

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

February 2010

**Languages in the News**

*Preparing Students for the Flat World<sup>1</sup>*

“The current economic crisis and its relationship to the way in which the American economy has adjusted to the “flat world” provide an opportune context to rethink the purposes of our schools. How do we prepare children to invent a future that enables them to meet their needs, develop, be happy, and continue deepening the work-in-progress that is our democracy?”

Click here to read more of the article [\*Preparing Students for the Flat World\*](#) by Fernando M. Reimers.

---

*Foreign Language Teaching in U.S. Schools  
(Results of a National Survey)<sup>2</sup>*

This executive summary outlines the changes between the 1997 and 2008 surveys of world language professionals in both public and private schools. The changes included those at both the elementary and secondary levels in the following areas: languages taught, program types, scheduling, curriculum and instruction paradigms, as well as educational reform. Some trends indicated are:

- a 7-16% decline in French, German, and Latin study at the secondary level.
- Spanish continues to be the most widely taught language in both secondary and elementary programs.

---

<sup>1</sup> Link submitted by Paula Patrick, NNELL President.

<sup>2</sup> Link submitted by Bonnie Corretjer.

- only 3-4% of elementary and secondary schools offer Chinese
- the percentage of elementary schools offering foreign language decreased from 31% to 25%
- the use of Internet resources, target culture literature, proficiency oriented assessments, and instruction based on national standards are all on the increase
- from 1997 to 2008 the use of target language in the classroom moved from 22% to 75%
- issues of unequal access to foreign language instruction

Click here to read [\*Foreign Language Teaching in U.S. Schools \(Results of a National Survey\)\*](#) by Nancy C. Rhodes and Ingrid Pufahl.

---

*Leading for Global Competency<sup>3</sup>*

“Now more than ever, education should prepare students for global civility and peace. So what in the world are we waiting for?”

“Good teachers and principals, in the United States and elsewhere, know that good education begins with clarity of purpose. The purpose of schooling is to prepare students for life in the real world in their communities and societies, both in the present while students are in school and in the future after they leave school behind.”

“Good educators know that the real world is ever more interconnected and interdependent. We all share in facing such planetary challenges as climate change, health epidemics, global poverty, global economic recessions and trade imbalances, assaults on human rights, terrorism, political instability, and international conflicts. We also share

---

<sup>3</sup> Link submitted by Paula Patrick, NNELL President.

opportunities for global collaboration in such areas as scientific and artistic creation, trade, and international cooperation. These challenges and opportunities define the contours of our lives, even in their most local dimensions. Yet in spite of growing awareness of the importance of developing global skills, few students around the world have the opportunity today to become globally competent.”

Click here to read more of [Leading for Global Competency](#) by Fernando M. Reimers.

### **World Languages Position Paper**

The National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) published a position paper to outline a rationale for teaching world languages. Salient points included:

- Communication proficiency in at least two languages is a basic skill that supports national security and economic prosperity.
- College Board, national educational commissions, Secretaries of Education, and school associations have endorsed learning a foreign language as one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills essential to students.
- Benefits of learning a foreign language included growth in personal, academic, cognitive, and societal areas. Complex problem solving and higher levels of cognitive and metacognitive processing have been noted in students studying a second language.

Click here to read the [NCSSFL position paper](#).

### **Advocacy Resources from CALPER<sup>4</sup>**

The website for Penn State’s Center for Applied Language Education Proficiency

<sup>4</sup> Link submitted by Heather Hendry.

Research (CALPER) includes an advocacy page, where foreign and second language teachers and educators can find tips and links to resources to help inform their advocacy initiatives. In addition, for folks who themselves are experienced advocates in their communities; CALPER invites suggestions for links to additional advocacy resources.

Click here to look at [CALPER’s advocacy resources](#).

### **Cultural Orientation Resource Center**

The Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has selected the Center for Applied Linguistics’ Cultural Orientation Resource (COR) Center to provide technical assistance on orientation and incoming refugee groups. The COR Center website includes information on cultural orientation overseas, U.S. resettlement, lesson plans and tools, information about the U.S. Refugee Program with a link to admission statistics. In their publications you will find:

- Refugee Backgrounders
- Culture Profiles
- Welcome to the U.S.: Guidebook for Refugees
- Welcome to the U.S.: Video/DVD for Refugee Viewing
- Refugee Families and Refugee Youth Orientation Videos
- Phrasebooks

Click here to access the [Cultural Orientation Resource Center](#).

Send any information, comments, or questions for *Newsworthy* to Tammy Dann at [trdann@q.com](mailto:trdann@q.com)

Thank you to Robert Raymond, Leslie Zimring, and Alexandra Migoya for their help in preparing *Newsworthy* for publication.