

FLES NEWS

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR EARLY LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Habari Za Kiswahili Challenges of Swahili Instruction

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The challenges of starting an elementary school foreign language program in one of the commonly taught languages are well known by the profession. Obstacles are much greater for starting a program in less commonly taught languages—there is a lack of materials, curriculum, program models, and trained teachers. As a result, very few programs exist in languages other than French, Spanish, and German. One solution, explored by the University of Wisconsin, is to organize a program with the combined expertise of an area studies department and department of curriculum and instruction in a college of education.

The University of Wisconsin's Title VI African Studies Outreach Program promotes instruction in kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8) in Swahili, a language widely spoken in east and central Africa. Graduate students from the Department of African Languages and Literature provide instruction that allows young students to explore Swahili language and culture in an informal setting. In the 1992-93 year, the elementary classes took place in after-school extracurricular programs, a summer university program, and in summer community center programs. The middle school programs also took place in the summer at local community centers. The programs are short-term, with total meeting time between eight and ten hours.

Typically, instructors for the commonly taught language program are recruited from among foreign language student teachers enrolled in the University of Wisconsin or Edgewood College pre-service programs. This instructional opportunity is part of the practicum requirement for elementary experience in anticipation of K-6 certification. Consequently, none of the instructors are expected to hold foreign language certification; however, they are expected to have had some education courses.

The Swahili teachers were students in the African studies program but were not in the preservice education program. Only one of the three Swahili instructors at the elementary school level held a license for teaching at that level—a teacher of English of Kenyan heritage. Two had teaching experience, but not at this age level. One had no

pedagogical training or teaching experience. At the middle school level, the teacher competencies ranged from a certified English teacher to noncertified individuals with no pedagogical training. Most were trained in Swahili in the United States, while others had studied Swahili in East Africa. None of the instructors spoke Swahili as a first language, although two had taught at the middle school level, one in Kenya and Zaire.

An informal survey of the eight Swahili instructors of was carried out at the end of the program. The instructors responded candidly to survey questions about the challenges they faced. The results of this survey, which provide valuable insight for organizers of future African and less commonly taught language programs, are reported here.

Survey Results

Instructor. Extracurricular programs at public schools should require that teachers be certified to teach foreign language. Instructors should be familiar with foreign language methods, the target language country, the students of the particular level, and the state and district curriculum for the school level. (To prepare K-12 teachers of Swahili, the University of Wisconsin has recently proposed a certification program for Swahili.)

Students. Parents and guidance counselors must be aware and supportive of the program. To recruit students, the program coordinator and instructor also need to convince the parents and community leaders of the value of less commonly taught languages. The current Wisconsin legislation, requiring middle school language offerings, can facilitate this process. All U.S. students should have an opportunity to study languages from various continents, not merely Western Europe.

Materials. A critical component of teaching Swahili is materials. Few Swahili materials have actually been designed for a communicative framework with proficiency goals, especially for the K-8 level. The African Language Teachers Association has created a Swahili task force to focus on this issue. As more Title VI African language instructors become familiar with language instruction at this level and informed about the value of integration of authentic materials, they will solicit materials from colleagues in East Africa. Although materials are published in Swahili in East Africa, they are expensive and difficult to secure in the United States. Unlike the commonly taught languages, no clearinghouse exists for Swahili or most other

(Continued on page 9)

Notes from the President

Each new school year brings with it the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year and to make plans for the future. Since my term as your president quickly draws to a close, I will do the reflecting and will leave the job of planning for the future in the very capable hands of your next president, Audrey Heining-Boynton.

In our second year as an official organization, we focused on two main objectives: membership and communication. Our 1993 membership goal of 700 by the Annual Meeting in San Antonio has almost been met. The early September count shows a total of 574 NNELL members. Now is a good time to mention NNELL membership to your colleagues and friends.

Our goal of becoming affiliated with both the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), has also been accomplished.

Our two goals related to communication were: *FLESNews* and networking sessions. This year's three interesting and informative issues of *FLESNews* have been the work of Editor Marcia Rosenbusch, the contributing editors, and the individuals who have been willing to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard). Congratulations and thanks to you all.

NNELL networking sessions were held at each regional conference last year, thanks to NNELL First Vice-President Audrey Heining-Boynton. Second Vice-President, Mari Haas, has organized sessions for the 1993-94 school year. Thanks to all who have assisted in organizing these sessions. Your efforts are helping to spread the word.

In addition to the goals listed above, the executive board worked diligently to fine tune the organizational structure. We have compiled a handbook for executive board members which includes, among other things, the organization's mission and goals, constitution and by-laws, policies, job descriptions, and timelines.

In addition to your six elected officers (president, first vice-president, second vice-president, immediate past president, secretary, treasurer), the executive secretary, and *FLESNews* editor, the NNELL executive board includes five regional representatives, and four committee chairs (membership, by-laws, political action, and publisher liaison.) We will be at ACTFL in November and hope that you will join us at the Networking Session on Saturday, November 20 at 11:40 a.m. in Fiesta E of the Convention Center.

This has been a busy and exciting year for NNELL. Some of our goals were accomplished while others remain for reevaluation. That is the nature of growth and progress. In the last issue of *FLESNews* I expressed the hope that when we came together in November, each of you would feel that you had grown professionally through NNELL and that you had helped NNELL grow professionally. That remains my hope for each of you and for NNELL.

Carolyn Andrade
6447 Meadowvista Ct.
Cincinnati, OH 45224-1603

FLESNews is a newsletter for educators interested in providing quality foreign language instruction for children. The newsletter provides information on classroom activities, resources, teaching methods, recent research, upcoming conferences, and information on how to publicize elementary foreign language programs. *FLESNews* provides a means of sharing information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others who are interested in the teaching of foreign languages to young children.

FLESNews is published three times a year (fall, winter, and spring) by the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL): Marcia Rosenbusch, editor; Carolyn Andrade, president. Executive committee members are: Audrey Heining-Boynton, first vice-president; Mari Haas, second vice-president; Donna Grundstad, secretary; Sonia Torres, treasurer, Carol Ann Pesola, immediate past president.

Contributing editors for the newsletter by topic are: *Classroom activities* Diane Fagin Adler, North Carolina State University, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Box 8106, Raleigh, NC 27695-8106; *Conferences* Susan Walker, 4560 Ohio Ave., St. Louis, MO 63111; *Funding information and new legislation* Joint National Committee for Languages, 300 Eye St., NE, Suite 211, Washington, DC 20002; *Research* M. Joy Young, Charleston Day School, 15 Archdale St., Charleston, SC 29401; *International news* Eileen B. Lorenz, Academic Programs, Montgomery County Public Schools, 850 Hungerford Dr., Rockville, MD 20850; *French resources* Myriam Chapman, Bank Street School for Children, 610 W. 112th St., New York, NY 10025; *German resources* Cindy Sizemore, 801 South, Prudence, #6102, Tucson, AZ 85710; *Teaching methods* Mary Lynn Redmond, Wake Forest University, Department of Education, Box 7266, Reynolda Station, Winston-Salem, NC 27109.

Membership dues for NNELL, which include a subscription to *FLESNews* are \$12/year (\$15 overseas). Please send your check to: Nancy Rhodes, Executive Secretary, National Network for Early Language Learning, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC 20037.

FLESNews wants to hear from its readers. Send letters to: Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Editor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, 300 Pearson Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011. Send contributions to be considered for publication to the appropriate contributing editors at the addresses listed above. Deadlines for information are: fall issue—May 1; winter issue—Nov. 1; spring issue—Feb. 1.

Readers are encouraged to make copies of this newsletter and share them with colleagues. Articles may be reprinted citing *FLESNews*, National Network for Early Language Learning, as the source.

†Foreign Language in the Elementary School

International News

Welcome to a new section of *FLESNews* where international news of professional interest will be published. Please send information about important issues, research, resources, innovative programs, conferences and other international events in early second language learning and related fields to the International News editor: Eileen B. Lorenz, Academic Programs, Montgomery County Public Schools, 850 Hungerford Dr., Rockville, MD 20850. In this first column, information on several international conferences is featured.

November 4-6: 17th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers. Ottawa (Ontario), Canada. Clair Bélanger, 226, prom. Sherwood, Ottawa (Ontario) K1Y3V8, Canada (613-729-9126). This year's theme is: *Active learning in Immersion: Redefining Our Roles*. Conference sessions will be either in French or English. The publishers' exhibits presents a wide choice of French language texts, some of which have been developed specifically for immersion students.

November 27-December 1: The 7th Guadalajara International Book Fair, Feria Internacional del Libro, Guadalajara, Mexico. David Unger, U.S. Coordinator of FIL '93, Division of the Humanities NAC 6/923, The City College of New York, New York, NY 10031 (212-650-7925). Organized by the University of Guadalajara, *Feria Internacional del Libro* will exhibit 67,000 titles and will be attended by 548 publishing companies from 26 countries.

International News Editor: Eileen B. Lorenz

Memo to: NNELL Readership

From: June Phillips, Project Director

K-12 Foreign Language Standards

A collaborative project of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, the American Association of Teachers of French, the American Association of Teachers of German, and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese to develop K-12 Foreign Language Standards has been funded by the Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The task force charged with drafting the standards is chaired by Christine Brown, Glastonbury (CT) Public Schools. Members of the task force are: Martha Abbott, Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools; Keith Cothrun, Las Cruces (NM) High School; Beverly Harris-Schenz, University of Pittsburgh; Denise B. Mesa, Dade County (FL) Public Schools; Genelle Morain, University of Georgia; Marjorie Tussing, California State University at Fullerton; Guadalupe Valdés, University of California, Berkeley; John Webb, Hunter College (NYU) High School; Thomas E. Welch, Kentucky Department of Education; and A. Ronald Walton, Advisor, National Foreign Language Center.

As the task force began its work, it found that creating a "vision" statement to guide discussion would be useful. The early version of that statement was reworked at the last meeting of the task force into a *Statement of Underlying Principles* for second-language learning. No doubt this statement, too, will be revised many times. By publishing it in the NNELL Newsletter, we seek your input, reaction, or comment both on the *Statement* and to the following questionnaire. Respond to: Standards Project, c/o ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701.

Draft Statement of Underlying Principles

Communication is a necessary and natural part of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to interact successfully, at home and abroad as citizens in the global community. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in more than one language, modern or classical. Children who come to school to learn English should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language.

Supporting this vision are three principles about language and culture, learners of language and culture, and language and culture education:

Competence in more than one language and culture enables people to communicate with people in other cultures in a variety of settings; look beyond their customary borders; participate more fully in the global community and marketplace; develop insight into their own language and culture; act with greater awareness of self, of other

cultures, and their own relationship to those cultures; and gain direct access to additional bodies of knowledge.

All students are language and culture learners, and they can achieve success; acquire proficiency at varied rates; learn in a variety of ways and settings; benefit from the development and maintenance of proficiency in more than one language.

Language and culture education is part of the core curriculum, and it is student-centered, interactive, and success-oriented; focuses on communication and cultural understanding; develops and enhances basic communication skills and higher-order thinking skills; accommodates varied learning styles; is supportive of and integrated with the entire school experience; incorporates effective strategies, program models, assessment procedures, and technologies; and reflects evolving standards at the national, state, and local levels.

Input Requested on National K-12 Student Standards

Standards will have a significant effect on students' opportunities to experience second languages during their education career. Within our profession we often assume consensus regarding programmatic issues that may not exist. During their first meeting (June 12-13, 1993), the members of the Student Standards K-12 Task Force discussed many of these issues and determined that there was a need to solicit opinions and reactions to gauge areas of consensus and areas of difference. The task force is committed to developing standards that are visionary without being unrealistic.

Colleagues are invited to address the following issues in order to inform the standard-setting process. Please provide explanations, as appropriate. Please indicate the question that each of your responses addresses. All comments should be sent to Standards Project, c/o ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701.

1. Should all students in the U.S. be required to learn at least one language other than their mother tongue? Why or why not? If yes, suggest some competencies that all children should attain regardless of the model in which they participate.
2. At what school age should second language study ideally begin? What is the minimum sequence?
3. How should the standards address second language maintenance through grade twelve? How should the standards address first language maintenance of language other than English?
4. Should standards be developed by: grade level? clusters of grade levels (e.g., middle school)? stages of language development?

(Continued page 10)

Legends and Language Learning: *Les Calebasses de Kouss*

Irene Garger
Knoxville Middle School
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), 18 teachers from the Pittsburgh Public Schools had the opportunity to participate in a very exciting project, "Legends and Language Learning: Bringing Africa to the Classroom." The focus of the grant was determined by the fact that teacher knowledge about Francophone West Africa is extremely limited. These countries are usually ignored in most French classrooms. The fact that Africa possesses a very rich legacy of folktales and legends made a focus on legends a natural one for the French classroom.

As a participant in this project, I developed a curriculum unit that focuses on storytelling for use in elementary and middle school foreign language classes. I have used this unit with great success in both beginning sixth and seventh grade classes, as well as in both a regular eighth grade class (second year) and an honors eighth grade class. I collaborated on this project with a colleague, Sharon Smith, who developed a unit for elementary school immersion programs that she has used with her seventh and eighth grade immersion classes.

In my unit, the teacher tells a story that provides the context for developing speaking skills, learning about culture, and learning vocabulary, grammar, and sentence patterns. I will share the basis for the story from my unit, some storytelling strategies, and pre- and post-activities that can be used to promote language learning through storytelling.

Preparation for Storytelling

My colleague and I chose *Les Calebasses de Kouss* and, since this is primarily a legend for adults, we adapted it for young students. I liked this story because it had vocabulary I wanted to teach and an element of surprise. Also, I could divide the story into two class periods, which was advantageous in my teaching situation.

The first step in preparing a legend is to make a skeleton of the story that contains the essential components of the story line. The first half of the story line follows:

Mr. and Mrs. Hare live in the forest.
Mrs. Hare desires jewels.
Mr. Hare goes into the forest.
He speaks to the Baobab tree.
He asks for jewels.
The Baobab displays jewels in its trunk.
The Baobab sends Mr. Hare to an okra field.
Mr. Hare meets Kouss, the genie of the Baobab.
Kouss sends Mr. Hare back to the Baobab.
Mr. Hare finds two gourds.
Mr. Hare chooses the small gourd as Kouss instructed him.
Mr. Hare finds jewels.

This first part of the story can be told on the first day. The second part of the story, which deals with greedy Mr. Hyena, can be told on the

second day:

Mrs. Hyena desires jewels.
Mr. Hyena goes to the Baobab.
He demands jewels.
Mr. Hyena goes to the okra field to see Kouss.
Mr. Hyena returns to the Baobab.
He chooses the large gourd.
Mr. Hyena finds Kouss angrily holding a large stick inside the gourd.

Before telling the story, I involved the students in the creation of a book about the cultural aspects of the story, for example, the Baobab and the hyena. Each student received a blank book that was to be filled with information about Africa. One of the first activities in my unit was to color a map showing the Francophone African countries and to glue it into the book. Students also colored, glued into their books, and labeled in French, scenes of the city and country: a variety of houses and huts, people, animals, musical instruments, vegetation, and trees indigenous to Africa—one of which was the sacred Baobab. The final activity was to create covers for their books. The students were very proud of their accomplishments and had developed insight into African culture in preparation for the story.

The teacher's goal in telling a legend is to be able to tell the story in French in such a way that the students will be able to understand it. To achieve this, the teacher must prepare visuals that will enable the students to follow the story line. For *Les Calebasses*, I painted a large artist's canvas with a Baobab tree on the left and an okra field on the right. I attached Velcro to the canvas so that a variety of pictures could be placed on the canvas as the story progresses. I colored and laminated pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Hare, Mr. and Mrs. Hyena, and Kouss. I also prepared pictures of two gourds—one contains jewelry and the other, Kouss with a large stick. Simple pictures drawn on the blackboard could also be equally effective. The pictures I developed are included in my curriculum unit.

Storytelling Strategies

I tell the story using the canvas and the pictures as props to promote listening comprehension. As the story progresses, I point to a picture, and even beginning students supply the word in French. For example, I begin the story with, *M. et Mme. Lievre habitent dans la forest. Mme. Lievre desire les bijoux.* (Mr. and Mrs. Hare live in the forest. Mrs. Hare wants jewels.) The next time *Mme. Lievre* is mentioned, I point to her picture and the students say, "*Mme. Lievre.*" Frequent repetition of the key words in the story is essential for beginning students to be able to supply the words.

At the conclusion of the first part of the legend, the students were very curious about the contents of the second gourd. They had to wait for the second part of the story on the next day to find out what was in the large gourd.

On day two, I went through the first part of the story quickly with the students supplying many of the words. The story of the Hyena was told, and the students were excited to see the contents of the large gourd chosen by the avaricious Hyena: Kouss angrily holding a large stick.

If the legend is told a third time, the students can supply most key

(Continued on page 5)

words and phrases. Their knowledge leads to many interesting post-story activities.

Post-story Activities

A great variety of activities were used after the telling of the legend to reinforce vocabulary. Sentence structure was also reinforced with more advanced students:

- Students mimed the actions in the story as the teacher retold it.
- Students participated in Total Physical Response activities, such as following directions to dress a stuffed animal.
- In a pair activity, students compared sequences of animals, vegetables, and fruits on each of their papers.
- Students matched pictures of the characters and important objects to words of the same.
- Given a Venn diagram (see figure below), students filled in adjectives that were true for Mr. Hyena and adjectives true for Mr. Hare. In the center of the Venn diagram, adjectives common to both characters were listed. To find appropriate adjectives in French, students used a dictionary.
- Given ten facts about the story in writing, students placed the facts in the correct sequence.
- Students unscrambled the letters of eight verbs. The verbs were then used in retelling the story.
- In a diagram of a Baobab tree, students wrote an infinitive on the lowest blank. They wrote a subject and the verb form of that infinitive that corresponds to the subject on the middle line. On the

top line they created a sentence using the subject and verb. This activity can be expanded to include adjectives or compound sentences.

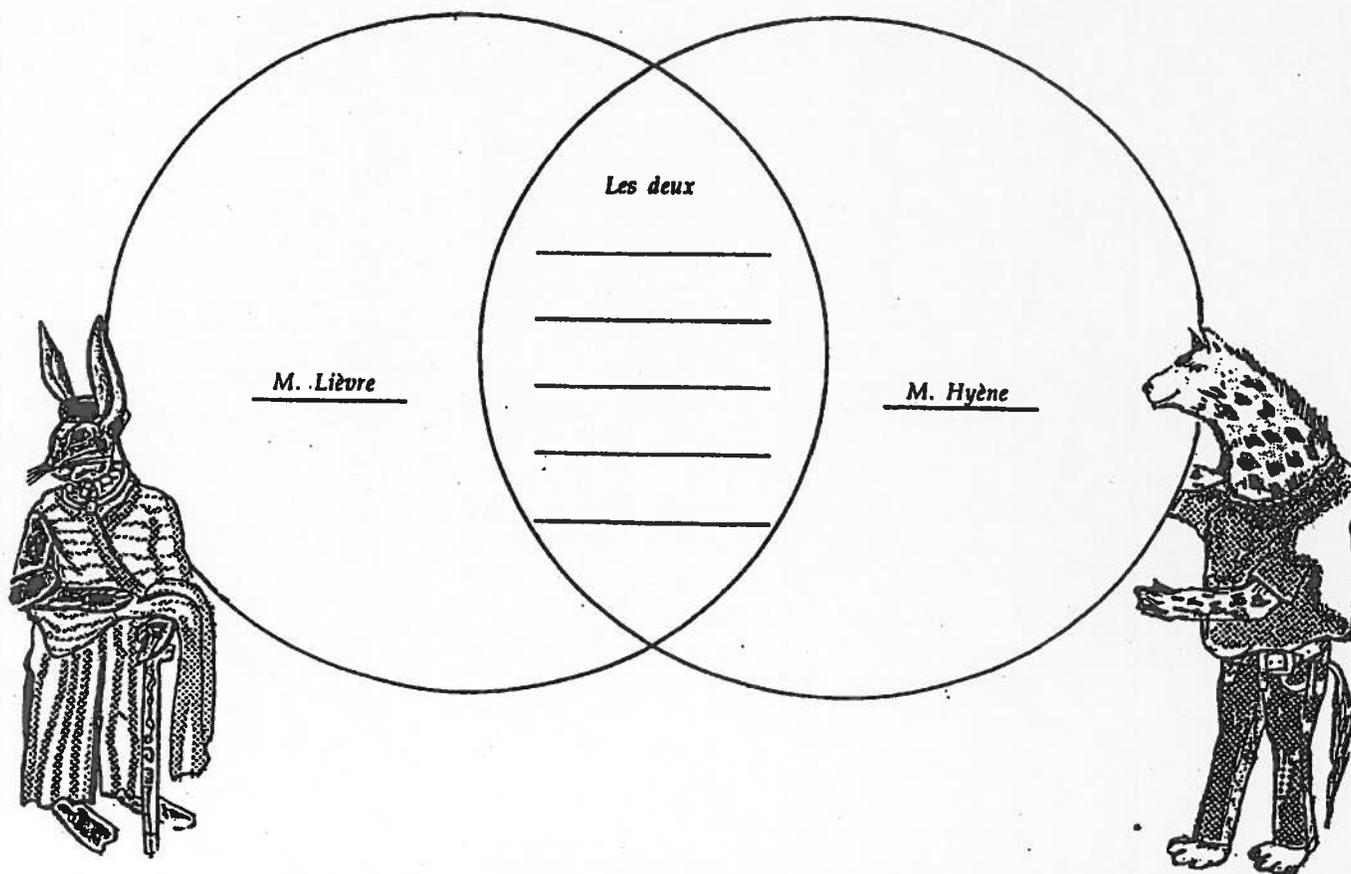
- Students created their own sentences to retell the story. This culminating activity demonstrated that students had mastered the basic vocabulary and sentence structure. They enjoyed showing off their new knowledge and, in many instances, improved upon my dramatics.

Storytelling is an effective method for foreign language teaching in elementary and middle school classrooms. The story provides a meaningful context for vocabulary and sentence structure. An added bonus is the enthusiasm and receptiveness of the students to this strategy for teaching a foreign language.

This curriculum unit was developed in collaboration with Sharon Smith, Frick International Studies Academy, Pittsburgh, PA. For further information or comments about the unit described here contact Irene Garger, Knoxville Middle School, Charles and Grimes Sts., Pittsburgh, PA 15210.

See Resources for Your Classroom—French, for a review of the complete set of curriculum units and information on how to order these materials. ED

Teaching Methods Editor: Mary Lynn Redmond



Conference Calendar

International, national, and regional conferences and workshops are previewed in this section of the newsletter. Please send information on conferences and workshops to the Conferences editor: Susan Walker, 4560 Ohio Ave., St. Louis, MO 63111.

FALL 1993 CONFERENCES

October 21-24: Advocates for Language Learning. Kansas City, MO. Paul A. Garcia, President, ALL, School District of Kansas City, 301 E. Armour, #620, Kansas City, MO 64111 (816-871-6317).

November 20-22: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. San Antonio, TX. ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801 (914-963-88307).

SPRING 1994 CONFERENCE

March 10-12: Second/Foreign Language Acquisition by Children, Theoretical Aspects and Practical Applications. Tulsa, OK. Rosemarie Benya, P. O. Box 2053, Ada, OK 74821 (405-332-8000).

Conferences Editor: Susan Walker

A Global Vision for America

The following statement was developed by the Policy Committee of the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) in cooperation with the House/Senate International Education Study Group and was distributed to every member of Congress and the new administration and to education associations such as Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Education Association (NEA), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASPP), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), among others.

Among the problems that confront our nation, one of the greatest and most insidious dangers is the quiet crisis of global incompetence—the failure to understand, communicate, and function effectively in an international environment. The problem is real, immediate, and of increasing gravity with each passing year. It threatens our economy, our security, and the very quality of our lives.

To address this quiet crisis, it is imperative that we begin now to establish and accomplish future goals for our students, citizens, and nation:

- Include the mastery of a second language with particular emphasis on communication in the language as one of our national education goals.
- Make available to every U.S. student beginning in kindergarten and continuing throughout pre-collegiate and higher education, the study of language, culture, and literature of at least one other country or region.
- Recognize the multicultural nature of our society and enhance the use of linguistic and cultural resources within our borders.
- Incorporate international knowledge and language usage into the degree programs of institutions of higher education, professional programs, and technical schools.
- Link teacher preparation and performance to a clearly defined set of professional standards that include a demonstrated awareness of international and multicultural concerns.
- Enhance the language competence and knowledge of teachers, at all levels, through increased opportunities to study abroad and at special summer foreign language institutes.
- Make language and cultural study available to students and professionals in fields where accurate communication is of special concern, such as law enforcement, social services, and health care.
- Identify the need for and develop expertise in translation, interpretation, and other international skills that support national interests.
- Assist the private sector in developing the language skills, cultural awareness, and international expertise necessary to become competitive in an international environment.

Spanish Resources Contributing Editor Sought

Due to a resignation, *FLES News* is searching for a new contributing editor for Spanish resources. Contributing editor appointments are made annually by the editor and are competitive positions. The responsibilities of the Spanish resources editor are:

- Submit a total of nine resource reviews per year, three for each issue.
- Verify that materials are in the publication format specified by the editor, are typed or legibly handwritten, and are double-spaced.
- Submit complete and accurate information that has been checked for spelling and clarity.
- Meet the deadlines specified by the editor for submission of information.

To apply for this position, submit the following to the editor by November 1:

1. A brief curriculum vitae or resume including your name, home address, and telephone; your title, school address, and telephone; your professional training and work experience.
2. State the position for which you are applying.
3. Write a short paragraph explaining why you are interested in this contributing editor position.
4. Define a plan for obtaining resources for review.

Send applications to Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Editor, *FLES News*, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011 (515-294-4046).

Activities for Your Classroom

Teachers: Please submit a favorite classroom activity for publication in FLES News by sending a description in the following format: Title, objective, materials, and procedure. You may include any pictures or drawings as illustrations. Send with your name, address, and telephone number to the Classroom Activities editor: Diane Fagin Adler, North Carolina State University, Dept. of Foreign Languages & Literatures, Box 8106, Raleigh, NC 27695-8106.

Title: Who's Humming?

Objective:

Students will identify a classmate's voice on an audio tape. (NOTE: The beauty of this exercise is that the students think that they are just guessing whose voice they are hearing on the tape, but they really are practicing the interrogative "who", manipulating first and second person pronouns, learning numerous common verbs and answering questions in the negative!)

Materials:

A teacher-made audio tape with students performing different activities: singing, counting, talking, whistling, sneezing, snoring, humming, etc. The tape is made with only one student at a time present, so that each student only knows his or her own contribution.

Procedure:

Play one segment of the tape. Ask "Who is singing?" Call on students to guess. As the students guess, "Paul is singing," turn to Paul and ask, "Paul, is it you?" Paul answers, "Yes, it is I" or "No, it is not I." In French, it would proceed like this:

Teacher: "Qui chante?"

Student: "Paul chante."

Teacher: "Paul, c'est toi?"

Paul: "Qui, c'est moi." or "Non, ce n'est pas moi."

Contributor: Sharon McCullough
French FLES Teacher
Spartanburg District 7
Spartanburg, SC

Address Correction

In the 1993 spring issue of FLES News 6(3), an incomplete address was given for the Japanese Language Teachers Network, which seeks contact with elementary school Japanese teachers. The complete address is: Barbara Shenk, Japanese Language Teachers Network, University High School, 1212 West Springfield Ave., Urbana, IL 61801 (217-244-4808).

Title: Math Vocabulary Game

Objective:

Students will practice math symbols and vocabulary in the target language.

Materials:

Paper, pencils, and chalk.

Procedure:

Introduce four words per lesson, e.g., triangle, circle, square, and rectangle. On the chalkboard, draw the symbol and write the word for triangle, circle, square, and rectangle. Have students copy the symbols and words from the board. Practice pronunciation in the target language.

Begin the procedure with the whole class. Send one student to the chalkboard. Explain that each time you say a word, he or she will write the correct symbol. For example: *triangle* = ▲. Call on another student to read the symbols from the board. Next, each student writes the "problems" on the board. Call on another student to read each problem.

Examples of problems:

- a. ▲ ▲ ▲ ● ● ■ ■ ■ ● ▲
b. ■ ■ ■ ▲ ■ ● ● ■
c. ● ● ■ ● ● ● ■ ▲ ■ ▲ ■ ●

Note: This activity can also be used for numbers, simple math problems, and cardinal points.

Contributor: Iris L. Cadiz
Garden Grove Elementary School
Winter Haven, FL

Classroom Activities Editor: Diane Fagin Adler

Cape Cod from page 8

and refinement. Incorporated into student standards, as we know from the 1992 ACTFL meeting and subsequent newsletter, are the generalized "outcome" points of Grades 4, 8, and 12, the first two of which pose different issues for foreign language participants depending upon the type of program, time devoted to the program, and the point of entry and exit. John Weber (Hunter College High School, NY) pointed out in his remarks on the topic of language that the standards to be developed must, above all else, be realistic and reflect a reality we can cope with while, at the same time, being forward-looking. Further input from elementary teachers about different standards of expected outcomes for grade 4 children will be important, it was pointed out, as are the different views on assessment. Members of the profession are asked to distribute, discuss, and respond to the questions on page 3 of this newsletter. Further information of this long-term project will be discussed in ACTFL newsletters and conference sessions.

Cape Cod Currents: Project 2017 and Student Standards

Paul García
Kansas City, Missouri, Public Schools
and
Advocates for Language Learning

Mid-August on Cape Cod. Sun, sand, summer, and (for us old-timers) whispering memories of Patti Page: "salt sea air, quaint little villages here and there" Guess again, dear colleague. This was the 1993 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Summer Seminar and it was *serious* business. There was much to consider, with precious little time to enjoy the oceanside facilities during the August 20-22 meeting. But what an intellectual "high!" We became part of an empowering and invigorating series of discussions. Their consequences will be apparent not only in the near future, but over the next decade—or longer. Our seminar topics were student standards and extended sequences for language learners, beginning in the primary school years.

ACTFL leadership has been committed to ensuring and maintaining sustained dialogues, followed by appropriate action plans. The issues that many of us have helped to develop were the focus of the 1993 program. They are student-centered and accountability-related issues which will—and should—dominate foreign languages professional discourse in the 1990s. "What does a child know, and how do we prove it?" are by no means *passé* queries. The seminar activities that concern NNELL members extend beyond elementary school age language learning. Indeed, both the topics discussed have the potential of forcing the language profession to put into effect some overdue "measuring rods" (a combination meter stick and lightning rod) to our mostly anecdotal conclusions on academic achievement, teacher preparation, and the role of second languages.

The New American: Project 2017

As a member of ACTFL invited to serve as an Advisory Committee member of Project 2017 (so named for the year when present primary school learners join the adult work force), I was pleased, on behalf of the 3500 students in French/German/Spanish immersion and Latin FLES programs from my district (Kansas City, Missouri), as well as on behalf of Advocates for Language Learning (I serve as national president), to listen to our major foreign language organization to advocate programs of quality for all children. The members of the Steering Committee of 2017 (chaired by Christine Brown, Glastonbury, CT Schools) affirmed the importance of "hearing from the field," and thereby obtaining data and information about current issues that promote or impede the implementation of sustained foreign language programs. Because there is as yet no funding allocation for this project, Brown reported, the group's activities will be modest in scope, and "one small step at a time." Ron Walton, of the National Foreign Language Center, who assisted with the presentation, pointed out that there are substantive questions that our profession must address in the area of elementary school foreign language education: what conditions, for instance, must we create for successful learning, what models are appropriate (and where), and what language choice issues must be

faced.

Systemic issues, such as articulation and infrastructure (preparation of teachers, dearth of materials, assessment instruments), as well as strategy-related issues (Whom must we convince? How do we convince?) must be reflected upon as we begin Project 2017. In early October, the members of the Steering Committee will attend a 4-5 day working session in Washington, D.C., during which time they will consider the issues brought up during the seminar in the following areas:

Advocacy. Why begin early? What are the compelling arguments? Who can help to frame this topic?

Research. What research activities are ongoing concerning the "whats" and "hows" of an early start? How can elementary school foreign language instruction implement the overall and specific goals of K-8 schooling? What role can distance and technology learning play in quality programs?

Infrastructure. What are the issues of licensure, preparation, and recruitment of elementary school foreign language teachers? How are schools configured? What is the budget process? How are decisions about foreign language programs made?

Articulation. What models exist for successful vertical and horizontal articulation? What outcomes are possible for various types and depths of programs?

Assessment and Standards. In various program types and at various levels, what do students know and what can they be expected to do? How can student knowledge and skills be expressed in measurable terms? How can we avoid having "minimum" standards be considered the "maximum?"

Policy. What is the intercultural importance of what we do in foreign language education and what is its impact on American education?

We await the deliberations of the October meeting that will be disseminated across the profession, and continue to look forward to the spirit of cooperation and interest that prevails on a matter so vital to our nation. Those interested in more information about Project 2017 should contact Jamie Draper at ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801.

Standards

Standards are of concern not only to elementary school foreign language teachers, but to the entire profession. June Phillips is the Project Director of the federal grant awarded to ACTFL and the national foreign language teacher associations (AATF, AATG, AATSP). (See article on page 3.) That standards for students have been the topic of debate since the National Goals panel of 1989 is well known. Foreign languages are late into the process, compared to other professional groups. As Phillips pointed out in her opening statement, "Key is the fact that the standards are to be content-related, challenging, descriptive, and amenable to assessment." The standards task force met in Hartford (CT) and St. Louis (MO) and has reviewed responses from individuals as well as constituent foreign language organizations. The "belie?" statement published on page 3 and sent to members of ACTFL, AATF, AATG, and AATSP is continually undergoing revision

(Continued on page 7)

Habarai Za Kiswahili *from page 1*

less commonly taught languages. The development of materials assumes that the author is familiar with the student, the language, and the methods of instruction. In the past, most materials were written by linguists for adults using grammar-translation or audio-lingual methods of instruction. Consequently, the Swahili teachers spent an enormous amount of time creating authentic, communicative activities for each lesson.

Curriculum goals. Although most of the materials focus on novice level instruction, each activity must have a communicative context for the appropriate age level. These materials should include the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as cultural information. For Swahili children's literature as well as other materials, for thematic units at each school level are not currently available and need to be obtained.

Collaboration. Although most schools encourage collaboration with the classroom teacher, several Swahili instructors indicated that they needed additional time to interact with the teachers. This time could allow coordination of instruction on themes or interdisciplinary approaches. Presently, the curriculum remains tied to the Swahili instructors' capabilities, given the limited time that they have to work with the students.

Expectations. One of the issues instructors mentioned is their failure to communicate the goals of the course to students and parents. A clear definition of the acquisition expectations specifically for Swahili will diminish the frustration for all. Several coordinators indicated that teachers still need more training in the pacing of activities, group management, and the teaching of social skills. Their observations underscored the need for coordinators to articulate goals.

Schedules. Both the coordinators and instructors agreed that the schedules of one-hour or two-hour blocks per week or month provide insufficient time. Few instructors wanted to participate in these short contact programs because of the preparation and travel time needed for such a short classroom experience. In addition, the financial rewards were not substantial enough to encourage their continued participation.

Planning. All the instructors concurred on the need for meticulous planning. Developing short activities of not more than ten minutes with clear directions is critical in maintaining the interest of younger students. Furthermore, teachers report that visuals are essential in helping illustrate vocabulary and cultural concepts. Many of the instructors commented that they realized that they did not include sufficient comprehension checks in their lessons, thus, they often assumed that the students understood, when they did not. Their lack of experience with these age groups contributed to their misjudgment.

Several ideas are basic in the development of the curricular content. Activities should be short—no longer than 10-12 minutes—varied (learner styles), include visuals and humor, involve varied groups, have an overview, examples, and comprehension checks, be concrete, include action and movement, be primarily taught in Swahili (discipline, directions, comprehension checks, culture), include listening, speaking, reading, writing skills, and culture, and emphasize communication not recitation.

Pedagogical training. Instructors admit that training in foreign language pedagogy at the elementary and middle school levels would have helped them understand the needs of their students and their learning capabilities. Several instructors skillfully employed current foreign language methodology. Yet, under stress, they tend to fall back on a grammar translation or audio-lingual method. Only two instructors were familiar with pair work, language ladders, Gouin series, Total Physical Response, passwords, and culture capsules and clusters. Only three of the instructors had developed a lesson plan and unit prior to teaching in this program. Some instructors claimed frustration when

they had to reteach topics of the previous lesson. The concept of spiraling information throughout a unit was not part of their repertoire. Under these circumstances, instructors need more time to collaborate with other instructors on an interdisciplinary unit.

Interest Questionnaires. None of the instructors indicated that they conducted an interest inventory prior to instruction. For this reason, they believe that they were not always connecting with the students' interests. Two of the instructors distributed a teacher/class evaluation form students at the end of the program as part of the program review. Both types of information would provide clues for improving the quality of instruction.

Current status. The Swahili program in Madison illustrates a fundamental issue regarding teacher preparation and community support. Most program coordinators are willing to include Swahili in the offering. However, when it does not attract sufficient numbers of targeted students, administrators become less supportive. It is critical for instructors to maintain clear lines of communication with administrators, parents, students, and community officials.

The African Studies Outreach Program anticipates that the University of Wisconsin extension programs will continue. In addition, two other Wisconsin programs have requested an instructor for the 1994 summer. A third potential summer program is through the Madison Metropolitan School District Summer School (middle school). Administrators of this option want to provide ongoing opportunities for students to continue their instruction during the academic year either at the middle school or high school. Therefore, they would like to see the high school program reinstated.

All of these options require funding. The burden of securing grants is with the African Studies Program. Several funding agencies are targeted for instructor salaries and materials. However, the funding assumes that the instructors are certified by language and age level. Therefore, the cooperation of the Department of African Languages and Literature with the School of Education and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is crucial for Swahili programs in Madison.

In summary, a successful K-8 program for a less commonly-taught language requires the integration of these factors: cooperation of the school administration, enthusiasm of the community and parents, qualified instructors and substitutes, interested students, collaboration of other instructors, sufficient budget, well-planned curriculum and materials, articulation with other feeder programs, and appropriate class time.

The following people assisted in preparing this article: Kayla Chepyator, Betty Franklin, Magdalanea Haumer, Anne Lessick-Xiao, and Josphat Mwet. For a complete discussion and appendices, see History of Swahili Instruction in Madison, Wisconsin: K-12 Initiative. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. FL 021 452).

Resources for Your Classroom

Please submit directly to the appropriate resources editor any language-specific materials you would like considered for review. Other materials may be sent to the FLES News editor for review.

German

Die Ritterburg, vol. 9 of *Meyers kleine Kinderbibliothek* (1992). S. G. Schönfeldt, Trans. Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut & F. A. Brockhaus AG. (Original work published in French, 1990). Available from International Book Import Service, 2995 Wall Triana Highway, Huntsville, AL 35824-1532 (800-277-4247). Approximately \$9.00; price does not include shipping and handling.

Die Ritterburg, volume 9 of *Meyers kleine Kinderbibliothek*, is a delightful book providing insight into the culture of the Middle Ages. The transparent pages reveal the architecture of the castle as well as inner workings of the castle's social structure. Children are taken on a tour of the castle, which includes visits to the bed chamber, the kitchen, and the dungeon. Along the way, the children encounter a juggler and a dancing bear entertaining the nobles at mealtime, as well as knights and their squires preparing for an enemy attack. This volume ends with a picture of castle ruins that have survived to today and encourages the children to think about how different their life is from life in the Middle Ages.

Meyers kleine Kinderbibliothek currently includes seventeen volumes of science-oriented picture books for children. The books include special transparent pages that allow the young reader to see the inner workings of things. In the various volumes children can explore the interior of a castle, an animal's skeleton, the development of a chick embryo, an airplane's cockpit, or get an inside view of our earth—bugs and all. These special transparent pages turn the books into a type of hide-and-seek game for the reader, thereby encouraging children to question what lies below the surface. The simple language and beautiful illustrations, along with the playful approach to learning, make these books a valuable resource for any FLES classroom.

Other volumes in the series are: *Das Ei*, *Das Wetter*, *Der Marienkäfer*, *Die Farbe*, *Das Auto*, *Unter der Erde*, *Der Elefant*, *Das Flugzeug*, *Die Blume*, *Der Vogel*, *Der Apfel*, *Die Maus*, *Das Haus*, *Das Schiff*, *Der Bauernhof*, and *Am Fluss*. All the volumes are visually stimulating for the teacher and students alike. *Meyers kleine Kinderbibliothek* provides a wealth of supplementary materials for all levels of FLES, extending into the middle school.

German Resources Editor: Cindy Sizemore

French

Donato, R., Fall, T., Gall, R. (1993). *Legends and Language Learning: Bringing Africa to the French Classroom*. Available from Curriculum Department, Pittsburgh Public Schools, 341 S. Bellefield Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Request should be made on school letterhead. Include a check for \$15.00, payable to School District of Pittsburgh. Price includes shipping and handling.

This wonderful curriculum guide, 406 pages long and produced by teachers in the Pittsburgh Public School under a National Endowment for the Humanities grant, comes at just the right time. There are few materials available to the growing number of French teachers who are looking to expand their curriculum beyond the borders of Europe. This guide, for grades 1 through 8, approaches the teaching of language and culture through authentic West African folktales. The nine units were field tested on children and produced by classroom teachers with the assistance of experts in the field.

Using storytelling as the medium of instruction not only engages children's attention but provides an authentic cultural experience. In this guide, each unit is organized around an African folktale chosen for its content and adapted to the age-level of the students. The units are organized so that anyone, even those of us who have never before told stories in the classroom, can have a rich and successful experience. Each unit contains the story itself, plenty of pre- and post-learning activities, procedures for evaluation (including portfolio evaluation), vocabulary lists, lots of visuals and hand-outs. A technique, entirely new to me, called "story skeleton" especially engaged my interest. There are mind-stretching and language-rich communicative activities for each story. An interesting appendix offers a framework for creating your own storytelling and there is an extensive list of resources. The visuals include maps and line drawings that reflect the African context of the story. This curriculum is an indispensable addition to what I hope will become a growing list of materials about Francophone Africa for young students.

See an example of one of the units on page 4. ED.

French Resources Editor: Myriam Chapman

Standards Project from page 3

other?

5. Given that the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) intends to assess students primarily at grades 4, 8, and 12, should our assessments be developed to coincide with this model? Why or why not?

6. Significant work has been done by the profession on competency assessment of second language proficiencies. In addition to skills, what content areas should be addressed in the standards?

7. What other issues should the task force consider as it develops the framework for national standards?

New for 1994 from Educational Extension Systems

The 1994 World Calendar—For classes dealing with multiculturalism, global awareness, foreign language, ESL classes. A multicultural and multilingual instruction aid developed in six languages within one publication: English, French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic—includes the national, civic, and religious holidays of all major religions of over 120 nations. Each photo caption, day, month, and many holidays are in multiple languages plus ancillary material to help the teacher. A teacher's guide is also available.

The 1994 Ethnic Cultures of America Calendar—A very useful teaching aid for use in classroom discussion and other efforts in the field of Ethnic Diversity. The publication illustrates and identifies 106 different U.S. ethnic groups and shows them celebrating their ethnicity through cultural and religious holidays. The holidays of the 106 ethnic groups are included. The publication also contains information about where ethnic groups came from, what constitutes an ethnic group, what is the common culture of America, where new groups are coming from, as well as ethnic census data, and much more.

Each calendar costs \$14.50 including postage and handling. Discounts for bulk orders are available.

The 1994 Cultural and Festival Days of the World Poster—A 22" by 35" poster produced in four colors contains a listing by month, by date, by name of holiday, and the country of the world in which it is being celebrated. It is excellent as a teaching aid for global awareness and multiculturalism as well as classroom and school bulletin boards. The poster contains a different theme each year. The poster cost is \$9.95, which includes postage and a teacher's guide. Discounts are available for bulk orders.

Send order to Educational Extension Systems, P. O. Box 259
Dept. A, Clarks Summit, PA 18411 (800-447-8561).

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Mail check (no purchase orders accepted) and this order form to: Nancy Rhodes,
Executive Secretary, National Network for Early Language Learning, Center for Applied
Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037

Children's Classroom Creations



Seth Splawski
Grade 6
St. Mark's School of Texas
Japanese Program
Donna Mullett, Japanese Teacher

FLES News enjoys including children's work in the second language. We encourage you to send works that lend themselves to copying, such as line drawings, short stories, or poems. If you would like a work returned to you, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope. Please include the child's name, age, school, and teacher's name, as well as written permission from the child and his or her parents or guardians. Send the original copy of children's work to the editor, Marcia Rosenbusch.

Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Editor
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