 9-12 and updating the annotated listings of published resources and Internet resources. We also added a new feature: this new collection was made available through the CAL as the "On-line Foreign Language Resources Guide." As of January 2001, this grade 9-12 guide has been expanded to a K-12 collection that includes updated descriptions of many of the instruments described in the 1998 bibliography. This latest collection, *Directory of K-12 Foreign Language Assessment Instruments and Resources*, has been published on the Web site of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (www.cal.org/ericcll/k12assessment/) to enhance its accessibility and to place it in proximity to a rich collection of other foreign language teaching resources (such as reports, digests, and resource guides, all related to various aspects of foreign language teaching, learning, and assessment). The directory may also be accessed through both the CAL (www.cal.org/k12nflrc) and the NFLRC Web sites (www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc).

Advantages of an On-line Publication

Publishing on-line offers a number of distinct advantages. The searchable database takes advantage of the interactive nature of the Internet, allowing users to customize their searches according to numerous criteria (e.g.,

The searchable database takes advantage of the interactive nature of the Internet, allowing users to customize their searches according to numerous criteria. . . .

key words in the title, language, school level, skill assessed). Users also can determine how much of the information they need at a given time and can print only that from the Web site. For the compilers, this format allows for continuous enhancement and updating of the directory. In addition, users may also contribute a description of their own assessment instrument(s) by filling out an interactive assessment submission form. Approximately half of the current entries in the database were collected or updated through the Internet.

Assessment Instrument Descriptions

The descriptions of the assessment instruments are very detailed. In addition to extensive information about the instrument itself, the description provides the name and address (often including e-mail and Web site) of a person to contact for more information. The following examples were among the 142 assessment instruments resulting from a search according to skill (speaking).

Directory of K–12 Foreign Language Assessment Instruments and Resources

Title: *FLES Oral Assessment Kit*

Test language: Spanish

Availability: Unrestricted

Current users: Columbus Public Schools, OH

Type of FL program: FLES

Intended grade level: K–5

Intended test use: Achievement, proficiency

Skills tested: Speaking, listening

Test author: Karen Kendall-Sperry

Publication date: 1995

Test cost: None

Test length: 20–25 minutes per child

Test materials: Question cards, picture to describe

Test format: Short answer, discrete point, picture description

Scoring method: Holistic

Description: This individually administered speaking and listening

assessment is appropriate for all languages. For ease of administration, the examination is on cards. These cards serve as written or visual prompts for the student, or as aural prompts (the teacher reads the card without showing it to the students). Students are asked to identify objects, guess colors, count, and describe a picture. Answers may or may not be scripted. They are rated using a three-point rubric: answering without hesitation is awarded a plus; answering after repeated prompting is awarded a check; if a student cannot respond, a minus is given. Students are engaged metacognitively by being asked to verbalize their reactions to the test situation. Immediate feedback is provided to the student.

Test development and technical information: This teacher-made assessment instrument was field tested with K–5 students in May 1995.

Parallel versions in other languages:

Currently available only in Spanish, but appropriate for all languages

Contact: Dr. Robert Robison
Worthington Schools
752 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085

Title: *PALS: Performance Assessment for Language Students*

Test language: German

Availability: Restricted (performance tasks for teacher use only)

Current users: Middle and high school foreign language teachers in Fairfax County, Virginia

Type of FL program: Middle/high school sequential foreign language

Intended grade level: 7–12

Intended test use: Proficiency, program evaluation

Skills tested: Speaking, writing

Test author: Fairfax County teachers

Publication date: 1998

Test cost: None

Test length: Oral (15 minutes); written (30–45 minutes)

Test materials: Rubrics, tasks, scoring devices, audio taperecorder

Test format: Short answer, student self assessment (program component)

Scoring method: Holistic, analytic

Description: This group-administered speaking and writing assessment is

based on the school curriculum and the national standards. Test components consist of speaking and writing tasks, analytic and holistic rubrics, and score conversion charts. Students are asked to respond orally to a verbal prompt and in writing to a written prompt. The program includes steps to assist students in self assessment and in devising their own "Proficiency Improvement Plan."

Test development and technical information: This assessment is teacher made and for in-house use. It has been field tested and in use for two years. The rubrics can be accessed from a Web site: www.fcps.k12.va.us/DIS/OHSICS/forlang/

Parallel versions in other languages:

French, Spanish

Contact: Ms. Martha Abbott
Foreign Language Coordinator
Fairfax County Public Schools
7423 Camp Alger Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22042
Phone: (703) 208-7722

E-mail: mabbott@fc.fcps.k12.va.us

Web page: www.fcps.k12.va.us/DIS/OHSICS/forlang/

Future Goals for the *Directory of K-12 Foreign Language Assessment Instruments and Resources*

The goal of this directory is to provide the latest information on assessment practices in foreign language education through continuously expanding the searchable assessment instrument database and the annotated lists of Internet and printed assessment resources. In order to meet this goal, we need the help of readers. If you have an assessment instrument that you have developed or have come across an excellent resource that is not listed on our site, please let Lynn Thompson know by either contacting her through the Web site, or e-mailing directly to lynn@cal.org.

New Publication on High-Quality Early Language Programs

Perspectives on Policy and Practice: Establishing High-Quality Foreign Language Programs in Elementary Schools, by Douglas Gilzow and Nancy Rhodes, has just been published by the LAB at Brown University (2000). As an increasing number of school districts across the country make commitments to foreign language education for younger learners, educators and administrators are posing a number of key questions: Should foreign language study be part of the core curriculum? Are these programs suitable for districts that are not well funded? What does a successful program look like? What kind of scheduling, staffing, and long-term maintenance are involved? How should a school decide which languages to teach? Will there be lasting results?

The Center for Applied Linguistics has identified seven highly successful programs as models in providing foreign language instruction to elementary and middle school students. Based on the experiences of these and other programs, as well as on recent research, the 12-page perspectives paper offers invaluable information for administrators, teachers, and parents who are considering establishing early foreign language programs in their own communities.

For single copies of the publication, please send an e-mail to: publications@lab.brown.edu or visit the LAB online catalog at www.lab.brown.edu.

Activities for Your Classroom

Body Parties: les parties du corps

Marilyn Sable
Pocantico Hills Central School
Sleepy Hollow, New York

Level: French or any other language; Middle School—grades 5 and 6

"Body Parties" or giant body part people is the culminating activity of a unit on body parts. It is an arts and crafts project that students do mostly at home. This project is a lot of fun and makes a great bulletin board exhibit (see photo on next page). Prior to "body parties" we picked the most disgusting bloody and bruised body parts out of a "magic" Halloween bag. We responded totally and physically to each item: we tossed eyeballs back and forth, stuck out tongues, smelled feet, whispered sweet nothings into cut-off ears, tangoed with a hand and a shirt sleeve, batted eyelashes, raised eyebrows, and polished nails. We pointed, we named, we labeled. We discussed the "verb-al" capabilities of each body part: The mouth can eat and speak—*la bouche* (mouth), *manger* (to eat), *parler* (to speak); the tongue can taste—*la langue* (tongue), *goûter* (to taste); the feet can walk, run, and jump—*les pieds* (feet), *marcher* (to walk), *courir* (to run), *sauter* (to jump); etc. We compared idioms. A Frenchman wouldn't be caught dead putting his foot in his mouth; he puts his feet in his plate. Whereas Americans merely "split hairs," the French "cut a hair in four," etc. We played *Jacques a dit* (Jacques said), we made a whole class human chain. We worked out to *Tête* (head), *épaules* (shoulders), *genoux* (knees), *et pieds* (toes). We planted cabbages in bizarre ways *Savez-vous planter les*

choux? (Do you know how to plant the cabbages?) We sang and plucked *Alouette*. To the tune of *Alouette*, we ran the gamut of diseases in Barbara MacArthur's *Mal à la Tête*. In Josée Vachon's *Le remède à son talon*, we searched for cures. We scratched to Patti Lozano's *Ça me gratte la figure* and to Suzanne Pinel's *J'ai la varicelle*. We discoed with Étienne in Steven Langlois' *Rocumentaire* and threw our entire bodies and souls into *le Hoogie Boogie*.

Targeted Standards:

Communication

- 1.3 Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Cultures

- 2.2 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Connections

- 3.1 Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Comparisons

- 4.2 Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Communities

- 5.2 Students show evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using

the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand and manipulate body-part vocabulary.
2. Students will create an original arts and crafts personality using mixed media.

Materials:

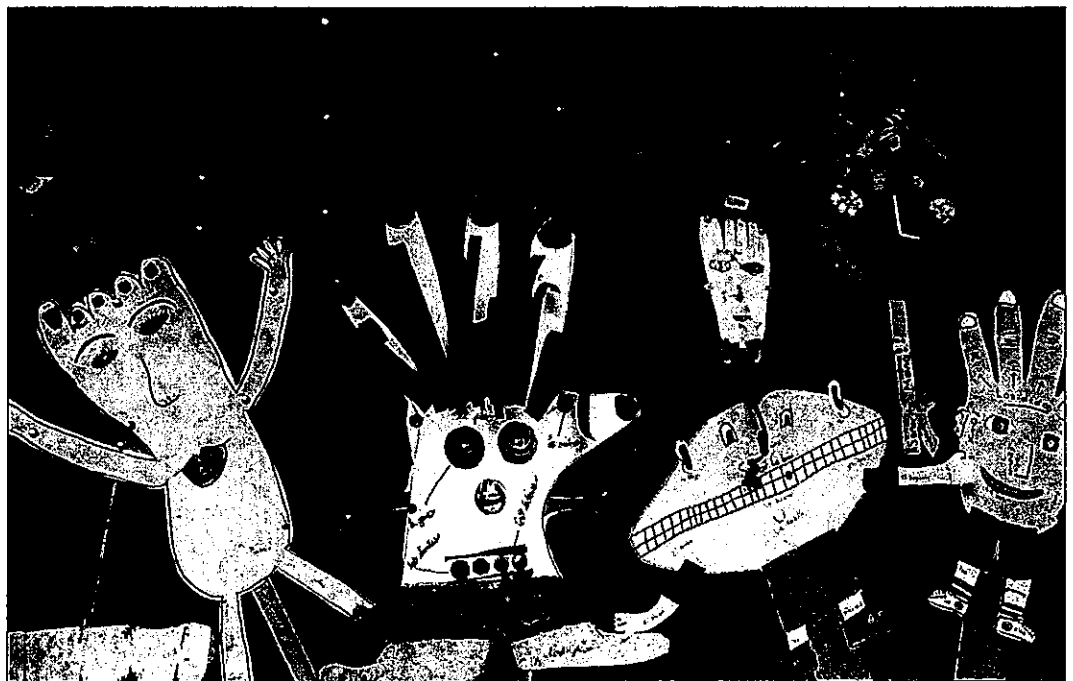
1. For the body: poster board, cardboard, plastic board, styrofoam, wood, etc.
2. Mounting stick: yardstick, ruler, metal stick, paint stirrer, etc.
3. Glue, tape, staples, velcro, etc. Stickers, pictures, pompoms, feathers, fur, pasta, beans, ice cream cones, fabric, ribbon, pipe cleaners, streamers, glitter, sponges, earrings, costume jewelry, cotton, shells, candy, soup, nuts, etc.

Procedures:

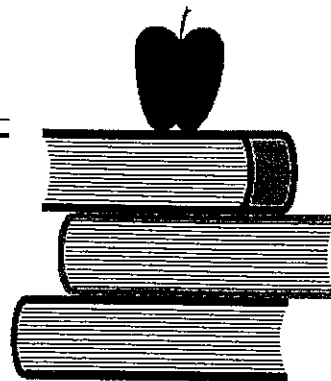
- Choose your favorite body part: hand, foot, heart, nose, mouth, tongue, eye(s), ear(s), etc.

- Make a giant version of the body part. Cut out its form. This will be the focus of your person.
- Give your person a name, using the title *Monsieur, Madame, or Mademoiselle*.
- Give your body-part person arms, legs, eyes, nose, mouth, etc.
- Label all body parts in French. Write clearly and double check your spelling.
- Mount your person on some kind of a stick so that you can hold it up and move it like a puppet.
- Give your creation a French twist: Eiffel Tower earrings perhaps; a Basque beret; lots of bracelets; a *fleur de lis* emblem; a French flag, etc.
- Be prepared to present your person.
- Be creative! Have fun!
- *Small Groups:* Write and perform a puppet show.
- *Whole class:* Students come up individually. The class creates a personality profile around each body person.
- *Individual:* Write a biography for your person.

Students' arts-and-crafts projects displayed on classroom bulletin board for les parties du corps unit.



Classroom Resources



For Any Foreign Language

Lakeshore Learning Materials, 2695 E. Dominguez St., PO Box 6261, Carson, CA 90749; www.lakeshorelearning.com; Phone: 800-421-5354 or 310-537-8600; Fax: 310-537-5403.

Lakeshore Learning Materials has a wealth of reasonably priced resources for foreign language classes, from manipulatives, musical instruments, and art materials to pocket charts, puppets, and plastic fruit. These resources will help you organize your supplies, integrate your curriculum with manipulatives for interdisciplinary language lessons (the “connections” goal of the standards!), and illustrate your lessons with a variety of visuals. Contact them for a full catalog. The following lists describe catalog highlights for language classes:

Teacher Resources

- Easels for big books
- Stands for chart paper and books
- Rolling carts
- Freestanding, portable white boards for learning centers
- Sentence strips, chart paper pads
- Pocket charts with differently shaped pockets in a variety of sizes that hold sentence strips and/or pictures (one chart has a velcro top and pockets on the bottom to allow students to illustrate a story, the life-cycle of a frog, etc.)
- Supplies for any art project (paints, markers, an extensive array of collage materials—rhinestones, beads, buttons, pre-cut paper shapes, crinkle strips, pipe cleaners, and lots more)

Literacy Materials

- Cloth characters for classic children’s books and songs (such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*, and *Corduroy*, *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*, *The*

Wheels on the Bus, *Five Green and Speckled Frogs*, *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie*—with the old lady sewn on the apron so that the students can slip the food into her mouth) to be used with storytelling aprons and felt/velcro tabletop easels or pocket charts

- Storytelling gloves with sticky glove puppets for many classic stories such as, *The Three Bears*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Itsy Bitsy Spider*, and *Five Little Ducks*
- Activity kit for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* that includes a cloth caterpillar puppet (that turns inside-out to form a butterfly) and large laminated food props (of the book illustrations by Eric Carle) to slip over the caterpillar on your arm
- Soft activity walls of the farm, the city, and ocean scenes complete with stuffed cloth shapes of the animals, plants, and transportation
- Hats and child-sized uniforms from different careers
- Plastic manipulatives—sets of food for lunch, dinner, and breakfast, fruit and vegetable assortments, cooking utensils and dishes, tubs of small plastic manipulatives (animals—insects, wild animals, sea life), food and nutrition, space, seasons and weather, transportation, and all about me

Math Materials

- Cards for sorting, graphing, patterning, and counting
- Small plastic manipulatives—fruit, cars, animals, shapes
- Manipulatives for the overhead projector in different shapes

Science Materials

- A nursery for hatching butterflies
- Stamps for each stage in the life cycle of a frog, a plant, or a butterfly
- An 18" green frog to dress with colorful clothing for the four seasons
- Plus animal manipulatives that depict the food chain, animals that hatch from

- eggs, how a hermit crab survives
- A growing box for planting seeds that allows students to see (and measure) how plants grow under the ground
- sets of realistic plastic pond or sea animals

Multicultural Materials

- Musical instruments (a Chilean rainstick, a Mexican guiro, a Zulu marimba, a West African balaphon)
- Poster sets of children of the world, families, and emotions
- multi-ethnic puppets and soft dolls (Asian, Black, White, and Hispanic and community workers)
- People Shapes™—chipboard shapes in 12 People Colors™ to make puppets with assorted clothing, yarn for hair, and materials for creating faces and decorating clothing
- Plastic foods from many cultures—a basket of breads from around the world, sets of Italian, Chinese, Mexican, or Japanese foods
- Child-sized clothing from different cultures (a Mexican *falda* and *blusa*, a Nigerian *lro*, *buda*, and *gele*, a Vietnamese *ao dai*, a Ghanaian *dashiki* and *kuka*, a Guatemalan *toto* and *camisa*, and a Japanese *happi* coat)

Sunday, May 7, 2000

Dear Myriam,

I heard you speak and attended one of your wonderful workshops at Connecticut COLT recently. But I was even more impressed with your column in the latest issue of Learning Languages [Vol. 5, No. 2]. It was the first time I had seen my job described in such exact terms. You really understand and know what's going on.

Presently, I travel to two schools and teach one class of fifth grade (45 minutes) and ten sections of grades 2, 3, and 4 (15 minutes each) everyday. I have no classroom to call my own in either school but share some "space" in the elementary school with the reading consultants. That, however, next year may become a memory; for several years my space consisted of a cabinet on wheels and a folding chair in the hallway. Of course, add to that the responsibilities of curriculum and assessment. Plus, I don't even get the equivalent planning time of other part-time "specials" teachers. The physical, emotional, and intellectual drain at the end of the day is tremendous. Burnout is a distinct possibility. The love of teaching Spanish, professional development opportunities to enable me to be with my peers, support from my principal and other staff members, and the positive response from the children and parents are things that keep me going. My goal is to be in one school and serve the entire PK to 4 population. That, however, according to my administrator, won't be a possibility for years.

I have had my job for four years now. In fact, one year I even taught in three schools per day; another year I taught thirteen 15-minute classes a day in two schools. I firmly believe that my schedule—as well as those of many, many other FLES teachers—is just too much! I hope that NNELL someday will have the political clout to change the mindset of some district administrators who create such schedules and don't understand how difficult they are and the toll they take on their dedicated teachers. Which brings me to the reason I am writing you.

On the Nandu listserv—nandu@caltalk.cal.org—periodically contributors (other than me) have brought up the issue of overscheduling and burnout. I believe the appearance of your Learning Languages letter on the listserv would be a tremendous service to the dedicated FLES teachers out there who—like me—feel like a lone voice crying in the desert. Perhaps, too, membership in NNELL would increase, adding to the power of NNELL's voice.

Thanks for listening. This issue of Learning Languages was the best ever!

Sincerely,

Kathy Siddons

What's the Flap about FLAP?

Joint National Committee for Languages
(Adapted from the JNCL-NCLIS Web site:
www.languagepolicy.org)

FLAP Is in Trouble

The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) has provided key funding for elementary school foreign language programs for many NNELL members in recent years. Two political processes are currently affecting the future of FLAP: appropriations and reauthorization. There are several bills currently "out" in both houses of Congress that propose to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (last reauthorized in 1994 as the "Improving America's Schools Act"). Although these two plans are only proposals and not formal legislation, Congress will soon begin work on the reauthorization of ESEA. Therefore, it is important that NNELL members be informed about this process and that they advocate for this key federal support for early language learning.

The President

In the first week of his presidency, President Bush announced his education plan, "No Child Left Behind." The plan consists of seven performance-based titles that stress accountability, parent choice, and annual assessments. Bush's education plan, however, fails to include any provisions for the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP).

The same week, Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) and the New Democrats announced a counterpart to Bush's proposal, "The Public Education Reinvestment, Reinvention and Responsibility Act" (Three R's). Like

the Bush plan, Lieberman's proposal does not include FLAP.

The Senate

In the spring of 1999, Senator Kennedy introduced S. 1180, the "Educational Excellence for All Children Act," which reauthorizes the entire ESEA, and which strengthens FLAP. Representative Clay introduced this same bill in the House as H.R. 1960. At this time, no floor action has been taken on either bill. Senator Cochran introduced S. 601, the "Foreign Language Improvement Amendments of 1999," which also strengthens FLAP.

On March 9, 2000, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) passed S. 2, its version of the ESEA reauthorization, by a party-line vote. While Republicans and Democrats continue to clash along ideological lines (Republicans support increased flexibility and decreased federal involvement in local education; Democrats support strengthening and improving federal education programs), they have left FLAP largely untouched.

The House of Representatives

The following legislation has passed the House: H.R. 1995, the "Teacher Empowerment Act;" H.R. 2300, the "Academic Achievement for All Act" (a.k.a. Straight A's), and H.R. 2, the "Student Results Act." All three are part of a House attempt to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Although the ESEA

As members of
NNELL . . . it is
time to write
letters to your
members of
Congress. . . .

reauthorization will determine which programs are allowed to be funded after it becomes law, it does not affect FY 2000 funding for any programs. However, the three House bills that have passed do not mention the Foreign Language Assistance Program. Sources at the House Committee on Education and the Workforce have told JNCL that House Republicans have decided to eliminate FLAP and similar smaller programs in their attempts to de-federalize public education.

The attacks on FLAP have continued as the House Committee on Education and the Workforce marks up its fourth ESEA reauthorization bill, H.R. 4141, the "Education OPTIONS (Education Opportunities To Protect and Invest In Our Nation's Students) Act," also known as the "State and Local Transferability Act." This is a large block grant, which appears to be

the committee's final step in reauthorization, and which eliminates FLAP and other federal education programs by omission.

NNELL Members' Advocacy Urgently Needed

As members of NNELL and as professionals committed to early language learning programs for our nation's children, it is time to write letters to your members of Congress to let them know that the Foreign Language Assistance Program should be maintained and strengthened. It is important that you write to both your senators and representatives and that you urge them to support FLAP and include it in this year's reauthorization of ESEA. Go to the JNCL Web site (www.languagepolicy.org) to see a sample letter to a senator and one to a representative that you can personalize.

NOMINATIONS OPEN: NNELL Executive Board for Fall 2001

NNELL is currently seeking nominees for second vice-president and secretary. Nominations for these positions should be made in the form of a letter or e-mail. Include the nominee's name, home address, and telephone number. Nominees must be current NNELL members. The second vice-president serves a one-year term, then succeeds to first vice-president, president, and past-president, serving for a total of four years. The secretary serves for two years and is responsible for the minutes of the board meetings and maintaining the historical records. Nominees must be able to attend the annual board meeting, which is held one or two days prior to the ACTFL annual meeting in November.

Please send letters or e-mails of nomination no later than April 2, 2001, to Myriam Met, Chair, Nomination Committee, NFLC, 1029 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005. E-mail: mmet@nflc.org. Mail ballots will be sent to members in April. The results will be announced in the fall.

Calendar

Spring 2001 Conferences

March 29–April 1, 2001

Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. New York, New York. Northeast Conference, Dickinson College, P.O. Box 1773, Carlisle, PA 17013-2896; 717-245-1977; Fax: 717-245-1976; E-mail: nectfl@dickinson.edu; Web site: www.dickinson.edu/nectfl.

April 26–28, 2001

Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Indianapolis, Indiana. Diane Ging, Executive Director, CSC, P.O. Box 21531, Columbus, OH 43221-0531; 614-529-0109; Fax: 614-529-0321; E-mail: dging@iwaynet.net.

May 17–19, 2001

Building on Our Strengths: Second International Conference on Language Teacher Education. Minneapolis, MN. Language Teacher Education Conference (01-2491), University of Minnesota, P.O. Box 64780, St. Paul, MN 55164-0780; 800-367-5363; FAX: 612-624-9221; E-mail: tjb@umn.edu; Web site: <http://carla.acad.umn.edu/conferences.html>.

Summer 2001 Courses and Workshops

June 17–July 13, 2001

Teacher Preparation for Elementary and Middle School Foreign Languages. Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota. Carol Ann Pesola Dahlberg, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN 56562; 218-299-4511; E-mail: cadahlbe@cord.edu.

June 24–28, 2001

National FLES* Institute. University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Maryland. Dr. Gladys C. Lipton, 301-231-0824; Fax 301-230-2652; E-mail: lipton@umbc2.umbc.edu; Web site: http://homepages.go.com/~gladys_c_lipton.

July 16–25, 2001

Teaching Foreign Languages to Young Students. Mari Haas, 212-865-5382; E-mail: haasmarib@aol.com. Registration: The Center for Educational Outreach and Innovation, Teachers College, 525 W. 120th St., Box 132, New York, NY 10027-6696; 212-678-3987.

July 16–26, 2001

K–8 Foreign Languages: Leading the Way with Teacher Preparation. Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey; Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu; Web site: www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc.

August 8–16, 2001

Integrating Technology into the Foreign Language Classroom. Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. Marcia Harmon Rosenbusch, National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center, N131 Lagomarcino Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; 515-294-6699; Fax: 515-294-2776; E-mail: nflrc@iastate.edu; Web site: www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc.

Are You Using Distance Learning or a Video Program with Young Students? . . . *We'd Like to Hear from YOU!*

As school administrators and teachers turn to video-based and distance-learning programs to teach foreign languages to children, educators urgently need more information about the implementation and instructional value of such programs. The Center for Applied Linguistics, as part of its work with the federally funded National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University, is studying the benefits and drawbacks of using distance-learning technology to teach languages to young children.

One outcome of this research will be a practical guide about the overall benefits of video-based instruction for children and descriptions of the six most commonly used language programs in U.S. schools. However, meaningful conclusions will depend on input from educators who are actually using these programs in the classroom. If you are teaching foreign languages with the help of any of the following programs, we invite—and encourage—you to give us your feedback:

- *Amigos* (Agency for Instructional Technology)
- *Elementary Spanish* (Northern Arizona University)
- *Español Para Ti* (National Textbook Co./Contemporary Publishing Co.)
- *Saludos/InterActive Spanish* (Great Plains National University of Nebraska)
- *MUZZY* (Early Advantage)
- *SALSA* (PeachStar, Georgia Public Broadcasting)

The Center for Applied Linguistics has developed a short questionnaire to gather information about these programs from administrators and teachers. If you can help, please contact us. We will e-mail, mail, or fax you the questionnaire. Or, you can do a phone interview. Thank you in advance!

Contact: Ingrid Pufahl, Project Consultant

Address: Center for Applied Linguistics, 4646 40th St., NW,
Washington, DC 20016
Telephone: (301) 530-4766
Fax: (202) 362-3740
Email: ingrid@cal.org

NNELL

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. NNELL provides leadership, support, and service to those committed to early language learning and coordinates efforts to make language learning in programs of excellence a reality for all children.

NNELL

An organization for educators involved in teaching foreign languages to children.

MISSION: Promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own. This is accomplished through activities that improve public awareness and support of early language learning.

ACTIVITIES: 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.

ANNUAL MEETING: Held at the fall conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

OFFICERS: Elected by members through a mail ballot election held annually in the spring.

MEMBER OF: JNCL-NCLIS (Joint National Committee for Languages-National Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and International Studies).

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Visit the NNELL Web site at: www.educ.iastate.edu/nnell

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