

*A collection of information and links to
websites concerning
Early Language Learning*

November 2009

Advocacy Committee

I would like to welcome several people to the NNELL Advocacy Committee. Julie Canady, Robert Raymond, Leslie Zimring, and Alexandra Migoya help edit *Newsworthy* and find resources for the *Home/School Connection*. Gladys Lipton, Catherine (Kay) Hoag, and Marlene Knobbe lead the Advocacy Google Group. Meriem Bacha, Concha Marin, Heather Hendry, and Bonnie Corretjer find links and articles to share in *Newsworthy*.

Thanks to all for your dedication to NNELL and your interest in advocating for early language learning.

Languages in the News**

Foreign language is key to success

“I would like to blame geographic isolation for the fact that most U.S. citizens that are not of immigrant households do not speak any languages other than English. Fine, you can't hone your German or your French, we get it - it's all an ocean away. Regardless, just to the south of us Spanish and not English is what is spoken. According to a report conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics, Foreign Language Teaching: *“What the United States Can Learn from Other Countries,”* the U.S. lags in foreign language proficiency because linguistic education is introduced too late, and our teaching force is not properly equipped.

These conclusions should not come as a surprise. We can all recollect the nightmare and confusion of foreign language classes, so it's no wonder why few bother to pursue the languages in which they once held interest. So, what do we lose from avoiding learning a foreign language?”

Click here to read more of the editorial [“Foreign language is key to success”](#) by Meina Kaleyah.

**Link submitted by Marcela Summerville, Pennsylvania state rep.

Speaking Avatars

Voki is a free service that allows you to create personalized speaking avatars and use them on your blog, profile, and in your language classes. An **avatar** is a computer user's representation of him or her.

Click on “get started” to create your own avatar. You can choose the facial features, clothing, and accessories of your avatar. Choose a background and record your voice using your phone or a microphone connected to the computer. Set up an account to publish your avatar.

Children under the age of 13 years old cannot have an account.

Click here to create your own [avatar](#).

Western Initiative for Language Leadership (WILL)**

The Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) has a professional development program to support isolated second language teachers with five or

fewer years of teaching. Participants in the Western Initiative for Language Leadership (WILL) work as a group supported by CASLS' staff, national experts, and previous WILL participants serving as mentors. Over two summer institutes, participants focus on action research and leadership while earning university credit.

The Southern Initiative for Language Leadership (SILL) has been created to support educators in the Southern United States.

Click here to watch the [eight-minute video about the experiences of WILL participants and mentors](#).

Click here to learn more about [WILL or SILL](#).

**Link submitted by Carolyn Taylor, Pacific Northwest Regional Rep.

Online videos

MisCositas.com is a free web resource with a variety of materials for teaching Spanish, French, Italian, Thai and ESL. Within this website are videos in Spanish, French, Chinese, Italian, German, and Indonesian.

- Videos with orange borders are "in-flight movies" and travel videos. They contain images and scenes from a country, city or celebration and have a simple narration in the target language.
- Videos with blue borders are instructional and educational videos.
- Videos with purple borders are interviews and illustrated folktales.

Included on the video page is a link to YouTube with more videos. Here you

will find videos in Spanish, French and Chinese.

Click here to watch the [movies](#).

Sing with Juanes

On this website you can choose from 3 songs to sing along with Juanes. Create an avatar by uploading your own photo or using one provided by the website. Sing along using your phone or the microphone on your computer.

The page can be displayed in English or Spanish. Songs to choose from are *Me enamora*, *La camisa negra*, and *Tres*. The website is sponsored by Sprint.

Click here to [Sing with Juanes](#).

Poducate Me

This website has a step-by-step guide to podcasting. In this guide you will learn how to:

- find and download podcasts
- select appropriate podcasting equipment and software
- record, edit and polish your podcast
- create an "enhanced" podcast
- upload your podcast to the Internet
- create a podcast blog
- share podcasts with your students

Click here to read the [podcasting guide](#).

Send any information, comments, or questions for *Newsworthy* to Tammy Dann at trdann@q.com