

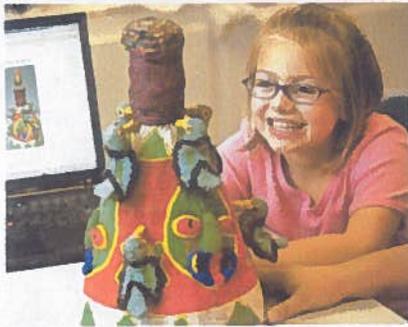
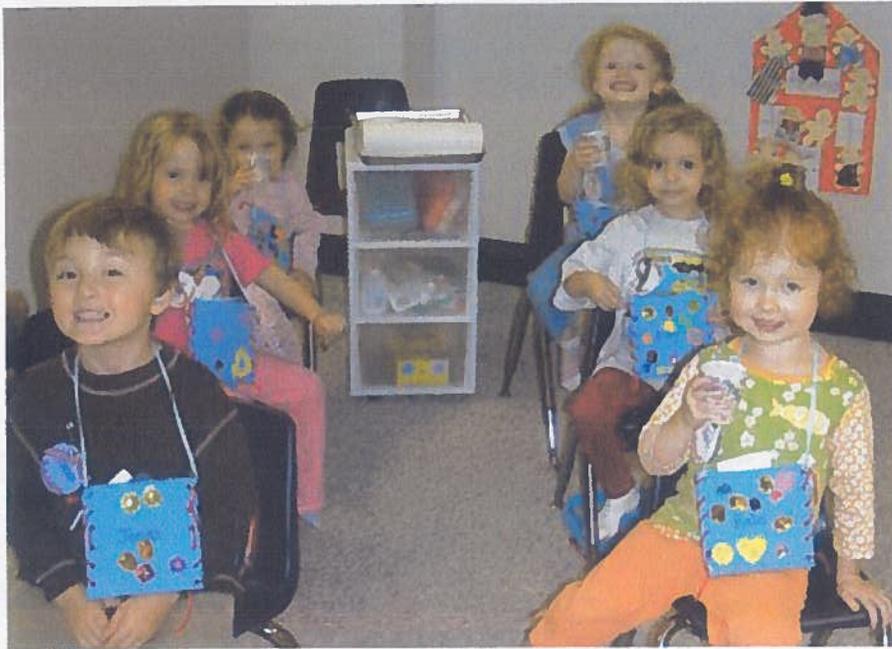
Spring/Summer 2011 • Volume 16 • Issue 2

LEARNING LANGUAGES

The Professional Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning



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Building a Community of Learners

BY JACQUELINE BOTT VAN HOUTEN—NNELL PRESIDENT



Welcome to the Spring /Summer edition of Learning Languages. As you may have noticed, our journal is taking a thematic approach and announcing the topics a year in advance, so that anyone wishing to submit an article will have ample time for action or scholarly research and writing.

The theme of the Spring/Summer 2011 Learning Languages, “Building a Community of Learners,” is one that draws upon one of the goals of the National Foreign Language Standards and adapts them to reflect a 21st century interpretation of learning. As language educators we are all familiar with the Communities Goal: Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World as well as the subsequent standards for learning:

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

Since the standards were developed, our ideas—of how learners use language in and outside of class and for what purposes—have evolved into ways we never before imagined. Just think, the standards preceded wikis, blogging, text messaging, the ipod, and Facebook. How have those creations changed our thinking about community and language use?

As a result of trends in education since the turn of the century, our concept of learning communities has exponentially expanded beyond the traditional perception of education, beyond the delivery modes of teacher teaching students and professional development providers training teachers. We are beginning to recognize the value of learning that takes place from pre-school through adulthood in shared and self-constructed environments; that results from self-determined and personalized goals; and that occurs among individuals within a group despite differences in age, location or ability.

My own concept of community has changed enormously in recent years. As a consultant in a state department of education, I admit that I work more on a regular basis with

my National Council of State Supervisors of World Language (NCSSFL) colleagues across the country than I do with my colleagues across the hall in the same building. We share the same concerns, events, influence, etc., and learn enormously from one another.

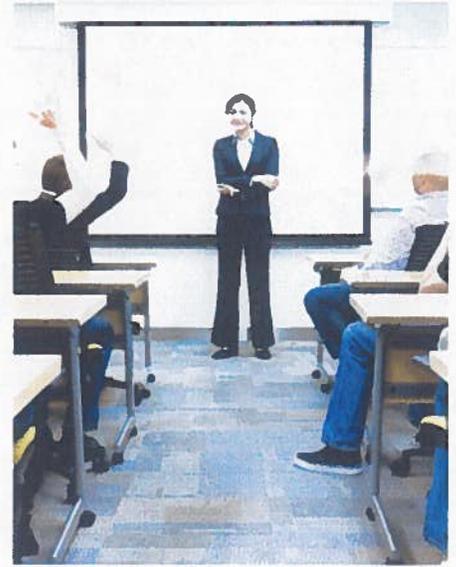
In my personal life, my community has expanded in directions I never would have imagined. Who knew that, as a former teacher of French, I'd be networking on FB with teacher friends in China and the Canary Islands. And, I never thought that, as a mother of a daughter who never shared my lust for travel, I'd be extending my family community across borders and learning about marriage requirements and customs in Mexico for her May 3 wedding this year!

Our NNELL family is also a community, as well as a network. We learn from each other new practices and tools. We share our resources. We exchange ideas on how to advocate for language learning and maintain those experiences in our schools. NNELL members are teachers, parents, teacher trainers, administrators, etc., and we are creating our own communities of learners through workshops, through our Facebook page, through webinars, and more. Let me know how you see the NNELL community changing and what you might like from NNELL to address your needs.

I, and the other board members, Rita Oleksak, Paula Patrick, Tammy Dann, Nathan Lutz, Al Martino, and Rebecca Fox, are all open to your ideas on how to build a more effective NNELL community of learners. I hope that this issue of the NNELL journal will inspire you to see language learning in new ways and broaden your sense of community. Enjoy the articles and let me know what you think. Have a great spring and summer!

Jacqueline Bott Van Houten
NNELL President

NEWS AND EVENTS



NYS AFLT Summer Institute

Again this year, NYS AFLT (New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers) is teaming up with NNELL and the New York State Education Department to offer a fantastic Summer Institute from August 2-5, 2011, in pastoral Oneonta, NY. This summer's theme is "21st Century Skills: Building Global Literacy." For more information, visit <http://www.nysaflt.org/conferences/summerinstitute>.

Be a Language Advocate

Being an early language advocate does not have to take much of your time, but every minute you spend could be worth five times that if your early language program is in jeopardy. Log in to NNELL's Web site at www.nnell.org and click on "advocacy" to find ideas on how to inform and involve parents, colleagues, administrators, and other stakeholders in your early language program.

ACTFL Presenters

NNELL is pleased to announce the presenters for the ACTFL Annual Convention and World Languages Expo. Lynn Sessler will be presenting "Managing the Multitudes: Assessment Activities for the FLES Classroom." Brooks Lindner will be presenting "Using Children's Literature as an Authentic Teaching and Assessment Tool." Sally Hood will be presenting "Evaluation of a Dual-Language Immersion Program in Rural Oregon."

Southeast Workshop

On May 7, 2011, NNELL's Southeast Workshop kicked off the opening session with guest speaker Greg Duncan.

Duncan, who is president of InterPrep, Inc. and has been a foreign language educator for more than 35 years, is an independent consultant who serves K-12 schools, teacher preparation institutions and other educationally focused entities throughout the United States and abroad.

Greg's topic, "Happiness All Around (Students, Teachers, Parents, Administrators): More Proficient Students," puts forth the notion that schools and districts in the U.S. are truly making progress at strengthening language programs.

For more information on upcoming events, visit www.nnell.org.



Shore Teacher a Leader in Language

Pittsville's Harkins earns state, regional awards

BY CULUM MCKINNEY—DELMARVANOW.COM

A portable classroom at the edge of Pittsville Elementary and Middle School is on the leading edge of world language education in Maryland.

There, French teacher Sherri Harkins is heading a pilot program introducing foreign languages to elementary students.

Named Maryland Language Teacher of the Year in 2010, she was awarded the title of Teacher of the Year by the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages—the largest regional organization representing teachers of foreign languages.

"I love that I teach in what appears on a map to be a tiny dot," Harkins said. "But for me, Pittsville is the happening place for world language."

She said early world language instruction fits in neatly with other initiatives such as Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) programs that are aiming to prepare U.S. students for competition in a global market.

Susan Spinnato, a director of instructional programs with the Maryland State Department of Education, said Maryland was the only winner of the federal education reform grant Race to the Top to include world language education on its RTTT application. While most were already doing it, she said a law passed in 2010 will require all Maryland school systems to provide foreign language instruction at the middle school level.

As Harkins has been able to speak to Maryland superintendent Nancy Grasmick, Spinnato said her recent award will give world language even more of a voice in a state that already has some of the oldest language immersion programs in the country.

"Every level of recognition gives you more access to the people who make decisions," Harkins said. "The title isn't just best language teacher—so many teachers are incredible. It's about getting to be the voice that shouts from the mountaintops."

Indeed, she will get a chance to do just that when she goes to Denver in November to compete for the title of National Language Teacher of the Year, as named by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Spinnato said Harkins is a good choice for the representative role.

"We were thrilled when we heard. I do a lot of work with school systems on the Shore," she said. "I'm glad a teacher on the Eastern Shore is being recognized. She's very articulate and an outstanding public speaker. She's very passionate about what she does."

Spinnato said she had worked with Harkins and knew she was an excellent teacher, but was further impressed by her ability to communicate the importance of language education when she heard her speak at the recent NCTFL conference.

Wicomico and Worcester are the only counties on the Eastern Shore to have world language programs at the elementary level, but Harkins and other educators are cautiously optimistic such programs will expand.

"In our county, Pittsville has the only elementary program, which was started with the idea that we would run the pilot for three or four years and look at the data," said Ruth Malone, director of curriculum and professional development and Harkins' former world language supervisor.

She said they were documenting students in the program to see how it affected their language skills and performance in other areas before they attempted to expand the program.

Diane Stulz, coordinator of instruction for Worcester County public schools, said they have elementary foreign language programs in four of their schools and hope to offer it for all primary students.

Though tough budgetary times make it difficult to expand a program that requires more teachers and training, Spinnato said she is hopeful that world language funding will remain level and won't be endangered by getting rolled in with other programs when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—currently called No Child Left Behind—gets reauthorized.

While Harkins, Malone and other educators said brain science clearly shows kids learn languages best at early ages, Malone said you can't just shift resources from high schools to elementary schools, as many students would lose what they've learned by the time they would really be using it.

Arlene White, a French teacher at Wicomico High and Salisbury University who also served as chair of the NCTFL teacher of the year selection committee, said textbooks would also have to be revamped to prepare teachers for instruction at the elementary level.

Using SU as an example, she said there is only one chapter of their textbook devoted to strategies for teaching elementary students a foreign language.

Knowing such challenges exist, Harkins, a former business owner, said she isn't afraid to talk to people about how language learning fits into education.

"In a time frame where everything is global—politics, education, commerce—you can't truly participate in a global marketplace without it," she said, noting parents should let their kids decide what language to learn, as they all have benefits and it is important to be interested in the one you're learning as it will be a lot of hard work.

She said she is excited to see next year how the first students to begin her program in third grade perform when they begin the middle school language curriculum.

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Raising Global Children *One Community at a Time*

BY STACIE NEVADOMSKI BERDAN

If the United States is to compete successfully on a global scale, we must refocus our parenting in order to help our children grow up ready for tomorrow's increasingly complex and multi-cultural global economy. Our children must become global citizens: open-minded, resilient kids ready to see global interconnectedness as both opportunity and welcome challenge. We must come together as communities to raise global children.

The idea of “raising global children” is the subject of an interactive book that a colleague and I have been researching for the past two years—and plan to publish this fall. Our intention is to create awareness and issue a call to action to American families across all income levels and geography. We offer proven parenting strategies for raising global children—strategies that are not just “nice to have” for understanding other cultures and people, but critically necessary to harness a world of opportunities beyond our borders. Our increasingly complex (and conflict-ridden) world demands that we raise our children with the mental agility, emotional stability, and personal and social skills needed to operate successfully in the global marketplace.

As other nations have recovered faster than the U.S. from the global financial crisis, Americans have watched the so-called developing world surge for the first time past the developed world in share of global GDP—and the trend will continue. Americans now know that we must treat China, Russia, India and Brazil as the competition they are—and we certainly cannot ignore them. When today's kids grow up, they are as likely to compete for jobs in, and with people from, Beijing or Brasilia or Bangalore as from Boston or Baton Rouge.

The stakes for our children are already high, and rising. By the time today's toddlers join the workforce, the ability to work globally and cross-culturally may make the difference between great success and just getting by. One World Bank 20-year meta-study on globalization and employment conditions concluded that global trade is increasing income disparities worldwide¹. Some globalization gurus believe that the monolingual, mono-cultural poor of all countries will increasingly resemble each other, while the upper echelons of all nations will also resemble each other, all part of an interconnected and globally mobile permanent upper class². Although the book will serve as a foundation of information, it will provide only the starting point from which to build our community of like-minded adults.

Despite the reality that globalization is here, parents

have nowhere to turn for relevant, practical advice. National education efforts are mired in monitoring test scores across the country for a curriculum based on outdated objectives that already has the U.S. listed far behind nations such as China, Finland, New Zealand and Denmark³. School districts are mired in delivering the teach-to-tests curricula and battling budget cuts just to keep foreign language and social studies. Parent groups are hard to find amidst an environment crowded with professional work and kids' activities. No real community exists to coalesce around, a place at which concerned parents can congregate not only to hear what others have to say, but also to offer solutions and, as necessary, band together to build a strong, clear voice to communicate to policymakers, decision-makers and thought leaders across the country.

“Raising Global Children” aspires to satisfy this need. A key component to the book will be its dynamic, interactive component known as The “Community Board.” The CB is a next-generation technology that combines the best of social media tools with old-fashioned grass roots community building. Participants will be able to share information and follow the discussions of interest to them because the CB is curated with an intuitive organization that allows members to quickly extract information they want. Topics can be organized by geography, age and even congressional district so as to gather members around local issues.

The Raising Global Children CB will enable people to share ideas and exchange information that may be as simple as tips for traveling with children to more complex organizing and mobilizing groups across the country to impact national legislation. It will be designed by parents and for parents seeking to open up a child's world to a future bright with global possibilities.

Using powerful communication tools, this virtual community can extend into local towns, school districts and groups of like-minded people across the country. We want to inspire fellow parents to join in our efforts to raise global children—and provide them with practical advice, tips and the tools to do so—as well as to convince leaders to prioritize these

FEATURE

issues for our children's sake. Combining virtual communities with geographic ones creates a powerful force.

This virtual, vibrant community tool is critical to affecting change so that our children can compete in the global marketplace. People who demand national curricula change in areas such as mandatory foreign language immersion; enhanced cross-cultural awareness through the understanding of culture, religion and language; and world history that incorporates economics, geopolitics, and geography, can come together to connect, organize and mobilize.

Our virtual community will do more than advocate for social change. It will serve as an information source for busy yet concerned parents looking for practical ideas to nurture their children's open-minded resilience and appetite for variety and adventure. Parents can share ideas and have a discussion about introducing multicultural cuisines young, starting ideally with an adventurous palate of tastes and spices. Library and museum visits can open up the world, while cultural festivals and immigrant neighborhoods can bring the wider world closer. Vacations can go far beyond Disney or the beach, encouraging children (and parents) to step out of their comfort zone and learn that the unfamiliar can be a source of excitement and joy. Choices about work, leisure, entertainment, books, movies, and dozens of other areas can all help shape children's interest in the world.

The Raising Global Children CB will be a dynamic, living community that is built around common interests in a matrixed fashion. Parents, educators, thought leaders and

experts can join in the robust discussion that pushes the global debate front and center with the most advantageous position for affecting change to benefit our children.

NOTES

1. See: (<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOCIALPROTECTION/Resources/SP-Discussion-papers/Labor-Market-DP/0708.pdf>)
2. See for instance Shenkar, Oded, *The Chinese Century: The Rising Chinese Economy and Its Impact on the Global Economy, the Balance of Power, and Your Job*, (Wharton School Publishing, 2005), Conclusions.
3. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/07/education/07education.html?_r=1

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stacie Nevadomski Berdan is a marketing and communications consultant & expert on international careers. Her first book, "Get Ahead By Going Abroad" won two business/careers awards. She spends her time speaking on campuses, advising companies, writing about globalization and, of course, traveling. She provides practical, relevant advice to succeed in the global marketplace.

Her second book, "Go Global!" "What's Hot for Students Launching an International Career," is a cool, interactive app that incorporates multi-media into the text - but also builds an interactive community around the idea of globetrotting, creating a dynamic, curated site that evolves every day. Available in April.

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Leaving Walled Fortresses for Globally Networked Communities

BY TOM WELCH

The biggest challenge our profession faces is the question of how to overcome a system that is geared to an early 20th century view of the world community. If our 21st century communities include both our local physical neighborhood and the expanded notion of networked virtual communities, then what does that mean for learning communities, especially for younger learners?

While the milestone may not be accompanied by wild celebrations in communities around the nation, we will soon be marking the 20th anniversary of the release of “Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century” [Exec Summary]. That document with its 5 C’s, including “Communities” has formed the basis for much of the work in our languages community in the last decade and a half. With that relative stability in approach, it is hard to imagine how much has changed in the intervening years. Use of the Internet was in its infancy, e-mail was just beginning to come into common use and the idea of seeing pictures on the Internet using something called the WorldWideWeb still seemed to be the stuff of science fiction for most of us.

There may be no formal celebrations, but most of the workings of our real-life communities have certainly changed. We bank online, we conference online, we watch movies online, we meet and break up online, we teach and learn online, we can even watch and interact with our children and others from anywhere in the world.

In retrospect the impact of technology on our lives and our communities in these last two decades seems enormous, but it hasn’t happened all at once. Though rapid, it has nevertheless been one day at a time. That is both a comfort and a challenge. It is a comfort in the sense that we have been forced to grow more and more adept at dealing with change.

I see this very clearly in the world languages community. As a profession, we can be proud of the way we have embraced change. I have seen amazing amounts of money spent to make sure that language departments have the latest technology. Many of our classrooms connect to native speakers in distant lands using Skype. Conference sessions touting the latest Interactive White Board world language lesson planning tips are always a big hit. I’ve seen those IWBs used in classrooms with early language learners and I’ve been amazed by the creativity of my colleagues and marveled at the engagement of young language learners.

In many language classrooms, districts and states we have fallen into the trap of trying to use technology to help us do a better job teaching languages. We need to stop asking questions such as “How do I use 21st century tools to help me teach better?” “How do we expand elementary school language programs?” “How do we ensure a clearly-articulated, long-sequence program?” Instead, with GenText occupying the seats of our classrooms, we need to ask “How do we help more

learners understand and use more languages in newly defined communities on a daily basis?”

In schools across the country there are hardworking teachers who go to heroic efforts to help language come alive for their early language learners. But the 21st century has fundamentally redefined the possibilities for our sense of community in exciting ways that are poised to propel language acquisition. Most K–8 programs have not noticed because they have been trying to expand and improve instead of innovate and create. As I think about communities for learners today, I am reminded of my working definition of the difference between improvement and innovation. Improvement looks backward, innovation looks ahead. We have spent too much time and energy and too many hours and dollars trying to wring the last drops of efficiency out of the wet blanket of the past. It is time to look at the opportunities ahead and develop methods to help even early language learners learn to take advantage of them.

Let’s pause a moment to reexamine the Communities standard more carefully. The 1995 Executive Summary presents the goal of Communities as a goal that will “enable the student of languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways. [Exec Summary, p. 3]” With the advent of so many possibilities via technology, perhaps it should read “participate in multilingual communities from home and around the world.” With the latest data showing that nearly one out of every three people on the planet today has a cell phone or smart phone [citation: <http://www.wolframalpha.com/input/?i=global+mobile+phone+penetration>], the entire world is now our community. Unlike just over a decade ago, participation today is no more difficult than logging on to the Web with a computer or other smart mobile device.

What are the implications of this for K–8 language programs? Easiest to understand is the unbelievably expanded resource collection. Log into your YouTube account and do a search for “French children songs with lyrics”—535 come up! Try German and you have access to 1,160. Spanish? 549. Japanese? Over 1,600. Chinese? Over 400. Now try the same search for children’s songs without lyrics. French? Over 2,600. German? Over 3,000.

In his 2010 book, *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*, [Penguin Press, NY, 2010] Clay Shirkey noted that one of the differences between past generations and today is that, in the past, technology had served to make us consumers rather than producers of content. Today that is no longer the case. With something as simple as a flipcam, or a recorder on a smart phone, even young language learners can be producers of content, participants in their multilingual world community. With the increasing ubiquity

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of emerging technologies we should be working diligently to destroy the accepted and limiting division between home and school. Standard 5.1 urges use of the language at home and at school [exec summary, p. 4]. We could avoid this artificially imposed dichotomy if we were to change our basic belief about where language learning should occur.

I understand that the thought of very early learners watching or posting videos to YouTube is fraught with challenges, concerns and implications (though not insurmountable, judging from the number of them already on there!). But what about other resources that could help students actually use the language at home and at school?

Take a few moments and do a Google search for language learning resources for children. From free sites to pay, the web abounds with a seemingly infinite number of resources. A very quick search led me to everything from simple word games such as crosswords and acrostics in a variety of languages, to a PBS website with Sesame Street characters ready to teach kids a wide variety of languages. I found free children's books written in Niuean (the language of the Polynesian country of Niue – where every child in the country received an OLPC laptop, and where every inhabitant has free wireless [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niue>]) and Mongolian. Best of all, many of these resources are free to the multilingual community of the world.

Students with iPods? Take some time to check out iTunes and its resources, or iTunesU. There are hundreds and hundreds of apps available today and more are appearing on a daily basis. It's no longer limited to Apple either, with Android apps available now the ability for each learner to customize their own learning to their own platform should be a dream come true.

Are NNELL teachers sharing these sites with children and their parents? I know there is an inherent danger of losing control of the learning process if kids are learning too much too quickly, or learning the “wrong” things at the “wrong” time, but we must see this as a system problem that needs to be addressed, not a learning, or parenting problem.

It goes without saying that as our students participate more and more fully in a global multilingual community, they will want to pick up additional languages as well. As a professional community we must develop ways to encourage learners to acquire language facility in more than just one other language. A paradigm that tracks students into study of a single language and does not promote and encourage pluralism is out of step with the opportunities in today's language learning community. The challenges we face as a profession are certainly not resources, nor are they time. No, the biggest challenge our profession faces is the question of how to overcome a system that is geared to an early 20th century view of the world community.

Standard 5.2, “Students show evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment. [Exec Summary, p. 4]” is perhaps more challenging. We have unwittingly done our best to create a pervasive culture of dependency when it comes to students.

The school community excels at fostering an attitude that is the exact opposite of the one called for in the standard. Unfortunately, I have seen classroom after classroom where the teacher feels all of the responsibility for language learning by the students. It is the teacher who is desperately searching for and trying to organize the myriad resources. It is the teacher who is trying to differentiate for every student; the teacher who is trying to coordinate with other content teachers to keep students following some imaginary, coordinated “map” that actually exists only in the minds of curriculum planners. It is the teacher who feels the burden of keeping every student dependent on him or her. If there is connection to the multilingual community, it is the teacher who is supposed to organize it, plan the connections, and check the technology.

We inculcate students with the idea that their main responsibility as a member of a “learning community” is to consume what they are offered. Society even unwittingly sends them the message that if the teacher is not offering a wide enough menu, a demanding enough curriculum, an engaging enough classroom, then it is the teacher's fault and they or their parents have the right to demand and expect more.

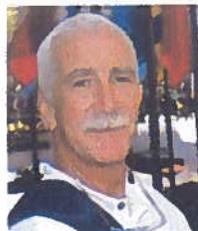
The time has come to look at participation in the multilingual community as first and foremost the responsibility of the learner. The teacher should be encouraging and guiding that participation in such a way that the responsibility of the teacher lessens over the years while the responsibility of the learner increases correspondingly. In my view an existing articulated long sequence program would result in high school students who receive no language instruction, but instead are using and studying the language on their own for purposes other than a grade reflecting how they have responded to the lessons of a teacher. We will never get lifelong learners if we do not help them make the transition from “responders to teaching” to independent learners.

We need to reexamine the idea of communities from at least two perspectives. The first is the expanded, infinitely networked community that technology can literally put in our pocket. We need to help learners (and their parents) understand in new and exciting ways the virtually unlimited opportunities for participation 24/7/365 in the world's multilingual community.

We also need to reexamine the idea of a redefined school community. As long as we limit learning to what happens in assigned classrooms for a given period of time for a given number of days or months, we rob our children of the richness that we know is possible in a multilingual community made up of learners from around the world.

The future is ours, if we can free it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Tom Welch is an education futurist and edupreneur. Among other things, he taught French in Nicholasville, Ky, for many years and served as the World Languages Specialist in the Curriculum Division of the Kentucky Department of Education. Through his work today as an independent consultant he is involved in a variety of innovative education projects in all disciplines and all levels.

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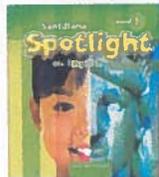
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Building A Cross-Cultural Community Through a Dual Language Immersion Program

BY SALLY HOOD

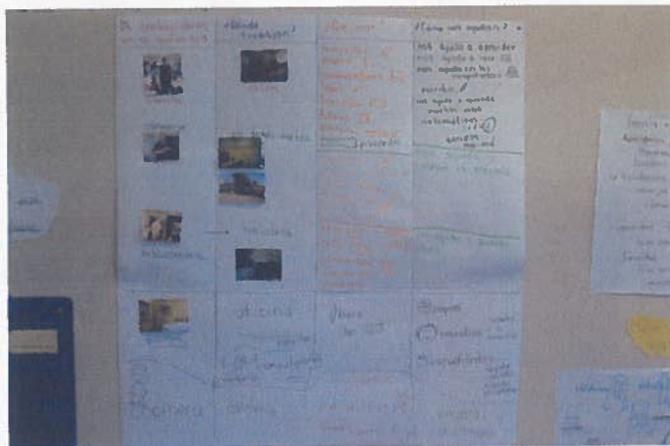
Background: A Rural Dual Language Immersion Program

This research study evaluated the effectiveness of a Spanish-English dual language immersion (DLI) program. Many researchers have found that high-quality and long-term DLI programs promote academic achievement and high levels of language proficiency for both language groups (de Jong, 2002, 2008; Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007; Lindholm-Leary, 2008, 2009; Mora, Wink, & Wink, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002). Despite the evidence, leaders from the field of bilingual education have identified urgent research questions and barriers to research in dual language education (Parkes, 2009). One of these areas targets the societal, cultural, and political climate that surrounds multilingualism. The leaders stated that opposition to multilingualism creates “an antagonistic climate that has strong impact on dual language programs and those who do research in them,” (p. 35). Leaders in the field recommended that dual language educators collaborate to advocate for an “additive” view of linguistic and cultural diversity. In this report, the researcher presents collaborative efforts of DLI teachers to instill cross-cultural interactions from the classroom to the community.

The researcher and DLI teachers who work in the program created research questions focused on documenting DLI students’ progress in speaking, reading, and writing; DLI teachers’ perceptions of the effects and benefits of the program; and instructional practices used in the program. The researcher and DLI teachers decided that the following data would best answer the questions: student assessment results, teacher interviews, teacher surveys, focus group discussions, and classroom observations. The researcher analyzed quantitative data using Excel spreadsheets and simple statistics and qualitative data through coding and identifying themes. The researcher and DLI teachers have used results to highlight how well the program is implemented, improve the program, and inform administrators, parents, staff, and community about its effectiveness. The study will continue for several years to document longitudinal student achievement data.

The children who participate in the DLI program learn 80 percent of academic content through the Spanish language beginning in kindergarten through second grade. When the children are in third grade, 70 percent of their instruction is in Spanish, and in fourth and fifth grades, 50 percent of class time is spent in Spanish. In each classroom, approximately half of these children are considered native Spanish speakers (NSS) and half native English speakers (NES). At each grade level, these children are integrated in a classroom to learn together and from each other. The overarching goals of this DLI program are for the children to become bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate by the end of fifth grade.

The DLI program is a strand within an elementary school that is located in a small agricultural community, approximately 40



miles south of Portland, Ore. According to 2010 U.S. Census data, approximately 22 percent of the community’s residents are Latino and 72 percent are Caucasian. At the Title I school in which the DLI program operates, 48 percent of the students are Latino. Currently, the DLI program has two classrooms of 25 students at each grade level, kindergarten through fifth. The vision is for the DLI program to be a K–12 option in the district. At this time, a steering committee is collaborating with a middle school to prepare for future implementation of DLI at this level.

Community of Learners Framework

Gail E. Tompkins (2009) developed a framework for what a “community of learners” looks like in the classroom. This framework includes 10 characteristics, each with defined roles for teachers and students. According to Tompkins, in a community of learners: students take on responsibility

for their own learning and behavior; classroom activities are meaningful and authentic; teachers allot sufficient time for actual reading and writing; teachers model the reading and writing processes and then give children time to practice; the classroom environment is one in which students feel comfortable taking risks; and children are given choices about what they want to read and write. In this article, the researcher provides examples of how the DLI program fosters a community of learners at the classroom level; each example reflects one or more characteristics from Tompkins' framework.

The framework for analyzing the building of a community beyond the classroom is based on one strand of *The Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education: A Review of Research and Best Practices* (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). This document, hereon called the GP, provides an extensive review of research on favorable characteristics of dual language education. The "Family and Community" strand states that parents become more involved with a DLI program when the school environment is "a welcoming and warm one for parents of all language and cultural groups, where bilingualism is valued and there is a sense of belonging for students and their families" (Howard, et al, 2007, p. 36). According to the GP, when parents are involved with the school and sense the value of their involvement, their children achieve higher academic success (Howard, et al, 2007). The GP provides a list of additional effective features for family and community involvement. These include providing home-school collaborative events, employing bilingual school staff, and posting bilingual signs and announcements (2007). In this article, the researcher provides examples of how the DLI program fosters community in the school, in children's homes, and in the community outside the school; each example reflects one or more features from the GP.

Although the evaluation study addressed a variety of elements of the DLI program, this report only targets findings that share the common theme of community building. The researcher excerpted examples from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and focus group discussions with the teachers. The researcher gave teachers copies of data she transcribed for confirmation of their accuracy. All names are pseudonyms to protect teachers' confidentiality. Findings illustrate the myriad of people it takes to grow a cross-cultural community.

The Students: Academic & Social Interactions

When the researcher walked into a second grade classroom, children were gathered on the carpet, each with a homemade book in their hands; they were anticipating the beginning of "Author's Chair." The first author, a native Spanish-speaking male, held up his small paper book that was in the shape of a monster's head. He read his story aloud to his peers and, when he was finished, his peers made comments and asked him questions. The next author (a native English speaker) wrote her story on chart paper and sang it to the

tune of "A Little Teapot." The whole class sang it next while the teacher pointed to each word with a ruler. One Spanish-speaker asked the author a question. The author began her answer in Spanish, but struggled in her explanation. The teacher gave her permission to continue in English and then repeated what she said in Spanish. Each student had the opportunity to be in the Author's Chair and each book was shaped like the theme of the story. Pokeyman and a whale were other examples. This instructional vignette is one example of how the DLI teachers build community in their classrooms while teaching academic content in Spanish.

This example also illustrates how the NSSs and NESs interact on a daily basis in the classroom as they learn academic content. The teacher, Nan, explained to me that she taught the children story structure at the beginning of the year. Nan allots 40 minutes per day for the children to write while she facilitates guided reading groups. Nan provides a checklist of writing tasks for the children to accomplish as they work independently. When a child is ready for the editing stage of writing, Nan meets with him or her to go over the story for grammar and punctuation. She also gives the children a list of mechanical structures for self-editing. Children are always at different points in their writing. They love having a real audience and creating shape books. One NES had written 13 books in Spanish since the beginning of the year!

The DLI teachers group children purposefully to build a collaborative classroom community. Children are grouped at tables by language proficiency levels and mixed by native language, ideally with at least two NSSs and two NESs at each table. One strong bilingual child is at each table to facilitate discussions in either language. Each child also has a partner and sits with him or her for activities that occur on the carpet. Partnerships are based on language levels or academic reading levels so partners can support one another. With these grouping structures, children have the opportunity to share with the partner at their table group first, and then with all members of their table group, or, when they are on the carpet, share with a partner before sharing with the whole class. In this way, teachers give children a resource and support for using Spanish orally. The goal is to foster independence and participation in the language of instruction. However, teachers have found they must pair students carefully. For example, teachers explained that during English instruction, they have more success when they partner two NSSs, one with strong English proficiency who can help another who is at a beginning level.

The teachers have built community through establishing a non-threatening learning environment as well. In the DLI program children operate in two languages at all times of the day and possess different levels of language proficiency. In the classroom community, children feel free to make mistakes. They may say something in broken Spanish or broken English, but their peers do not correct them, because they are trying to communicate a message. One teacher recounted a conversation with an NES parent who, after watching his daughter give a speech in halting Spanish, asked if the other children made

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fun of her. The teacher responded, “Well, no, the kids are so focused on meaning and so used to hearing people speak and take risks and make mistakes that it doesn’t even faze them at all.” In the DLI classroom community, children help each other, work independently, and are willing to create with the language of instruction.

The teachers claimed that the children’s social communication skills are more difficult for them than their academic language skills. One teacher recounted an incident in the lunch room when a NSS female had a problem and refused to talk with the cafeteria personnel because the child claimed she could not speak English. The teacher explained that “if a child sees someone who doesn’t speak Spanish, she or he just doesn’t talk to the person, rather than trying.” The teachers also explained that although the NESs accomplish much of their academic work in Spanish, they are not growing in their social communication skills. The teachers attributed the children’s lack of social language skills to the reduction of playtime in lieu of higher expectations for academic outcomes in kindergarten and first grade. One kindergarten teacher explained that because she does not want to cut math or literacy, the program does not provide children the opportunity for “play, exploration, and social interaction.”

Teachers & Students: Dynamics in the Classroom

One of the teachers in the DLI program, Valerie, grew up in the community after spending the first 10 years of her life in Mexico (her first language was Spanish). She attended school in the district, worked as an instructional assistant and interpreter for the district while pursuing her bachelor’s degree, and began teaching kindergarten in the DLI program six years ago. She currently teaches first grade. During the one-on-one interview, I asked Valerie to describe her teaching philosophy about teaching in a DLI program. She responded passionately:

I think it’s a way to bridge two cultures. I think I have had the opportunity to bring together two different cultures, and make one of their own, in our classroom. We basically do that each and every day, and we do that through reading and writing, and all of our activities. They are basically meant for us to be a little community. I want kids to realize that they each have something very valuable to share, and that is their language and their culture and their own individuality. That is my teaching philosophy. That each child feels that she or he is a valuable individual and that each can bring something to the table and they can make our community much stronger.

Valerie continued, explaining that, as a learner, she learns with the children. She explained that when she models a lesson and a child mentions a detail she does not know about, that she tells them, “That’s something I didn’t know. I just learned something.” Valerie believes that children need to see her as a learner in order for them to have the confidence that they are all learning and play an important role. Valerie also sees her role as a guide and to teach children that she is there to help

them, but they are also there to help her. One of Valerie’s goals is to have the children become responsible for their own learning.

The DLI teachers also build community in their classrooms through holding high expectations for all children and valuing both languages. One teacher claimed that no one group of children has power over another, that it is a “shared thing.” Every child has the opportunity to teach something to somebody else, to be the expert on something at some point. Everyone has value in the classroom. One teacher explained that she had experiences in other schools where if there is one language of power and you do not achieve in it, then you are “pushed to the side and laughed at.” The teachers reported that the children believe they are capable of learning and possess a sense of ownership, that the school and the classroom belong to them. The emotional and social nature of the classroom culture and how each child fits into it creates a learning community in which all children are treated equitably.

Teachers & Parents: Sustaining Communication

Without the assistance of a DLI program coordinator, the DLI teachers take on the responsibility of initiating and maintaining communication with parents. The teachers try to make home visits as much as possible, especially when children begin to struggle in their classes. Renee claimed that parents enjoy their visits and explained the importance of them:

I felt like we had conversations that would never have happened during conference time here at school with the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking parents; also getting to know them at home seemed so much easier. When parents come in for parent nights, I can’t remember which parent goes with which child, so this is really nice, to sit down with them in their homes.

Marie commented that she took her camera during a home visit and took photos of the entire family so she could have pictures of them up on her walls at home. This helps her remember “which parents go with which children.” Because the teachers make the effort to conduct home visits, parents feel comfortable coming to the school and they feel a connection with the school.

The DLI teachers apply what they learn from home visits in their classrooms. Marie described how she learns about “the dynamics of the household,” and that this helps her “understand where that child is coming from when they’re reacting to something.” By dynamics, Marie referred to interactions that occur between parents and children. She discussed an example of a girl who was “clearly the apple of her mother’s eye.” In her classroom, the girl was always asking for attention and had a strong personality in terms of being aggressive with other children in trying to obtain what she wanted. The home visit helped Marie understand the root of the child’s behavior in her classroom. Debbie also described

an example of how a home visit revealed family and child dynamics:

I have a child who cannot cope, who has zero coping skills, and will zone out and become catatonic if she makes one tiny mistake. Seeing the mother at home and watching, don't smile this way, don't look that way, don't move this way, it's just this constant...so I'm trying to talk to that child and say I expect all of my students to make mistakes. I want to see lots of mistakes, I love the mistakes, because that means you're doing something and you're learning something, so that's the message I'm trying to learn from her, based on what I've observed of the interactions with mom.

The teachers have collaborated to gain parent support for their program. In the school, all signs and announcements are written in Spanish and English and the school is staffed with bilingual personnel, important facets of a welcoming school environment for both groups of parents and their children. Teachers agreed that students, parents, staff and community members of both language groups are made to feel like a valuable part of the school culture. They claimed that the community has a good impression of the program, has a good sense of its purpose, and want it for their children. Although the teachers admitted that "there is still a lot to do," they believe they have done a good job with parent communication in promoting the program.

Teachers said Spanish-speaking parents sometimes express amazement that instruction is conducted primarily in Spanish. Parents have asked the teachers, "So you mean you just speak to them in Spanish all day? You're teaching them to read in Spanish?" Teachers believe that the program gives power to their language.

The teachers collaborated to plan and facilitate parent nights. The author attended a "Family Night" at the school and took detailed notes while observing the event. All DLI teachers helped to facilitate the event. A crowd of about 100 parents with their children attended, approximately half were Latino and half were Caucasian. The teachers posted six pieces of chart paper around the cafeteria where the event was held with the following headings: homework, reading, math, second language performance, schedule, and other questions, each in a different color. Teachers sat up tables, each with the name of one of the teachers who facilitated a small group discussion. Each table had a lotteria (bingo card) with dried beans to mark nine pictures (clip art) that coordinated with a PowerPoint presentation.

The bingo cards had statements about participation in a DLI program. Most tables had a mix of English- and Spanish-speaking parents. Two teachers read sentences, first in Spanish and then in English, out loud to the crowd: DLI is hard; DLI is for everyone; DLI is about making cross-cultural friendships. After the game, teachers moved to their assigned table and talked to parents regarding questions they had about the program. The teachers wrote parents' questions on sticky

notes and stuck them on the labeled charts. Parents' questions included: How can I help my child with homework at home? How do we support Spanish reading at home as native English speakers? Is math taught differently in Spanish? The teachers read each question to the crowd and answered each of them, giving the parents tips on how to support their children at home.

The Community Outside the School

The DLI program is located in a politically conservative community in which two language groups live. The teachers feel that it is important that they serve as "bilingual models" for the children, because adults in the community do not speak each other's language. The teachers see themselves as advocates of bilingualism and try to communicate its importance to the community in informal ways through conversations. This is an on-going challenge because English is viewed as the language of power and community members question the rationale for teaching other languages to their children. Teachers worry how political tensions surrounding bilingualism may impact the DLI program in the future. As advocates, teachers hope that children participating in the DLI program are developing cross-cultural awareness and acceptance that will combat racial tensions and create "a community that understands each other at some level and that gets along in a different way than happens in a lot of places." The teachers trust that the DLI program will affect change in the community and they are committed to this broader goal that lies at the heart of learning about other languages and cultures.

The children's lack of opportunity to use their bilingual skills outside of school limits their language proficiency. The teachers explained that English speakers and Spanish speakers rarely interact outside of school even though most neighborhoods in the community include a mix of both language groups. In town, there are few places where English speakers and Spanish speakers mingle. One teacher claimed:

When I go to the bowling alley, there are no Spanish-speaking people there. When I go to the park to see a concert, there are not very many Spanish-speaking families. Even though culturally that really fits with what they would do, they're kind of on the outskirts.

The teachers have encouraged parents to cross cultural boundaries by inviting children from another language group over to their homes. Teachers have even made phone calls to parents in order to make arrangements for children from each language group to come together at each other's homes. Yet, teachers reported that it is rare for children from the two language groups to interact outside of school, even in after-school sporting events. The teachers reported that some children who struggle the most with learning English are the ones who, when they go home, have no more access to the second language. Children talk with their friends and family in Spanish, watch TV only

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in Spanish and listen to music in Spanish. The teachers base their assertions on interviews they conducted with parents that focus on what happens at home and what languages are spoken and heard there. The teachers realize that even though the DLI program is designed to foster bilingualism, the students who are the farthest behind academically are the English learners. The teachers view the home environment as one of their primary challenges. Teachers grapple with meeting the needs of children whose parents have low literacy levels and who do not speak the second language.

Conclusions

In summary, the researcher has documented that this DLI program has built a cross-cultural community of learners within the classroom and school, and has striven to expand it into the neighborhoods. In the classroom, children from Spanish-speaking and English-speaking cultures engaged in learning that was meaningful, content-focused, and cooperative. Highly trained bilingual teachers implemented research-based practices based on the Guided Language Acquisition Development (GLAD) instructional model (Project G.L.A.D., 2009) or the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP, Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2007) teaching framework. The teachers implemented instructional practices that included the use of an abundance of visuals, chants, charts, movement around the classroom, manipulatives, and reading of authentic fiction and non-fiction books. Teachers conducted home visits and family events at school to involve parents in the education of their children. Although the teachers advocate for bilingualism, community members continue to doubt the purposes of learning languages other than English.

The research findings from this study demonstrated it takes more than a bilingual education program to build a cross-cultural community. Once children step outside the program, they are encircled by a community that separates itself by language and culture. Although the teachers and staff who work in the DLI program have striven to reach out to parents and the community about the cognitive, economic and affective benefits of learning other languages, advocacy is needed on a wider scale. The researcher has assisted the principal and teachers in the advocacy process through publicizing assessment results to administrators, parents, and the bilingual education community. The researcher recommends the establishment of bilingual parent liaisons who would systematically provide parent training so that they would then have the knowledge to advocate for themselves, their children, and the value of living in a cross-cultural society.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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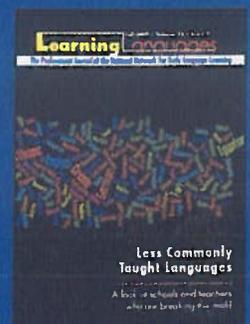
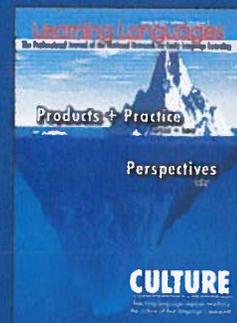
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Preschoolers Gather at a Norwegian Fish Market in Minnesota

BY VALERIE BOREY AND REBECCA HEGSTAD

It is a typical day at the famous fish market in Bergen, Norway. Vendors wrapped in rain coats huddle under white tents, selling everything from shrimp to flowers to handmade souvenirs. Some tables are stacked with salmon and herring, while others feature baskets of berries and fresh fruits. Families out for their household grocery shopping are interspersed with clusters of strolling teenagers and tourists toting cameras.

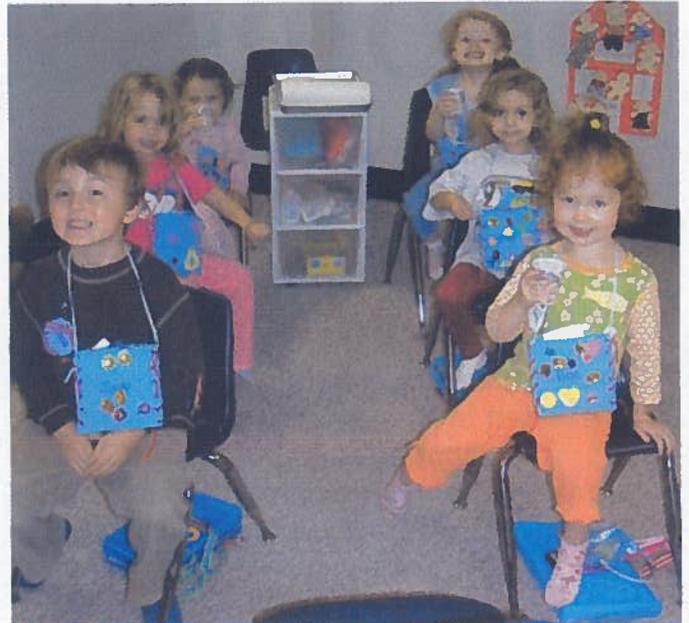
What's different about this day, though, is that it exists in the collective imagination of 10 Minnesotan preschoolers, aged 3 to 5, and the two Norwegian immersion teachers who are guiding the experience. They are not really at an outdoor market; they are in a preschool classroom. Although you can almost smell the fish and flowers, they are made of plastic and fabric, part of a socio-dramatic play session organized as part of the curricular theme "Going Places" in Concordia Language Villages' Norwegian pre-K program, Barnehage.

The activity took place in 2009, in which the class simulated a trip to Norway during "Going Places." Applying for passports, exchanging dollars for kroner, packing a suitcase, and planning an itinerary were all part of the tasks leading up to departure, approximately five weeks into the fall term. After taking a plane ride to Oslo and visiting the king's castle, the group rode a train to the southwestern city of Bergen. Here, they gathered at Fisketorget, one of the more recognizable landmarks in Norway; an open air market on the pier where fresh fish, flowers, and fruits and vegetables, and other handmade wares can be found. It was here that they began to try on the identities of shoppers and vendors, learning to handle their language structures not as students, but as speakers in context.

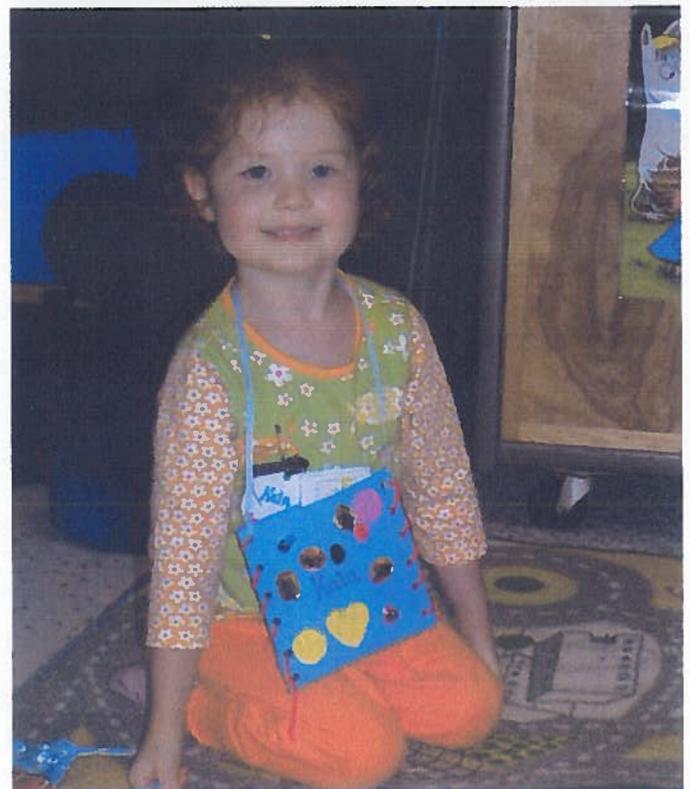
Situated Learning at Barnehage

Barnehage is a Norwegian Immersion Pre-K program offered in Minneapolis, Minn., through Concordia Language Villages, featuring parent-child and drop-off classes for children aged 2 ½ to 5 years old, as well as supplementary Saturday classes for children 4 to 11 years of age. In the present article, we focus on our drop-off class of beginning Norwegian speakers. Most were taking the class because their family had Norwegian heritage, and some children had one or both parents who were native to Norway. At the time of the Fisketorget simulation, children had attended the part-time Barnehage program for anywhere from five weeks to two and a half years (five hours per week, eight months per year).

The curriculum at Barnehage is premised on a situated learning model, in which learning to know is not the automatic equivalent of learning to do. Whereas learning to know can involve decontextualized activities such as learning words from a dictionary, performing grammar drills, and memorizing vocabulary, in the situated learning model, knowing and doing are considered inseparable. Learning takes



On the plane to Norway



Children depended on their pocket holders to carry their money to the fish market

place when it is embedded in an authentic context, and when it is driven by the unique intentions and expectations of its participants. This approach to learning is informed by Lave and Wenger's (1991) anthropological perspective of learner

participation in communities of practice, where learning is conceived of as an apprenticeship within a broader context of social activity. For our children at Barnehave, what this means is that they are not here to learn Norwegian, but to learn how to participate as competent social actors in Norwegian society.

They learn to play the same games that Norwegian kids play, to make telephone calls, order food at restaurants, and use Norwegian money to buy things at the market. Dahl (2003) explored four key variables in the situated learning model which lend themselves to the language learning as enculturation approach that we adopt at Barnehave, and at Concordia Language Villages in general. The key variables are 1) identity (the way we do things in our classroom community); 2) access (the extent to which we scaffold learning in our community); 3) transparency (the level of complexity involved in the task); and 4) control (the extent to which individuals seek to master their participation in the community). Using these variables allows us to look at the larger context of our Fisketorget activity as being embedded within (and relying upon) the larger framework of our community.

Identity

At Barnehave, we do not simply share an interest in learning Norwegian, we share a congruent way of doing things as a community. We have rituals we follow on a daily basis, ranging from how we greet one another during circle time, to how we take turns being line leader, to the transition songs we sing during clean-up and meal times, and even to the inside jokes we share. The children who are new to Barnehave are unfamiliar with our ways and choose to adopt our traditions (or not), to attend to our social norms (or not), and to align themselves with our routines (or not).

The children who are veterans to our program have so closely identified themselves with the way things are done at Barnehave, that they are quick to point out when we have skipped something important, and find ways to either take leadership roles in upholding our traditions (volunteering, for example, to be the first to call a game) or to subvert our routines in clever ways by, for example, deliberately substituting words in songs or well-worn phrases (see also, Cekaite and Aronsson, 2005, and Peck, 1977, on language play as a resource in L2 learning).

As part of our shared Barnehave heritage, there are some things that we routinely did prior to our activity at the Bergen Fisketorg that helped to set up our activity. When children line up to go to the gym, for example, we count heads out loud as a group in Norwegian, rehearsing numbers one through 10 on a regular basis. During meal times, children ask for snacks in Norwegian, "Kan jeg få _____?" ("Can I have _____?") , hear, "Vær så god." ("Here you go.") when they are served, and say, "Takk" ("Thank you.") in response. They use the same constructions during craft time, when asking for scissors or glue, when they want assistance, as well as when they ask for a colored sticker at the end of the day. During the course of the

session, and prior to our Fisketorget simulation, the children used similar language constructions to buy tickets for the plane and train, ordering food in a restaurant, and going to the bank to withdraw money for their trip. There was, in other words, a shared framework for understanding the context of interaction.

Part of identity in a community of practice comes from the relationships established within the community. Appropriately, play is a foundation of community identity in early childhood settings (Bergen, 2002; Haas, 1998; Elkind, 2007). Incorporating both free play and structured play into a preschool language curriculum provides the opportunity for children to learn a second language naturally, while simultaneously building relationships (Skyu, 2008). Even though the children in Barnehave don't have the language skills to interact exclusively in Norwegian during free play, this time of the day is a vital ingredient to the learning process. Skyu acknowledges that many activities in language immersion settings are one-way (teacher to student) and teacher-directed.

The teacher acts as the primary model of language. This can be particularly true with a class of beginning language learners, and especially in part-time programs like Barnehave. However, we know that young children learn through actively interacting with the world around them. Free play, even if it happens in English, offers a chance for student to student interactions. R.P. McDermott (1996) writes:

Learning is in the conditions that bring people together and organize a point of contact that allows for particular pieces of information to take on a relevance; though the play might happen in English, the children are developing a sense of belonging during these times; without the points of contact, without the system of relevancies, there is not learning, and there is little memory. Learning does not belong to individual persons, but to the various conversations of which they are part (p.292).

At its core, play leads to relationships, which build community, which establishes identity, which leads to language learning. Fisketorget drew on this assumption, counting on the children's comfort with each other to make room for language learning to happen.

Access

Access to a community depends upon the stance with which a community receives newcomers – some communities have gatekeepers who actively block access to those who seek entry, some communities selectively ignore newcomers, while others actively encourage their participation. At Barnehave, we provide newcomers the tools to facilitate their comprehension, while also allowing for the fact that their participation will be different from that of veteran participants who have been in the program longer. Veteran participants take a hand in this process as well, often stopping to explain how things work (e.g., "It's time to go to the gym now. You have to find a place in line.") and model appropriate behavior (e.g., answering questions, leading parts of games, finding specific toys during

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free play). This type of newcomer/old-timer social interaction has been shown to significantly boost comprehension and language skills among second language learners in early childhood settings (Hirschler, 1994, Wong-Fillmore, 1976), and newcomers to Barnebage tend to respect the relative positioning of veterans as experts in the program, often seeking to do what they do.

Language scaffolding for Fisketorget happened at different levels depending on where the kids were with their language skills. During circle time and directed activities in both the classroom and gym, we played games to introduce new vocabulary related to our upcoming simulation, emphasizing words such as blomster (flowers), fisk (fish), frukt (fruit) and grønnsaker (vegetables). With newer students, we focused for five weeks on teaching numbers 1–10 and finding various ways to practice our counting skills (from counting heads on the way to gym, to counting out Norwegian kroner, to matching our seat assignments on the plane to the correct chair). Students who already knew their numbers got a chance to review, and also began to challenge themselves by rehearsing increasingly sophisticated constructions such as “Hvor mye koster det?” (“How much does that cost?”) and “Det koster to kroner.” (“It costs two crowns.”).

Transparency

Previous simulations, such as the ones referenced above, helped to set up children’s expectations for how the Fisketorg simulation would run. The children, who had been tracking their journey through Norway on a map, were shown pictures of the real Fisketorg in Bergen. In addition, asking for food, art supplies, buying train tickets and plane tickets, etc., provided children with a linguistic framework for anticipating the verbal exchange of vendors and shoppers. Students also became accustomed to the socio-dramatic play model used repeatedly in class. Children who initially ran a reality check early on during the session (e.g., asking the teacher, “We’re not really taking an airplane today. We’re just pretending, right?”) no longer bothered to question the play scenario, instead confidently informing their parents on pick-up that “We went to the fish market today!”

Control

During the activity, there were differences in the way each child tackled the language, with veteran participants more likely to seek mastery over the buying and selling exchange than their near-peers. Some children understood (whether conscious or not) that the activity was both for play and language practice, and they took it upon themselves to use what they knew, or to ask for help to fill the gaps. Other children were simply concerned with filling their baskets with goodies. Despite these differences, the quality of the children’s overall experience appeared uniformly positive. With the teachers acting as language resources and supporting the scaffolding necessary to challenge the learners, the children were all engaged, regardless of whether they were new learners or seasoned participants.

The length of time the children participated varied, though this seemed to be related more to developmental level and experience in the program than actual language ability. Some 3-year-olds participated for only 4–5 minutes after which time they wandered a bit. However, they became reengaged when we switched roles (buyers/sellers) half way through the experience. Most 4- and 5-year-olds continued playing for 10–12 minutes.

Some children used Norwegian from the start of the activity, while others started in English and switched to Norwegian as they adapted to their roles. After trading roles, a few children who were trying out their new role looked to the teachers for guidance. Though they had heard the first group of sellers calling out “Fisk! Fisk! Tre kroner!” (Fish! Fish! Three crowns!), several sellers who were new to Barnebage that semester wanted the teachers to help them get started with the language for their particular booth (fish, flowers, fruits or vegetables, and how many crowns they cost). On the other hand, the buyers didn’t need as much prompting. They utilized the much-used expression “Could I please have a flower?” that is repeated in many contexts in the daily schedule of the program. The experienced students were challenged to apply more advanced structures: “Could I please have two flowers?”, or “Could I please have a red and a blue flower?”.

Shaping the Community of Practice

Lave and Wenger (1991) make an important distinction between the teaching curriculum, which is essentially constructed by the instructor and stems from the instructor’s perspective of what knowing something entails, and the learning curriculum, which is situated in community practice, from the perspective of the learner. The learning curriculum includes not only didactic practice from the instructor, but also the “circulation of knowledge and practice among peers and near-peers” (p. 93).

This distinction allows us to look at the learning environment as something that is shaped by the various practices and interactions that take place between instructor and students, peers and near-peers, and the overlapping communities in which instructor and students are also engaged (for example, the school, the broader teaching community, the parent school community, etc.). Thinking about the learning environment as being formed at the intersection of these relationships opens up possibilities for exploring how learning takes place as a community process, instead of as a transmission from teacher to student.

In Barnebage itself, we have witnessed the circulation over time of Fisketorget practices among peers and near-peers. The original group of children in 2009 (who have since mostly graduated and moved on to kindergarten) adopted the buying/selling role as part of their free play, using a small wooden puppet theater that stands on the floor. After Fisketorget, the children started using the puppet theater during free play as a flower vendor stand, without puppets.

The children would sit behind the stand selling fabric flowers through the open window, exchanging non-existent money, and drawing the curtains shut when the shop owners went on break or closed the store for the evening. Interestingly enough, it is almost always the shopkeeper who initiates this play (often in a mix of English and Norwegian), despite our observations that this role required greater prompting in the initial simulation.

This free play activity evolved into a tradition of sorts, passed on to the next generation of participants (and the younger incoming generation which followed), that continues to this day. Though new students to Barnebage have never experienced Fisketorget, they nevertheless join in the dramatic play as vendors and shoppers at the flower stand. The play has become part of the collective memory of the community, even to those who don't know the history behind the game's origins and even when the teacher is not structuring the play.

In the Fisketorget simulation, we saw how some of the key variables in a situated learning model came into play. Grounding their identity in a shared heritage allowed children a similarly shared framework for interpreting events and engaging with one another through play, rather than relying on teacher regulation. Access to community support (including teachers and near-peers), provided authentic opportunities for participation, regardless of language level.

Transparency (or clarity of task), was established through comparison with previous exchanges and transference of relevant information. As for control (the extent to which individuals seek to master their participation), we saw children participating at different levels and seeking different challenges depending on their own developmental needs. In adopting the flower shop as a free play activity, we further saw evidence of children independently seeking mastery over their own participation as Norwegian speakers, which in turn informed the kinds of play into which newcomers were enculturated.

There is a difference between learning to know and learning to do. We suspect that if parents asked what their child did at Barnebage on the day of Fisketorget, the response wouldn't be a list of the language constructions they learned, or a description of the architectural design of the buildings surrounding Bergen's marketplace, or a reflection on the dynamics of role playing. Instead, they would respond simply, "We bought blomster!"

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Giving Kids a Can Do Attitude

BY NADINE JACOBSEN

The question going into this action research was, “How can a language teacher encourage more positive attitudes toward language learning while building a learning community?” After incorporating “I Can” statements into the curriculum, more than 100 third grade students were surveyed. The survey asked what they thought they could do in Spanish. Following the survey, 30 students were randomly chosen to be interviewed assessing what they could do. A comparison was made between what they could do and what they thought they could do. The results of this survey will be discussed along with a review of literature related to studies of self-efficacy, motivation and other factors that can either build or tear down a learning community.

After Audrey L. Heining-Boynton (2007) surveyed a large number of boys and girls attending schools with FLES programs, the study revealed a decline in interest for both boys and girls. One student mentioned only using what he learned in a Mexican restaurant. Expanding the learning community gave learners more opportunities than the local semi-authentic restaurant.

Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walberg (2004) argue that, “We are neglecting the sort of practical and creative abilities that allow people to deal with real-life problems and unforeseen challenges” (p. 80). Creating a learning environment with more opportunities in school to use the language will encourage learners to speak within a larger learning community.

According to Gorsuch (2009), “practice and language use opportunities probably require more attention within divisions in order for students to develop higher levels of self-efficacy and thus persistence in learning” (p.534). By promoting self-efficacy and cultivating a larger learning community, learners will have positive memories of the World Language program and seek more opportunities to communicate in the target language.

As Grundstad and Watzke (1996) found, students who participated in a World Language program prior to secondary school were more likely to continue their World Language education. Therefore, giving kids a CAN DO attitude is the focus at Dunn Elementary in Louisville, Ky.

“CAN DO” statements are incorporated into the learning community and shared with the learners’ families every six weeks by announcing them as the learning goals. Learners color in dots keeping track of their success in the language as they are asked to do so when they demonstrate what they CAN DO. The focus is now off what they can’t do and on what they can do. Learners often transfer the class experience, including the assessment, home with them, bridging the gap between home and class and strengthening their learning community as seen in Figure 1 and 2.

This learner shared how she transferred the learning experience home by teaching her mom and brother using the simple assessment strategy she learned in World Language class. The student then demonstrated what her mother learned by

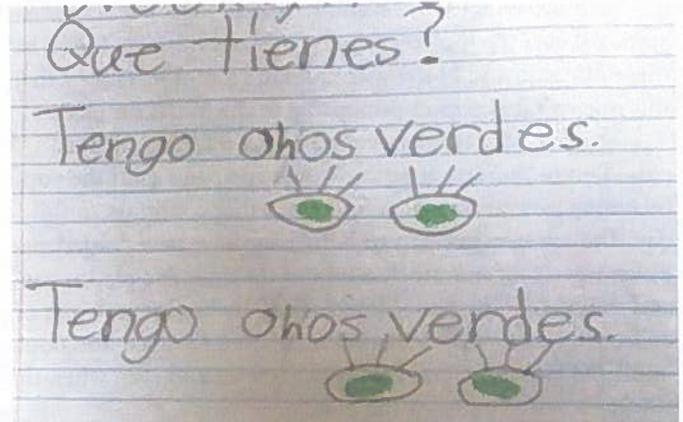


Figure 1: Student and parent demonstration of knowledge

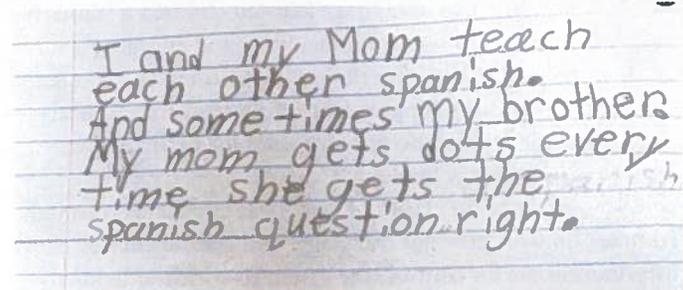


Figure 2: Student testimony

logging both of their responses as seen in Figure 1. She then shared her learning/teaching experience with the class. (Figure 2)

By focusing on the positive and what we can do, we are much more motivated to do more in order to experience more success and even share the success. This behavior is known as achievement motivation, when the anticipation of success motivates the learner to work harder. More often if a learner expects failure, they are less likely to be motivated to participate. Cohen (2001) reports on self-actualization, which can be compared to achievement motivation:

Self-actualization is the drive to actualize potential and take joy and a sense of fulfillment from being all that a person can be. Self-actualization is based on being aware of abilities and talents, applying them appropriately in a variety of situations, and celebrating their successful application. (p. 41)

The attitude of a student depends on motivation; therefore a program that successfully teaches students to do more with the language than order in a semi-authentic restaurant will move a student’s attitude toward continuing to learn the language.

Classroom Research Questions

1. What do my learners believe they can do using the Spanish language?
2. How does what learners believe they can do with the language compare to what they can do?

Procedures

An assessment tool was created focusing on what a learner can do with the language, including demonstration of the use of great strategies which are not language specific. "Si Se Puede" which means, "Yes, it can be done" is how it is referred to it with learners.

Learners are involved with keeping track of what they can do using the Spanish language. Each six weeks learners receive their learning goals written in "I can" statements based on a theme. Learners measured their abilities in relation to an "I can" statement for each of the six units. Following survey (Figure 3), learners chose from the following answers for each guiding statement for the unit: 1) I can with no help. 2) I can with some help. 3) I need to work on this.

The survey was implemented to all of the third grade classes, equaling 119 students. The following week 30 learners were randomly chosen and interviewed. Each oral interview lasted a few minutes and they were scattered throughout the week. Since the purpose of this study is to promote ethical teaching and support social justice, there are no apparent issues about ethics.

The demographics of Dunn Elementary (Figure 4) demonstrate the lack of interaction with Spanish-speakers in the school environment. The data also shows the lack of significant contact with others from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds in the school environment. The percentage of white students is 76 percent, followed by black with 15 percent then Asian/Pacific Islander at 8 percent.

For the purpose of this study, the third grade classes were surveyed and interviewed. (Figure 5)

When I hear learners saying, "I can't learn Spanish," or "Why do I need to learn Spanish? Everyone I know speaks English," I realize that they may have a low self-efficacy when it comes to learning another language. They are not living in a country where it is the predominant language, do not encounter it on a regular basis or have little or no heritage connection to the language. Figure 6 demonstrates the lack of exposure to other languages in Dunn Elementary.

Learners who spoke a language other than English first are labeled L1 (first language) other than English. Those who live in households where another language is spoken are labeled L2 (second language) spoken in home, and those who speak one language and other languages are not spoken in the home were labeled monolingual.

Findings

Findings revealed that 43 percent of learners feel they can speak Spanish. Forty-two percent felt they could do it with help, with a total of 85 percent of students confident they could do it with and without help. Of the 119 learners, 114 responded. The seventh survey question asked learners to fill in what they thought they could do in the language. The results are exhibited here followed by examples of the students' responses to the fill-in section of the survey. Although learners receive instruction in the target language, they also draw, write, and act out what they are learning.

¡Si Se Puede!	I can with no help!	I can with some help.	I need to work on this.
1. I can talk about things in my classroom!			
2. I can give directions!			
3. I can talk about my home!			
4. I can talk about birthdays!			
5. I can talk about the weather!			
6. I can talk about what I like and don't like to do!			
7. (Fill in what else you can do!) I can :			

Figure 3: Survey

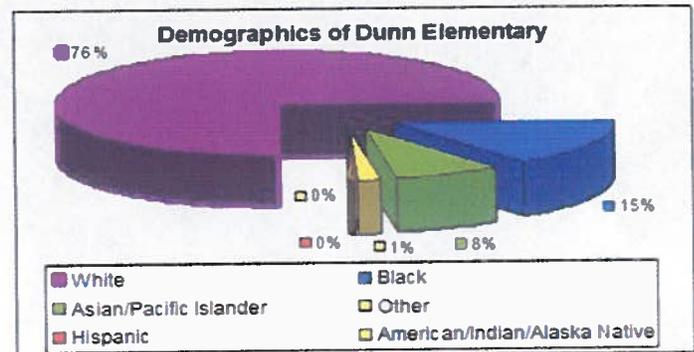


Figure 4: Demographics of the school

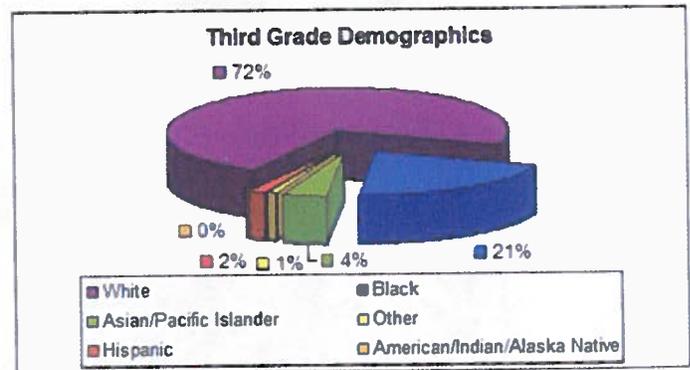


Figure 5: Third grade demographics

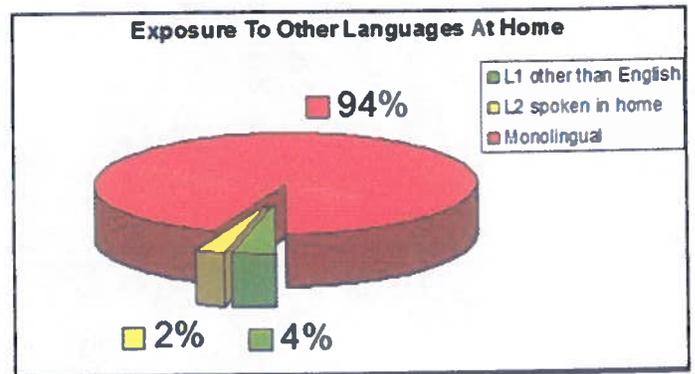


Figure 6: Exposure to other languages

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Student examples of fill-in "I can" statements:

- I can ask basic questions and respond to them.
- I can count in espanol.
- I can name the people in my family.
- I can say my name and how I feel in Spanish.
- I can say what I like to do outside and inside.
- I can say what my room is like.
- I can talk about animals.
- I can talk about colors.
- I can talk about days, months and seasons.
- I can talk about englasa (church).
- I can talk about food.
- I can talk about math.
- I can talk about my car.
- I can talk about my sport.
- I can read in Spanish.
- I can read some Spanish.
- I can follow directions.
- I can read a book in Spanish.
- I can talk about myself.
- I can talk about school supplies and books.
- I can talk about school.
- I can talk about seasons.
- I can talk about the weather.
- I can talk in Spanish!!
- I can tell what sports I like to play.
- I can tell when my birthday is.
- I can sing a birthday song in Spanish (Espanol).
- I can sing a pinata song.
- I can write Spanish books.

Of the responses, 89 percent talked about what they can say/talk/sing about in Spanish. Learners appear to feel more successful in speaking than in writing.

Survey vs Oral Assessment

Once the survey was complete, 30 students were randomly chosen to be orally interviewed. A sample of the rubric used to determine what the learners CAN DO can be seen in Figure 9.

How does what learners believe they can do compare to what they can do? Over 50 percent of their responses reflect they were confident they could demonstrate the "I can" statements without help.

Figure 10 reveals what it was determined learners could do by interviewing the learners orally in comparison to what learners said they could do in the survey. Overall, the number of responses from the survey stating learners could talk about a particular subject without help was higher than what was determined by the oral interview.

As a result, learners demonstrated a higher level of self-efficacy by stating that they CAN DO more than they actually could as a result of the oral interview.

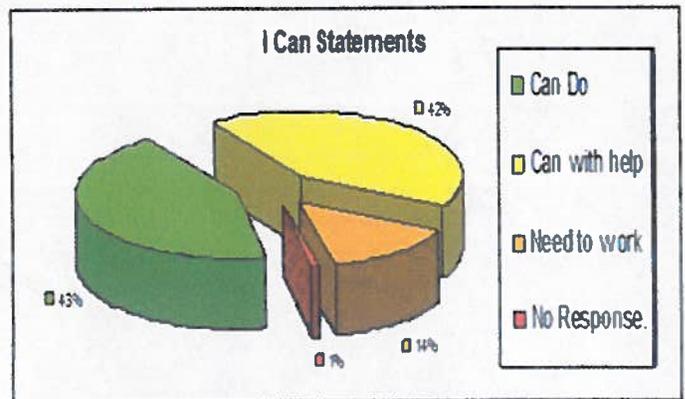


Figure 7: All CAN DO statement results

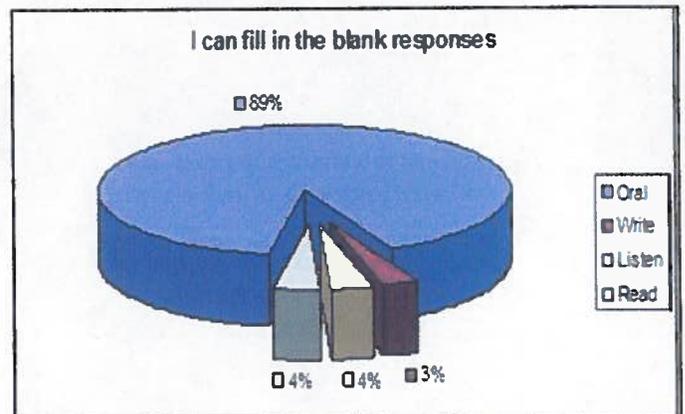


Figure 8: Fill in the blank responses

The Oral Interview Rubric	
Examples	
Unit 4) Cuando es tu cumpleaños? Cuantos años tienes? Que te gusta hacer en la fiesta? Can you sing a Birthday song? Able to answer questions:	0 (3) 1 (Need to work =3) 2 (some help = 2) 3+ (Can do=1)
Unit 5) Que tiempo hace? Able to describe the weather given pictures and gestures learned in class:	0 (3) 1 (Need to work =3) 2 (some help = 2) 3+ (Can do=1)
Unit 6) Que te gusta hacer? Que no te gusta hacer? Able to answer given pictures and gestures acting out activities learned in class:	0 (3) 1 (Need to work =3) 2 (some help = 2) 3+ (Can do=1)

Figure 9: Determining what students CAN DO

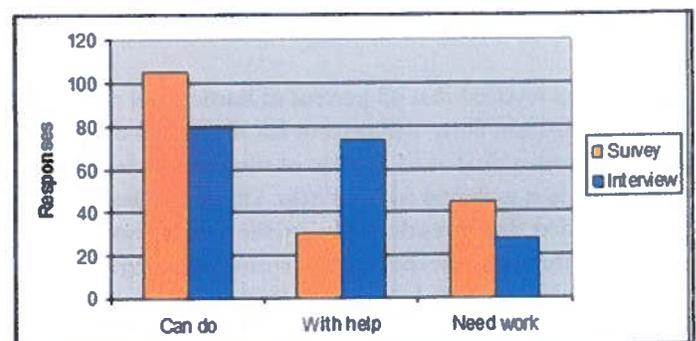


Figure 10: Survey and oral assessment of 30 students

Conclusion and Implications

What tools are needed for a learning community to grow, strengthen or even survive? By equipping students, parents and other invested adults with a common language and the proper tools, the learning community can develop and become stronger. Conversation can develop and strengthen learning communities by simply integrating language chunks and asking questions such as, "What CAN you do with the language?" and "I can ____." Without having surveyed what the learners thought they could do before the "I can" statements were implemented, the growth of self-efficacy is unknown.

On the other hand the results demonstrate potential for the "I can" statements. One of the most revealing sections of the survey was the completion of the sentence, "I can ____." Here one can see the influence of the larger learning community with responses such as "I can talk about the englasa." (iglesia/church), "I can talk about my cat." And "I can name the people in my family." For most school age students, the school, home and few other places make up their learning community. As educators we need to create lessons and communication that encompass the learning community and encourage learning and teacher outside of the classroom.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Around the World with Language, Content, and Culture

BY TINA SMITH AND MARY LYNN REDMOND

Foreign language specialists design and present instruction that integrates language, content, and culture on a daily basis, but where do they find ideas that help them provide a context for communication using authentic cultural resources? Teachers have access to many tools that offer suggestions for interdisciplinary strategies, and for those willing to investigate, museums can become another resource. More and more institutions like the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at Wake Forest University (NC) are ready and willing to provide lesson plans and resources to enhance foreign language instruction. Museums have collections that expand decades and explore a multitude of countries and cultures. Museum educators use those collections to create curriculum-based programs, lessons, activities, and outreach kits to share with teachers and students.

The Museum of Anthropology has been a part of Wake Forest University since 1963. Originally begun by the faculty of the Wake Forest Department of Anthropology, the museum was called the Museum of Man. In the beginning, the mission of the MOA was to enhance classroom teaching about people and cultures of the world. Over time, MOA has expanded its mission to offer community engagement activities with a cultural focus including family days, summer camps, and special programs to accompany exhibits.

The Museum of Anthropology offers many opportunities to foreign language specialists in grades K–12. For teachers in the local area, the museum educator provides 19 programs that are designed to meet cross-curricula standards, either at the museum or in schools. Each program includes an instructional presentation, hands-on use of objects relating to the country, people, and culture being discussed, and images or activities to reinforce the lesson. For teachers who prefer to present their own lessons, the MOA has created outreach kits and literacy backpacks that they can check out for use in their classes. The outreach kits include instructional activities on a wide array of topics such as Native American games and Mexican folk art, and the literacy backpacks come with multicultural stories, lesson plans, and rélia.

Of particular interest to foreign language specialists in grades K–12 are the Artifact and Archival Collections databases. The Artifact database (<http://cairo.deacnet.wfu.edu/>) houses information and images on more than 26,000 ethnographic and archaeological objects in the museum's permanent collection, while the Archival database (<http://cairo.deacnet.wfu.edu/archives/>) has information and images on 5,000 ephemeral objects. Through the on-line collections, foreign language teachers have access to many cultures that are not typically represented in textbooks and instructional materials that can help broaden students' knowledge of the



world and cultures in which languages are spoken. Currently, the collection includes artifacts representing an extensive number of cultural groups in Africa, Asia, Oceania, the Middle East, North America, South America, Central America, and Europe.

Teachers, students, and parents can access both databases anywhere there is access to the Internet. Information and images found in the databases can be used as primary sources to enhance instruction, and the integration of technology to explore these sources can also offer a myriad of language experiences to students of all levels.

Instructional Strategies for Use of On-line Artifacts in K–12 Foreign Language Classes

1. Explore a Culture Through its Artifacts. Foreign language teachers can visit the on-line Artifact Catalogue and search for a particular cultural group. They can select specific objects and have students work in small groups to view the objects on-line. Students can examine the objects and answer questions about them. What does the object appear to be? What is it made of? How might it have been used? What does the object tell us about the people who made

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

it or used it? What do we know about the environment in which it was used? Each group can present its findings to the class, and other students may contribute different ideas or perspectives on the object and the culture it represents. The group findings can be used to help students understand how products from a culture can provide insight about the practices and perspectives of the culture.

2. Create a Story about an Object from a Culture. Foreign language teachers (or students as appropriate for the level) can visit the on-line Artifact Catalogue and search for objects that represent the cultures of the languages they teach. Students can then investigate the cultural significance of the objects such as their purposes and functions in the culture, physical characteristics, place of origin, etc. Using this information, students can create a story about an object and its role in the culture to present in class. Students can also pretend that they are the objects, making them "come to life" for the class as they tell a story about where they live, what they do on a typical day, with whom they interact, etc.
3. Create Virtual Exhibits for a Classroom Museum. Students can investigate a particular culture by using the on-line Artifact Catalogue to search for objects found in that culture. They can work in groups to gather information about the objects, how they were used in the culture and by whom, the time period, common characteristics among the objects, etc. Students can then use this information to prepare a PowerPoint presentation that features the objects they have studied. These virtual exhibits can be set up at different stations around the classroom, and students can visit each station, gathering data from each exhibit. Members of each group can take turns being the docent for the virtual exhibit.
4. Describe our Culture for a Future Anthropologist to Discover. Foreign language teachers can guide a discussion about products of their students' culture that would help an anthropologist living several hundred years from now be able to examine the culture in which they currently live. What products best define who we are and provide information about our perspectives and practices? Based on this discussion, students can collect small objects found in daily life that represent their culture. Students can present the objects to the class, explaining how they depict their culture and how they would be represented in the on-line collections. Conclusions can be drawn regarding what an anthropologist living in the future would learn about our culture from the objects.

For general information or questions about resources offered by the Museum of Anthropology at Wake Forest University, please contact Tina Smith, Museum Educator—Tel: 336.758.5643 or e-mail: smithth@wfu.edu. Teachers may request an Education Guide that describes the museum's resources. Please visit the Museum of Anthropology at www.wfu.edu/moa to learn more about the museum and its instructional resources.

Language	Country	Object	MOA Catalogue Number
French and Arabic	Chad	Ngalie (Throwing Knives)	1999.08.E.5
Arabic	Jordan	Kohl bag	1984.E.1239
French	Cameroon	Throne	2003.08.E.017
Chinese	China	Lily shoes	1986.04.E.280.a-b
Japanese	Japan	Hanwa (Tomb Figure)	1989.03.E.029
Spanish	Bolivia	Adorno de trenzas (Hair Adornment)	1985.E.058
Spanish	Peru	Arrow Quiver Gourd	1984.E.0412

Sample Objects: Exploring a culture through its artifacts

Language	Country	Object	MOA Catalogue Number
French	Mali	Saddle	2001.10.E.56
French	Côte d'Ivoire	Gold Dust Box	2007.01.E.6.a-b
Spanish	Panama	Nuchu (Healing Doll)	2008.01.E.16
Spanish	Guatemala	Santos (Saints Figures)	2006.07.E.54
Arabic	Somalia	Prayer Board	1993.11.E.1
Arabic	Morocco	Diadem	2005.11.E.123
Japanese	Japan	Tabi (Split Toe Socks)	2008.09.E.02.a-b
Chinese	China	Memorial Tablet	1986.04.E.586

Sample Objects: Create a story about an object from a culture

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Tina Smith is the educator for the Museum of Anthropology at Wake Forest University. She teaches curriculum-based, object-oriented classes on various world cultures and archaeology for students in grades K-12. She researches, designs, and presents thematic summer camps for children and specially requested outreach programs in the Winston-Salem community. She lectures and collaborates with numerous Wake Forest professors, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School district coordinators, and teachers to create lesson plans, projects and activities that are used in the classroom. She has held several state and national positions, and she is currently the EdCom Representative for the Southeastern Region. She frequently presents at state, regional and national conferences.



Dr. Mary Lynn Redmond is director of Foreign Language Education and chair of the Department of Education at Wake Forest University. She teaches K-12 methods and research courses and supervises Foreign Language Education teacher candidates at the undergraduate and graduate level. She has taught French in grades K-12 and at the university level. She has held numerous state and national positions including executive secretary of NNELL, and she currently serves on the Executive Board of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. She frequently presents at state, regional, and national conferences. Her scholarship and research focuses on K-12 articulation, curriculum design, technology, and literacy.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Advocacy Counts for Program Success

BY KAY HOAG AND LIZ CARROLL

This article focuses on the importance of advocacy in the establishment and promotion of early learning programs. Kay and Liz attribute the longevity of the 13-year K-5 French program to the following local advocacy efforts.

Relationship with District Administrators

Kay makes it a point to introduce herself and greet district decision makers whenever possible. Three years ago, she and the PTA President of Lexington Elementary coordinated a presentation to the District School Board members in a celebration of the 10-year anniversary of her district's FLES programs. Before this year's general election, Kay attended a forum which features commentaries for open School Board positions. She made sure to introduce herself as a "French teacher for grades kindergarten through second at Lexington Elementary," when greeting each candidate. When a neighboring school district was faced with the possibility of cutting its FLES program, Liz took the time to stop her car when she recognized a school board candidate putting up election signs. She made the candidate aware of her concerns about budget, cutbacks, and the value of early language programs in any school district.

Relationship with the Principal

This 10-year relationship has resulted in respect and value for the K-5 French Instruction Program at Lexington Elementary School. Often, the principal has observed Madame Hoag's students using the French language both inside and outside of the French classroom. This administrator also pitches in when it is time to decorate and set up for the annual PTA French Night and schoolwide French celebration.

Relationship with Foreign Language Colleagues

Kay and Liz have been planning their lessons together for the past four years. This helps to articulate their teaching in grades K-3 and they also check in with each other regularly to ensure that they are covering the district curriculum guidelines and state/national standards for foreign language learning. Kay and Liz attend monthly FLES teacher meetings in their district. The Director of Elementary Education for the district serves as the Foreign Language Coordinator in Lexington. This administrator meets with the Foreign Language Curriculum Council to work on K-12 articulation curriculum planning and implementation and to discuss ideas and descriptions for new course offerings that are needed. Kay and Liz have gotten to know middle school French teachers through these meetings since they provide opportunities for regular contact with the high school French teachers who will be receiving their students. Both Kay and Liz also serve as officers in state or national foreign language teacher organizations.

Relationship with Colleagues from Other Content Areas

Kay and Liz have lunch on a regular basis with the art, music, PE and computer teachers at their school. They also meet at least once each month after school as a team. The team assists in planning and executing the annual French celebration. They coordinate efforts to integrate content from each other's curriculum whenever possible. Kay and Liz communicate with grade level teachers to solicit ideas for integrating or reinforcing content from math, science, social studies, and English/language Arts whenever possible. Kay and Liz assist with non-foreign language school functions as well. They both serve on other committees with school colleagues (calendar committee, SACS committee, etc.) as directed by their principal.

Relationship with Parents

Kay and Liz feel it is important to get to know their students and parents as much as possible, therefore, they always make a point to attend the first open house in every homeroom every year. They also write a quarterly parent newsletter, and developed a "French Parent Log" to include in it. This log provides the parents of their 1,000 students another avenue for two-way communication. Liz and Kay have personal Web Pages and they include these addresses as well as their email addresses on parent communications.

They also utilize the school's parent newsletter that goes out each month to supply short descriptions or reminders about happenings in French classes. Kay and Liz make a special effort to give "new" students to the school a warm welcome, and along with a letter to parents of the students, they attach a "French Parent Log," previous parent newsletters of the current year, and some background information about previous learning in French classes.

Relationship with the Community

When the time comes for the annual PTA French Night and Schoolwide French Celebration (held on Mardi Gras for the last 10 years), Kay and Liz make sure to invite parents, family members, colleagues and their former students now in middle and high school. They also create special invitations decorated by students for district administration, town and country council members, the mayor and governor, legislators who represent the districts that the school is in, the presidents or CEOs of the 16 French companies that are currently operating in their state and employing 14,500 South Carolinians, and French speaking community members.

See NNELL's Advocacy page on the Web site at www.nnell.org.

Article reprint from Learning Languages, Winter 2003, Volume 8, number 2.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

How Global Language Learning Gives Students the Edge

BY DAN FOST

In the quickly evolving world of global-language learning, America is waking up to a new reality. Though we once asserted a sense of world dominance that relied on foreigners learning English, the United States is starting to hear the clarion call of a connected world in which knowing how to communicate in multiple languages is crucial.

We are at a pivotal point in what is increasingly called world-language education, poised to regain a measure of competitiveness with innovative tools and programs that promote crosscultural understanding. But unless we shed our reluctance to speak any language other than English, the potential of this renaissance may not take hold, and we could lose our edge.

New methods and technologies are opening up incredible opportunities in this realm, providing real-world connections with those speaking other languages, thus motivating students to learn to communicate in a foreign language. To that end, wired schools are using high-tech tools—mostly free, like Skype and Google Talk—that make it easy to connect students

with their counterparts in other countries. And government funding is creating opportunities for student-exchange programs.

On the forefront of this cause is the International Education and Resource Network-USA (iEARN), which started in 1988 to foster U.S.-Soviet cultural understanding and has kicked off language learning in 130 countries. Among its key initiatives is an online program where kids from different countries can work together on projects.

“Some of the Russian-language teachers actually tossed out their textbooks in favor of the authentic interaction we were engaged in,” said Ed Gragert, iEARN’s executive director. “It’s better to present something written by a student, because it’s going to be read by a real student.”

Gragert calls for more student travel to other countries; it may not build immediate fluency, but that kind of firsthand experience provides critical incentive to learn. As students make friends in other countries, they want to improve their language skills. “If I had my way, everyone in the U.S. would

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B: ¿Cuál es tu problema? (What is it?)

A: ¡Necesito (I need) un lápiz!

B: ¡Aquí tienes! (Here you go!)

A: Muchas gracias. (Thank you very much.)

B: ¡De nada! (You're welcome.)



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

have this kind of experience,” he says. But he also notes that at a cost of \$5,000 to \$10,000 per student, “that’s obviously too expensive.”

Technology, however, is bridging the gap left by lack of funds by providing affordable new tools that create easy international interactions. Take, for example, the following online services: Elluminate is a conferencing platform that enables schools to collaborate on projects together. Teachers have used Elluminate’s videoconferencing technology for a wide range of educational applications, from teacher training to debate competitions to geography lessons. But it’s particularly valuable with international connections because it can work over a dial-up connection, the kind still prevalent in the developing world, according to iEARN’s Lisa Jobson.

Educators also use VoiceThread, which provides an online space where teachers and students can post dialogue, photos, videos, and audio files that can be retrieved by anyone, anywhere. One person can post a photo or video, for example, and others can add voice or text comments to the item. The basic version of the service is free, and for a small subscription fee, educators can add student email accounts, extra storage, and management tools.

For simple exchanges, there’s ePals, a social network for K–12 students: Think online pen pals and digital storytelling. Because ePals was built for schools, it offers secure email and blog tools. Although it is not a specialized language tool -- its Web site deals more with projects on global warming, natural disasters, weather, water, and digital storytelling—it does help connect thousands of classrooms in 200 countries.

Though some services aren’t built specifically for schools, teachers use them in classrooms because of their easy accessibility. The Audacity application allows you to store, edit, and share audio files. Skype and other services make online video chats a breeze. Of course, real-time interactions can be a challenge: Time differences mean students in the U.S. are sleeping while their Korean counterparts are in school, and vice versa. But teachers occasionally organize a Skype chat as a treat at the end of a semester.

Almerinda Garibaldi, who oversees some programs in Brazil for iEARN, says teachers who use these programs are excited by the possibilities for breaking down borders. Garibaldi vividly recalls one teacher, Valda Costa e Silva, telling her “there is no doubt that the use of technologies became the shortest way to overcome borders between the countries and peoples. Now we are here, but we can also be there; everywhere, without limits.”

Beyond technology, many other programs are facilitating global encounters. Some initiatives are bringing native speakers from abroad to the U.S. The Chinese ministry sends hundreds of native speakers to America through a program called Hanban to teach the language in Confucius Institutes. These schools are dedicated to Chinese language instruction. In addition, a number of exchange programs work with Hanban to send teachers, administrators, and students to China to supplement the language learning that’s happening in the classroom.

The State Department’s National Security Language

Initiative provides scholarships for American teens to go overseas for a summer, a semester, or an academic year to get immersed in a language and a culture. “Kids will learn a language better if they have to function in it every day,” Gragert notes.

Apart from government organizations, private institutions are also on the task. The Asia Society, for instance, runs 18 schools for more than 4,000 predominantly low-income and minority students. The schools emphasize global themes and proficiency in at least one foreign language (or a world language, as it’s increasingly being called in educational circles). The organization also works with mainstream high schools to promote languages, particularly Asian languages, according to Vivien Stewart, vice president of education programs at the Asia Society.

It’s a big shift from the backlash that bilingual education suffered several years ago when the issue became entangled with immigration politics and states like California essentially voted it out. Voters resented the notion of immigrants coming to American public schools and being taught in their native language. Yet those students are now getting more of an immersion experience in English, while English-speaking parents are sending their children to schools where lessons are taught in Mandarin, Japanese, or another world language.

Schools that offer language classes are immediately oversubscribed, according to Stewart. Joanne Wright exemplifies the urgency felt by some parents to expose their children to foreign languages. Her children are in their second year at the public Richmond Elementary School, a Japanese immersion program in Portland, Oregon.

“We bought into the idea that learning a second language would make our children better thinkers,” she says. “Also, I want my kids to value a culture other than their own. I want them to be exposed to an entirely different way of being—different values, different foods. They even do math differently.”

The first graders spend half the day learning in Japanese and the other half in English, and most subjects are taught in both languages. Although neither of the Wright parents speak Japanese, the children are devouring the language, much to their parents’ delight.

On The Precipice

Although this enthusiasm has been a boon for world-language education, these offerings, already relatively slim in the U.S. when compared with other countries, actually slipped in recent years, particularly in the most critical elementary school and middle school years. Budget cuts and the demands of No Child Left Behind have made language education an easy target, according to Nancy Rhodes of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

“What we’ve seen over the last 10 years is pretty devastating,” Rhodes reports. The number of elementary schools offering foreign-language instruction dropped from 31 percent in 1997 to 25 percent in 2008, and the number of middle schools dropped from 75 percent to 58 percent in

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the same period, according to a study by CAL and Westat, a research organization. Even though 91 percent of high schools offer foreign languages, only 46 percent of students actually take them.

The challenges are multifold. “No Child Left Behind established an overemphasis on reading and math and took away time from the study of languages,” says Shuhan Wang, deputy director of the National Foreign Languages Center at the University of Maryland. Because it’s not an area being assessed in testing, Wang explains, schools don’t teach foreign languages as much.

Compounding the problem is the fact that schools that want to offer a foreign language have trouble finding qualified teachers. Nearly 31 percent of the schools in the CAL survey have some uncertified language teachers. Thirty-six states and Washington, D.C., have identified a shortage of world-language teachers, according to Wang.

Inequities also abound. The CAL study found that rural and poor urban schools don’t get nearly the world-language offerings that suburban schools do and that while 51 percent of private elementary schools offer language classes, only 15 percent of public schools do.

“People talk about their concern that the U.S. is behind other countries in math and science, but we are much further behind the rest of the industrialized world in language learning than we are in math and science,” says the Asia Society’s Stewart. “In almost every country, it’s compulsory. In almost all of them, it starts in kindergarten. In almost all of them, it goes on for several years. That’s a huge difference.”

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills argues that the U.S. must do a better job of teaching students key world languages to help them succeed in the 21st-century economy. The organization cites Harvard Business School professor Dorothy Leonard’s call for people with “T-shaped skills”—those who speak two or more languages and can “see the world from two or more different perspectives.” They have “the cognitive diversity needed to formulate innovative solutions to complex problems.”

That’s right: Learning languages boosts brain development. Studies have shown that child bilingualism helps kids to expand their parameters of language and their cognitive ability, says Wang. “They can see that a thing could be called table or mesa or zhuozi in different languages. They have an open mind and more empathy, and they are constantly trying to make a connection. The brain is about connectivism. They are always trying to analyze and compare so they can plug in new information.”

Children who speak only one language may get frustrated with problems that are not easily solved, she notes. But children who speak two or more often seek a new route in attacking the problem.

Changing Priorities

Over the years, Americans haven’t considered foreign-language education a priority because it seemed like everyone

else learned English, the world’s most widely spoken language. It’s taught in schools in more than 100 countries and is spoken by 1.5 billion people -- one-fourth of the world’s population, according to scholar David Crystal. Adds Stewart, “Because the U.S. has been dominant economically, we felt we could dictate to the world on our terms.”

But that scenario has changed drastically. As the economy grows in China and India and, to a lesser extent, the Middle East—to say nothing of the increasing focus on security after the attacks of September 11—studying world languages is becoming a priority. The U.S. State Department’s National Security Language Initiative encourages the study of seven languages that are rarely taught in the U.S.: Chinese, Hindi, Arabic, Russian, Korean, Farsi, and Turkish.

But European languages are still valued. Though some have minimized French, for example, the language is spoken in many countries, especially in Africa. And with the U.S. Census Bureau survey counting 34.5 million people speaking Spanish at home, that language is increasingly important domestically.

New programs and classroom innovations that emphasize immersion in culture are boosting the effort. Teachers are beginning to reward students for being able to function in a language, according to Marty Abbott with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. National standards and state frameworks have all grown out of the idea of encouraging conversation. “We’re trying to change the way we assess and teach students,” she explains.

In fact, some of the greatest obstacles to world-language education are parents who recall their own miserable experiences. Many Americans were introduced to foreign languages in middle school or high school classes that emphasized conjugation of verbs and other dull grammatical tasks rather than relevant communication skills. “Language teaching in the U.S. has been ineffective,” Stewart says. “We start it at the wrong age. Teacher skills are not great. There’s a focus on grammar and translation.” The result: “Adults who took three years of French don’t speak a word,” she states.

But the trend toward competency and away from conjugation is helping create a new generation of language learners, one that gains real-world skills with many practical applications.

The Asia Society works toward what Stewart calls “the need for students to graduate from high school college-ready and globally confident. In our shorthand term, the 21st century will be very different than the 20th.”

Adds Stewart: “Every issue you can name—economics, public health, police work, climate change—there are international dimensions to all of them. You have to have an awareness of other cultures. You can’t know about all of them. You can’t speak all languages. But languages are going to be important, and we are going to need to continue to learn about them.”

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Ana Lomba
NNEFL Member

School/Organization:

Ana Lomba Early Languages LLC,
www.analomba.com

Title:

Owner

City & State:

Princeton Junction, NJ

Why have you chosen to teach a world language to children?:

When I was a child growing up in Spain, English was one of my favorite classes. Not only did I enjoy playing with the language, but I also loved the idea of meeting people with other cultures and backgrounds. There were no other modern languages offered in my school. Had there been more, I would have taken them.

I also took Latin and ancient Greek and later on French and German. Loved them all. When I came to the USA, it was a shock to discover the lower status that world language education has in this country. In the U.S., there is the strange belief that some disciplines are more important than others or that some disciplines help you more in life than others. I oppose that belief because it is obvious that people have different talents and interests. One should always follow his or her passion. Learning another language and working on an international capacity was my dream and

my passion and it opened extraordinary opportunities for me. Providing young children with the opportunity to follow their multilingual dreams is more than a profession to me—it is my call, my way of giving back for all the good fortune I've had. I believe that learning languages is not 'a nice thing to do.' It can literally transform your life, as it did mine.

What unique approaches do you take in your classroom to connect with your students and help draw them in?:

My approach is unique in that 1) I help parents learn languages with their young children (toddlers and preschoolers). I discovered during my years of instruction that the groups in which the parents were in the class were flying in comparison with the groups without parents. Therefore, I changed my approach to transform parents into my partners in teaching. In reality, my approach is about teaching parents how to teach their children.

2) Because of the special parent-child dynamic, I design the tasks so that all sorts of everyday situations become excellent language learning opportunities. Parents take the lead and I help them as they progress.

3) I think about the four language modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as the four blades of a language propeller. The vehicle will move in a swifter and more balanced way if all four blades are in place from the very moment of ignition. Of course, this means something different for infants than for older children. We are talking about building early auditory, oral, and literacy skills here. Depending on the age of the children in the groups, the activities will look very different.

What has served as the best professional development for you personally?:

The very best professional development has been to serve in the board or as an officer of language organizations. Having served for ACTFL, NNEFL, and FLENJ has been an incredible learning

experience. You get to know the best and brightest people in our field and participate in the most forward-thinking and mind-opening conversations. It's like harnessing the power of the cream-of-the-crowd. I learn a lot as well by being an active participant on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. I don't understand why more language educators are not there. They are invaluable learning platforms for me.

Being a member of the FLENJ board allows me to attend all the professional development sessions that I want. I have to say that I haven't attended any that I didn't leave thinking that I had learned a lot. I also attend workshops on general education topics, not just languages. I believe that to be an excellent educator you need to have a global knowledge that goes beyond your particular niche of expertise.

What are some of your inspirations?:

I like reading biographies of people that have gone through all sorts of challenges to succeed in life—politicians, artists, entrepreneurs, educators ... I learn from all. Working on your own, as I do, is very tough. I also have a special child, which makes it even more challenging. Reading about other people gives me the courage to continue. I am not alone.

In our field of early languages, we have incredible people such as Helena Curtain, Carol Ann Dahlberg, MariHaas, Lori Langer de Ramírez, Terry Caccavale, Marcela Summerville, Karen Nemeth (TESOL) and many others that are moving mountains. I am lucky to know them and have them as my friends. Even though we don't work together, it is a collaborative effort. There is a lot of junk out there in regards to language learning technology, but I am hopeful that with more offerings people will learn to differentiate what is helpful from what is not and take more control over their own language learning process. This is inspirational too—I want to be a part of it by designing electronic products or platforms.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Carol Gaab
NNELL Member

School/Organization:
TPRS Publishing, Inc.

Title:
Wife, Mom, Teacher, Author

City & State:
Chandler, AZ

Why have you chosen to teach a world language to children?:

Totally by accident! If you had asked me what my passion was 25 years ago, my answer would have been marketing/marketing research. My teaching career started (spontaneously) in 1989 by tutoring Spanish students at ASU. Within a short time, it evolved into teaching K-8 Spanish.

WOW! THAT is when I learned what passion really is. I was immediately hooked by young learners' eagerness to truly communicate in the target language and by their genuine and nonjudgmental view of diverse people and their enthusiasm for celebrating (vs. tolerating) other cultures.

What unique approaches do you take in your classroom to connect with your students and help draw them in?:

Well, I really do not consider myself "innovative," since most strategies that

I implement I learned from someone else. With that said, I think the most important factor is LOVE.

When you truly 'love' your students, regardless of their age, they are much more receptive to instruction, motivated to succeed and emotionally/neurologically able to learn. (They will also laugh more/harder at your jokes.) The second most important factor is to flood students with a continuous flow of personalized CI.

Whether we are talking, singing, reciting a poem or creating a story, my students are always at the heart of every lesson. If we are not talking about them, then we are talking about how the lesson or content might apply to them. We laugh together a lot and sometimes, we even cry together.

What is the most important thing students leave your classroom having learned or discovered?:

That they really CAN learn to speak and understand Spanish—FOR LIFE!

What has served as the best professional development for you personally?:

Attending sessions and workshops presented by my peers! Like I said, almost every technique I use is either borrowed directly or was developed as a result of something I learned from someone else.

Based on your experience, what kind of advice do you have for new teachers—either individuals considering a career in language education, or those in their first few years of teaching?

Teacher-student rapport is far more important than any strategy, approach or method you will ever learn. First, learn to truly love, respect and appreciate ALL of your students, THEN go to every conference, workshop and peer-mentoring group

that you can! Keep a notebook of the jewels you learned from each session/meeting and jot down a few notes about how you can apply them. Every month, open that notebook and remind yourself of those jewels you wanted to implement in your own classroom.

What are some of your inspirations?:

My family! My husband and children perpetually inspire me to better myself personally and professionally through tangible obvious actions/words and through countless intangible moments that even a 2T hard-drive couldn't contain.

Teachers! They are too often under-appreciated, under-valued and under-paid, yet they are always over-achievers, over-learners and over-comers. In the midst of social, economic and political turmoil, they are a constant source of inspiration, and they give me hope for my grandchildren. (I don't have any [grandchildren] yet, but I hope to some day.)

If you weren't in your field, what would you be doing?:

Learning more languages, traveling and summering at my lake house in Wisconsin.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Getting notes and letters from teachers telling me that I made a difference in their lives and in their classrooms, that I helped them become better educators. Also, getting notes and letters from students telling me how much they enjoyed a book or a story and thanking me for making their learning fun and interesting, and receiving (text, audio and video) files from students who want me to see/listen to their original stories, poems and songs. THAT makes my day! (sometimes, my YEAR!)

NNELL Award

Call for Nominees

The NNELL Award for Outstanding Support of Early Second Language Learning will be given to an individual or individuals who have demonstrated outstanding support of early second language learning of languages other than English. Nominees may be actively involved in their efforts in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, the following: principal or other school administrator, district or state school superintendent, classroom teacher, parent, school board member, businessperson, civic leader, politician/elected representative. Nominees should be individuals whose primary job responsibilities are not related to the field of second language education.

The nomination for this award will be in the form of two letters of recommendation (a letter of recommendation and a letter of support) from individuals who can attest to the nominee's work in the field of early language learning. The letter of nomination must come from a current NNELL member, and the letter of support should be written by another individual who is very familiar with the nominee's work for early language learning. The letters should include documentation that clearly demonstrates evidence of the ways in which the nominee supports early language learning and that is clearly separate and distinct from the individual's primary job responsibilities.

The nomination may also include up to five photocopied pages of supporting evidence such as copies of newspaper articles that recognize the nominee's work for early language learning (brochures, pamphlets, etc. will not be accepted). The following are examples of criteria that can be considered in writing the letters of nomination as they apply to the nominee's work on behalf of early language learning:

- Demonstrates commitment to early second language learning in the school and the community, e.g., seeks ways to inform the community of the need for beginning language study early as an integral part of the school curriculum and in an uninterrupted sequence
- Provides visibility to the second language program, e.g., seeks media and/or newspaper publicity of school foreign language events, sends newsletter with second language program updates to parents
- Provides leadership in establishing and maintaining early second language programs at the local or state level
- Supports and provides professional development opportunities for early second language specialists
- Advocates for early second language programs at the local or state level, e.g., represents his or her foreign language program at local or state school board meetings
- Serves on local or state committees for early second language learning, e.g., advocacy projects, state world/foreign language association committee or board, PTA
- Supports exemplary ongoing second language instruction in his/her classroom, e.g., collaborates with the world language specialist on interdisciplinary projects

Three copies of the nomination packet including the two letters of nomination and up to five pages of sample supporting evidence should be emailed as one nomination submission with a postmark date of no later than July 15, 2011 to:

NNELL
ATTN: Awards Committee
PO Box 75003
Oklahoma City, OK 73147

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The screenshot shows the website's homepage with a yellow and orange gradient background. At the top, there are navigation links: My Account, My Cart, Checkout, and Log In. A search bar is located on the right. The main header features the EMC Publishing logo and the text 'ELEMENTARY WORLD LANGUAGES'. Below this is a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT US, SPECIALS, FOR PARENTS, DOWNLOADS, and CONTACT. A 'SHOP BY LANGUAGE' sidebar on the left lists Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Italian, English, and Arabic, with Spanish selected. The main content area features a 'WORLD LANGUAGE ACTIVITY KITS' section with a 'View Product' button. Below this is a 'FEATURED PRODUCT LINES' section with six categories: Syntalk & Speaking Spanish Confidently, Programs, Activity Kits, Fables & Fairy Tales, Games & Maps, and Language Creation. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the ACTFL logo, the slogan 'ENGAGE • MOTIVATE • CHALLENGE', contact information, and the NEL logo.

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