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Learning Languages

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CULTURE

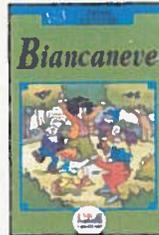
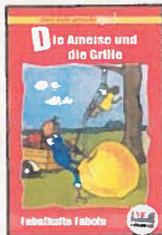
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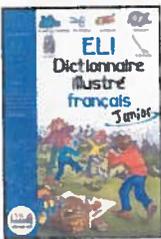
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NNELL Board stays busy bringing training to members

PRESIDENT'S NOTES



■ As coordinator of world languages for Fairfax County Public Schools, the 12th largest school system in the United States, **PAULA PATRICK** oversees K-12 foreign language programs in 11 languages which include two-way immersion kindergarten programs, an extensive elementary partial-immersion program in four languages at 13 sites, Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs at 32 sites in seven languages, and 50 middle and high school programs that offer over 100 course offerings, including AP and IB courses. Ms. Patrick was instrumental in guiding the FCPS School Board to adopt a strategic goal of having all of its students to graduate with proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English in order to ensure that they have an advantage in today's society.

This certainly has been an exciting year for NNELL. The NNELL Swap Shop breakfast at the ACTFL Convention was a huge success. Marty Abbott's keynote address on advocacy gave people a plethora of ideas on how one can advocate for early language learning during this national economic crisis we are facing. Colorado State Senator Pat Steadman spoke to the participants on the importance of early language learning and explained how important it is to politicians to hear from their constituents. He encouraged educators to write to their state senators and congressmen regarding the benefits of second language learning.

For the first time, NNELL was extremely fortunate to be able to offer three outstanding sessions: "The Power of Many Voices," by Amanda Seewald; "Starting a State Early Language Learning Network," by Patricia Hannah, Joanne Jones, Frank Regich, Pamela Valdez; and "Increasing Students' Communication Through Partner Gap Activities," by Tammy Dann and Lindsey Cornwell. At the business meeting with the NNELL state and regional representatives, the Executive Board heard that the membership would like to have more professional development opportunities.

Taking the lead from ACTFL to enter the digital world of the 21st century, NNELL offered a free webinar on May 1, 2009. The webinar highlighted web-based applications that enable students and teachers to create digital media products in the target language that exemplify the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication. We were happy to have Janna Chiang conduct the webinar. She is a certified K-12 Mandarin Chinese teacher at Stopher Elementary School in Louisville, Kentucky. Survey results indicated that the membership would like to have more webinars in the future.

Stanford University hosted the NNELL Southwest Regional Workshop on May 15, 2010. Presenter Helena Curtain discussed how best to integrate language, content and culture in teaching and assessments and how to actively engage all learners in a second language classroom. Participants from around the region were actively engaged in the full-day workshop. NNELL is grateful to Duarte Silva and the School of Education for their support of this professional development opportunity for NNELL members.

NNELL's nomination committee, chaired by Terry Caccavale, has received nominations for the office of vice president and secretary-treasurer for the upcoming election. Information about the candidates will be announced in June and members will be able to vote electronically. The new officers will begin their term at the ACTFL Convention in Boston. As I pass the torch to Jacque Bott-Van Houten, rest assured that NNELL will continue to advocate for early language learning, provide teachers with professional development opportunities and

resources, but most importantly NNELL will continue to serve as a network for teachers to share from one another and prosper.

On the topic of sharing, please mark your calendar for Nov.20, for the next NNELL Swap Shop breakfast. The keynote speaker is Catherine Porter, the Past President of Modern Language Association. Her MLA Presidential Address, "Why English is Not Enough," will be published this spring in the MLA Journal and the keynote will enable participants to hear more on this topic. NNELL will once again offer three sessions at the 2010 ACTFL Convention. Cheryl Berman and Amanda Seewald will present FLES Immersion Day Camps-Extending Language Learning Beyond the School Year; Michele Anciaux Aoki will present Early Language Assessment for Professional Development and Accountability; and Sandra Schoder, Victoria Gilbert, and Yan Wang will present "Culture in the 21st Century. Where is ELL going?" NNELL will also offer a couple regional workshops in the fall, which will be announced on our website and through the state representatives.

With the 2010-2011 school year ahead of us many of you are probably thinking about what you may want to try in the classroom next year. The theme of this issue is Culture – or more specifically, the interconnectivity of the teaching of products, practices, and perspectives. I know you will enjoy the many viewpoints and the creative ideas from your colleagues. Culture is always an engaging topic for students and teachers alike.

When language teachers discuss the teaching of culture, the very topic elicits excitement and creativity. All language educators agree that students cannot learn a language in isolation without learning the culture of the people who speak the target language. Many teachers readily discuss activities that teach students about products and practices, but often they admit they are searching for ways to get students to understand perspectives. When exploring a cultural aspect of a particular country, students are often quick to ask "Why do the people do that?" Although the question appears to be simple, teachers spend a large portion of their planning time developing activities that will enable the students to clearly comprehend the perspective or the why. The articles in this issue will answer many questions and give the readers many new ideas for their summer planning.

In closing, I'd like to thank all of those who submitted articles. I can see that this topic is near and dear to the hearts of many language educators. The NNELL committee on culture is researching links, lessons, organizations, etc., that can provide the NNELL membership with additional resources on this topic. We will be sending more information out to our membership when this site is launched.

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Integrating **Culture** into the **Russian Language Curriculum** at Argonne Elementary School

INTRODUCTION

We cannot teach language without teaching culture; culture is the context for language learning. Succinctly stated by our National Standards, culture must be front and center in our classrooms: "In reality, then, the true content of the foreign language course is not the grammar and the vocabulary of the language, but the cultures expressed through that language."¹

So what does this mean for our classrooms and our curriculum? The concept of teaching culture through isolated mini-lessons, such as those done on traditional "Culture Fridays," is as outdated as the grammar-translation method of teaching language. We cannot expect our students to gain intercultural competencies through activities that are not embedded in cultural contexts any more than we can expect our students to gain communicative proficiency by simply doing drills on worksheets. In this article, we will share the Russian FLES program at Argonne Elementary School in San Francisco.

BACKGROUND

Argonne, one of the 66 elementary schools in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), is located in the heart of the diverse and vibrant Richmond district where many speakers of the Russian language live. With the assistance of federal FLAP (Foreign Language Assistance Program) funds, SFUSD began its first Russian FLES Program in 2007. There are two hundred fifty K-2 grade students from different backgrounds receiving Russian language instruction and there are also twenty students in the after school Russian for Heritage Speakers program. Students in the FLES program receive Russian language instruction twice a week for 30 minutes. Russian for Heritage Speakers classes meet twice a week for 45 minutes. The FLES program will add a grade level every year until it becomes a full K-5 articulated program in 2012.



THE CURRICULUM

The district Russian Content Specialist has developed a curriculum that centers on folktales and Russian literature, a rich resource

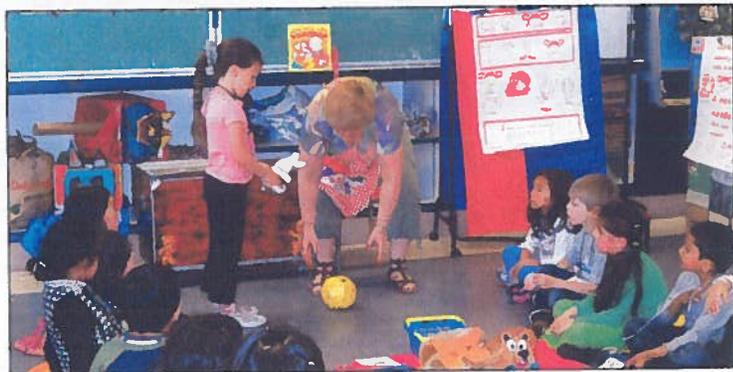
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Effective **communication** is more than a matter of language proficiency and, apart from enhancing and enriching communicative competence, **cultural competence** can also lead to **empathy** and **respect** toward different cultures as well as promote **objectivity** and cultural perspicacity. (Thanasoulas, 2001)

”

for cultural lessons. The thematic units align with national and California standards and the curriculum provides a comprehensive framework for building and developing oral skills, communicative competency, and literacy. Each grade level curriculum comprises six or seven thematic units with a folktale or an authentic or original story created specifically for the unit to introduce the desired vocabulary as the contextual center.

Culture is an integral part of the curriculum, a natural and organic element that is woven into its tapestry and introduced through hands-on activities, TPR and TPR story telling, poetry, games, drama, and role-play. Visuals, puppets, colorful illustrations and hand made materials create an environment that enables children to learn something very different from their daily world, while at the same time expanding and making it richer. The curriculum and activities enable students to acquire language and culture as a whole, rather than a word list at a time. The Russian language is spoken in the classroom approximately 90% of the time.



SETTING THE SCENE AT SCHOOL

You can feel the Russian atmosphere as soon as you enter the school. First, the welcome sign in Russian, "Добро пожаловать" greets you at the main entrance. You turn the corner and there is a cheerful bulletin board, "Мы учим русский язык" ("We're learning Russian") that displays examples of the current work completed by FLES program students, a copy of the newsletter "Russian at Argonne," and the monthly topic that is dedicated to a holiday celebration or has a cultural significance in Russian life or history. The next display features the "Art of Russian Cuisine" poster. Students, their families, school staff and visitors can familiarize themselves with a collection of traditional Russian meals accompanied by recipes. There are several more displays in the first floor halls: "Прогулка по Москве" ("Trip Around Moscow") and "В Третьяковской галерее" ("Inside the Tretyakov Gallery"). Beautiful photographs take you to different sites of the Russian capital, and you can make a stop and "visit" the famous Tretyakov Gallery to admire the art of Russian painters by viewing reproductions of their pictures. The bulletin board on page 4 exhibits the works of students – Russian Heritage speakers: their essays, poetry and pictures.

INSIDE THE RUSSIAN ROOM

While walking up the stairs to the second floor you can hear commotion in the Russian room. It's the Russian language teacher, Mrs. Pernik, and her students who are singing, dancing, and imitating animal voices – all while learning the cultural importance of these animals in Russia. They discover that in Russian culture animals “speak” in the Russian language as well: chicken in Russian says, “Ко-ко-ко” (“Kokako”), the rooster says, “Кукареку” (“Kukariku”), the frog, “Ква-ква-ква”, (“Ква-ква-ква”) the horse “Иго-го” (“Yi-go-go”) and so on. Mrs. Pernik says: “In the foreign language classroom the students need to talk, sing, chat, chant, be heard, and have fun!” They can feel the culture and it comes alive for them. In fact, some children joyfully report that Russian is one of their favorite classes.

In Kindergarten children learn the names of farm animals and pets from “Курочка Ряба” (“Kurochka-Ryaba”) and “Петка” (“Репка”) folk tales. They find out about traditional characters of Russian folklore: Dyed, Baba, girl Masha. They compare the Russian folk tales with their American counterparts: “Маша и Три Медведя” (“Masha and Three Bears”) with “Goldilocks” and “Колобок” (“Kolobok”) with “The Gingerbread Man.” They become familiar with the names of fruits, vegetables and colors while listening to the original story, “Как Радуга Нашла Цвета” (“How the Rainbow Found its Colors”). First grade students continue learning numbers, colors, and animals' names through the content of the thematic unit “Апельсин” (“Orange”) that is based on a Russian poem, “Мы Делили Апельсин” (“We Were Dividing an Orange”).

Classroom routines provide background for using language in various situations and are culturally appropriate: students walk into the classroom with the sounds of the song “Здравствуй мамочка родная, привет” (“Hello, mother dearest, hello”). In a typical school in Russia the day begins with the sound of the bell; the bell is also used at the end of each class. At Argonne school every room has its own schedule, so there are no school-wide bells. To

create an environment that is close to one in a Russian school, the teacher rings her little bell and students role-play a chant in which they say that they are ready for the class to start. Teacher, “Что такое? Что случилось? Почему звенит звонок?” “Students, “Всё в порядке. Мы готовы. Начинается урок.”

Children greet the teacher and their puppet friends in Russian and ask how they are. Then they play a phone game with a pretend friend in Moscow: one student shares about the weather in San Francisco, while the student on the other end of the phone talks about the weather in Moscow. “Phone conversation” is often used to add fun and authenticity to situations. In the future, students will engage with real pen pals from Russia through email communications. Each unit ends with a team project or culminating activity.



Some of the topics continue and develop over the years. Children learn about Russian cultural symbols, flag, geography, and names of the major cities very early, beginning in Kindergarten, and continue to expand on this knowledge every year. They also build up their knowledge of Russian customs and traditions. For example, Дед Мороз (Grandfather Frost) and Снегурочка (Snow girl) first “visit” Kindergarten children during the winter holidays. Students acquire information about the New Year celebration in Russia while learning one of the popular children's winter holiday songs, “Маленькой Елочке Холодно Зимой” (“The Little Pine Tree is Cold in the Winter”). Concurrently, they learn vocabulary words and phrases and play games that are associated with this holiday. In first grade students become familiar with Snow Girl's story that they learn from reading the folk tale “Снегурочка” (“The Snow Girl”). They engage in different activities and act them out with visuals and real objects. In the second grade unit, “Путешествие в Москву со снегурочкой” (“Trip to Moscow with Snow Girl”) children embark on a virtual trip to Moscow. During this adventure they learn about winter sports and activities. At the end of the unit student teams create a poster about their own “trip” to Moscow. They draw pictures of the winter activities, write sentences to describe them, and present their poster to the rest of the class. Often characters travel from one story to another. The curriculum design provides familiarity and recognition of learned material, reinforcement of vocabulary and structures and at the same time a background for introducing new information.

Teachers constantly make and emphasize comparisons between the two cultures. When children learn about winter holidays they talk about similarities and differences of the celebrations. Students find out that the Thanksgiving holiday is a part of American culture while International Women's Day is a major holiday in Russia. Together teacher and students create Venn diagrams to compare Russian folk tales with their American counterpart stories when applicable.

TEACHING RUSSIAN TO HERITAGE SPEAKERS

Authentic Russian literature is the basis of instruction in Russian for Heritage Speakers classes. Poetry memorization is traditional in Russian culture. Every one or two weeks, children are asked to memorize a poem. The complexity of the poem depends on the students' age and is differentiated by their language proficiency level. Students are exposed to the masterpieces of Russian classical literature as well as contemporary literature. Authentic literature provides a context for learning literacy and grammar. Sometimes students create their own context for learning. Last year 3-5 graders wrote their own story, “Баба Яга, Фиолетовое Привидение и Маленький Дракончик” (“Baba Yaga, Purple Ghost, and Little Dragon”). During this activity they not only experienced first hand the process of writing but at the same time expanded their vocabulary through figurative language. Pictures of Russian paintings also provide topics for conversation about Russian history and life. A great resource for this activity is the book “A Trip Around Tretyakov Gallery with Andrey Usachev” a collection of reproductions of paintings by famous Russian artists. Each reproduction is accompanied by a cleverly written poem that makes the content of the picture more understandable. After discussing a still life painting, students drew their own still life pictures and described them.





RUSSIAN EVENTS AT ARGONNE

The school year culminates in a Russian party where children showcase their talents and Russian language skills. In front of an audience students act out the traditional folk tales, “Колобок” (“Kolobok”) and “Теремок” (“Teremok”), sing songs, and recite poetry. Heritage speakers put on productions of plays by the Russian poet, David Samoilov: “Словёнок Пошел Учиться” (“Little Elephant Went to School”) and “Словёнок Турист” (“Little Elephant Goes Hiking”). Last year, the 4-5 grades class that was not a part of the program (at that time Russian was only offered to K-1 grade students) wanted to acknowledge the Russian program. With the guidance of their classroom teacher, Ms. Julian Eng, students in this class wrote an original play, “Баба Яга и Наташа” (“Baba Yaga and Natasha”) in English and the whole class participated in this production. The teacher and students not only wrote the play but also created their own props, made a dance based on Russian folk dances, and included Russian popular songs; the songs were sung in Russian. Everyone had a blast while rehearsing and performing this play.

PROGRAM ADVOCACY

The “Russian at Argonne” newsletter, produced every two months and disseminated through the classroom teachers serves as the source of communication between the Russian program and the school community (including parents). It advocates the importance and benefit of early language learning supported by research, informs about events, and provides grade level curriculum/vocabulary updates, culinary recipes and other information. Argonne’s library features a collection of authentic Russian literature in the Russian language as well as bilingual books.

Ms. Robin Sharp, the school principal, teachers, and the school community all strongly support the Russian program. It also receives

a tremendous amount of support from the SFUSD World languages programs supervisor, Ms. Margaret Peterson, who relentlessly promotes the importance of early language learning and who is constantly researching for sources to sustain program.

The Russian FLES program has accomplished a great deal during a very short period since it’s opening at Argonne Elementary School in April 2007. Its success provided the basis for the vision of the future of the program. It is supported by the SFUSD’s commitment to graduate every student in the district with the knowledge of at least two languages and aligned with the district’s Multilingual Master plan. In addition, on March 23, 2010, the SFUSD Board of Education unanimously passed the Seal of Biliteracy award that will recognize bilingual and biliterate seniors with a distinction of honor on their diplomas and transcripts. This distinction will acknowledge and celebrate students’ language and culture skills and empower them to enter the 21st century world. The students of Argonne Elementary School have the exciting opportunity of beginning their path to bilingualism with Russian as their foreign language.

Children recognize the attributes of the Russian culture when they walk the streets in their own neighborhood, the Richmond district, where there are many Russian stores and services. According to some parents’ reports, students proudly demonstrate their knowledge of the Russian language by engaging in conversation with Russian native speakers, shocking the latter and making their parents proud. Gaining knowledge at school and engaging with native speakers enables students to understand and embrace the Russian culture.

REFERENCES

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MILA TEPER, a Content Specialist for the World Languages/ Multilingual Programs Department in the San Francisco Unified School District, has taught Russian language and culture for 30 years both in Russia and in the U.S. For the last three years she has been writing and implementing the Russian Language curriculum at Argonne Elementary and Feinstein Elementary schools where she also teaches the Russian FLES program and

the 4th/5th grade class for heritage speakers. As a coach she provides instructional support to the teachers in her district.



TEACHING CULTURE QUESTIONING PERSPECTIVES ON OUR PRACTICES

Despite years of training, teaching experience, reading professional literature, attending conferences, and learning from expert colleagues, when it comes to the teaching of culture, I wish I knew more answers to many critical questions. My questions are framed by the basic questions that all curricula seek to answer: WHAT is the purpose of teaching culture (WHY)? WHAT should students learn? WHEN should they learn it? HOW should they learn it? HOW will we know what students learned?

WHY

I'm not sure that as a young language teacher I ever even questioned the purposes of teaching culture. It was simply a given. I entered the profession when notions of culture learning focused on facts and factoids, a time when the ability to identify and understand the great esthetic contributions of the target culture competed with the importance of citing historical or even geographical information. Over time, the profession began to look more closely at the teaching of culture, viewing both "Big C" and "little c" worthy of attention. In the 1990's, conversations about the national standards resulted in a greater acknowledgement of the role that culture plays in language: culture is central to making meaning from what one hears and reads, and to conveying one's own meanings effectively. From these conversations has emerged our current focus on the profound effects of cultural perspectives on what people do, how, and when, and why.

The extraordinary acceleration of globalization has highlighted the role of perspectives in shaping how well we can work across linguistic and cultural frontiers to successfully work toward common goals. Demands for a global workforce, global events (from the environment, to economics, to security), and widespread media discussions have provided clearer answers to why we need to develop intercultural proficiency in our students. We might even say that today, intercultural competence may be as important, if not more

important, than knowing how to use a range of grammatical structures or a variety of tenses. Big grammar errors are not likely to cause problems; small cultural gaffes, on the other hand, can often cause big intercultural problems.

WHAT

Why we need to develop intercultural competence will shape what we teach. We are fortunate that the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning have given us a strong framework for thinking about what students should know and be able to do. In the past the primary purpose of culture learning was cultural appreciation; therefore, the content was most appropriately those aspects of culture we most valued. Of course, cultural appreciation continues to be part of culture teaching and learning. Historically we have done an excellent job of teaching cultural products and practices—and we still do. Today's language educator goes well beyond the great works of other cultures (subsumed under 'products') as well as their customs and traditions (subsumed under 'practices').

Cultural perspectives figure more prominently than ever before in our course goals. Perspectives challenge us because they are often unknown—not just to those of us who are non-natives, but also frequently to those born to a cultural group. While we may not be able to state with clarity or certainty the perspectives that drive products and/or practices, we should emphasize that they do exist, even if they are beyond our ability to decipher them.

That is, we may not be able to define what the perspective is, but we can be certain that there is one. If nothing else, we need to make sure that our students understand the driving force that perspectives play in determining cultural behaviors, institutions, and ways of being.

While products and practices are far more easily identified, there is still much left to be determined about which products and which practices are vitally important for students to know at given points in their language education. For example, if we knew for certain that a student would limit his/her language study to two years, what would

be absolutely essential for that student to know? Which products and/or practices? And among those, which would receive the highest priority? How carefully have we considered these questions every time we write curriculum, units, or lesson plans? How often have we stopped to consider the reasons why we have made it a priority to teach about the Day of the Dead in Mexico, the Moon Festival in China, or how Germans celebrate birthdays in comparison with an alternative priority we might have chosen for use of our instructional time?

WHEN

As I noted above, curriculum specifies not just what we teach (scope) but also when that content is taught (sequence). The language scope and sequence has remained virtually unchanged since I joined the language teaching profession. Most of us have had a pretty clear notion of what language gets taught and in which order. It's rare that a language student does not learn colors, numbers, and the days of the week in their first year; students generally can communicate about events in the present in their first year of study and past events shortly thereafter. This scope and sequence for the early years of language learning has no parallel in the learning of culture. Some

questions we might want to consider include: Are there some cultural notions that should precede others? If so, which aspects of each of the three P's should be taught and in which order? Are there developmental stages of language proficiency that are associated with developmental readiness for given cultural understandings? How might research on the progressive development of cultural competence inform curriculum?

Questions about when to teach aspects of culture are not limited to an instructional sequence for the 3 P's. Given the large number of learners who begin language study prior to late adolescence, we need to take into account psychological and social development of students. Questions we might want to address include: Are there developmental constraints on the learning of certain cultural concepts? At what age are children most able to deal with cross-cultural knowledge, concepts, or skills? How do emerging concepts of self and identity impact a sequence of cultural learning goals?

"While we may not be able to state with clarity or certainty the perspectives that drive products and/or practices, we should emphasize that they do exist, even if they are beyond our ability to decipher them."

HOW

Moving on with the core questions curriculum addresses, I wish I knew more about effective pedagogical practices for teaching culture. What research can guide the strategies that we might use for teaching perspectives? Discussions of perspectives can be challenging because they can so easily edge into the danger zones of stereotyping and overgeneralization. How do we teach culture (particularly perspectives) to young learners? Do those strategies differ for older learners? If so, which would be most appropriate to our students as they mature socially, psychologically, and cognitively?

How we teach culture extends beyond instructional practices to include resources. What resources are available (especially for teaching perspectives) and how do we decide which resources are best suited to our students? While we have some answers in the growing professional literature related to teaching secondary students, we have far fewer for young learners, particularly since the answers may vary significantly for early elementary, middle elementary, and emerging adolescent students. Rapidly evolving and changing technological resources have allowed us to bring the world to the classroom and our students into the world. How might these technologies most effectively be utilized to develop truly culturally competent graduates of our programs? Some discussion has addressed whether we should focus on similarities or differences. When we focus on similarities we may unintentionally give our students the idea that everyone is the same, and ignore how important understanding differences may be. At certain points in their development, young children focus on differences as a way of creating an identity (I'm not a boy; I'm an American; I'm a Texan). Middle schoolers value being the same as peers and may develop negative attitudes toward those different from them.

For some middle school students, however, a fascination with 'the exotic' heightens engagement and motivation, and can be a driving force for students exploring cultures different from their own. On the other hand, some who

have examined the teaching of culture urge us to shy away from portraying others as 'exotic.' These experts in the teaching of culture suggest we encourage our students to see others as others see themselves—not at all exotic but 'normal'—just as they are supposed to be!

One strategy that has been suggested is that we present our cultural differences as a reflection of the way cultures try to solve similar problems, yet may devise different solutions. In this light, we see people all over the globe as 'cultural problem solvers.' A common problem all cultures address is how people relate to one another (rules and courtesy; family relationships; emphasis on the primacy of the individual or that of the group; the importance of getting the task done or attending to the needs of others). How we know what they know: Assessing cultural competence remains a serious challenge within the classroom setting. The best evidence of our success will come when our students interact in authentic situations with native speakers/culture bearers. In the interim, we can seek some evidence in classroom based, technologically-mediated interactions. Classroom based role-plays can provide limited evidence, but we will have a hard time knowing with certainty if our students can use their cultural knowledge and skills effectively in real-world interactions in authentic contexts, since most of our students cannot truly play the role of the authentic culture bearer. Creating useful and meaningful assessments of intercultural competence is underway, but will require continued efforts.

This is an exciting time for language educators. We have the attention of policymakers, the media, and the public. There is growing awareness that linguistic and intercultural competencies are integral to our society, economy, and security. In our classrooms sit tomorrow's leaders and workers; our future presidents and lawmakers; future board of education members and superintendents; and future technicians, skilled workers, and parents. What we do matters greatly, so we need to keep asking questions and seeking answers.



MYRIAM MET was a supervisor of foreign language instruction for major urban and suburban school districts for more than 25 years. In that capacity, and as a consultant to educational agencies, she has planned, implemented, and evaluated Mandarin programs, including elementary FLES and immersion programs, STARTALK summer programs and secondary school programs.

Steven Cohen given NNELL Support Award

Dr. Steven Cohen, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for Rye City Schools in Rye City, New York, is this year's recipient of the NNELL Award for Outstanding Support of Early Second Language Learning. Dr. Cohen was nominated by three elementary Spanish teachers, Reina McGoldrick, Lauren Gobbo, and Vanessa Franco and an elementary school principal, Dr. JoAnne Nardone.

NNELL

Dr. Cohen was recognized not only as an exceptional administrator, but also as an ardent advocate for the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program in the Rye City School districts' three elementary schools. "A big part of the mission of the district is to globalize children's education," said Dr. Cohen. "Our goal is for students to graduate with fluency in the language, rather than minimal competency, which is what the state currently requires." According to his nominators, since his initial proposal to the school board to add a foreign language, "he has continuously made a concerted effort to incorporate and recognize FLES as an integrated part of the elementary school program." "Most notably, Dr. Cohen has not wavered in his continued dedication to our growing program despite the current economic climate."

For the past two years, Dr. Cohen has argued in support of Rye Middle and High School students having the option to take a second foreign language, in a district that currently already requires one language. Spanish is taught in all elementary schools and beginning in the fall of 2010 middle school students will have the option to take a second language, and both middle school and high school students will be able to study Mandarin.

Immersing himself in a foreign culture, Dr. Cohen was among the participants of this year's delegation of the U.S. Educators Program, during which he spent two weeks visiting schools in Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Ise, and Nagoya Japan.

We congratulate Dr. Cohen for his outstanding support for early language learning and wish him and those in his school district continued success.

The Day **Bolivian** Students Came to School

Motivating Students Through **Culture**



THE PROBLEM

Every weekend last year, while planning my lessons for the upcoming week, I realized that I was planning my instruction with one particular class in mind. As I envisioned the engaging activities, I saw the students in the combined 4th and 5th grade class carrying them out with smiles on their faces. Inevitably, on Monday morning, I would remember that these lessons also had to be implemented in the combined 3rd and 4th grade class that was the biggest challenge of every day. This class had Spanish right after gym class and right before lunch. To make things worse, they sat at tables instead of desks, so they had a plethora of things on their tables to play with during Spanish class. I had asked their classroom teacher if there was any way to have Spanish class at a different time during the day, but she had responded with a firm “no”.

Like many elementary foreign language teachers, I traveled from room to room to teach. Each room had different materials and a different classroom culture. Some rooms had magnetic chalkboards, some had white boards, and others had only a smart board and chart paper. In addition, some teachers consistently had the students quiet and ready for Spanish class when I walked in, while others did not end their instruction until they saw me. I taught my students for fifteen minutes every day. At this laboratory school, there were eight classrooms at the K-5 level. I taught one kindergarten class, three combined 1st and 2nd grade classes, two combined 3rd and 4th grade classes, and two combined 4th and 5th grade classes. In order to manage this, I taught one thematic unit in kindergarten, another for the 1st and 2nd grade classes and another for the 3rd -5th grade classes. By doing this, I had three preps each night, and could differentiate activities based on the needs of the differing levels.

I knew that my lessons were not working well in Ms. Johnson's combined 3rd/4th grade Spanish class. The students were unmotivated and unengaged during Spanish. I found myself using English during this class for behavior management instead of

Spanish. Activities that worked beautifully with my other classes failed miserably in this class. I could not figure out how to motivate these students.

I wish I could say that I created an action research project to experiment with different techniques to find the perfect fit for this class, but I did not. Juggling three preps while attending doctoral classes at night, I was fed up with this class and was at the point where I thought there was nothing that I could do to make it a success.

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION?

It was at this point that a parent informed me that a local hospital was bringing a group of Bolivian students to Pittsburgh for a service-learning project. Knowing that I had recently traveled to Bolivia and that my thematic unit for the spring centered on Bolivia, she asked if I might be interested in inviting these Bolivian students to visit our school for a day.

I immediately contacted the organizers of the program and together we figured out a time when the students could visit our school. Counting the weeks to their arrival, I discovered that I had two months to fully prepare my 3rd-5th grade students for this experience. While the visit required that I alter my thematic unit and the order of lessons already planned, I was still able to stick to my main objectives for the unit.

PLANNING

I was not quite sure how to plan for the Bolivian students while they were at my school. I wanted to teach my students about Bolivia, but how could I incorporate that with planning something for our visitors? Turning to the Nanduti listserv to see if any other teachers had ideas, I searched in vain. Therefore, I decided to pose this question to each of my four 3rd-5th grade classes. Each class was thrilled to hear that we were going to have guests, even Ms. Johnson's class. They wanted to know everything about our visitors, including where Bolivia was

located. Asked what sorts of activities they thought we should plan for that day, each class brainstormed ideas and, as a class, voted on what we would do.

While some classes wanted to perform a play, teach the visitors a game or prepare and talk about food, Ms. Johnson's class decided that they wanted to create a slideshow about Pittsburgh. I loved this idea and thought that it would be a great way to incorporate the Comparisons standard into our unit that already addressed the other 4 C's. That weekend, I thought about how we could prepare a presentation on Pittsburgh while also studying Bolivia and decided that we would spend the following weeks studying important facts about Bolivia, and then, based on that information, think about what Bolivian students might find interesting about Pittsburgh.

THE TRANSFORMATION

Over the next several weeks, I saw a transformation occur in all of the intermediate classes, but especially in Ms. Johnson's class. The students wanted to know everything about our visitors so that they could be prepared for the big day. Not only were they engaged during Spanish class, they became star students thirsty for even more information. I taught them about the typical school day in Bolivia, modes of transportation, popular foods and sports. Students learned and practiced phrases such as *"Me gusta/No me gusta..."* (I like, I do not like), *"Mi deporte favorita es..."* (My favorite sport is), *"Yo voy..."* (I go). We also worked a lot with interviewing activities in which students practiced forming and answering questions. Whereas before the same four students would volunteer for each question or activity, now almost all twenty - four hands would go up when I posed a question. The students were producing more oral language than they had before. I had explained that our visitors did not know any English and that the only way they would be able to interact with our guests was through their Spanish and body language.

It also helped that two families in the school had volunteered to be host families for these students. As a result, these two students, one in the 3rd grade and one in the 5th grade, came to school with stories each week about their guests. They confirmed that the students did not speak English. They also talked about their experience using Spanish with these visitors, and how nice and fun the visitors were.

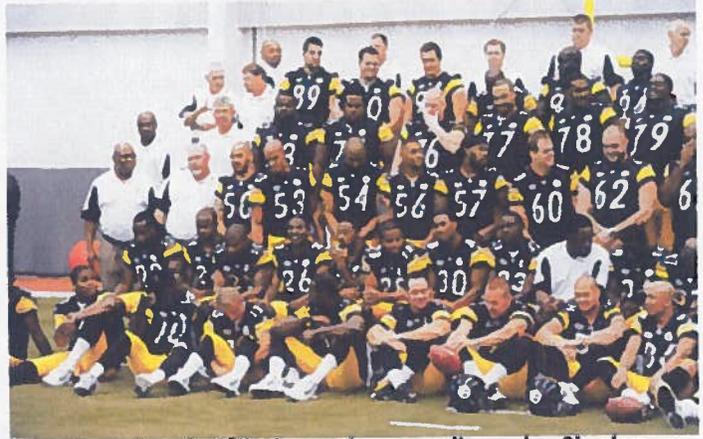
We framed our PowerPoint presentation about Pittsburgh using the topics that they had studied about Bolivia. We made slides telling about the typical school day in Pittsburgh, modes of transportation, popular foods and sports. Several students who attended the after school program asked permission to work in the computer lab on our presentation. They found pictures to accompany the slides that we prepared during class. Each child chose one slide to present. I met with each classroom teacher and created a schedule in which I would have each 3rd - 5th grade classroom for one hour on our big day.

THE EVENT

The students were so excited when I saw them in the halls on the day of our event. Fourteen high school students from Bolivia arrived at the school along with two translators. Their first stop that morning was in Ms. Johnson's class. I arrived to the classroom to be greeted by twenty-four eager students who had been practicing their PowerPoint all morning. They had rearranged the classroom to accommodate the visitors and four students had brought in special snacks for the class. (Much to everyone's surprise, all four students had baked brownies. Sure, it was very cultural—but I was concerned about their sugar levels that day!) One by one, the students proudly stood in front of the class and presented their information. The Bolivian students smiled throughout and commented on how precious the children were. They asked questions during the slideshow which my students answered with the help of their peers and me.

After the presentation, the Bolivian students asked my students if they had questions for them. Using mostly phrases, words and

pictures my students asked them about their favorite cartoons, what they liked to do for fun and how they liked Pittsburgh. Granted, my students were novice level speakers, but I was impressed by the fact that they could communicate, even if they were unable to form



El equipo de fútbol americano se llama los Steelers.



Hay tres ríos en Pittsburgh.

complete sentences. They were still able to practice their memorized phrases such as *"¿Qué te gusta hacer?"* (What do you like to do?) and to understand the answers, at least partially. Several of the Bolivian students also practiced their English a little bit, by clarifying when students could not understand them.

After this day, many students asked me if the Bolivian students could come back. When reflecting on the experience, one child wrote about the class and recess, *"Mi experiencia con bolivianos chicos fue increíble. ¡Jugamos futbol! ¡Mi equipo gana 3 a 1! ¡Yo marco un gol! Presentamos un opero un teatro."* (My experience with the Bolivians was incredible. We played soccer! My team won 3-1. I scored a goal! We presented a play.) Another child wrote, "I liked having them here! I was a little queasy about my Spanish but I was actually better than I thought."

Even as the weeks passed, the students continued to reflect on the experience. For many of them, it was their first opportunity to speak Spanish with someone who could not speak English. While this class continued to be my biggest challenge, their motivation was never as low as it had been. I found that by addressing the Communities, Communication, Culture and Comparisons standards simultaneously, my students gained a renewed interest in learning Spanish.



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Negotiating 2 Culture

Useful Strategies for Helping Younger Students

LEARNING to speak another language requires students to adopt new ways of **THINKING**. Some teachers believe that students can assimilate idiomatic expressions and cultural turns of phrase simply through the teacher's use and the students' **PRACTICE**. Others work to explicitly show the difference between the target **LANGUAGE** and native language, as if it were an anthropological study. The learner's age, experience and the amount of instructional time can **INFLUENCE** the specific approach adopted and whether it is in the grammatical, sociolinguistic, or strategic domains.

Teachers of early learners of foreign language can modify approaches taken with older students so that their students learn to acquire information about alternative viewpoints and come to understand that some viewpoints are only available when one understands the target language and culture. Learning to ask for this information or clarification is a reasonable expectation for novice speakers and is part of "establishing and maintaining intercultural contact" as recommended by Savignon & Sysoyev (2002) in their taxonomy of sociocultural strategy instruction.

Teachers of early language learners can provide their students with simple interrogative phrases. These would include explicit teaching of "coping strategies" to help young learners negotiate moments when there is a breakdown or help is required from the native speaker. Such coping expressions include the L2 equivalent of "Excuse me...", "Please, repeat..." and "How do you say _____ in L2" (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002). Keep these expressions printed in L2 in large type in the surrounding environment of the classroom. This makes for easy reference so that students can practice them with each other and their teacher. To spiral these expressions multiple times throughout the year, teachers can model and require students to practice them when, for example, introducing themselves at the beginning of the year, asking for directions, making a recipe or any relevant art project, and playing games. The younger the student the more concrete this kind of practice or instruction needs to be—a challenge when dealing with the abstractions inherent in idioms, symbols and norms of behavior. Selecting images to illustrate these is important in an immersion setting.



FIGURE 1 FASHIONBUBBLES.COM/2009/FOI-MAL/



FIGURE 2 [HTTP://WWW.OLEOLE.COM/MEDIA/MAIN/IMAGES/MEMBER_PHOTOS/GROUP1/SUBGRP287/EXCUSE-ME-DID-YOU-SA_68449.JPG](http://www.oleole.com/media/main/images/member_photos/group1/subgrp287/excuse-me-did-you-sa_68449.jpg)



FIGURE 3 HOW DO YOU SAY X IN L2 ?

Peck (1998), as cited in Fleet (2006), describes culture as "accepted and patterned ways of behavior of a given people...sharing common social space and history, ...and imaginings." These imaginings are particularly well suited to exploration with young learners. The second level of Savignon and Sysoyev's sociocultural strategies is "Creating sociocultural portraits of an L2 context and the participants in intercultural communications". Teachers can create those portraits by introducing authentic artifacts, studying country symbols, role playing common cultural routines, and using proverbs or gestures. By implementing all of these during the school year, multiple learning styles are engaged. Furthermore, it can help students to compare and contrast their respective cultures with the target culture. This new awareness ensures that they are well on their way to becoming global citizens. Here are some illustrations of how to use these strategies with English language examples.

ARTIFACT TREASURE BOX

Imagine a box (doesn't have to be a treasure chest per se, but that décor makes it more fun) filled with maps of the country or regional area of focus—Google Earth maps or actual maps in the target language. Include small touristy type mementos to illustrate concepts that are important to the country, at least one per student, e.g. a small Statue of Liberty, a reproduction of Washington crossing the Delaware, a penny, nickel, dime and quarter, a small flag, photo of fireworks on the 4th of July, recording of the national anthem, photos of diverse populations of immigrants in U.S., small card with pledge of allegiance typed on it, images of Ben Franklin, Susan B. Anthony, or President Obama and something else to associate with their identities.

IMAGINARY JOURNEY

An imaginary journey to a specific place with sensory props (noise, music heard, spritzed smells, etc.) For a trip to New York City, for example, one might record some airport landings and take offs, taxis honking, collect road gravel for an asphalt smell, salt water for the ferry ride to the Statue of Liberty and have students stand close together to simulate crowded subway rides.

ROLE PLAYING

Role playing is a common routine that is different from L1 experience, especially when moving from informal to formal registers or showing a video of gestures and practicing imitating them. It is best to have easily donned props to signify the different hierarchical roles one will play in a social setting in the target culture. It also helps students to track what each player should say or how they should behave when their turn comes. For example, one might introduce a friend to the principal of the school in one role play version. In the next, the friend would be introduced to a pal. The student wearing the principal's hat or other key wardrobe symbol would be spoken to using respectful terms such as Sir/M'am, eye contact, and firm handshake if English were the L2 culture goal.



FIGURE 3 [HTTP://WWW.SPEEDYSIGNS.COM/IMAGES/DECALS/JPG/H/373/625.JPG](http://www.speedysigns.com/images/decals/jpg/h/373/625.jpg)

PROVERBS AND SAYINGS

Proverbs and sayings are another way for early language learners to grasp the essence of a cultural norm. Many children have difficulty explaining what idioms mean in their own language, much less in L2, but once they have practice with some concrete ones they can



transfer this skill to the L2 saying and have fun deciphering possible intentions. For example, "It's raining cats & dogs" is easy for children to analyze and come to understand why such a saying exists.

Another concrete one is "A penny saved is a penny earned". When I create a list of proverbs to teach students, I look for ones that are common to both cultures to start, perhaps with a funny twist, such as "Don't pull my leg = *No me tomes el pelo*" (Don't take my hair in Spanish)." It is also helpful if the saying has a concrete reference point for students to latch on

to or contains words previously learned. With enough exposure to the expression and an incentive to use it authentically in class (intrinsic or extrinsic), students start to tune in and try to be the first to use an expression.

GESTURES

Gestures are another way to introduce culture. The "okay", "thumbs up", and "victory" signs are common in English culture. Finding a way to introduce the L2 kinesthetic code is fun for students and teachers. When appropriate in the classroom, pick a gesture (using one finger to pull down on one's eye), such as "*¡Ojo!*" (meaning literally "eye", but figuratively, "watch out" in Spanish and teach it to the students. Then provide an incentive for them to use it authentically. Again, posted images are helpful reminders. For example,



FIGURE 5 [HTTP://WWW.DE-FACT-O.COM/FACT_READ.PHP?ID=23](http://www.de-fact-o.com/fact_read.php?id=23);
 FIGURE 6 [HTTP://WWW.DTAE.ORG/PUBLIC/RESULTS3/THUMBS.JPG](http://www.dtae.org/public/results3/thumbs.jpg);
 FIGURE 7 [HTTP://WWW.TRAVELPOD.COM/TRAVEL-BLOG-ENTRIES/TROWB14/1/1223368140/TPOD.HTML](http://www.travelpod.com/travel-blog-entries/trowb14/1/1223368140/tpod.html)

Finally, each of these cultural portraits requires us to consider how to best translate oral or written language into a visual, kinesthetic, or sensory language input that students can grasp as they move to mastery of the target language. Foreign language teachers are like bridges across a ravine. They provide the structure that allows students to move from one side to the other and feel safe enough to cross.

The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century advocates a conceptualization of culture as a framework of perspectives, products, and practices. Tang (2006) suggests we conceive of culture as not only the outcomes that we experience in communication, but rather as the internalized control mechanisms that govern individual's behaviors. She makes the case for teachers to design learning situations that invite students to participate in those outcome behaviors and adopt those internalized characteristic controls, at least temporarily—in other words, the what and how of culture. However, she also states that knowing the why is what enriches and sustains the memory about a second culture accumulated in the learning process. To teach the why successfully (even at the early language learner stage), Tang proposes that foreign language instructors borrow from social science fields such as history, philosophy, religion, anthropology, and psychology. She uses the terms, "cultural minds" and "cultural manifestations" to reduce the National Standards "3 P's" to something more manageable, and in her opinion, a more appropriate characterization. Because products and practices are both "manifestations" and symbols of the mind's activity, there tend to be overlaps. A more holistic conceptualization allows teachers of foreign language to act as teachers of culture with all of the academic core studies that lie within, rather than simply

teachers of a skill (language use). It is this kind of teaching which brings foreign language instruction into the "integrated world of the 21st century".

With early language learners, foreign language instruction that accesses the "cultural mind" can begin by assigning roles to students (or teams) when studying a thematic unit. These roles give students the lenses of an art historian, a biographer, an archaeologist, a lexicographer, a gazetteer, a chronologist, a cartographer, a scientist, etc. according to what suits the inquiry questions or themes of a unit. Each student or team must take responsibility for analyzing "cultural manifestations" and explaining why they exist. For example, assuming the target language is English, there could be a unit that focuses on leadership in US history. One might begin by exploring George Washington. By analyzing Washington crossing the Delaware, a biography of Washington written in simplified English that students can restate and summarize in their own words, objects that represent something of the man or his era, a series of words that characterize Washington's personality, any texts about him generated in his time, timelines of his life, maps of the areas of where he lived and travelled, Washington's professional interests in surveying and farming, students might be able to speak to why Washington is a prevailing influence in US leadership culture and values—"I cannot tell a lie."

It may take exposure to the work such roles entails across the curriculum for younger students to grasp how the roles are consistent even as the content changes within one culture. But when students can begin to articulate why the "manifestations" are related to the "mind," we know that they truly understand the context. We can help early language learners begin to negotiate the lay of a foreign culture by giving them the words to explore it. When we design our lessons and activities in ways that reflect our mastery of the target culture's mind and manifestations, we create opportunities for them to inhabit it.

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■ **VICTORIA GILBERT** studied Art History & Fine Art, areas that have served her well in trying to understand the heart of different cultures. She grew up in three different countries and has been teaching foreign languages in elementary school (Spanish & French) as well as science for over twenty years. She obtained her doctorate from Teachers College in curriculum and teaching in 2005.

“FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN U.S. SCHOOLS Results of a National Survey”

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), a non-profit organization located in Washington, D.C., has been tracking the status of foreign language education in United States schools since 1987. In collaboration with Westat, a leader in survey research and with financial support from the United States Department of Education, CAL published the results of its third survey, “[Foreign Language Teaching in U.S. Schools: Results of a National Survey](#)” by Nancy C. Rhodes and Ingrid Pufahl, in 2010. The authors intend that government agencies, policy makers, and local school districts will use the data as a resource “...to inform the discussion, planning, and implementation of measures to improve foreign language teaching in their schools.” CAL will continue to conduct surveys every ten years to chart efforts toward equipping our populace with the communication skills and cultural understanding they need to live and work in a global society.

In direct contradiction to warnings from the government and from the private sector that the nation needs a linguistically competent and culturally aware citizenry, the survey results reveal that schools are abandoning elementary and middle school foreign language programs at an alarming rate. Further,

many of the existing programs are not adequately intense to graduate students with high levels of linguistic proficiency or cultural awareness to meet the challenges of the 21st century world. The picture is a disturbing one, particularly at a time when national security and leadership in the global marketplace are at stake.

In contrast to the 2008 results, the 1997 survey report showed positive trends. There was an increase in classes for native speakers; Japanese was on the rise in elementary schools and Russian at the secondary level; teachers were increasing their use of computer-based resources; there was a significant rise in professional development for foreign language educators; and with the adoption of national and state standards, teachers were beginning to adjust their content and instructional practices. Yet,

even in 1997, survey researchers expressed concern about the “limited number of K-12 long-sequence programs designed to educate students linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in the United States and abroad.” A decade later, Rhodes and Pufahl report that well-articulated elementary and secondary programs that reflect national and state standards are the exception rather than the rule.

Information collected from five areas of focus (the amount of foreign language instruction, program models, teacher certification, curriculum, and the impact of reform policies on foreign language instruction) revealed the “ups and downs” of foreign languages. While there have been gains in the number of Chinese and Arabic programs, there are fewer French and German classes offered. Latin decreased at the secondary level but increased in elementary schools. More students are taking Advanced Placement courses; more teachers are following established curricula and using authentic literature. At the same time, the prevailing program model at the elementary level is an exploratory one. Accounting for geographic factors, public versus private school, socio-economic status, metro

status, and school size, researchers uncovered trends that revealed interesting insights into opportunities for native speakers, for rural, suburban, and urban students, and opportunities for teachers to collaborate and have access to high quality professional development.

Progress in the field has been uneven and influenced by many factors – the impact of education reform programs, economic issues, teacher shortages, teacher isolation in small and rural settings, and access to high quality professional training. These and other issues continue to have an impact on foreign language education. Rhodes and Pufahl summarize and chart data from over 5,000 public and private schools from a four-page survey to paint a detailed portrait of the current status of foreign language instruction. The authors draw inferences and suggest steps toward improvement that are timely and compelling.

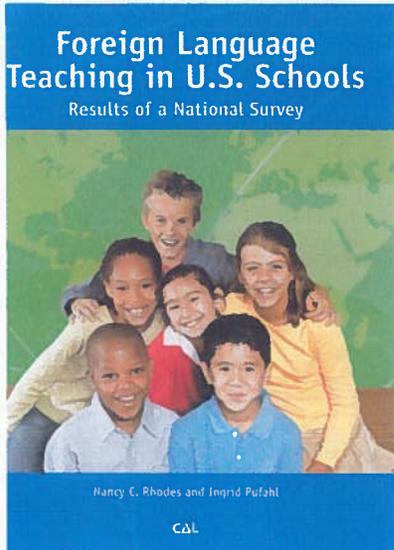
They conclude that the overall status for foreign languages is no better than it was in 1997 and join with others in advocating long sequences of study in articulated programs based on current theory and research in the field. Implicit in their recommendations is a “call to action”, that it is time: to abandon ineffective teaching strategies and program models, to equip all students with the skills they need to take their place in the global marketplace and to secure the future of our nation and, most significantly, to focus instruction on proficiency. They express their hope that, “...the United States, through federal, state, and district-wide initiatives in the decade to come, can change the trajectory of language education.”

Rhodes and Pufahl’s analysis and synthesis of the CAL survey results provide a unique perspective for educators, policy makers, and citizens involved in plotting a course of action for developing the linguistic and cultural competence of the United States people. By comparing similar data over a twenty year span of time, they present a view that is at the same time heartening and disappointing. The data makes clear the attributes of programs that work and effective teaching practices for building linguistic and cultural proficiency; at the same time, the evidence highlights pitfalls and inequities regarding funding, K-15 articulation, and access to instruction. The authors’ recommendations, which are essentially the same as the ones suggested by the 1997 survey results, describe specific steps for meeting the linguistic and cultural challenges faced by the country: establish long sequence, high quality foreign language programs staffed with teachers who base instruction on the proficiency goals outlined in national and state standards; offer a range of language choices in schools; conduct additional research on the outcomes of foreign language instruction in order to deepen understanding of student potential in acquiring languages. With these proposals in mind, the United States can alter the landscape of foreign language learning and build a citizenry armed with the requisite skills for living and working in an interconnected world.

Author: Nancy C. Rhodes and Ingrid Pufahl

Publisher: Center for Applied Linguistics 2010

Reviewed by Rosanne Zeppieri, the K-8 world languages supervisor in the West Windsor-Plainsboro School District in New Jersey. Her district has a robust FLES program that leads to long sequences of language study in several languages.



Watch children play. They easily slip into imaginary worlds of their own creation. If they are lucky, they live and learn in an environment that nurtures this very natural quality of children's play. A patch of grass becomes an island. A teeter totter transforms into a pirate ship. A stick morphs into a magical staff of power. Rocks and acorns are gathered to create a feast.

Eat, Drink, Play, Discover:

engaging the imagination through the senses to discover spanish-speaking cultures

At Sonrisas Spanish School, we're interested in finding ways to teach children in the way children actually learn. Our mission is to create high quality, standards-based Spanish classes and curriculum materials that are both effective for teachers and also provide a positive foreign language learning experience for students. We

value the human communication that a teacher provides, and we

believe that this type of learning is much more effective than media-based programs. It is only through the human interaction of a teacher guiding students through a lesson that all of the senses are used. The senses then engage the imagination. The more this is done, the more effortless both teaching and learning feels.

My husband Brooks and I started Sonrisas Spanish School as an after-school enrichment program in Austin, Texas area elementary schools in 1996. Our classes were informed by the ESL techniques, TPR, and the Natural Approach that we had used as bilingual

teachers in the Austin Independent School District, as well as the foreign language methodologies used in Waldorf Schools across the country. Over the years our number of students, our experience and expertise, and our family grew. Noting a paucity of high quality Spanish curriculum for preschool and elementary, we published *Sonrisas Spanish School: An Early Childhood Spanish Language Curriculum* in 2002. In 2005 we moved our family and our school to my hometown in Southwestern Colorado to be closer to family where, in Pagosa Springs, we expanded our school to include Spanish classes for not just elementary school children, but adults as well. In 2009 we published our second curriculum, *Sonrisas Spanish School: An Elementary Spanish Cultural Curriculum*. For the last several years, teachers at Sonrisas Spanish School have been using this curriculum to teach cultural lessons in which students and teachers take imaginary trips to Spanish-speaking countries. In the context of these lessons the students engage their imagination through the senses in order to discover Spanish-speaking cultures.

Because not everyone reading this article speaks Spanish, the examples for the language directives will be written in English. As a

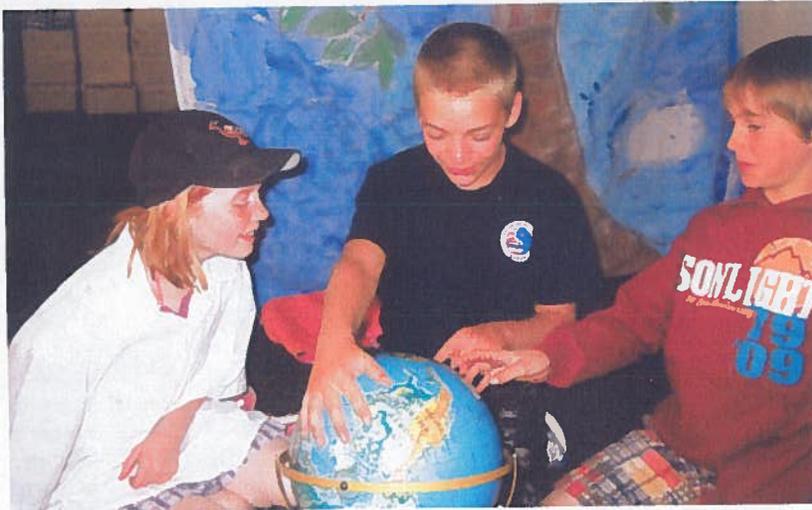
language teacher engaged in a lesson, however, the teacher is always speaking in the target language.

THE JOURNEY

Each of these lessons begins with a globe, treated with the same care and reverence as a crystal ball. As the teacher holds the globe carefully in her hands, she finds home on the globe. Her finger finds the location of her town on the globe as she says: "Children, here

we are in Pagosa Springs, Colorado....." She slowly moves her finger from home towards the country they'll be traveling to on an imaginary trip as she says: "We cross land, we cross water, and finally we arrive.....here on the island of Cuba." Then she gives the globe to one of her students and asks: "Maria, where's home? Where are we now? Show me how we get from here to Cuba." She lets a few students show her with their fingers how to get from home to Cuba so that she knows they are following her. She asks another student:

"Juan, show me water on the globe. Show me land. When we travel to Cuba do we have to cross water?" Then she reaches into her basket and pulls out a toy bicycle. "Class, is it possible to travel to Cuba from here by bicycle?" When they answer she reinforces their answer as she points to the ocean: "No, of course not! Bicycles can't travel over water." She does the same with a toy car, bus, train, boat, and airplane. Then she asks: "Class, how should we travel to Cuba today?" If they say airplane, her students create a plane right there in the classroom, much the way they create airplanes on the playground. They place two rows of chairs in the center of the room with a walkway down the middle for the flight attendant to serve drinks and snacks. The teacher passes out plane tickets and passports (made by the students in a previous class) and has them line up to get on the plane. She provides as much detail as possible to their plane trip, asking them to fasten their seatbelts, and offering them peanuts and beverages after take off. She has them look out their windows at the ocean below. She asks them to prepare for landing. By the time they exit the plane in Cuba their imaginations are already open and ready for any experiences the teacher presents to them.



This same routine, starting with a look at the globe, can be repeated before every cultural lesson. Once her students know this routine, she can expand upon it. She compares one country to another. (Which country is closer to us: Mexico or Spain? Which is larger: Argentina or Costa Rica?) She compares transportation modes. (Which method would be faster: airplane or bus?) She lets her students infuse their imaginations into the journey. One of her classes wants to travel to Spain on a magic carpet. Why not?

By starting each lesson with an imaginary journey, children are put at ease as we engage them in an experience as natural to them as breathing: imaginary play. The stage is set for whatever lesson their teacher has in store.

ENGAGING THE SENSES

The senses provide a window between ourselves and the world around us. If we want our students to experience and not just learn about a country, it's essential to use the senses to create that cultural picture.

FEEL

When her students step off the imaginary airplane in Costa Rica, the teacher makes a dramatic gesture of fumbling through her bag to get a fan and starts fanning herself "Ay ay ay, it's HOT here!" she says. "What was the weather like when we left home?" (It happens to be snowing and freezing cold in Colorado when they go to Costa Rica.) "Not here! Here it's HOT and HUMID!" She begins fanning the student closest to her and asks if anyone else would like a fan. In their imaginations the students are all suddenly feeling as hot as she, and she has engaged their sense of touch. Can you see how different this playful experience effects the children as opposed to simply saying "Class, in Costa Rica it's hot and humid"? When we take a real trip to another place, our first experience is usually a contrast in the way the air feels on our body. Whether you are taking your students to the French Alps or Beijing, think about what that first experience of the air on skin would feel like and create that in their imaginations.

HEAR

As the teacher and students are all fanning themselves in Costa Rica, the teacher suddenly drops her fan and brings her hand to her ear. "Shhhhh. Listen," she says. When everyone's quiet she makes her best monkey sound. "A monkey! Let's see if we can find it. Let's go into the tropical rainforest." In a corner of the classroom she has taped pictures of plants and animals that live in a Costa Rican rainforest. "Where could that monkey be? Maybe these will help: telescopes!" She hands each student a cardboard toilet paper tube to help find the monkey. A student finds the monkey's picture on the wall. "Here!" he says, and they all look at the monkey. The teacher puts her hand to her ear "Listen," she says as she makes her best parrot sound. "I hear a parrot. Can you guys find it with your telescopes?" They go through the same routine with a jaguar and a frog, and finally rain.

When visiting imaginary Cuba, the teacher does the same introduction and drops her fan to bring her hand to her ear, but instead of making an animal noise, she presses play on the CD player and plays some traditional Cuban music. "I hear Cuban music. What instruments do you hear? Does anyone feel like dancing?"

In Spain they hear flamenco and in Argentina they hear tango. The teacher does her best to represent the dancing style of the country and gets her students moving their bodies. Some teachers take this time to play an instrument that is traditional in the culture they are visiting.

SEE

To engage the visual imaginations of her students, a teacher uses books, photographs, memories, and contrast and comparison. Before the lesson begins she asks herself, "What do I want my students to see in the country we journey to? How does this experience contrast visually with the students' home town?" When she takes her children on their imaginary trip to Spain, she reads *A comer*, written by



Ana Zamorano and illustrated by Julie Vivas. In addition to having fantastic, manageable dialogue for the emerging Spanish speaker, it's a beautifully illustrated depiction of the food and culture of a Spanish village. She shows her students the pictures of the village buildings that are clearly hundreds of years old and asks her students: "Does this village look like our town? How is it different or the same? Are the buildings taller or shorter? Do we have castle ruins in our town? Do these buildings look older or newer than the buildings in our town?"

In Costa Rica she focuses on colors. Going into a rainforest offers a visual assault of color—especially green. When she takes her students into the imaginary rainforest she asks them: "What colors do you see?" She encourages them to tell her each color they see on the scarlet macaws, quetzals, and toucans. They linger on the dreamy iridescent blue morpho butterfly. Jan Brett has a beautifully illustrated book called *La sombrilla* that presents the brilliant experience of color in a Costa Rican Cloud forest. The teacher shows her students the pictures and asks them what colors they see. She contrasts this complex visual experience with the very simple experience of color in Colorado in the winter: white snow, brown and dark green trees, and blue sky.

In Argentina the teacher focuses on the fact that many parts of Argentina are very similar to Colorado as they are the same distance south from the equator as Colorado is north. So while they are in Argentina they see the opposite season that they are experiencing in Colorado. On the imaginary trip to Argentina in the fall, they go to where snow is melting and trees are blooming. In winter, Argentines are going to the beach for swimming and gardens are growing. The teacher has her students imagine what their own town looks like in the opposite season, and that becomes their visual experience of Argentina.

SMELL AND TASTE

I'm sure we can all relate to the experience of an olfactory journey. The scent of your grandmother's perfume on a stranger propels you into her living room; the fragrance of a gardenia takes you back to

tropical vacation you once took; the smell of apples takes you to a fall apple-picking harvest. The smells trigger the memories. In the imaginary journey to a Spanish-speaking country, if you can give your students the opportunity to smell and taste, the experience etches into the memory. In Spain students eat typical Spanish tapas. In Costa Rica they eat *gallo pinto*. In Cuba they eat tropical fruits. In Argentina they drink *yerba maté*. In Mexico they drink Mexican hot chocolate. A year after the lesson if you ask your students about their imaginary trip to Spain, chances are the first thing they will say is "We ate manchego and olives." As a teacher, you can use the sense of taste and smell to trigger the memory of the cultural and linguistic experience.

THE LINGUISTIC JOURNEY

In Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, the first standard is communication:

Communication

Communicate in Languages Other than English

- *Standard 1.1: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.*
- *Standard 1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.*
- *Standard 1.3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.*

As a foreign language teacher planning a lesson, when I keep the standards in mind, my lessons elicit both useful and meaningful language from my students. I keep them posted above my desk to encourage and reference them often while I plan.

In their book *Languages and Children: Making the Match*, Carol Ann Dahlberg and Helena Curtain define the "functional chunk" as a memorized and unanalyzed phrase of high frequency. (p.48) The imaginary cultural journey lends itself perfectly to teaching useful language chunks. These useful language chunks should be informed by the standards for communication listed above.

Even before taking the journey, the globe activity solicits meaningful Spanish dialogue. The following dialogue is an example of an instructional Spanish exchange in which the teacher engages her students in a conversation, and finishes the conversation with confidence that her students fully comprehend the language:

- Teacher:** María, where's our town?
María: Here.
Teacher: Juan, our town is here? (Points to the location of their town on the globe.)
Juan: Yes.
Teacher: Samuel, our town is here or there? (Teacher points to their town location and a random point on globe.)
Samuel: Our town is here. (Points to our town.)
Teacher: Guillermo, our town is there? (Points to random spot on globe.)
Guillermo: No, our town isn't there, it's here. (Pointing on globe.)

Once the teacher has determined that her students not only know where their town is located on the globe, but also that they can talk about it confidently in Spanish, she goes through the same series of questions with the goal of having her students locate the target country. Then she moves on to the next step:

- Teacher:** Soon we are going to travel from our town to Spain. (Drags finger around globe to Spain.)
Ana: Ana, do we cross land?
Ana: Yes.

- Teacher:** Bea, do we cross sea?
Bea: Yes.
Teacher: Francisco, reach in my basket and chose one of the modes of transportation for us to travel to Spain. (He pulls out a boat.) Francisco, is it possible to travel from our town to Spain by boat?
Francisco: Yes.
Teacher: Lupe, is it possible to cross the sea in a boat?
Lupe: Yes
Teacher: Pablo, is it possible to cross land in a boat?
Pablo: No. (Teacher gives Pablo the basket.)
Teacher: Look in my basket and chose a mode of transportation in which we can cross land. (Pablo takes out a car.)
Teacher: Talia, is it possible to cross land in a car?
Talia: Yes.
Teacher: Carlos, is it possible to cross sea in a car?
Carlos: No.
Teacher: We must travel across land and sea to reach Spain, so we must travel by car and boat. (Teacher places boat and car in front of José) José, choose which mode of travel we will use to cross land.
José: Car
Teacher: Lili, we will cross the land in a car?
Lili: Yes.
Teacher: Isabel, we will cross the land in a boat or a car?
Isabel: We cross the land in a car. We cross the sea in a boat.
Teacher: Yes! Lupe, how do we cross the sea?
Lupe: In a boat.

The above example focuses on the following language chunks:

<i>Dónde está?</i>	Where is...?
<i>(No) está aquí.</i>	It's (It isn't) here.
<i>Es posible</i>	Is it/It's possible
<i>Viajamos en coche/barco.</i>	We travel in car/boat.
<i>Viajamos por la tierra/océano</i>	We travel over land/ocean.

Once the teacher is sure her students are with her she can move on to the journey itself with confidence that all of her students can 1) identify Spain on the map, 2) tell her what major geographical features lie between their home and Spain, and 3) talk about at least one way of traveling across the geographic bodies to get to Spain. These are all meaningful language chunks that have been conveyed to the students in the target language. The imaginary trips lend themselves to covering many valuable phrases that are used in daily conversations. As a teacher you can take any language chunk that you want your students to gain confidence with and structure a dialogue around that concept. Take your time when introducing a new phrase, checking often for understanding. And always come back to review the concept in subsequent lessons.

THE STANDARDS

In addition to the communication standard discussed above, the imaginary trip to a Spanish speaking country addresses the remaining four standards. When each of a child's senses is engaged, these standards are met in a way that doesn't feel contrived or obligatory. Referring to the standards during lesson planning can actually enrich the depth of the lesson.

Cultures

- *Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures*

- *Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.*
- *Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.*

During the imaginary trips students don't just learn about practices, they practice them. Likewise, they don't just learn about products, but rather they make them, taste them, and touch them. In this way it is as if they are in the shoes of someone actually in the country, experiencing that unique perspective.

Connections

Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

- *Standard 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of the other disciplines through foreign language.*
- *Standard 3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.*

World geography and its climates are an obvious match for meeting this standard. In addition to this, students experience history, music, art, and (to an appropriate degree) political science during these imaginary trips. It is through the experiences within the imaginary journeys that the distinctive viewpoint of a foreign language can be understood. For example, through the experience of listening to Cuban music, creating *maracas*, and then playing and dancing along, students experience Cuba from the cultural viewpoint that would be impossible without the experience.

Comparisons

Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

- *Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through*
- *comparisons of the language studied and their own.*
- *Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through*
- *comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.*

During the imaginary trips, children experience climate, food, drinks, and holiday customs of the countries they visit. These can often provide a stark contrast or a surprising similarity to their home culture. It's very natural in the context of these experiences to ask questions like "How do you celebrate Christmas?" or "Do you eat tamales at Christmas time?" or "Does yerba maté taste like tea you've had before?" or "How is el Día de los Muertos different/similar to Halloween?" or "How does this country look different than the country you live in?" By looking at each experience in relation to their own culture, students deepen their understanding and their openness to another culture.

Communities

Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

- *Standards 5.1: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.*
- *Standard 5.2: Students show evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.*

In each journey the students create an art project that directly reflects the culture of that country (a *maraca* in Cuba, *papel picado* in Mexico, a *gauchada* in Argentina, etc.). Taking home a "souvenir" from the country creates a context at home for talking about the cultural experience they had in Spanish class. This standard is most effectively met with parent involvement. In my class I send home a weekly report for parents to stay connected to what their children are learning in Spanish. In each report I give them a suggestion for community connection. This can be as simple as looking at labels in grocery store for olives, clementines, almonds, tortillas, etc. and finding the words *hecho en España* or *producido en México*. It can

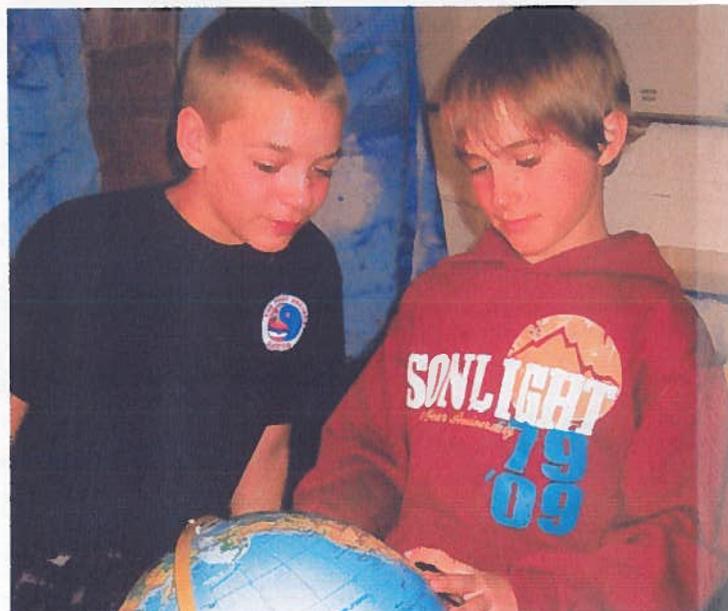
be as involved as teaching your students a traditional Mexican folk dance and performing in a local Cinco de Mayo festival. I often give the parents functional language chunks to incorporate into their home life.

LIFE-LONG LEARNERS

"Through the inner flexibility of their speech organ, the children find their way to a flexibility of soul and an openness that has an effect on their entire later life and especially on their social abilities. The foreign language lesson is suited like practically no other lesson to encourage openness and awaken interest for what is foreign to oneself—and in our time of widespread racism and social conflict on both a small and large scale this is a pedagogical mission of the first order."

– Rudolph Steiner (Forrer, Salusso, and Silvestry, *Senderos*, p. 14)

When a teacher sees a shift of perspective in her students, and language and cultures that were once perceived as "other" or "foreign" become familiar and understood, she has succeeded not only in her linguistic goals for her students, but also in creating what Rudolf Steiner refers to above as "a flexibility of soul and an openness." It is this quality of foreign language study that creates life-long learners. When a teacher engages her students' imaginations through the senses, she sees an inner spark ignite. Her students' hearts open to the rich diversity of experiences available in the world.



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■ **BLUE LINDNER** a bilingual elementary school teacher and mother of two, has been teaching Spanish to children for 14 years. She lived in Costa Rica and studied Latin American culture, history, and politics at the University of Costa Rica in San José. In 1996 she founded Sonrisas Spanish School where she teaches Spanish to children ages 3 to 12 years old, as well as trains Spanish teachers. She and her husband, Brooks Lindner, also a bilingual and Spanish

teacher, have published two curricula—a preschool and elementary Spanish curriculum called *Sonrisas Spanish School: An Early Childhood Spanish Curriculum*, and a second curriculum called *Sonrisas Spanish School: An Elementary Spanish Cultural Curriculum*. The curricula are online at www.sonrisasspanishschool.com.

USING ART IN A NEW WAY

We can't pass them up! It's almost impossible to resist a poster of our favorite painting at an exhibition we just visited, postcards from an art museum's bookstore, or coloring books that feature artists from the target culture we are teaching. We put them in our teacher stash and mentally label it with the word "potential." In previous decades, teachers might have decorated their rooms with the art posters, used the postcards as visual flashcards when identifying artists, or made copies of the coloring book pages when teaching colors. Art was part of the "Big C" culture, along with famous monuments and historical events. But the days of "Name That Artist" are changing and now teachers are interested in creating and blending art activities into their lesson plans to enhance communicative, performance-based instruction.

Works of art, whether modern or classical, can provide students with vehicles for communication. Whether a painting ignites a student's imagination while listening to a story or transports him into a cultural or historical situation portrayed by the artist, using art in our thematic units can double our chances of having students demonstrate that they can transfer what they are learning into a different context. Edith Ann, one of the characters of comedian Lily Tomlin, once revealed that she likes a teacher "who gives you something to take home to think about besides homework." Teachers who lead students into thinking about the perspectives behind the products and practices of a culture would be Edith Ann's kind of teacher!

MEMORY NARRATIVES

By using a painting like Georges Seurat's *Un dimanche après-midi à l'Île de la Grande Jatte* (A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte) as a backdrop, teachers can create a narrative script for an interpretive task in which students listen to the voice of a young French woman (pre-recorded by teacher or colleague) who is reminiscing about her experience of going to the park with her mother when she was a little girl. By using the painting as evidence, students can react to the woman's recollection as being "accurate/true" or "inaccurate/false." One of the "recollections" a teacher might include in her script could be "*Il y avait toujours quelques bicyclettes au parc*" (There were always many bicycles in the park). Since there are no bicycles in the painting, this would be an inaccurate statement. However, the teacher could also write a statement such as "*Ma mère et moi aimions aller au parc ensemble. Je portais toujours ma robe blanche*" (My mother and I liked to go to the park together. I always wore my white dress). Since the painting portrays a young girl in a white dress with her mother in the park, the statement would be accurate. Students could also create statements about the painting.

CONVERSATIONAL SNIPPETS

By using a painting as the inspiration for a graphic novel or cartoon, teachers or students can create short scripts for snippets of the characters' conversations or thoughts. To set this up teachers scan the painting into a Power Point slide or display it with Smart

Board technology and insert numbered callout/dialog bubbles next to characters. When listening to the script's prompts, students determine which character is speaking or thinking about something in particular. For example, in the Velasquez' *Las Meninas*, one of the prompts might be, "*Estoy aburrido y tengo hambre. Quiero un hueso.*" (I'm bored and hungry. I want a bone.). The only character in the painting who would say he is hungry and wants a bone would be the dog in the foreground of the painting. By listening for key words and phrases, students would know to choose the dog. Of course, it could also be a reading activity in which students are given written prompts on sentence strips that they would match with characters in the painting. It can then be extended to students developing the same type of scenario with either an assigned or student-selected painting. Many of the paintings of Renoir and Degas are wonderful vehicles for this activity in French. German teachers will find the anonymous 15th century painting, *Paradiesgärtlein* (Little Garden of Paradise), an effective vehicle for students to morph themselves into a painting to "eavesdrop" on the characters as they interact with each other. This painting can be found at the Stadel Museum's website at www.staedelmuseum.de

DEVELOPING CULTURAL DETECTIVES IN THE CLASSROOM

If we give the role of "cultural detective" to our students, then what an artist includes in a painting can provide "clues" to the perspective of that painter. As Picasso once said, "I paint objects as I think them, not as I see them." In Frida Kahlo's painting, *Autorretrato en la frontera entre México y los Estados Unidos* (Self-Portrait on the Border Line between Mexico and the United States), we see Kahlo in a pink dress placed in the middle of the painting with images of Mexico to her right and images of the United States to her left. When looking at the painting through the eyes of a detective, students notice things like colorful flowers with deep roots on the Mexican side and electrical appliances with long cords on the U.S. side. When prompted to wonder what the artist is trying to tell us about her perspective toward Mexico and U.S., one sixth grade student said that, "she was trying to tell us that her roots were in Mexico, not the U.S." A seventh-grader thought that, "the electrical cords meant that the U.S. relies too much on machines and not enough on nature." Fairly sophisticated for middle-schoolers, but opinions like these surface because this type of activity encourages reflective thinking about the world seen through the perspective of the artist.

Some teachers may be reluctant to do this type of activity in beginning language classes if they feel that their students would not be able to do the entire activity in the target language. For beginners, students could fill in a Venn diagram with simple words and phrases from the target language that would indicate which items are on the Mexican side of the painting, which are on the U.S. side, and which are represented in both sides. When it is not realistic to complete the deeper reflection in the target language, do it in English. H. Ned Seelye in *Teaching Culture: Strategies for Intercultural*

Communication contends that “the other logical option - do not carry out the activity - ignores the crucial importance of developing cultural skills. The well-meant conviction that cultural activities must be held in abeyance until they can be carried out in the target language has been too impoverishing.” (page 8)

INFORMATION GAP ACTIVITY

Teachers can create an information gap activity that would reinforce the transfer of newly acquired vocabulary and language structures into a new context. By using coloring book pages of famous works of art from the target culture, teachers can design activities that direct students to exchange information about particular details in a painting. For example, pairs of students could give each other information and ask/answer questions about the different items from their assigned half of a coloring book page in order to complete a colored drawing. From the coloring book pages of Goya's work, *Don Manuel Osorio de Zuniga*, Student A might ask, “*De qué color son los zapatos?*” (What color are the shoes?) to get the information he needs to correctly color in one of his items. Another strategy would be to make statements about his half in exchange for information about the other half. For example, Student B might say, “*Un pájaro es azul y el otro es anaranjado*” (One bird is blue and the other is orange) and Student A might respond with, “*Y uno de mis pájaros es amarillo y el otro es rojo.*”

THE ART CONNECTION

By tapping into the “art connection”, World Language teachers can integrate art into their lessons for multiple purposes. Whether it be to develop vocabulary, interpret stories, create conversations, or to investigate cultural perspectives, integrating art into our thematic units can bring language to life for many students. No longer used just to decorate our classrooms art can now become an integral part of standards-based instruction.

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EuroLib

The European Children's Traveling Language Library

The European Children's Traveling Language Library is a European Union funded education project. Targeted at children who are in their first year of learning a foreign language (in Europe this can be age six in Italy or age ten in the United Kingdom), its goals are to:

- Expose language learners to the rich heritage of European languages and cultures
- Motivate students to learn languages
- Build a love of reading as the best form of autonomous lifelong learning
- Reinforce emerging literacy

Traveling libraries of beautifully illustrated children's books in six European languages (English, Spanish, Turkish, Italian, Czech and Finnish) will travel from school to school across Europe. Each school keeps the library for a set period of time and has to carry out a number of educational and collaborative activities before, during, and after the Library's visit. Additionally, they place the results on the project website for use and viewing by other schools.

Activities will include inter-comprehension, comprehension, creative expression, criticism, reflection, task-based learning, collaboration, and the use of languages within a social context. Both on the project website and traveling with the library itself will be teacher diaries and teacher guides. Every school will be able to add

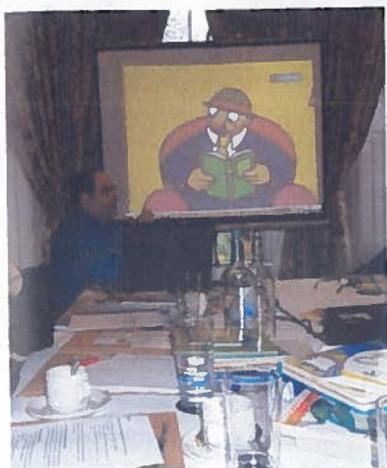
a profile and message for the next schools in the library and on the website as text and/or multimedia.

The languages of the books in the library represent the languages in the partner countries. In all European Union projects we must have at least three partners from three different eligible countries. EuroLib has a partnership of six countries namely UK, Turkey, Czech Republic, Spain, Italy, Finland. The 36 books of the library (six in each language) were chosen because they reflect the cultures of their country and because they are heavily illustrated. The abundant pictures help children decode the story even though it may be written in a language that they do not understand. Each country has in their selection at least one classic story of their culture like Don Quixote from Spain, a factual book like a Richard Scarry book from UK, and the rest being fiction.

The project closes in November 2011 but before that we want to form a World Association that will enable its continuation and growth. Interested organizations, schools, teachers, even parents can contact the project now on my email address joel_josephson@kindersite.org to express their interest in helping to form the association. The primary mission of the association will be to enlarge the number of libraries globally and to ensure the movement and sustainability of the libraries.

The photos below are of the partnership meeting in London, UK (January 2010) when each partner introduced the selections from his or her country.

The photos below are of the partnership meeting in London, UK (January 2010) when each partner introduced the selections from his or her country.



■ **JOEL JOSEPHSON** (UK) is the Founder and Executive Director of the Kindersite

Project <http://www.kindersite.org/> A website used by 18,000 schools in 157 countries, for early learning.

Cultural Diversity Creative Genius Cognitive Development

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Jared Diamond (1999), in his Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, proposed the following question: Why did certain civilizations in world history seem to be more “advanced” than others? To answer his question, Diamond compared and contrasted many societies throughout history and determined that societies that had more access to cultural diversity were more apt to advance than their more isolated counterparts. Evolutionary psychologist, Steven Pinker (2002), provided a more thorough synopsis of Diamond’s explanation: “So Eurasia conquered the world not because Eurasians are smarter but because they could best take advantage of the principle that many heads are better than one. The “culture” of any of the conquering nations of Europe, such as Britain, is in fact a greatest-hits collection of inventions assembled across thousands of miles and years. The collection is made up of cereal crops and alphabetic writing from the Middle East, gunpowder and paper from China, domesticated horses from Ukraine, and many others. But the necessary insular cultures of Australia, Africa, and the Americas had to make do with a few homegrown technologies, and as a result they were no match for their pluralistic conquerors. Even within Eurasia and (later) the Americas, cultures that were isolated by mountainous geography—for example, in the Appalachians, the Balkans, and the Scottish highlands—remained backward for centuries in comparison with the vast network of people around them” (pp. 68-69).

Not only does exposure to diverse cultural paradigms seem efficacious on the macro level, as illustrated by Diamond (1999), it also appears to be effectual on the micro level. Back in the 1970's, Dean Simonton (1997), a professor at the University of California-Davis, decided to dedicate a large portion of his research agenda to discovering some of the more salient factors involved in producing high achieving people. His research question was as follows: What elements in a person’s developmental environment (when they are kids) might contribute to the likelihood he or she will be a person of high achievement? To answer that question, Simonton analyzed the lives of approximately 5,000 highly creative people from 700 BCE to 1839 ACE, and concluded that, although many factors positively influenced achievement, one of the more significant ones was exposure to cultural diversity. Specifically, he found a positive correlation between highly creative individuals and exposure to cultural diversity in their younger, developmental years. These highly creative people, according to Simonton, tended to live in circumstances where different cultures interacted and, as a result, likely rubbed off on each other. This has been referred to as the cross-fertilization or cross-pollination of ideas (Murray, 1997).

Similar to that, we believe that exposure to cultural diversity may force children (or even adults) to form new neural connections in the brain to be able to sufficiently interpret meaning in things to which they are not accustomed. It has been widely believed for some time that people, when confronted with completely new experiences, must make metaphorical or analogical connections between old knowledge and the new information in order to comprehend and integrate the new information (Belth, 1977). The resultant new paradigms that are created, acquired through cross-cultural exposure, soon become older knowledge that can be used to better acquire even newer knowledge of one kind or another. Therefore, once formed, these new neural connections may be at one’s permanent disposal to assist in a myriad of potential cognitive processes (e.g., language processing, knowledge acquirement, formal operational and dialectical thinking, problem solving). In a similar vein, research has demonstrated that knowledge of a second language has the tendency to enhance academic achievement, verbal ability, problem solving, and overall cognitive development (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2010). Considering the research on cross-cultural exposure, maybe cultural instruction, done the right way and with the right mix, can significantly facilitate progress in multiple domains of the cerebral arena. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to provide foreign language teachers with a few innovative strategies for introducing elementary-aged students to cultural diversity that, in turn, may serve to be beneficial in the development of cognitive complexity.

WHAT EXACTLY IS DEEPER CULTURE?

It is well known that most (not all) of the cultural instruction proffered in the elementary grades, high school, and even college for that matter, deals with rather superficial things such as celebrities, holidays, food, sports, schools, music, dances, etc. This is all good, important, and essential; however, there is a realm of culture that runs much deeper than that. Protagoras said, “Man is the measure of all things.” Well, if that is true, then many of those measurements are cultural in nature. Each culture possesses different paradigms that inform people’s thinking. Two people from different cultures can witness the very same event and interpret it quite differently. This is because their cultural paradigms influence their interpretations (some that may be helpful in life; some maybe not so). For example, identical twins raised apart in two different cultures might possess very different opinions of themselves based on the two cultures’ paradigms of beauty. One may interpret herself as beautiful; the other may interpret herself as ugly. The power of paradigms cannot be overstated.

Cultural instruction should be more than just piñatas, mariachis, French bread, and the Eiffel Tower. We need to go a little deeper—especially in the secondary grades (Ivers, 2007). However, what about the elementary grades? We admit that going deeper here poses a significant challenge and we can’t say we have the answer. Although one of the authors taught full time in a FLES program early in his career, we know most of the readers of this article have had significantly more experience in FLES programs than we have. All we will do is throw out some ideas and let you consider them for what they are worth. Knowing that Mexicans celebrate el Cinco de Mayo is essential and important, however it may do little to foster complex cognitive development. If we are to expose our young students to empowering and life-enriching cultural diversity, a slightly deeper analysis of cross cultural differences may be necessary.

SOME WEIGHTIER MATTERS

First of all, since age-appropriate deep culture is very limited, we see nothing wrong with occasionally engaging issues from cultures other than the target one. What we are actually trying to do is develop a cross-cultural consciousness rather than have the students memorize a bunch of mono-cultural facts considering there is probably no way they could ever learn more than a tiny percentage of them.

The psychologist, Albert Ellis (2001), suggests a formula for use in the realm of mental health counseling that we believe is quite pertinent to the teaching of deeper culture as well. A very rough representation of it is as follows:

A. Event or circumstance → B. Beliefs (or culture) → C. Reaction

Similar A's filtered through different B's can bring on vastly different C's. To clarify, let me explain it this way. Like many middle-aged men, one of the authors can stand to lose a few pounds (about twenty). Envision his friends assigning him a nickname based on his being overweight (the event or circumstance) and run that scenario through Ellis' formula for U.S. Anglo culture vs., let's say, Latin American culture. Now we think you may see what we mean. There are many cultural elements that can be run through that formula for students in the secondary grades and college (Ivers, Ivers & Ivers, 2008). However, the problem is that most of them are too complex for elementary-aged children (i.e. cultural contributions to mental illness) or they are the type of issues that take a certain degree of maturity to discuss (i.e. diverse cultural views on physical attractiveness). However, in the spirit of affording the students the cross-cultural exposure that could be more beneficial, we need to at least make the attempt to go a little deeper.

One should probably begin with cross-cultural information that is not extremely complex, but yet it drives home the idea of diverse interpretations. We are not saying that the following things have never been covered before, but only that they maybe ought to get more of our attention to possibly focus the students more on the interpretive realm. Here are a few examples, and again, we don't see the need to have the cultural items be exclusively target culture phenomena:

1. One that might be in this realm would be the diverse interpretations of **gestures**. One very famous one is that in Albania the head movements for yes and no are the exact opposite of what they are in the U.S.! As a fun activity, you can ask your students to respond to simple questions by shaking their heads the "Albanian way." Of course, the discussion about some gestures (which also can be vastly misinterpreted culturally) would have to be reserved for maybe seniors in high school.
2. **Manners** can also provide an area where simple yet diverse interpretations can be taught. One might have to be a little careful here too, but an example might be that in some places in Latin America it is very rude to toss an object to another person. We, in the U.S., would think nothing of tossing something like a newspaper a few feet to a friend who was in need of one. Such an action would cause you to be interpreted as a rude person in many Latin America cultures. You can demonstrate this by pretending that someone is in significant need of an object you possess. You then carefully toss the object to him or her stating, "We are now in the United States. Would people think I am a rude person or a polite person?" You can then pretend that you are in a classroom in Mexico, toss the object to someone and state, "We are now in Mexico. Am I a rude person or a polite person?" This activity can be done with other cultural differences in manners as well.
3. Discussing **intensity and expressivity levels** from one culture to another may push the limit on keeping it simple but we still think it can be accomplished with a modicum of success. All cultural groups generally share the same emotions and similar facial expressions of emotional reactions (Pinker, 2009). However, culture determines the degree in which these feelings can be publicly expressed. This is an important point as we would not want to communicate that certain groups are more "emotional" than others. On the low side of the expressivity scale we will find folks like the Asians and Scandinavians (Althen, 1988). On the side where the culture permits more expressivity would be Hispanics, Italians, Arabs, and many others (Althen,

1988). Even here among English-speaking groups in the United States, we see significant differences. European Americans in the western part of the U.S. would generally be a little low on expressivity allowance and African Americans and European Americans from the urban Northeast would generally be a little high. We emphasize generally because there are, of course, many individual differences and exceptions. Considering the students' age, to avoid misunderstanding, you may not want to mention any specific ethnic groups. However, you can say that some people from different cultures or "places" may seem to us to be mad when they are really not mad. You can tell selected and maybe edited stories of how you, or people you know, were confused by these cultural situations. One of the authors often tells a story involving his wife (from a small town in Nevada) and her first visit to Philadelphia (his home town). Some of the nicest people he knows scared her to death. It would be efficacious for a child from a low-expressivity culture to maybe begin to understand this concept so that later in their lives they don't automatically assume that the communicative bearing of some Southern Europeans, Latinos, African Americans, or European Americans from Brooklyn somehow makes them too emotional, rude, or even dangerous. The less we talk about these things, the more the students may be culturally nudged toward prejudicial interpretations.

4. **Stories of personal experiences with other cultures** are beneficial for several reasons. First of all, they are extremely helpful in maintaining attention. If the students are not attending to what you say, it will matter little how adroitly you say it. Second, by cautiously discussing some of your personal experiences (or those of an acquaintance) you may be able to somehow work in the idea of diverse interpretations of reality. Third, even if you are unsuccessful in touching the deeper, interpretive realm, any discussion of foreign culture is usually valuable. After any sort of cross-cultural input, the child will be that much more likely to recognize a cross-cultural misunderstanding when he or she is confronted with one. A story one of the authors likes to tell his college students is when he was almost killed by a falling iguana on an iguana hunt in the jungles of the Yucatan Peninsula. He was in a remote Mayan village and an old man who took him and a few others on the hunt was humiliated after he failed to catch an iguana. The old gentleman sat down on a log with his head down and barely spoke. The author got the sense that, in that particular Mayan culture, a real man gets his iguana. Fortunately, the almost eighty year old man was able to redeem himself by climbing a tall tree and shaking some branches. It was then the author heard a big thud on the ground and looked down to see a huge iguana looking up at him but after taking one look at the creature, he decided to allow the old man the privilege and honor of catching him. After relating the story, he then asks his students if they would be humiliated if they took people on an iguana hunt and didn't catch one. We think this story might also work with the lower grades. Such questions set the stage for the eventual higher knowledge that what might cause embarrassment, in most circumstances, is thrust upon us culturally and is limited in time and space.

CONCLUSION

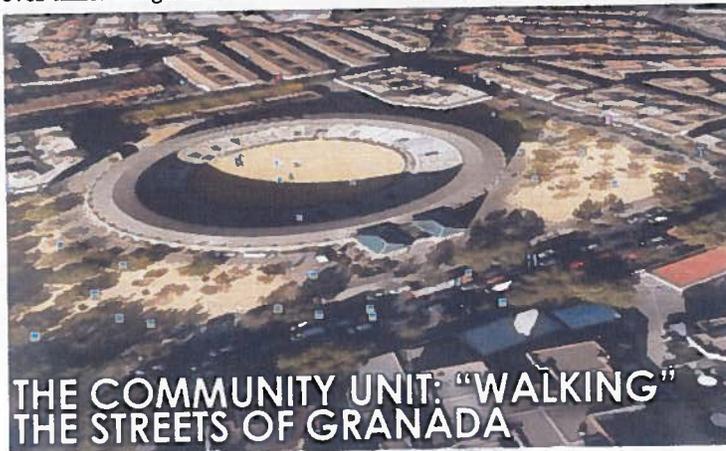
We are sure you good folks reading this can come up with even better ideas due to your more significant classroom experience. Considering the evidence at hand, we think it behooves us to give the teaching of culture in elementary school foreign language classes our undivided attention and reflection. Culture needs to be taught more deeply on

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cultural adventures for the Google™ generation

Today my third graders and I go grocery shopping half way around the world. Using Google Earth we “fly” to Granada, Spain and map out the shopping route of Antonia, the mother of the family I lived with while studying in Granada. We look at the store fronts and calculate the distance she walks every day to buy fresh ingredients for her amazing meals. The pictures in Google Earth we use while “shopping” in Granada are spring boards for meaningful discussions in Spanish about the products, practices, and perspectives related to grocery shopping and life in Spain. Once our shopping is done, we “fly” home. The next Spanish class we “drive” through my typical shopping trip, comparing it with our experience in Spain.

Google Earth is a computer program that allows users to view the Earth through satellite imagery and maps, to see cities from above and through street views, and to search for addresses and browse locations. Many famous buildings and structures from around the world have detailed 3D views accessible on Google Earth. It is possible to explore the sky, Mars, and the moon through Google Earth and historical views allow users to see changes to places on Earth over time. Google Earth is a free resource any school can download.



BEFORE GOOGLE EARTH

In my third grade community unit, I parceled out my knowledge about Spain and Spanish culture over the course of a few lessons. I told stories, showed pictures, and drew maps to compare Antonia’s and my typical shopping trips. Through our discussions I learned that my students found the variety of specialty stores in Spain interesting and they were surprised that Antonia walks to all of them. I often wondered how well my students visualized what I was explaining without ever having had the experience themselves.

USING GOOGLE EARTH

Google Earth allows my students to see first hand the streets of Granada, Spain. Now they discover the specialty shops as we “walk”

down the streets where Antonia shops. I fill in the gaps with my own stories and experiences, expanding on what they see in the pictures. Google Earth creates a better foundation for insightful discussions about cultural perspectives and practices in Iowa and Spain. Some questions we discuss are:

- *How often does your family grocery shop each week?*
- *Do you think every mother in Spain grocery shops as much as Antonia? Why or why not?*
- *Why would Antonia want to walk so far to do her grocery shopping?*
- *Does your family walk to the grocery store? Why or why not?*



BEFORE GOOGLE EARTH

I used atlases, maps, and pictures to bring an understanding of different parts of the Spanish-speaking world to my students. During the Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean unit, my sixth graders read postcards written by imaginary students in those countries. Each postcard included personal information about the imaginary child and information about the country where that child lived. We found the country on the map and looked at some pictures from that country.

USING GOOGLE EARTH

With Google Earth, my students discover how towns and cities look in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. The street view lets us look at 360° pictures of streets in several cities. We compare the products and practices of our city with the city we are “visiting” by looking at the pictures.

When Google Earth does not have street views for a city, I use the panoramic pictures provided. Placing markers next to the pictures before the lesson allows me to find the picture I want quickly when I am teaching, rather than clicking around blindly. After searching for the products and gaining insight into the practices, we end with a discussion on the perspective from that culture. Some questions we discuss are:

- Why are the buses painted that color?
- Have you ever seen someone with a horse and a cart on a highway?
- Why would there be a horse and a cart on the highway?
- What are the roofs of the buildings made of? What shape are they and why?



THE SOUTH AMERICA UNIT: A SLEUTHING ADVENTURE

BEFORE GOOGLE EARTH

My South America unit was set up similar to the game "Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?" A thief stole an important Incan artifact from a museum in Ecuador. My sixth graders became detectives and searched for clues the thief left behind, flew through South America and eventually caught the criminal. We returned the artifact to the museum and flew home. I used a PowerPoint presentation with lots of pictures and some internet resources.

USING GOOGLE EARTH

Now we use Google Earth to "fly" from airport to airport. We pretend to take a bus or taxi to get into the city while I zoom in on our destination. I add markers when necessary and link the markers for a tourist site or museum to websites with virtual tours, information and more pictures. We quickly retrace our path during each new class session, reminding the students where we are in our travel adventure. As in the Central America unit, we use the pictures provided in Google Earth to begin discussions about the practices, products, and perspectives of different cultures.

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all levels. The teaching of deeper culture in the elementary grades provides us a serious, yet not insurmountable challenge. However, the challenge is one where the potential rewards in the cognitive and creative realm may be much more than we currently realize.

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NAZCA LINES: A BETTER PERSPECTIVE BEFORE GOOGLE EARTH

During the deserts unit in first grade, my students learn about the Nazca lines. These ancient lines are in a variety of shapes and are located in the Nazca Desert of Peru. Pre-Google Earth I taught this unit using enlarged pictures of the Nazca lines to give my students an idea of how the lines look. The only video I could find on the topic was in English, so I showed the video with the sound muted and narrated it myself. This gave my students a better idea of the scale of the lines, but I knew there was a better way.

USING GOOGLE EARTH

Now my first graders and I board our pretend plane and use Google Earth to "fly" over the Nazca lines to view some of them from above. A highway runs through part of the Nazca desert, showing the students the scale of the ancient lines. They have a great time identifying lines and figures they see. This bird's eye view has led to better discussions about why lines were made and how they were created.

CONCLUSION

Google Earth provides me with high impact resources to help my students visualize places in the world where Spanish is spoken, despite never having been there in person. As a tool for developing a better understanding of the products, practices, and perspectives of other cultures, it is a user-friendly program that engages both students and teachers. Pack your imaginary bags and plan your trip using Google Earth today!



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A Cultural Pot Pourri from Fairfax County, VA

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is the largest school division in Virginia and the 12th largest in the United States. The FCPS School Board believes that students in the 21st century need to develop an ability to communicate with people who speak other languages and come from other cultures. The goal of the School Board is to ensure that all 174,000 students will graduate with communicative competence in two languages after a continuous sequence of second language instruction beginning in elementary school. At the elementary level, the world languages program offers instruction in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish. The Two-Way Immersion Program, Partial-Immersion Program, and the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) Program are the models used to deliver language instruction in 45 elementary schools. Teachers use the target language exclusively in both the immersion and the FLES models. In this article representatives from our FLES and Immersion programs offer vignettes from their classes that demonstrate how they integrate culture into each lesson while reinforcing content and teaching the target language. — Paula Patrick

Whenever I show my students a presentation or engage them in an activity that is related to my native country, Morocco, students become animated and inquisitive. It works like magic for me. Culture raises students' curiosity because they want to know and learn more about the target language and culture. Students start drawing comparisons and contrasts between what they see and live, and create associations and connections.

When I teach weather and geography, I link it to the Arab world since I'm teaching Arabic language. I show my students landscape pictures of the region and asked them to guess the climate. I use Google Earth and show them how the green in the North Africa turns into yellow and orange in the Middle East. I ask them to name the type of vegetation that might grow there. They are surprised to learn that palm trees are the main trees in the Middle East and that they produce dates instead of coconuts. I show them a picture of dates and even bring in dates to taste.

To take the lesson a step further, I explain to them the role of dates in the Arab world. People offer them to their guests as a sign of hospitality. During wedding receptions, the bride and the groom share one date and drink milk from the same glass. In many Arab countries, dates are also used in official ceremonies; for example, when the king of Morocco receives guests and dignitaries from other countries, he offers them milk and dates. To mark the moment, I usually add little anecdotes. For example, I told them about an incident involving the Italian president who had trouble chewing the big date the king offered him because it was getting stuck to his dentures. With the cameras focused on him he struggled to swallow the date in his mouth. Telling this kind of story creates bonding between the students, the language, and the teacher. Culture is the cement that glues the language and the knowledge together.



Integrating Culture into an Arabic lesson on Weather and Geography

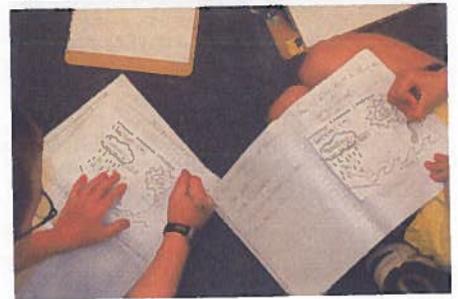
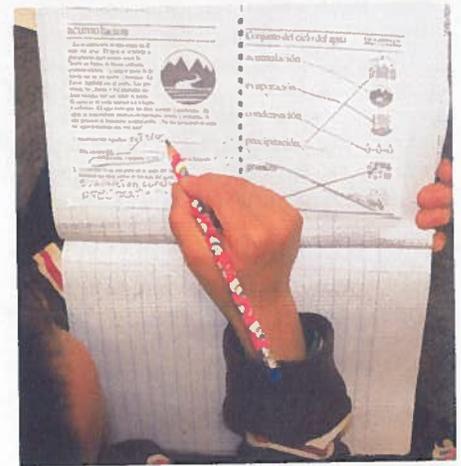
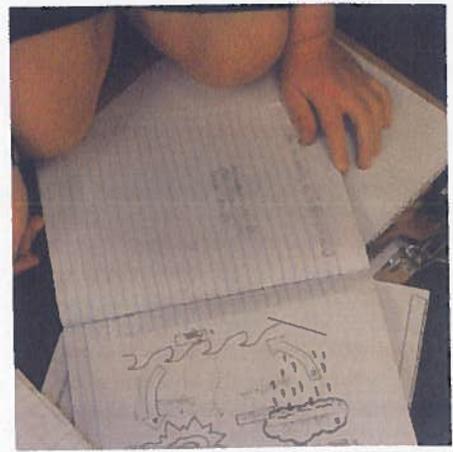
by Meriem Bacha

Have a Peek Inside a FLES Classroom with Margie Koller at Greenbriar West Elementary School

One of the benefits of the FLES (Foreign Language In Elementary Schools) model is its goal to give all students in elementary school the opportunity to acquire a language. At our school, we begin language in first grade and classes meet twice weekly for thirty-minute periods. Since FLES lessons need to be concrete, dynamic and meaningful so all the students can connect to, understand, and use the target language in all the skills, we carefully design our thematic units to fulfill these objectives. One of our third grade Spanish lessons “*Nuestro planeta*” (Our Planet) demonstrates these characteristics.

In our district all FLES lessons have three main objectives:

- First, communication is in the target language. In this lesson, students learn to answer questions associated with types of precipitation. They build vocabulary in the target language using cognates, such as: *evaporación* (evaporation), *condensación* (condensation), *precipitación* (precipitation), *sólido* (solid), *líquido* (liquid), *gas* (gas), *ciclo* (cycle), *comienza* (begins) as well as simple verbs in the present tense: *es* (is), *se encuentra* (are found), *puede ser* (can be), *sube* (rises), *baja* (falls).
- Second, lessons must include a cultural objective. In this unit the folktale from *Peru Llama and the Great Flood* as retold by Ellen Alexander (<http://dusd.k12.ca.us/des/bwebb/reading/llama.html>) fulfills this objective. Students look at the illustrations while listening to a very simple telling of the story. Originally told in the Quechua language of the Andes, this is a tale of a llama who dreams of a terrible flood and leads his Andean family to the peak of Willka Tutu, where animals of every sort take refuge. Illustrations in the book showing faces in the rocks to reflect the Andean belief of “aliveness” of all nature serve as an introduction to a later lesson on the rock cycle.
- Third, the lesson needs to align with the academic objectives of the grade level. In this case we chose a science objective that describes the process of the water cycle. The class interacts with the SMARTboard notebook pages, viewing and describing the changes of water as it goes through each part of the water cycle. The students enjoy using Total Physical Response (TPR) to act out the water cycle. Vocabulary cards pulled from the “mystery box” or *¿Qué hay adentro?* (What’s inside?) pique student interest and students eagerly take turns practicing the vocabulary. They name different types of precipitation and elements involved in stages of the water cycle as I pull the pictures one at a time from the box. The lesson finishes with the students working on differentiated assignments in their Interactive notebooks. They can choose to draw and label different types of precipitation or represent the elements and stages of the water cycle. It is gratifying to watch students actively engaged and using the target language as they make connections to the grade level curriculum. Even students new to the program can participate fully in these tasks as Spanish and science reinforce each other.



Integrating Culture into a FLES Geography Lesson

By Marina Afentakis/FLES Italian Teacher

In fifth grade, students learn about people in their environment in a 30 - minute lesson conducted completely in Italian. Google maps help to transport my students to Italy as they use a geography lesson I had designed to reinforce skills. In this particular lesson, students begin by exploring the Grand Canyon and discuss the size of it in the superlative form, *grandissimo*. They travel to the Alps and Dolomites in northern Italy where they compare and contrast this geographic region with the Grand Canyon. Again, starting with geographical features in the U.S., students identify the river that flows through Washington D.C., then compare the Potomac with other rivers located throughout Virginia and finally take their knowledge a step further by identifying the river, Tevere, that flows through Rome and comparing it with the Potomac River in D.C.

Throughout the lesson, the students strengthen their math and language skills by talking about the landforms in Italian and

by comparing/contrasting them in length and height. Classroom teachers are pleased to see the map skills they have taught reinforced as students compare landforms in the U.S. with those in Italy. Even though the lesson is focused on geography, the students learn the culture of Italy indirectly while traversing the countryside.

The lesson transitions to give students a more in depth look inside each city. Students view pictures of Washington D.C. and identify the museums and monuments. With an interactive white board, students match the pictures and descriptions about each one. They learn about the Vatican and museums in Firenze. To stretch students, the art of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raffaello, and Caravaggio, is introduced and later students are able to identify the Italian works of art and the artists who created them.

At the end of the lesson, I ask students to reflect on what they have learned. They draw connections between the two countries and enjoy being able to articulate the sights of their “new” country.

Chinese Gardens:

by Mei-Jean Kuo Barth

A Chinese Learning Scenario

In my Chinese FLES fifth and sixth grade classes, students learn the symbolism and the essential elements of Chinese gardens. They also compare and contrast the Chinese gardens with western style gardens. Students make connections with art, science (plants and flowers) and social studies (world history, religion of the world) by creating an art work of their own Chinese garden design that at the end of the unit, they present to the whole class.

This learning scenario has the goal of bringing students to greater understanding of both the Chinese culture and their own through the learning about gardens. Originally designed by Dali Tan of Landon School in Maryland it is part of a field test effort of ten learning scenarios of Chinese Language Teachers Association K-16 Standards Project.

I begin the lesson by showing a series of pictures of typical gardens from both the Chinese and Western tradition (examples from Longwood Garden in Delaware) along with video segments from YouTube of three famous Chinese gardens (see below). I have traditional Chinese flute and strings music playing in the background. Students view a PowerPoint presentation of garden pictures with key Chinese words and phrases on the interactive white board. I read each word aloud and have the students repeat after me. We follow this activity with a class discussion on the major elements of a typical Chinese garden. For homework we encourage students to conduct internet research on Chinese gardens, bonsai trees and famous western gardens. Students view bonsai garden photos in the National Arboretum in Washington D.C. in class and they design their own Chinese garden by drawing one on a white 8x11 piece of construction paper. We encourage them to label elements of the Chinese garden on their artwork. They are to differentiate the main characteristics of their drawing using one of the symbolism words. Students present their drawings to the class using the sentence patterns provided. Whole group discussion will then focus on the comparison of a western garden and a Chinese garden. In the meantime students read the book "In a Chinese Garden" in their language arts classes as an extension activity of this Chinese garden unit.

VOCABULARY:

Symbolism of Chinese garden: 和谐(harmony), 平静(tranquility), 快乐(happiness), 自然(nature), 满足(satisfaction), 世界和平(world peace).

Ten basic elements of a Chinese garden: 盆栽(Bonsai), 亭子(pagoda style gazebo), 小桥(small bridge walkway), 流水(flowing water), 莲花池塘(lily pond), 鱼(fish), 柳树(weeping willow tree), 月门(moon-shaped doorway), 石雕(stone carving stature), 倒影(reflection)

SENTENCE PATTERNS:

我的中国花园有... (My Chinese garden has....).

我喜欢 (I like....)

___ 很好看。 (___ is / are very pretty).

YOUTUBE LINKS

- A Typical Chinese Garden (pictures with soothing music): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7W9hPg41qM
- Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, Vancouver: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj73O05O5mI>
- Portland Classical Chinese Garden: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qG4V4RnEG5Q&feature=related>

INTERNET ARTICLE

<http://www.portlandchinesegarden.org/>

How to Integrate Culture in a Mathematics, Health or Science Lesson

by Annie Dwyer

As a fifth grade French immersion teacher, I try to integrate as much francophone culture into my lessons as I can in order to give an extra dimension to the required curriculum. Children always seem to enjoy discovering the supplementary information, and as a result, tend to develop a comparative mind set towards their overall studies.

When teaching long linear distances (mile and kilometer), an engaging task is to ask students to plan a trip within a francophone country where they would visit four towns. The objectives for this math project are to locate the towns on a map, draw connecting lines to each town, write one or two sentences per town on what each town is famous for, and calculate in miles and kilometers distances between towns using the map scale or the internet. In an immersion program, students must learn the state standards for math so, in this case, working

with both miles and kilometers is essential to the lesson.

To reinforce a unit on the metric system, I use a cooking activity related to a French holiday (*La Chandeleur* with crêpes or *La Galette des Rois* for the Epiphany) is a great activity for the mind as well as for the senses. Students reinforce their knowledge of the metric system by converting cooking measurements to grams and liters in a life situation, making this difficult concept a fun, practical and memorable one.

The use of the internet has facilitated our mission to integrate culture throughout the curriculum. In a science lesson on volcanoes, students are given a list of francophone countries where volcanic eruptions have occurred. They choose from a given list of countries, and conduct research in French on the volcano types, their eruptions and the impact on the land. The final product can be a poster... (continued on next page)

...or a Powerpoint presentation including pictures and a diagram of the labeled volcano.

For a unit on types of energy used in France students will participate in a scavenger hunt using the library and the internet. This lesson will also have a math connection as students create comparative graphs on French and American energy use and energy types, using Excel or Microsoft Word.

Students really like to connect learning to food. It's also a teacher's favorite! When teaching a unit on nutrition and various food groups, students are asked to compose a balanced menu in French including all food groups and daily servings. The final product is a menu, some food samples (if they wish), and the performance of a short sketch they would have written as a group – a presentational task.

Integrating the cultures represented by the taught target language brings additional knowledge and meaning to the curriculum, and a global awareness and appreciation for other countries. These life skills, taught at the elementary school level, are well valued in future professional life.

Japanese Language and Cultural Education at Great Falls Elementary School

by Mamiya Sahara Worland

I believe that to expose students to Japanese culture there must be a two-way exchange. It is important to establish and maintain contacts with organizations here and abroad to provide our school with these opportunities. Working with many organizations enables me to bring Japanese cultural programs to the Japanese Immersion Program at Great Falls Elementary School. In addition, each year many immersion students, parents and families make a trip to Japan to meet our sister school students, teachers, families, and dignitaries such as the Japan Minister of Education, former Prime Ministers, and the first Lady. In 2007, we took the exchange one step further by hosting 45 students and three teachers from our new sister school in Japan for a home stay with our Japanese immersion families at GFES. Each year the exchange has grown bigger, and this March we have involved the local feeder high school for this event for the first time.

In addition to international exchange programs, our immersion program participates in community events. For the past few years, 120 students and parents have participated in the National Cherry Blossom Parade and Sakura Matsuri Festival in Washington, D.C. where our students performed Japanese songs and dances. My students have also participated in a Pentagon event called "A Lifetime of Language Learning". The Defense Language Office sponsored this song and dance performance viewed all over the whole world through the military broadcasting system. Other organizations sponsored competitions such as the NCJLT's New Year's card contest, the Mid-Atlantic Association for Teachers of Japanese sponsored Haiku contest, and the Itoen sponsored Haiku contest in Japan. Additionally, our students derive great benefit from living near our nation's capital and participating in cultural celebrations such as Fall Festival and the New Year's Festival both sponsored by the Embassy of Japan, the Japan Information Culture Center, and Japan Commerce Association of Washington, D.C.

Finally, in the local community, our Immersion program has a close relationship with the volunteers from Washington Tokyo Women's club, who have been coming to help the classes for the past 15 years. They come to share their knowledge on culture, songs, crafts, and Japanese food with our Immersion students almost monthly for each cultural celebration. My long-range goal for Japanese language and cultural education in the U.S. is to broaden collaboration among students, educators, schools, communities, organizations, and governments from the local to the international level. It is my hope that through my work I will be able to improve teaching methods, develop new ideas, and find new resources for Japanese language and cultural instruction.



Cultural Integration in the FLES Classroom: Grade 1 Calendar

by Michele Maxson, Pine Spring Elementary School

First graders have been learning days of the week and months in their homeroom classes as they try to make sense of calendars and the idea of weekends and school weeks. As a Spanish FLES teacher, I reinforce the first grade curriculum when teaching the Spanish language and integrate culture into each 30 minute lesson that I deliver twice per week. After learning days and months in English, I teach students to write these terms in Spanish while learning about the Spanish calendar. An important cultural distinction between Spanish and English is the usage of capitalization of days of the week and months. I demonstrate this cultural contrast to my students by using words such as grande (big) and pequeño (little) to differentiate between capital and lowercase letters. I point out how these words are capitalized in English, but are not capitalized in Spanish. When they have a writing activity at the close of the class, they also practice this difference, as I am careful to point out that when they write their months or days in Spanish, they use all lowercase letters.

In addition to capitalization, another cultural difference exists between the two languages. The English calendar begins each week with Sunday, whereas the Spanish calendar begins with Monday. In order to emphasize this difference, I use sound effects to rip off the Sunday from the English calendar and paste it onto the end of the calendar. I also accentuate the notion of fin de semana (the weekend) highlighting that Saturday and Sunday are the two days of the weekend. To present this to my students in another visual manner, I highlight the endings of the days of the week in Spanish. The days for Monday through Friday all end in "es", which is the same beginning of the word for "escuela" (school). By contrast, Saturday and Sunday (sábado y domingo) end in the letter o, part of "no" in the phrase "no tenemos escuela" (we don't have school). This creates both visual and auditory connections for my students, not to mention drawing a personal connection for them to distinguish the weekend from the rest of the week in the context of when they are at school. As an additional written activity, the students fill in the Spanish calendar with the days of the week. The weekend has a special border to distinguish these two days as separate from the rest of the week.

In summary, in creating the cultural connections to illustrate the differences between Spanish and English calendars, I use visual, auditory, and hands on demonstrations and activities in my first grade classroom. I also tie what they are learning to their prior knowledge, in order to create more connections for language acquisition.

“For then will I turn to the people a pure language” (Zephaniah 3:9, King James):

Equipping K-4 Children To Speak Any Foreign Language With An Authentic Accent

Question: How do you prepare a child for a diverse cultural world where skills in any number of foreign languages might be required in their future?

Answer: Teach them cross-language foundation skills through sound training that apply across many languages and will stick for life.

Remember how Henry Kissinger speaks? He has lived in the US for over 70 years now, is Harvard educated, and is known to be bright and intelligent. Yet within seconds of him talking, you can recognize a strong foreign accent. Henry’s younger brother though, sounds like an American. Why is this the case? When the Kissingers fled Germany and came to New York, Henry was already 15. For most people, the ability to pronounce a foreign language with an authentic accent requires “muscle training” that tends to solidify before puberty – around age ten. According to this groundbreaking Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), the sounds we learn by age ten become part of our “muscle memory” in the mouth. Adding new sounds later on in life, for example those consonants and vowels of American English that do not exist in German, is not entirely impossible, but it requires a great deal of effort and investment that is far from what is easy and natural.

Although one should be aware of socio-psychological factors involved (cf. Moyer 1999), e.g. motivation to learn and self-identity, future research may strengthen the common-sense insight that accent, by and large, cannot be acquired natively after puberty. In the 1960s Lenneberg (e.g. 1967) formulated the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), suggesting that language could be learned through biologically-determined mechanisms within a specific time window. Naturally, the CPH has been applied in biology too, e.g. Ratner and Hoffman (1974). Just like Lenneberg, Chomsky developed the idea of innateness in his Universal Grammar (e.g. 1965), further developed and popularized by Steven Pinker (1994). On CPH, see also Sebastián-Gallés, Echeverría and Bosch (2005) and Singleton (2005). The important thing is, however, that for anyone who has been involved in teaching foreign languages to children under the age of ten, this should come as no surprise. Children can just as easily mimic the correct sounds of a foreign language, as they can absorb its vocabulary and grammar. Research shows that those sounds learned and memorized by children as they cross that age threshold tend to be retained for life. It is helpful to think of it as a form of inoculation, “sound inoculation”.

This is the very reason why Israeli (Zuckermann 2009, 2010), a.k.a. “Modern Hebrew”, sounds very much like Yiddish (see Zuckermann 2005). The fin-de-siècle Hebrew revivalists such as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (a native Yiddish speaker, born Perelman) very much wished to speak Hebrew with its Semitic gutturals – just like Arabs. But they could simply not avoid their native Yiddish consonants and syllable structure.

Parents in today’s educational environment are often puzzled by the need to make a choice of a second language for their children. In

non-English speaking countries, this choice is fairly straightforward, and it’s English. In America, however, unless the parents have a heritage language, which makes a natural choice, they face a bewildering set of possibilities. Many parents are driven by a desire to provide their children with foreign languages that will serve them well in the future. But which ones?

In today’s rapidly changing globalizing world, it is hard to predict which of many languages a child can learn today will be most useful to them twenty and thirty years from now, when they enter a global work place, interact socially with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, and may face relocation opportunities to foreign countries. Some parents argue that the choice of Spanish or Mandarin is “a no brainer”. Yet what about French? Russian? Arabic? and that’s only if we are staying within the six official languages of the UN. This choice can quickly become the subject of either guesswork or “religion”. Lack of comfort in making such a choice can keep parents from providing their children with any training in foreign languages at a young age. This is especially concerning when parents want to expose their child to the richness and diversity of other cultures through language education, but cannot decide which one.

This reality prompted the filing last fall of a patent that seeks to address this problem at its core. It is based on research that documents the sounds of human languages. Linguists have long used the “International Phonetic



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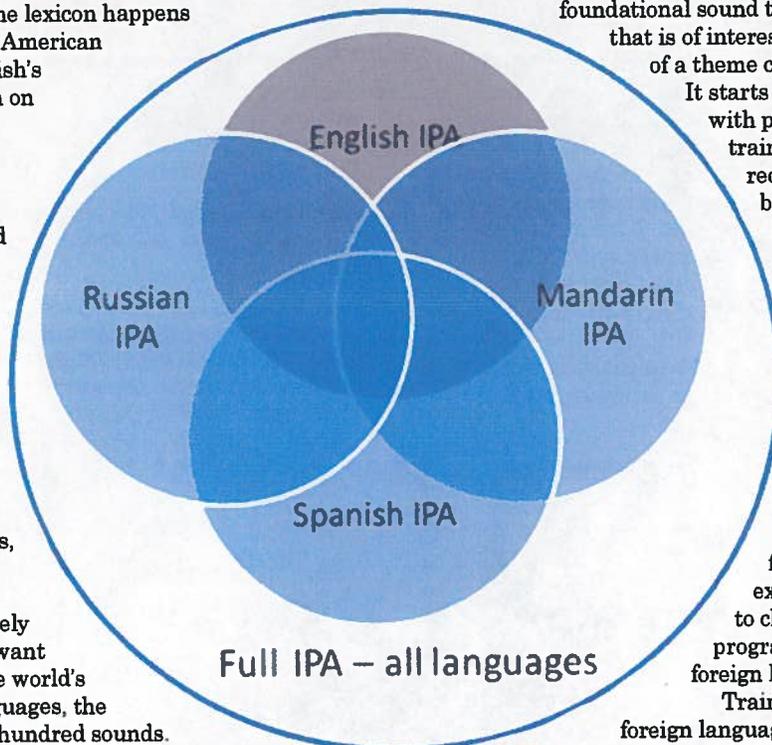
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Alphabet" (IPA) as a representation of human sounds. While it might not have a convenient symbol for the drawn-out "ow" that gives some people a distinct "New York accent", it does have a clear symbol that distinguishes the rolling R of Spanish from the R of American English, and these two from the R of English spoken in Scotland. It also has a special character for the "half L half R" that is found, for example, in Japanese. The IPA can describe any consonant, vowel, tone combination, and stress pattern in any human word, but it may be less effective in documenting intonation patterns and relative stress patterns of words within a sentence.

Armed with the understanding of what the IPA captures well versus where it's not quite as descriptive, let's turn our attention to what's in it, or rather, to how thick and voluminous it is. To those of you whose offices feature full "English-Foreign language X" dictionaries, the IPA lexicon might look surprisingly thin. The total inventory of consonants, vowels, and tones, covering virtually all human languages, numbers only in the hundreds.

Further "thinning out" of the lexicon happens when you remove the sounds of American English from it. American English's sound repertoire is actually rich on a comparative basis. There are significantly more sounds in American English than there are, for example, in Spanish or Italian. Since an American child for the most part is already learning all the consonants and vowels of American English, these sounds can be removed from any sound training program to be designed.

"Shrinking" the IPA lexicon further, occurs when we remove all sounds that are idiosyncratic to tribal languages, or any language that is spoken by small groups of people. The definition of "small" here is purely a matter of convenience. If we want to "limit" ourselves to "only" the world's 50 most commonly spoken languages, the IPA set will include only a few hundred sounds. "That's it" (see illustration)



This is exciting news for early language education. It means that children who learn to recognize, distinguish, and produce a few hundred sounds, should then be able to speak any of the world's 50 most commonly spoken languages they choose to learn at any point in life, with a near-authentic accent. Given the much smaller size of this "sound set" relative, for example, to the number of words a child must learn in any given foreign language to be considered proficient, sound training lends itself to becoming a foundational cross-language program. As long as the child is able to retain these sounds by the time they reach, on average, ten years of age, they will have these sounds at their disposal for life, standing at the ready to be used in any foreign language life circumstance or personal interest and choice bring the then grown person to learn.

One major hindrance adults face in learning foreign languages is that of self confidence. Many of us either experienced it ourselves or know other adults who invested a great deal of time and effort in learning a language, reached a level of proficiency and fluency that is reasonable, and yet are very apprehensive about opening their mouths to actually speak it. This often has to do with fear of "sounding funny". This fear, unfortunately is substantiated in many cases, because adults speaking a foreign language do tend to "sound funny" to native speakers. The hallmark of "sounding funny" is a strong foreign accent. Children who learn a foreign language young

enough can easily produce its authentic accent, and indeed if they cross our "proverbial age 10 threshold" they will retain this ability for life in most cases, but this only applies to this one foreign language that they learned. How many foreign languages can we expect a child to learn, even if they're lucky to have "globally aware and early-learning enlightened" parents who give them the gift of foreign language training? A handful at most, or a single one most often, beyond which this quickly becomes impractical.

This is where foundational multi-language sound training comes in. It is a natural complement to learning a foreign language, and it can also be a prequel to it. It can be wide and include a few hundred sounds that "cover" 50 languages, or it can be narrower and focus only on "the top 10" or on "East Asian languages". These variations are made to meet different levels of interest of parents and children, and to match varying degrees of attention spans and commitment at different age and gender groups.

Similar to foreign language training, multi-language foundational sound training can be woven into a theme that is of interest to the child or is a reinforcement of a theme covered in the child's school program. It starts from recognition, and continues with production. Unlike foreign language training, there are no clear literacy requirements, as the same sound may be written differently in different languages it is part of. (Think of the German "ach" and the Dutch "ag", which are virtually the same sound, but are written differently, and this is before we even introduce the representation of this sound in the Arabic alphabet or in the Hebrew alphabet, or think of the falling tone a in Mandarin, which exists in Vietnamese as well, but is written differently.) Since the goal of the program is not to train future linguists, there is no need to expose or teach the IPA symbol system to children. This obviously simplifies the program further, when compared with any foreign language learning.

Training can use all existing tools of foreign language training such as stories, songs, rhymes, and games, but there is no need for immersion in any particular foreign language. A story in English can be used as a base, into which new sounds are introduced in a careful sequence. These new sounds should be accompanied by compelling graphics and pictorials that are both memorable and distinct. For illustration purposes, think of a story in English that a child in the 4-6 age group would find engaging and fun. Let us assume it's a story about animals. Take this story, and introduce into the storyline a new character, doglike, called "the Perro". The Perro is represented graphically through an icon that is both memorable and distinct, let's pick a red dog with wings. The goal is to associate this new sound, of the rolling Spanish R as it exists in Perro, with this icon. Weave Perro into the storyline, which save for the word "Perro" is still in English. Now introduce another new character, "the Oiseau". The Oiseau carries its own distinct and memorable graphic icon, perhaps a mythical kind of bird. Its purpose is to introduce a new vowel sound, that of the French "eau" which is actually identical to the Spanish O, the Italian O, and the German O, and some might argue to the British "O" as in "Body". Once the child learns to recognize the new vowel sound in "Oiseau" it doesn't really matter which word from which language was chosen to introduce it. What matters is that it's memorable.

Making the new sounds memorable is enhanced by the use of songs, rhymes, and games. Songs and rhymes can be taken whole from foreign languages, to make them more fun, and give the

program the “parent pleasing” element of a child able to recite or sing short songs in multiple foreign languages. At its most elemental, the program teaches the child to recognize and distinguish the new sounds. As with any foreign language learning, it is followed by teaching and assessing for the ability to produce these sounds. As with any foreign language learning at a young age, the child’s memory needs to be refreshed in an engaging way periodically, but not indefinitely. Sounds that are retained by the time an average child reaches age ten, are then available for life. When, twenty years down the road, this child-turned- adult now decides to learn, say, Portuguese, all that it takes is a reference such as “remember the Oiseau? The “O” in Portuguese is just like the “eau” in “Oiseau”. Can you say it?” When they can, they come a step closer to pronouncing Portuguese with an authentic accent. When they cannot it’s like all of us adults struggling and spending a great deal of effort to produce sounds in a foreign language we’re learning. Had we learned these sounds as children it would have been so easy now.

This innovation has been received with a great deal of enthusiasm by early education practitioners teaching LOTE (Languages Other Than English) and ELLs (English Language Learners), who were exposed to it. We were encouraged to share it with the broad applied linguistic community early on, so that many can experiment with it and contribute to its development as a fledging new discipline within language teaching, that of foundational multi-language sound training. Timing seems especially appropriate given the focus of the current journal issue on Culture. Teaching the sounds of a large set of languages is an effective way to expose a child to the richness and diversity of human language as a chief expression of culture. The sound set is thus a great tool of cross-cultural communication.

We look forward to sharing learning and best practices in the application of multi-language sound training in future issues.

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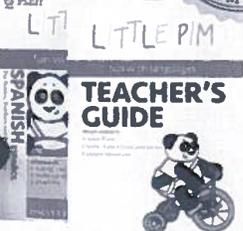
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Evidence of Multiple Intelligences in FLES Classrooms

by Beatriz Garcia Glick, Joyce Armstrong, Marc Marchese

ABSTRACT

According to the Theory of Multiple Intelligences of Howard Gardner, there are eight intelligences. In the present study with two FLES classes, 35 students were asked to present Spanish vocabulary to their class to link their preferences of techniques used to introduce the vocabulary to their classmates with a spectrum of their multiple intelligences. The vocabulary lists included numbers, animals, family members, and clothing. This study provides evidence of multiple intelligences in third and fourth grade students as well as possible correlations between third and fourth grade students' Spanish vocabulary manipulations and their multiple intelligences. Validity and reliability studies showed the presence of multiple intelligences in all students. Validity studies further indicated a correlation between logical intelligence and student's vocabulary manipulations.

INTRODUCTION

Howard Gardner first proposed The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) in his 1983 book *Frames of Mind*. Gardner redefined the term "intelligence" as a psychobiological potential "enabling the individual to resolve genuine problems or difficulties" (Gardner, 1983, p. 59) within a cultural context. Instead of the exclusive interest in logical and linguistic capacities that the Binet IQ test in 1905 measured, Gardner pointed out the importance of six other capacities: visual, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.

Once the Theory of MI was proposed, schools began to implement it to increase student motivation and as a form of addressing a more diverse population. Project SUMIT (Schools Using MI Theory) included 41 schools from Skyview Junior High School in Bothell, Washington to EXPO Elementary in St. Paul, Minnesota (Campbell, 1999). The interest in MI is not limited to elementary or secondary schools. Glendale Community College in Arizona participated in a project to use MI in courses such as Nursing, Anthropology, Chemistry, Biology, and Spanish (Diaz-Lefebvre, 2004). International recognition for the Theory of MI includes schools like Colegio Aula XXI in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Nanking Normal University in Nanking, China.

Because there is a lack of empirical data that sustains the validity and reliability of MI theory, this study deals with the measurement of preferences of MI by students and the observation of their MI by teachers in an attempt to find reliability in various measurements of MI as well as validity in the use of MI by students as demonstrated in the choice of activities that students made in an L2 classroom.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Several studies link achievement in L2 learning when incorporating the Theory of MI. Among them, Hall Haley (2001) did a study of students, ages 14 to 18 learning languages in six different schools, where she noticed an increase in motivation in both teachers and students when teachers introduced lessons that incorporated various teaching strategies such as role playing, cooperative teams, paired activities, journal entries, number activities, songs, debates, storytelling, graphs, and diagrams. Students in this investigation "demonstrated growth in oral and written proficiency in the target language at the end of the third-quarter marking period" (Hall Haley, 2001, p. 359). This study was expanded in 2004 to include a total of 650 students ages 6 to 18 years old with similar results including evidence that "students in experimental groups receiving MI-based instruction outperformed those in the control groups" (Hall Haley, 2004, p. 171). Since "MI theory challenges teachers to create learning environments that foster the development of all eight intelligences" (Hall Haley, 2007, p. 5), the Theory of Multiple Intelligences is especially useful when working with a diverse student body population.

Christison added different activities and types of assessments in her ESL classes to include multiple intelligences. In her paper she advocates the use of various teaching styles to enhance student learning (1993). García Gómez (2006) also used different techniques to develop the intrapersonal intelligence in his study of elementary students learning ESL. He mentioned using collages and photos for students to explore their personal growth and to explain it to the class in the target language. Fonseca (2007) also explored using different techniques to activate multiple intelligences in ESL, such as a visual pyramid of words, drawings, logical sequences, etc. to describe an event, a character, or a place. Ferrándiz García (2004) in a study of 237 elementary school children in Murcia, Spain, investigated the presence of multiple intelligences in the children based on focused activities that they evaluated using different factors. All intelligences were measured with a high degree of reliability and validity except for the intelligence labeled "social intelligence" which was probably a mix of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences.

Another assessment is presented by Garrido, Jaña, and Soto (2007) who tested 264 students in various middle schools in Santiago, Chile and who observed a 5.9% increase in language scores when they

Table 1. Table of Correspondences between MI Questionnaires and Video Observations

1-Student			
Multiple Intelligence Preference %	MIDAS-KIDS Questionnaire	Lazear Behavior Log	Video Observations Highlight = All evaluators in agreement
kinesthetic	59	0	Observed by all
spatial	57	75	
interpersonal	23	100	
intrapersonal	25	100	
linguistic	52	100	
logical	43	100	
musical	50	50	

used activities that boosted the logical intelligence and an increase in 16.1% in mathematical scores when they used activities that promoted the logical and linguistic intelligences.

Research Questions

1. Do elementary school children exhibit multiple intelligences as defined by Howard Gardner? If so, how can we measure them?
2. When elementary school children in a FLES program are asked to introduce vocabulary to the class, which techniques do they use?
3. Are these techniques compatible with their multiple intelligences?

THE STUDY DESIGN

The participants of this study were 35 students, 18 boys and 17 girls, ages 8 to 10, of whom 33 had been born in Pennsylvania and who attended a private elementary school. Students were taking Spanish as L2, and the class met two to three times a week for 40 minutes or for an average of 100 minutes per week.

The following study was longitudinal in that it lasted one year and included quantitative assessments because students filled out questionnaires of their multiple intelligences preferences. Teachers completed behavior logs of their assessment of students' multiple intelligences. The investigation also included qualitative analysis of their vocabulary presentations to the class to determine how each student became involved in her/his project. One investigator taped the final presentations and asked two other researchers to analyze and record techniques noted and intelligences expressed. By combining quantitative data with qualitative observations, the investigators evaluated a relationship between multiple intelligences present in each student and their preference for techniques which displayed those intelligences.

PROCEDURES

To obtain a quantitative measure of multiple intelligences, two questionnaires were used. One measurement was the Multiple Intelligence Developmental Assessment Scales developed by Dr. Branton Shearer (2002). Students completed this assessment, a self-assessment of their multiple intelligences in May, 2007. Each homeroom teacher was asked to fill out a behavior questionnaire devised by David Lazear (1994) in October, 2006. Internal reliability of each of the tests was determined by alpha Cronbach coefficients. The third measurement of multiple intelligences was a direct observation by three independent observers of videos of the students' vocabulary activities. These observations were part of a quasi-ethnographic study of students' involvement in their projects. Only one investigator observed each student as they worked in their groups or individually to determine their level of involvement and

their contribution. However, all investigators observed the video and determined the use of intelligences based on the techniques used. The reliability of the investigators' observations was determined by kappa correlations. Student activities were compared to corresponding Multiple Intelligences according to the table in Shrum and Glisan (2000) and to the Table summarizing the "Seven Ways of Teaching" in Appendix 1 (Armstrong, 1994). Students' activities as an indication of their preference for multiple intelligences were statistically validated by t-tests of independent means.

FINDINGS

Research Question 1

Do elementary school children exhibit multiple intelligences? How can we measure them?

The MIDAS-KIDS test had a total Cronbach coefficient of 0.96 and the Lazear log Scale had a total Cronbach coefficient of 0.89 indicating a high reliability of each of the questionnaires. Both evaluations agreed in the high presence of linguistic intelligence in most students but they differed in the quantitative analysis of the other intelligences. When using MIDAS-KIDS, the total population was found to have the following intelligences in descending order: kinesthetic, intrapersonal, linguistic, visual, interpersonal, logic, and musical. On the other hand, teachers rated students on the Lazear Log Scale as having logic, linguistic, interpersonal, visual, kinesthetic, intrapersonal, and musical also in descending order. Since students in their classrooms are usually asked to perform logic, linguistic and group tasks, they were the intelligences most observed by teachers. In most homeroom classes, there are few opportunities when students are asked to use activities such as TPR, drawings, songs, and personal reflections that show evidence of kinesthetic, visual, musical, and interpersonal intelligences respectively. However, with regards to the MIDS-KIDS questionnaires, all students except for one had more than one intelligence at a moderate level. The questionnaire was administered in May and it was observed that the one child that evaluated himself with low intelligence levels was leaving the school and had begun to withdraw from the group. With respect to the Lazear log, which teachers filled out in October, all students were evaluated as having a minimum of one intelligence at a high level.

Research Question 2

When elementary school children in a FLES program are asked to introduce vocabulary to the class, which techniques do they use?

Students of both grades exhibited a wide array of techniques to teach L2 vocabulary to their peers. Fourth graders showed a multiplicity of

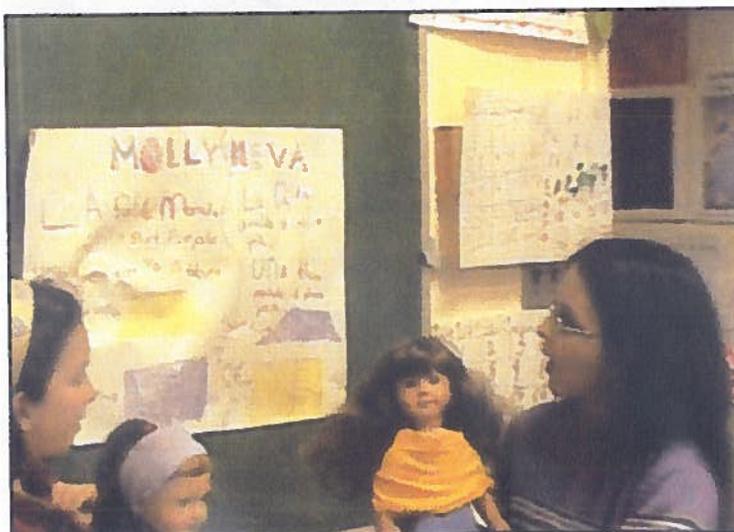


Fig. 1 Dressing up American dolls.



Fig. 2 Dressing up "aliens."

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MATH	Equal variances assumed	1.155	.290	-2.403	33	.022	-17.07	7.102	-31.516	-2.617
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.240	20.290	.036	-17.07	7.621	-32.948	-1.185

Table 2. T-Test of Logical Intelligence and Video Observations by Gilck

intelligences in their demonstrations since they included an original play where animals were saved from their cages in the zoo, a Twister version of "Touch the animals of different colors", and a rap song of "Old MacDonald" in Spanish. Other projects included making clothes for their American dolls (Fig. 1) to explain what they had sewn, a color wheel of clothing worth different amounts of points, a concentration game, making clothes and accessories for paper "alien" friends (Fig. 2), and dressing up animals (Fig. 3).

Third graders showed kinesthetic intelligence in jumping rope to name family members (Fig. 4) and searching for family members around the room, and visual and logical intelligence by creating genealogical family trees (Fig. 5). Some third graders showed the family members as puppets who greeted each other and went for a picnic. A more ambitious play described family members and a lost child. To introduce numbers, third grade students did gymnastics to show the value of the numbers, made a number game of cards spelling out the numbers that each pawn moved, and created many posters including numbers hidden in a word search, a counting pyramid, and cards comparing numbers to dots.

What they didn't do was to simply write the words on the blackboard and pronounce them. In all cases, students made a concerted effort to display their knowledge by creating a project that best suited their interests and in the case of logical intelligence that was related to the presence of that intelligence in the student in a statistically significant manner.

Research Question 3

Are these techniques compatible with their multiple intelligences?

Although three observers analyzed the video data, there were only moderate kappa correlations between evaluators as shown in Table 1 indicating that evaluators didn't analyze the data in a consistent manner.

This may have been due to the relative inexperience of the observers in evaluating activities based on MI theory as well as the somewhat misleading table of correspondences (Appendix 1) where, for example, "drama" was classified as an example of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence without consideration to the linguistic, spatial, interpersonal, and possibly musical intelligences involved in the production of the "drama". Classroom observations performed by the investigator minimized confusion as to which intelligences were involved in the development of the activities and gave a sense of how involved each student became with the project and in what capacity. The importance of classroom observations as a qualitative means of assessing data in conjunction with quantitative data is one of the results of this study.

Other results show that only the logical intelligence was found to have significant validity with the vocabulary manipulations done by the students (Tables 2 and 3). In other words, students who had logical intelligence as measured by MIDAS-KIDS used it in a significant number of activities. This validity was only statistically significant for video observations made by one of the observers. The other observers did not show validity between their observations and intelligences present in students.

Although the presence and use of only logical intelligence was validated in this study, when a table of correspondence between students' intelligences and activities observed by all three evaluators was analyzed, students did possess the intelligences that they used in their activities in all except one case. For example, in Table 1, the student indicated preferences for several intelligences including kinesthetic, spatial, linguistic, logical, and musical. Teachers observed a high preference for all intelligences except for kinesthetic



Fig. 3 Dressing up animals.



Fig. 4 Jumping rope to family members.

Appendix A. Summary of the “Seven Ways of Teaching”

Source: Armstrong, T. (1994). *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, p. 52.

Intelligence	Teaching Activities (examples)	Teaching Materials (examples)	Instructional Strategies
Linguistic	lectures, discussions, word games, storytelling, choral reading, journal writing, etc.	books, tape recorders, typewriters, stamp sets, books on tape, etc.	read about it, write about it, talk about it, listen to it
Logical-Mathematical	brain teasers, problem solving, science experiments, mental calculation, number games, critical thinking, etc.	calculators, math manipulatives, science equipment, math games, etc.	quantify it, think critically about it, conceptualize it
Spatial	visual presentation, art activities, imagination games, mind-mapping, metaphor, visualization, etc.	graphs, maps, video, LEGO sets, art materials, optical illusions, cameras, picture library, etc.	see it, draw it, visualize it, color it, mind-map it
Bodily-Kinesthetic	hands-on learning, drama, dance, sports that teach, tactile activities, relaxation exercises, etc.	building tools, clay, sports equipment, manipulatives, tactile learning resources, etc.	build it, act it out, touch it, get a “gut feeling” of it, dance it
Musical	superlearning, rapping, songs that teach	tape recorder, tape collection, musical instruments	sing it, rap it, listen to it
Interpersonal	cooperative learning, peer tutoring, community involvement, social gatherings, simulations, etc.	board games, party supplies, props for role plays, etc.	teach it, collaborate on it, interact with respect to it
Intrapersonal	individualized instruction, independent study, options in course of study, self-esteem building, etc.	self-checking materials, journals, materials for projects, etc.	connect it to your personal life, make choices with regard to it

Table 3. Table of Kappa Correlations between Evaluators Sorted by Intelligences

Intelligence \ Evaluator	Kin	Spa	Inter	Intra	Ling	Log	Mus	Total
Arm / Davis	0.46	0.32	- 0.19	Can't be tabulated	- 0.14	0.13	1.0	0.36
Arm / Glick	0.46	0.03	Can't be tabulated	0.64	0.12	0.14	1.0	0.42
Davis / Glick	0.82	- 0.14	Can't be tabulated	Can't be tabulated	- 0.06	0.13	1.0	0.43

and musical. Student 1 chose to use an activity that was highly kinesthetic as observed by all evaluators. This activity involved doing gymnastics as his partner counted numbers in Spanish from one to ten.

The lack of validity between activities and intelligences measured per student could be attributed to some of the following limitations of this study. First, the implied one-to-one correspondence between activities and intelligences as seen in Appendix 1, when in reality many intelligences operated at the same time to perform an activity. For example, "drama" was labeled as an expression of "bodily-kinesthetic" intelligence when in reality other intelligences operate in the production of a skit. Second, the kappa correlations between observers could be improved by training investigators more thoroughly in the identification of multiple intelligences. Another limiting factor in this study was the time that observers spent watching the student video. The principal investigator observed the video several times as well as made correlations between the video and the classroom observations; however, the two other observers watched the video once. Other limiting factors were the small sample size, and the difficulty in measuring an abstract concept such as "intelligence".

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study provides evidence of the presence of multiple intelligences in children, ages 8 to 10, not only through quantitative measurements based on questionnaires and teachers' behavior logs, but also through the choice of activities that children made. Third and fourth graders showed a multiplicity of intelligences in their choices of activities to present vocabulary in the L2. They presented numbers through word searches, number games, gymnastics, skits, and posters. They introduced family members through genealogical trees, jumping rope, personal family drawings, a search for family members in the class, skits and board games. Students described clothing in fashion shows, dressing up dolls, concentration, hangman, dressing up animals and aliens, and a wheel of fortune of clothes. Finally, they explained animals using skits, illustrated books, a game of Twister, hangman, and a musical rap. In all activities, students chose for the most part to work collaboratively. Evidence of a multiplicity of preferences of presentations was reflected in their measured intelligences.

The motivation, degree of engagement, and effort made by students in this study show the importance of including activities that target all intelligences and that reach all students, giving them the chance to take control of their own learning. Although the students in this study did not come from different ethnic, cultural, racial or socioeconomic backgrounds, they did vary in their cognitive abilities and in their interests and talents. Such a multiplicity of intelligence was demonstrated in the different activities chosen by students to manipulate vocabulary in L2. Using the Theory of Multiple Intelligences is especially valuable in L2 acquisition because it fosters learner-centered language acquisition by asking students to take responsibility for their learning and to do so by addressing their intelligences. Another positive aspect of using modules of MI learning is the exposure of the same vocabulary while addressing different intelligences that helps to include all children, to augment their self-esteem, and to lower their affective filter, which generally enhance language acquisition.

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Fig. 5 A genealogical tree.

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老鼠嫁女

The Mouse Marriage

Bridging Language and Culture: a Thematic Unit Based On a Chinese Folktales

INTRODUCTION

Traditional folktales constitute a social institution that reflects the value, customs, and lifestyles of the culture and are a natural way for students to explore the historical past, the belief systems of varied societies, and diverse factual information (Collingwood, 2005). Bosma (1993) states that young children easily accept the folktale as symbolic interpretation of life in an imaginary land and they can also be guided toward recognizing the distinctive traits of other cultures by reflecting on specific characteristics of the tales as retold within those cultures. Roney (1993) makes the even stronger claim that by using folktales, students can interact with culture (past and present) and make sense of the world around them. A carefully selected folktale can be a powerful tool to bring culture to our foreign language classroom, as well as serve as the center of a thematic unit.

Utilizing the national Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (2006), I developed a thematic unit for the teaching of Mandarin Chinese based on a traditional Chinese folktale -- 老鼠嫁女 (lǎo shǔ jià nǚ, The Mouse Bride/The Mouse Marriage). This unit for elementary school students incorporates the arts, social studies and language arts, as well as culturally appropriate communicative activities. The third grade class, located in the Midwest, met for two 25 minutes classes a week for eight weeks. All of the 25 participating students were English speakers who had no prior Chinese language learning experience. Even with limited teaching time (a total of less than eight hours), the students were able to perform the folktale in Chinese to their parents and the community as a final performance assessment.

SELECTING THE FOLKTALE

A pair of mouse parents seeks the most powerful husband for their daughter and interprets this to mean that their daughter should marry whomever or whatever they most fear. First, they choose the Sun, but the Sun says that he fears the Dark Cloud. The Dark Cloud says that he fears the Wind, and the Wind says he fears the Wall (which blocks his way), and the Wall fears the Mouse (which digs a hole under it and makes the wall fall). Ultimately, the mouse parents decide to marry their daughter to the handsome young mouse. The wedding was prepared, and on the wedding day, the new couple knelt and bowed to the mouse parents. The bride sat on a sedan chair and left her parents for her new home.

From the language learning perspective, the essential language vocabulary and structure, involved in this mouse story matches the students' learning levels. Pictures or simple dramatization introduce the vocabulary of family members and concepts from nature such as the Sun and the Dark Cloud. Additionally, since the story actions

are repetitive with regularly occurring patterns, the meaning of the story is easy to comprehend and students can soon predict what will happen, enhancing comprehension. By reducing the text into a short count-out rhyme with a clear predictable story sequence (Appendix A) we have made the story more accessible to beginning students. In most sentences, the differentiation between the meanings of the rhyming words in the story rhyme is key to understanding the characters and events in the folktale.

The Mouse Marriage story is a culturally rich folktale that bridges the relationships among cultural products, practices and perspectives. A myriad of common symbols for luck in traditional Chinese culture, which are used at weddings and at the New Year, are defined in the folktale. Using book illustrations or paper cuttings, a traditional form of folk art in many regions in Northern China and one that has many examples of the Mouse Marriage, we can see auspicious words (福 fú, good fortune; 喜喜 shuāng xǐ, double happiness), lucky symbols such as the red lantern, flowers, fruit, etc.

This story introduces students to additional cultural products such as costumes, wedding sedan chairs, traditional musical instruments, wedding music and other elements involved in weddings. The story also illustrates various traditions (body gestures, manners, and customs) and perspectives. Traditional Chinese culture is based on agriculture and the mouse is a natural enemy of farming because of its love of grain. This folktale represents the wish to eliminate the mice by marrying Miss Mouse and moving her to far off place. At the same time, since mice are prolific breeders, Chinese people use the image of the Mouse Marriage to wish young married couples to have many children and a flourishing family.

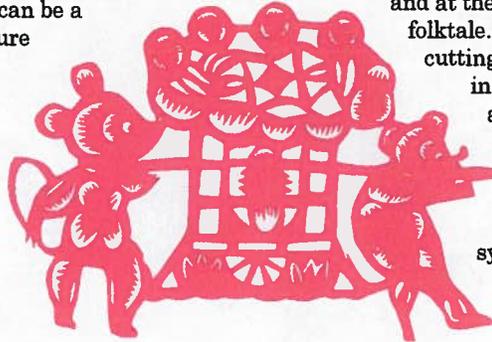
As with many folktales the mouse marriage story has several variants. For this thematic unit we selected the version in Monica Chang's book *The Mouse Bride - A Chinese Folktale* (1994) but altered the ending to have a happier resolution. Instead of being eaten by the cat groom, Miss Mouse marries a brave and strong mouse and they live together happily ever after. This ending is more acceptable for young learners. Zipes (1999) advocated this change stating that the altered tale "shifted the emphasis more toward the civilization" and reproduces and continues the progress of the world "toward perfect happiness" (p. 8).

PROCEDURES OF THE THEMATIC UNIT OF WORK

The objectives are centered on communication, culture and subject content connections. The teaching content clusters were developed first, and then were further developed into 16 lessons.

Cultural Objectives:

- Identify different forms of cultural expression, such as finger signs for numbers, traditional Chinese salutes 作揖 (zuō yī) for men, 道万



福 (*dào wàn fú*) for women and 磕头 (*kē tóu*, kowtow) (Standard 4.2);

- Demonstrate awareness of similarities and differences between Chinese culture and their own cultures (wedding customs, festivals). (Standard 4.2);
- Compare and contrast intangible products of Chinese culture such as games, rhymes and folktales with similar products of their own culture. ("Hickory Dickory Dock" with "little mouse climbs the lamp stand") (Standard 4.2);
- *Demonstrate familiarity with Chinese symbolism of colors, animals, numbers and other items. (Standard 2.2);
- Identify, talk about, and produce artwork, crafts, and games enjoyed by their Chinese peers (e.g. paper cutting character 喜喜, which means "double happiness"). (Standard 2.1).

Teaching Clusters:

The first four clusters (below) were the pre-teaching stage; clusters five and six were the story-reading and story-telling stage; and clusters eight and nine were the post-reading and telling stage. Cluster seven was the "big C" culture – historical figures, literature, music, and fine art which flowed throughout the thematic unit (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004, p. 225).

Pre-teaching strategies

- Counting people and animals.
- Family vocabulary (the mouse family in the tale and students' own family).
- Mouse (body parts; adjectives-colors and other relevant describing words). This part was not included in the 16 teaching lessons.
- Who is stronger/better? (The Sun? The Clouds? The Wind? The tall Wall? The Mouse?).

Storytelling and story reading phase

Telling the story: using a flannel board and cutouts, paper cutting set, and students made a Big Book.

Post telling/reading phase

- Students make a big book
- Students work in groups to illustrate one page of the story written on sentence strips. The whole class produces a story book used to re-read the story during the following classes.
- Culture and History: The content is divided and merged into other clusters (English explanations are used).
- Cultural practices: Chinese people celebrate the happy event in the Mouse family during the Chinese New Year period.
- Cultural products: Folktale and various crafts that represent this story; musical instruments and wedding music, Chinese costumes.
- Cultural perspectives: Good wishes for the harvest and a flourishing family
- Digital storytelling: Due to the limited teaching time, it was not possible to carry out this part of the experience. The students' voices, however, were recorded and imported into the previously created digital story. If teaching time permits, and with assistance from the classroom teacher or a technology assistant, students could create their own digital version of this folktale.
- Prepare and present a play to parents and the community.

Teaching Strategies

Designed to introduce Chinese to beginning young learners, the activities and strategies focus at the word and sentence level. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) clarify that "It is possible that even at the word and sentence levels the students are able to communicate meaning" (p. 92). Cultural and subject elements were considered as well as the students' age and learning level when designing the activities. The following were the key ideas used in planning the thematic unit:

- Use etymological information to input Chinese characters. Introduce Chinese characters from the first lesson with the following introduction procedure: Introduce a selection of the most common radicals to establish a basic concept of characters. Select characters related to the story and have a pictographic origin (one of the methods of Chinese character formation). Characters in this category consist of ancient forms iconically representing concrete objects. e.g. 高 (*gāo*, tall), is a pictograph of a high tower or pavilion on a lofty sub-structure equipped with a hall. 比 (*bǐ*, compare), represents two men standing as if to compare heights (Peng, 1983). Present each character with both a picture representing it and the actual character. Create a flashcard with a picture to provide a formation cue of the character on one side and on the other side, the actual word.
- Total Physical Response (TPR): The teacher calls out a counting number, students respond physically with the appropriate finger signs. This activity can be completed with either as a pair or whole class activity students.
- Sudoku: Practice math Sudoku to reinforce reading Chinese numbers.
- Chant and Rhythm: Introduce the number chant and practice it with a clear beat by clapping hands and playing the cymbals. Repeating the similar/same sounds at the end of each sentence, provides students the opportunity to distinguish the key sounds while they are actively engaged in verbal practice. The beat for the chant is the same as the story rhyme. The familiar beat, learned from previous lessons, enables students to learn the rhyme.
- Gouin series: Teach reading the story by telling it in a memorable pattern in a simplified rhyme with less than ten sentences. (... The Cloud is better than the Sun, The Wind is better than the Cloud...)
- "Stick beats the tiger": This is a Chinese version of the "Rock, Paper, and scissors" and helps students practice speaking and listening skills (The Cloud beats the Sun, the Wind beats the Cloud...).
- "Pass the flower, beat the drum": A popular cultural game to help students practice introducing themselves to the class.
- Snap: Students play this game in groups, picking up the required Chinese character card.
- Matching: In this formative assessment students match pictures with characters and sentence strips with pictures from the story.

DRAMATIZE THE FOLKTALE: THE FINAL PRODUCTION

Many educators see dramatic play, literacy, and other language skill development as complexly intertwined. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) indicate that performance is a powerful motivator for accuracy and attention. Stern (1983) notes that dramatizing communicative events leads to the necessary bodily and emotional involvement, which results in the motivation to make meanings and intentions clear in the target language. As an extended speaking activity and a communicative strategy to help the students improve their communicative competence, the story worked well as a play performed first to their peer classes and then to the parents, the principal and other school community members.



Inspired to follow the traditions of the Peking Opera in terms of the performance and stage props, I shared with the students some traditional opera customs and props and incorporated them into the performance. These customs included some of the traditional Chinese salutes: 作揖 (zuō yī), 道万福 (dào wàn) and 磕头 (kē tóu). Peking Opera is a highly stylized performance closely connected with the history, customs, culture, and social conditions of China. In traditional opera, for example, two pieces of cloths carried by two men represent a sedan chair, and one table covered with a red cloth with two chairs beside it makes a stage. Those ideas of stage props were all adapted to the students' final dramatic performance. The stage was decorated with a red lantern, red candles, which were not lighted, and a red background. All of the girls and some of the boys wore traditional Chinese costumes while traditional Chinese wedding music bookended the play. The students used as props: a pipe for smoking for the Mouse Father, a silk handkerchief for the Mouse Mother and Miss Mouse, a paper cutting of the character 喜喜 (double happiness), Chinese calligraphy (the name of the play 老鼠嫁女 displayed on the stage), a wedding sedan chair, firecrackers, a shoulder pole and baskets, a red flower knot for the groom, a red head cover for the bride and traditional musical instruments. All those cultural elements in the performance helped to create a context or frame in ways appropriate in the target culture.

The final play was a culminating performance task that "pulls together the goals of the unit and guides all the other planning choices that have to be made" (Curtain and Dahlberg, 2004). As students acted and reenacted the whole story, I could see them begin to demonstrate comprehension of many otherwise unfamiliar language and cultural elements. I could see that the story came to life and that students were imaginatively engaged. In the students' minds, they are on stage and they see the scene through a make-believe vision. They become the characters they portray, and they have entered the story world and have lived the characters lives.

CONCLUSION

This work is an example of how to develop a thematic unit for young learners that has a traditional folktale as its center. Age appropriate folktales can be a good resource for teaching foreign languages, providing an engaging and meaningful language learning context as well as rich cultural content. The folktale's versatility as a teaching tool permits the integration of foreign language instruction across many content areas. Met and Rhodes (1990) point out that "authentic, developmentally appropriate, culturally rich, content-based materials" are key components in quality elementary-school foreign language programs (p. 436). The folktale *The Mouse Marriage* has made a good unit focus. Along with cultural elements involved in the story, the story's well-known plot line helped to make the meaning comprehensible, especially since it was richly supported with visuals, gestures, and student participation. To some students, this story is not finished. One student drew a picture that was titled "Mrs. Mouse's new house". Couldn't we continue the language and cultural input by using the student's created mouse story in "Part Two"?

Appendix A: The Mouse Marriage Text

老鼠嫁女 *The Mouse Marriage*

老鼠爸，老鼠妈，老鼠女儿要出嫁。 Mouse Daddy, Mouse Mommy,
Miss Mouse is going to get married.

太阳强，嫁太阳，	The Sun is powerful, so marry him,
黑云又比太阳强。	Dark Cloud is more powerful than the Sun.
黑云强，嫁黑云。	The Dark Cloud is powerful, so marry him,
大风又比黑云强。	The Wind is more powerful than the Dark Cloud.
大风强，嫁大风，	The Wind is powerful, so marry him,
高墙又比大风强。	Tall Wall is more powerful than the Wind.
高墙强，嫁高墙，	The Tall wall is powerful, so marry him,

老鼠又比高墙强。
谢谢爸，谢谢妈，
吹~吹~打~打，
老鼠女儿出了嫁。

Mouse is more powerful than the Tall Wall.
Thank Daddy, Thank Mommy,
Piping and drumming,
The Miss Mouse is being married off.

Appendix B: Student Created Story Book – The Mouse Marriage



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LINGT.COM

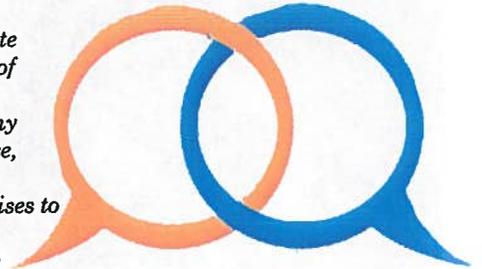
We all notice that schools across the United States have become increasingly diverse with students representing a variety of backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities and languages. World language teachers have been modifying their instruction to promote literacy and second language acquisition by teaching to multiple intelligences, differentiating instruction and using cooperative learning on a regular basis and they continue to search for strategies that help their students achieve success in the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Technology is becoming an increasingly important and powerful resource for the world language classroom. At Princeton Regional Schools, the 6th grade teachers have implemented a new technology in the 6th grade French class that is fun, addictive, and highly motivating for both the teacher and students. The teachers discovered the site while spending a morning exploring the Internet with the district technology trainer.

Called Lingt.com it is a web-based "virtual classroom" website. Lingt is a Boston-based company made up of a "small team of language-loving technologists who are passionate about making teachers' lives easier while providing tools to help them do their jobs better" (Lingt.com) and its website offers customized solutions that help people learn English and world languages in new and innovative ways. Lingt allows teachers to "easily create online assignments that get students speaking" (Lingt.com). Lingt operates and will continue to grow under the following principles:

1. Provide innovative language learning technology that has the greatest effect in ESL and world language classrooms where learning is supervised and driven by teachers.
2. Apply the technology to any curriculum, textbook, or teaching methodology. It should be a useful complement to a teacher's preferred teaching style.
3. Apply technology as an enabling tool. Educational innovation itself only comes through developers, teachers, and students working together to identify new best practices and applications.
4. Link sound pedagogy to technology development. Developers should be familiar with accepted research in language acquisition and work to apply its principles to improve learning.

The goals of this website include:

- *Get students speaking:* The website has a tool called "the Lingt editor" which allows teachers to create online spoken assignments to improve and assess students' proficiency. They can use this outside of class.
- *Stay simple and flexible.* The "Lingt editor" is simple to use and allows implementation of almost any spoken or written exercise. Teachers can create dictations, pronunciation practice, reading practice, image or video commentary and other activities.
- *Give the student a better experience.* Teachers can supplement curriculum with online spoken exercises to offer students a new channel for oral practice.
- *Incorporate culture.* Teachers can embed authentic music videos, commercials, and other authentic cultural media to use as a platform for oral assignments.
- *Avoid technology headaches.* Lingt is entirely online and works in every major browser. Students can access my Lingt assignments from the classroom, a home computer, mobile devices or in public spaces where Internet connectivity exists.



This spring the sixth grade French students at Princeton Regional Schools have been responding enthusiastically to this web-based program. Students comment on the ease of using the web site and completing the assignments. When students submit assignments they can also choose to include their email address if they would like to receive oral feedback from the teacher. It's a simple tool to use and the sound is very clear. Students who do not have access to a computer at home can use desktop computers in the school or public library. This has worked extremely well and at our school students can use the library computers before school, during lunch, or after school if they need to. The website also provides an archive for assignments and offers a library of shared assignments from other world language and ESL educators to give ideas for new tasks. The French teacher created a link from her webpage to the Lingt website and also a link for each of her classes so that the students can find assignments by their class period. She uses an analytic rubric to assess students' speaking skills as she re-plays individual student responses.

The French teacher has found this Web-based tool very effective as a new means to assess oral communication. The website specifically offers its services to ESL teachers as well. At first, the site was offered free of charge but all good things must end, it seems, and currently, Lingt charges \$2.00 / student annually for 50-500 students, (\$1.50 / student annually for 501-2,000 students; \$1.25 / student annually for 2,000-5,000 students). Districts can purchase a school license to have every teacher in the school or specific departments use the website. There are no student accounts to manage, the company monitors the school's usage and will advise if a school goes over its limit. Otherwise, teachers can also sign-up individually to Lingt.com.

Having spent the last year listening to feedback from educators, and improving the product, Lingt Classroom will add a number of new features including placing time limits on exercises for use as oral examinations. The Lingt website provides the most recent and up-to-date Web-based "virtual" environment to engage world language and ESL students orally. Students find it easy to navigate through this website to complete the assignments.

Our school believes that this website will provide a web-based "virtual" environment to engage world language students orally and we look forward to returning to this site with the new school year. In the technological world that we live in, we must find ways to embrace technology in our classrooms. The more we educate ourselves on this forefront, the more our students will be engaged and motivated to learn, and the more we will grow as world language professionals.

What's **H.O.T.** HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS in **LOTE**

NYSAFLT-NNELL Summer Institute



August 3-6, 2010
SUNY College at Oneonta
Oneonta, New York

NNELL is partnering with the New York State Association of Foreign Languages Teachers to bring you a Summer Institute not to be missed! Join your NYSAFLT-NNELL colleagues for learning, networking, and creating exciting new materials for your world language program! NYSAFLT welcomes NNELL as co-sponsor of this year's Summer Institute on the SUNY Oneonta Campus in beautiful Oneonta, New York. This year's topic, "What's H.O.T. in LOTE (Languages Other than English): Higher Order Thinking Skills," is sure to provide all attendees with new methods and techniques that spark student interest and ignite student enthusiasm and achievement.

Two separate strands of workshops will be offered to Summer Institute attendees. The general strand will consist of workshops of interest to teachers of all levels, with workshops focusing on middle and high school years. We will also offer a FLES strand with a focus on the unique needs of early language teachers. All workshops will be presented by our professional colleagues from NYSAFLT and NNELL. Attendees will have time to create products for classroom use and network with exhibitors and other professionals in the field of world language education.

Mark your calendar! Reserve the date! Bring a friend! The NYSAFLT-NNELL Summer Institute begins at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, August 3, 2010 with activities continuing through 12:30PM on Friday, August 6. Stay for the entire program and receive a certificate of attendance for up to 30 hours! You're sure to walk away refreshed, recharged and ready for your new year ahead!

Online registration will open soon! www.nnell.org/2010site/finals/events.html

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

NNELL is currently accepting article proposals for its Fall 2010 Journal.

Learning Languages, the journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning, 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 World languages. Learning Languages embodies 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.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, Learning Languages publishes Scholarly Articles, Feature Articles, and Activity Articles.

Scholarly Articles (2,000-5,000 words)

Scholarly articles are evaluated by at least three members of the board of reviewers through a process of blind review. Reviewers evaluate these articles on the basis of content, originality, information accuracy, clarity, and contribution to the field. These articles are clearly identified as Refereed Article in the journal. Scholarly articles report on original inquiry and cite current and relevant research and theory as a basis for making recommendations for practice. Scholarly articles in the areas listed below will be given equal consideration:

- Advocacy and Leadership (e.g. analysis of national trends or policies, effective leadership and advocacy models, etc.)
- Practical (e.g. exemplary implementation of an early language learning program model, innovative approaches to teaching, etc.)
- Research (e.g. quantitative or qualitative studies that have direct implications to early language learning, etc.)
- Theoretical (e.g. guidelines for practical application anchored in the literature, etc.)

Features (1,000-3,000 words)

Features are evaluated by at least two readers, one of which is a member of the NNELL Executive Board, and the editor. Features address subjects of appeal to early language teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of World languages. They may include teacher-to-teacher advice on issues affecting the profession, descriptions of successful advocacy initiatives, or selected invited contributions on topics of interest to the profession.

Activities (800 – 1,500 words)

Descriptions of successful language learning activities are expected to provide the following: a) language learning goals; b) applicable standards; c) materials; d) a description of the procedures, and e) assessment plan. Please keep in mind the diversity of languages represented in our readership in your examples and illustrations.

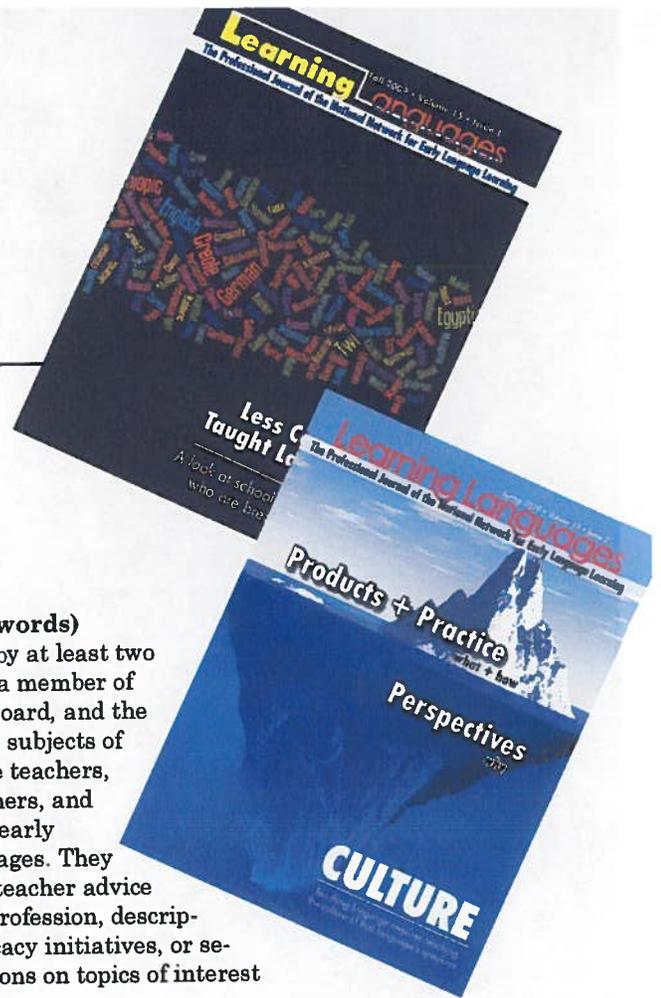
General Guidelines

To be considered for publication, all manuscripts must be accompanied by written notification from the author(s) containing: 1) a statement indicating that the manuscript is not being considered for publication elsewhere either in print or online; 2) contact address for all authors; and 3) clear designation of a contact author. are responsible for the accuracy of the information provided and compliance with copyright laws. In the case of multiple authors, one author should be designated as the contact author. The contact author is responsible for keeping co-authors informed on the status of a submission.

Deadline

The deadline for the Fall 2010 Learning Languages Journal is October 1. Proposals or manuscripts should be submitted earlier to NNELL Editor Priscilla Russel at

Priscilla_Russel@monet.prs.k12.nj.us



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to your
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success
stories.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NNELL Membership Form

Please renew/enroll me as a member of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL). NNELL membership includes a subscription to two issues (fall and spring) of Learning Languages and three issues of NNELL E-Notes which will be sent to the email address you provide.

Please check one of the three membership options below:

- 2010-2011 Regular Academic Year Membership. US Residents \$30.00 (Non-US Residents \$40.00)
 2010-2011 Full-time Student Academic Year Membership. Students must submit a photocopy of a valid student ID with their advisor's signature. US Residents \$15.00 (Non-US Residents \$25.00)
 2010-2011 Retiree \$15.00
 2010-2011 Institutional Member \$100

Payment may be made by check or money order (payable to NNELL). No purchase orders please.

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List My Contact Information in the NNELL Directory? Yes No

Mail this form and your check (or money order) to Robin Hawkins at the address below.