70th Anniversary Issue

NECTFL Review

A Journal for PK – 16+ World Language Educators & Researchers

Reflecting on the Past to Inform the Future

Empowering Language Learners for Global Change

Jill Schimmel
2025Conference Chair

71st Annual Northeast Conference
February 27- March 1, 2025
New York Hilton Midtown

NORTHEAST
CONFERENCE
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THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

The Language Classroom section of the NECTFL Review is edited by Catherine Ritz (**maflacatherine@gmail.com**) and features shorter articles (8+ pages/1,500–2,500 word) focused on classroom practices and experiences. We invite submissions from language educators at all levels that address topics such as: classroom instruction, curriculum design, assessment & feedback, leadership and advocacy, planning and program design, technology integration, student experiences, or other similar topics. These articles should focus on the language classroom and are not intended to present research findings. We are looking for focused and concise articles that share research-based classroom practices and experiences in the language classroom.

To submit an article to this section, use this link:

https://forms.gle/Fi9YTV3qAcmpZBT8A
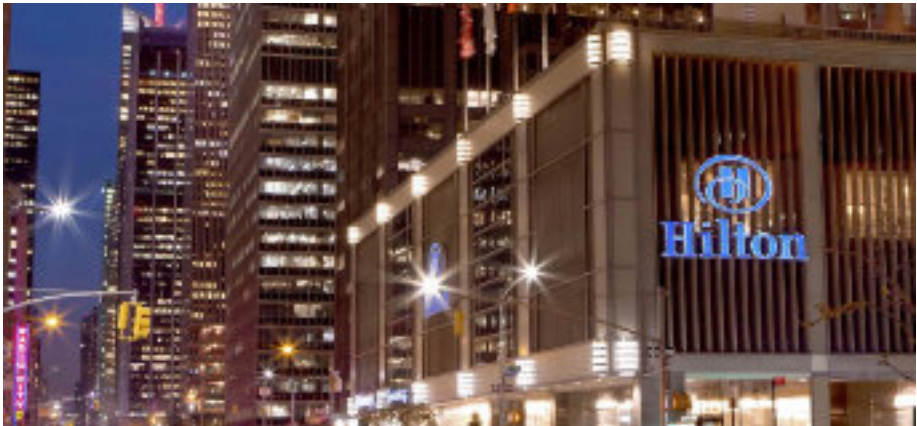
FUTURE NECTFL CONFERENCES

February 27-March 1, 2025
NY Hilton Midtown

February 26-28, 2026
NY Hilton Midtown

NORTHEAST CONFERENCE
on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

The NECTFL Editorial Board

Our sincere gratitude to the following individuals who have agreed to serve as reviewers of manuscripts submitted for publication in the NECTFL *Review.* We cannot fulfill our mission without them!

From the 2024 Conference Chair

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

On behalf of the NECTFL Board of Directors and Executive Director, Christopher Gwin, I am pleased to present the 92nd edition of the NECTFL *Review*, an academic journal for PK–16+ world languages educators, researchers, and administrators. I am confident that this edition of the journal will help to inspire and grow the profession. I am thankful to the authors and contributors for their time and research and to our editorial staff of Robert Terry and Catherine Ritz for their work in producing this edition of the NECTFL *Review*. This edition of the NECTFL *Review* is unique in that in addition to the scholarly articles, you will find stories of the impact that teachers, administrators, and all in the field of education have had on others, as our Past Chairs share their own butterfly effects, in celebration of our 70th annual conference theme: "Our Butterfly Effect: Creating a Lasting Impact."

The 70th anniversary celebration at NECTFL 2024 was a success! Throughout the conference participants not only shared new learning with others, but also had the opportunity to share moments of happiness and hope when talking about their own impact on the lives of others. This year's conference theme: "Our Butterfly Effect: Creating a Lasting Impact," was selected to help reinvigorate and revitalize our world language community with not only new ideas for classroom practice but realizing the impact that we can have not only on our students, but our colleagues, our communities, and our world. Teachers have an impact that is sometimes unimaginable. Over the course of a career, teachers at the secondary level may teach more than 3,000+ students, while elementary teachers are more likely to see numbers more than 800+ students. With such an incredible impact, I ask, What are you doing to help impact the lives of this next generation? How have you been able to design lessons, create experiences, travel abroad with students, making their learning not only meaningful, but impactful?

As I have said before, now is the time to see the impact we have together, moving our collective wings and moving our students forward on their journey towards language proficiency. Won't you create a lasting impact by inviting a colleague to join you in presenting at a conference? Joining you for professional development? Participating in a webinar or facilitating a book discussion? We often never know the impact that we have on those around us but encourage you to think about how you can help to spread the important work of world language education to those around you. Let's make an impact on our local communities, states, region, country, and world! Together we are more powerful than we are individually.

As a point of personal privilege, I would like to thank those who have helped make me a part of their butterfly effect, sharing friendships, work relationships, mentorships and more with a young, new teacher looking for a place in this profession. To those who have pushed me, encouraged me, mentored me, and more - THANK YOU! Your impact has made a difference in my life, and hopefully the lives of my

students. The power of our impact can be so great, I hope you will use your impact to help create a world of change makers!

On behalf of Vice-Chair, Jill Schimmel, I would like to invite you to our 71ˢᵗ conference, to be held in Midtown Manhattan at the Hilton Midtown, February 27–March 1, 2025. The theme for the 2025 conference is "Empowering Language Learners for Global Change." Please be on the lookout for our Call for Proposals.

Best,

Jimmy Wildman
NECTFL Chair, 2024

NECTFL Scholarships

▶ Teacher Conference Scholarships

Thanks to very generous grants from The NYS Statewide Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN) at NYU and Vista Higher Learning, NECTFL is pleased to offer 10 scholarships for new teachers (1–5 years of experience) and 20 partial stipends for experienced "mentor" teachers (7+ years of experience) to attend the 2023 Northeast Conference.

▶ NECTFL Future Language Educator Scholarship

NECTFL is pleased to offer the NECTFL Future Language Educator Scholarship. A $1000 scholarship will be awarded to a future language educator from the NECTFL region to be used during the semester/year devoted to student teaching (graduate or undergraduate). The recipient will receive one night hotel stay and a complimentary registration to the NECTFL conference to accept the award. The scholarship will be awarded at the conference and may be used either during that spring session or the following fall semester.

For more information, click on the link to the NECTFL Scholarships/Awards page: **https://www.nectfl.org/scholarships/**

In Memoriam

Joy Renjilian-Burgy

(1942 - 2024)

Joy Renjilian-Burgy, 81, of Wellesley, MA, passed away on January 14, 2024 in Boulder, CO, attended by her husband Don and her twin sons Sarkis and Lucien. Joy leaves behind her 3 sisters: Josh, Sally, and Margaret, and a large extended family.

Joy was born on December 9,1942, in Holyoke, MA, to Armenian parents Sarkis Renjilian and Aznive Melidonian, who came to the US after fleeing the Armenian Genocide.

Joy was a graduate of Holyoke High School, where she excelled as a student, athlete, singer, and actor. Joy went on to attend Mt Holyoke College, earning a B.A. in education and Spanish language. She did her graduate work in higher education and Spanish language at Harvard University.

Nicknamed "Alegria" (joy/happiness) by her colleagues, Joy's professional career, success as an author, and academic accomplishments were prolific, but Joy was foremost a teacher whose love for students spanned over 50 years of passion, energy, and innovation in the classroom.

Joy established a professional home base at Wellesley College where she was tenured for more than 45 years. A consummate sports fan, Joy could often be found on the sidelines of NCAA women's sporting events when she wasn't acting as department Chair, writing textbooks, presiding over a conference, or walking the halls at Wellesley or Harvard.

In 2017, Joy was honored by King Felipe VI of Spain with *La Orden de la Cruz de Isabel la Católica*" one of the highest civil honors awarded by the Spanish government for individuals fostering the study of Spanish language and culture. When Joy wasn't at work, she was often… working! And in the in-between moments she loved to cook, host, watch Boston sports, advocate for those less fortunate, and respond to the many people who sought her professional and emotional counsel.

Over the years, Joy (and Don) welcomed countless people into their home. Their dinner table was a place where royals mixed with refugees and students, and over time, through laughter and food, the many disparate individuals were woven into one big Joy-full family.

Beyond all the awards and accolades, it's perhaps the potency, color, and warmth of this extended family tapestry that Joy will best be remembered for.

from — **https://www.forevermissed.com/joyjoyjoy**

Co-recipient of a mini-grant from the John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur Foundation, I have spent a lifetime giving presentations and workshops at conferences nationally and abroad, resulting also in leadership roles in the profession beyond Wellesley College: as (past) president of several associations, including the AATSP (American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese), NECLAS (New England Council for Latin American Studies), MaFLA (Mass. Foreign Language Association), AIWA (Armenian International Women's Association). I also was chair of NECTFL (Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, the oldest pedagogical conference in the country, additionally, Board member of ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

from — https://www.wellesley.edu/spanish/faculty/renjilian-burgy

The Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages serves educators in all languages (including classical, less commonly taught, and ESL), at all levels from kindergarten through university, in both public and private settings. In existence since the late 1940s, NECTFL is the largest of five regional associations of its kind in the United States, representing educators from Maine to Virginia but exercising leadership nation-wide.

NECTFL has expanded its outreach, professional development and advocacy efforts through publications, workshops, research projects and other initiatives. Its prestige has been reflected in its singular ability to bring together the profession's most prestigious leaders for world-class and ground-breaking programs while sustaining an organizational culture that is interactive, welcoming, and responsive.

Through representation on its Board of Directors, through its Advisory Council, through conference offerings and refereed journal articles, NECTFL maintains a commitment to the individual foreign language teacher, to collaborative endeavors, to innovation and to inclusionary politics and policies.

What We Do:

We serve world language teachers by

- **listening to them**
- **representing their diverse views**
- **bringing them together**
- **nurturing their growth as newcomers and veterans treating them as caring friends and respected professionals**

Reflecting on the Past to Inform The Future

In early May of 2023, I asked the Executive Director of NECTFL if he had a list of the past chairs of the organization. He sent me an Excel spreadsheet with their names and contact information. On May 5, I wrote the following letter to these past chairs:

> Did you know that in 2024, NECTFL will mark its 70th anniversary? The 2024 conference, chaired by Jimmy Wildman (CT) and being held in New York on February 22–24 has the theme *Our Butterfly Effect: Creating a Lasting Impact*. We will consider what we have learned over the past 70 years at NECTFL, what impact our conference has had on the field and on individual classroom practice, and how to sustain this impact going forward.
>
> As Editor of the NECTFL *Review*, I would like to publish a special edition of the journal as our March 2024 issue with input from past chairs of the conference. The theme of the issue will be "Reflecting on the Past to Inform the Future." We would very much like to know what your thoughts are on topics relating to world language teaching with your particular perspective on areas such as program development; diversity, equity, and inclusion; the evolution of trends in teaching; bridging the articulation gap; the teacher shortage; saving programs; … the list goes on.
>
> I am not asking for a lengthy, research-based article with multitudes of references. Instead, I would like to know how you think world language teaching has evolved, basing your thoughts on how things were when you were chair of NECTFL, how you see NECTFL's impact on and contributions to the profession, and how things have changed.
>
> This special edition of the NECTFL *Review* will reflect our Northeast Conference Reports, the landmark publications of the organization that first appeared in 1954. Please let me know if you are willing to contribute to this special edition of the NECTFL *Review*. Your submission will not be reviewed by outside reviewers. The length is up to you. I wouldn't expect your contribution until toward the end of October.
>
> Thank you for considering this.
>
> Robert M. Terry
> Editor
> NECTFL *Review*

Chairs of NECTFL

(Including conference themes)

1954 Hunter Kellenberger†
Brown University
"Foreign Language Teachers and Tests"

1955 Germaine Brée†
New York University
"Culture, Literature, and Articulation"

1956 Dorothy B. Crawford†
Philadelphia H.S. for Girls
"Foreign Language Tests and
Techniques"

1957 William N. Locke†
Massachussets Institute of Technology
"The Language Classroom"

1958 George N. Shuster†
Hunter College
"The Language Teacher"

1959 Léon E. Dostert†
Georgetown University
"The Language Learner"

1960 Remigio U. Pane†
Rutgers University
"Culture in Language Learning"

1961 Carl F. Bayerschmidt†
Columbia University
"Modern Language Teaching in School
and College"

1962 Edward J. Geary†
Harvard University
"Current Issues in Language Learning"

1963 Harry L. Levy†
Hunter College
"Language Learning: The Intermediate Phase"

1964 Alfred S. Hayes†
Center for Applied Linguistics
"Foreign Language Teaching: Ideals
and Practices"

1965 Wilmarth H. Starr†
New York University
"Foreign Language Teaching:
Challenges to the Profession"

1966 Jean Perkins†
Swarthmore College
"Language Teaching: Broader
Contexts"

1967 G. Reginald Bishop, Jr.†
Rutgers University
"Foreign Languages: Reading,
Literature, and Requirements"

1968 Robert G. Mead†
Jr. University of Connecticut
"Foreign Language Learning: Research
and Development: An Assessment"

1969 F. André Paquette†
American Council on the Teaching of
Foreign Languages
"Sight and Sound: The Sensible and
Sensitive Use of Audio-Visual Aids"

1970 Remunda Cadoux†
Hunter College
"Foreign Languages and the 'New' Student"

1971 Hilary Hayden†
OSB St. Anselm's Abbey School
"Leadership for Continuing Development"

1972 Mills F. Edgerton†
Jr. Bucknell University
"Other Words, Other Worlds: Language-
in-Culture"

1973 Joan L. Feindler†
East Williston (NY) P.S.
"Sensitivity in the Foreign-Language
Classroom"

† = deceased

1974 Joseph A. Tursi†
SUNY at Stony Brook
"Toward Student-Centered Foreign Language Programs"

1975 Jerome G. Mirsky†
Jericho (NY) Public Schools
"Goals Clarification: Curriculum Teaching Evaluation"

1976 Philip E. Arsenault†
Montgomery County (MD) P.S.
"Language and Culture: Heritage and Horizons"

1977 Jane MacFarland†
Bourque Stratford (CT) P.S.
"Language: Acquisition Application Appreciation"

1978 Thomas H. Geno†
University of Vermont
"New Contents New Teachers New Publics"

1979 Paul Cincinnato†
Farmingdale (NY) P.S.
"The Foreign Language Learner in Today's Classroom Environment"

1980 John L.D. Clark†
Educational Testing Services
"Our Profession: Present Status and Future Directions"

1981 Helene Zimmer-Loew
NYS Deparrment of Education
"Foreign Language and International Studies: Toward Cooperation and Integration"

1982 Toby Tamarkin
Manchester (CT) Comm. College
"The Foreign Language Teacher: The Lifelong Learner"

1983 John Darcey†
West Hartford (CT) P.S.
"Foreign Languages: Key Links in the Chain of Learning"

1984 June Phillips
Indiana University of PA
"The Challenge for Excellence in Foreign Language Education"

1985 Stephen Levy†
Roslyn (NY) Public Schools
"Proficiency, Curriculum, Articulation: The Ties that Bind"

1986 Helen Lepke†
Clarion University of PA
"Listening, Reading, Writing: Analysis and Application"

1987 Christine Brown
Glastonbury (CT) P.S.
"The Language Teacher: Commitment and Collaboration"

1988 Richard Williamson†
Bates College
"Toward a New Integration of Language and Culture"

1989 John Nionakis†
Hingham (MA) Public Schools
"Shaping the Future: Challenges and Opportunities"

1990 Heidi Byrnes
Georgetown University
"Shifting the Instructional Focus to the Learner"

1991 Judith Liskin-Gasparro
Middlebury College
"Building Bridges and Making Connections"

1992 Joy Renjilian-Burgy†
Wellesley College
"Languages for a Multicultural World in Transition"

1993 José Díaz
Hunter College High School
"Reflecting on Proficiency from a Classroom Perspective"

1995 Rebecca Kline
Penn State University
"Voices from the Field: Experiences and Beliefs of Our Constituents"

1996 Julia Bressler†
Nashua (NH) Public Schools
"Foreign Languages for All: Challenges and Choices"

1997 Eileen Glisan
Indiana University of PA
"Collaborations: Meeting New Goals, New Realities"

1998 Richard Donato
University of Pittsburgh
"Stories Teachers Tell: Reflecting on Professional Practice"

1999 Martha Abbott
Fairfax County (VA) P.S.
"Language Learners of Tomorrow: Process and Promise"

2000 Frank Medley, Jr.†
West Virginia University
"Agents of Change in a Changing Age"

2001 Margaret Ann Kassen
Catholic University of America
"Beyond the Boundaries: Changing Contexts in Language Learning"

2002 Donald Reutershan
Maine Dept. of Education
"Teaching in Changing Times: The Courage to Lead"

2003 John Webb
Princeton University
"Foreign Language Teachers as Partners in the Education of All Students"

2004 Frank Mulhern†
Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association
"Listening to Learners"

2005 Mikle Ledgerwood
SUNY Stony Brook
"Opening Cultural Windows in the Year of Languages"

2006 Nancy Gadbois
Springfield MA Public Schools
"Building on Common Ground: Within, Across, Beyond"

2007 Marjorie Hall Haley
George Mason University
"The Many Views of Diversity: Understanding Multiple Realities"

2008 Sharon Wilkinson
Simpson College (IA)
"The iGeneration: Turning Instruction Inside Out"

2009 Laura Franklin
Northern Virginia Comm. College
"Engaging Communities: The World is Our Classroom"

2010 Jaya Vijayasekar
Vernon (CT) Public Schools
"Simply Irresistible: People, Programs, and Practices that Inspire"

2011 Charlotte Gifford
Greenfield (MA) Comm. College
"Strengthening Connections: Colleagues, Content, & Curriculum"

2012 Jennifer L. Steeley
Manheim Twp. (PA) Middle School
"Global Identities"

2013 Arlene White
Salisbury University
"Developing Leaders for Tomorrow's Learners in World Languages and ESOL"

2014 Janel Lafond-Paquin
Rogers High School Newport RI
"Susstaining Communities through World Languages"

2015 Cheryl Berman
SAU 50 Newington (NH)
[Conference Cancelled]

2016 Rebecca Fox
George Mason University
"Developing Intercultural Competence through World Languages"

2017 Carole Smart
Newmarket High School
"Strengthening World Language Education: Standards for Success"

2018 Bill Heller
SUNY Geneseo
"Unleashing the POWer of Proficiency"

2019 Rosanne Zeppieri
Plainsboro Regional School District (NJ)
"Authentic Language, Authentic Learning"

2020 Nathan Lutz
Kent Place School
Languages for All: Envisioning Language Learning Opportunities for Every Learner"

2021 Michael Bogdan
South Middleton School District
"Finding Our Voice: World Languages for Social Justice"

2022 Christopher Gwin
Haddonfield High School, University of Pennsylvania
"Classroom Roots, Global Reach"

2023 Margarita Dempsey
Smithfield High School
"Reimagining the World Language 'Classroom': The Future Starts Today"

2024 James Wildman
Glastonburg Public Schools
"Our Butterfly Effect: Creating a Lasting Impact"

The response to my request was outstanding. On the following pages, you will find the responses from 30 chairs of the Northeast Conference—past and present. In the comments that follow, there are condensed snapshots of the past of world language education (often called "foreign," and some still cling to that terminology). You will also read about landmark changes and innovations that have occurred in the past few years.

In *Agents of Change in a Changing World* (Davis, J.N. "Perspectives on an Age: Forty-Five Years of NECTFL Reports," R. M. Terry, Ed. Northeast Conference Reports, 2000, pp. 23–46), the author sums up "the roles that the Northeast Conference has played in the development of foreign language teaching in the US during the past half century" (p. 23). In this chapter, Davis focuses on the first twenty or so years of NECTFL history rather than on its recent past.

This special issue of the NECTFL *Review* focuses on the period from 1981 to the present. Reading these comments and reflections are like reading a renewed Northeast Conference Report—insights, guidance, words of caution, and words of encouragement.

In the NECTFL *Review* (No. 54, Spring 2004, pp, 6–8), there is a section titled "Past Chairs Reminisce," in which several past chairs help celebrate the 50th anniversary of NECTFL. A number of these past chairs are now deceased, but it would be fitting to start with them and read what they said about the organization.

Reginald Bishop (1965)

In 1965, many of us were excited by the thought that FL teachers could become a special force for social equity and tolerance by seeking to educate the public that a child raised in a foreign language was a cultural asset to the American. Second, by our offering at least some instruction in the native language of non-English speaking children, we could help them to feel pride in a special skill rather than the "shame" of an outsider taunted by classmates for communicating in "funny sounds."

But on a lighter note... By 1960, we had grown to larger numbers than local colleges could accommodate during spring term. Rutgers hit on the idea of renting a winter-vacated hotel on the Atlantic City boardwalk. Several days before our meeting, an advance party went down to be sure that all was in order. Imagine our dismay to walk into the high-ceilinged, elegant Ambassador Hotel lobby and to see water pouring from a plumbing leak above into rapidly-filling emergency receptacles.

Thomas H. Geno (1978)

My greatest remembrance is that my years with the Northeast Conference were wildly eventful and most inspiring.

In the first place, I recall that my period of allegiance to the organization began in the early sixties when I was teaching at Middlebury Union High School here in Vermont. From there on out, given NDEA, A-LM, workshops, institutes and the like, those of us in the FL profession lived through some rather heady years! I was first asked to work on one of the committees for the Reports under the leadership of the late Joan Feindler. Somehow or other [most probably due to my shy manner, certainly not in any way due to the originality of my mediocre committee work] I found myself nominated as a candidate to serve on the Board of Directors. Miracle of miracles, I won the bloomin' seat at the boardroom table of that august group.

After several years on the Board, I discovered that my peers had decided to railroad me into being their next Chairman. [Everyone else they wanted must have refused the job.] If memory serves me correctly, it was in 1978 that I found myself the great Pooh-Bah for the 25th Anniversary Celebration of the group's founding. It was because of my many friends, colleagues and contacts with the NE Conference that I became acquainted with the existence of ACTFL. and when I was hired by the University of Vermont in 1965, part of my task in the Department of Romance Languages was to assume the task of teaching foreign language pedagogy. My prior ten years of experience in teaching French on the secondary school level seemed to have pleased both my department chairman and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. How pleased I am to be able to see the Conference moving into its 51st year of existence. It seems impossible that it all began so long ago. I think back on those years with great pleasure

and easily reflect on my good fortune in having been able to meet and work with such devoted, exciting, intelligent, motivated and professional peers from all over the country.

John Darcey (1983)

When I think of the 1983 Conference two thoughts come to mind: the fun we had at the Conference held for the first time in the great city of Baltimore and the wonderful people I incorporated into the Conference, most of whom I had never met and who during the course of that year made a lasting impression on me as a professional. That I invited people like Helena Anderson, Evelyn Brega, Nancy Rhodes, Alice Omaggio, Dora Kennedy, Steve Levy, Gladys Lipton, Claire Gaudiani, Humphrey Tonkin, Vicki Galloway, and H.H. Stern to be the authors of the Reports was due to the great Helene Zimmer-Loew without whose strong support and counsel I would never have made it. What an impressive group it was; what great contributions they have made to Foreign Language education; how stimulating, exciting, and rewarding it was to work with them. Great memories, and many thanks to all who worked to make the Baltimore adventure—the 30th anniversary of the Northeast Conference—such a success.

Julia Bressler (1996)

My gift [to the NECTFL Fund for the Future] will never match in kind the impact that my affiliation with NEC has had on my life... beautiful and lasting friendships, reward¬ing and fulfilling professional growth and a chance to lead, for one glorious weekend in New York in April 1996, the profession that has given so much to me.

Frank W. Medley, Jr. (2000)

Memories of the NECTFL 2002 Conference Chair, or What Goes Wrong Regardless of Your Title!

"Agents of Change in a Changing Age" had a nice ring to it as a Conference theme. Little did I know the myriad ways in which the concept of change would manifest itself through out the meeting! The first change was the location of the meeting itself, which was held in Washington DC in 2000, after having been in the New York Hilton for the preceding 22 years. As a result of this change, many participants (including the Conference Chair) got lost on the way to the hotel. For two hours after arriving in Washington, I searched for the hotel. Finally, I spotted it, but then I could not find an exit that would lead me to the hotel entrance. So, around and around I went, becoming very familiar with the roads and trails in Rock Creek Park, but unable to get to the hotel!

A second significant change occurred at the Chairs Reception. For years, West Virginia University sent between 50-60 graduate students to NECTFL as a part of their professional development. Although the University funded the registration, travel, and lodging, no funds were given them for food. Thus, when the graduate students were invited to the reception, they immediately recognized an opportunity! They arrived as a group, passed through the buffet line like a swarm of locusts through a wheat field, and left little but bare tables in their wake! We immediately began to request additional items to replenish the buffet, so that the newly arriving and bewildered guests would have something to eat!

A third change that occurred happened at the opening general session, and was most painfully obvious to me, since I was sitting next to the person invited to deliver the keynote address. Unfortunately, the visiting dignitary preceding the keynoter paid absolutely no attention to the five- minute time limit that he had been asked to observe, and continued his comments well into the keynote speakers time. As the minutes slid by, the keynote speaker was busily deleting paragraph after paragraph from his prepared re-marks, in order to have the session end on time. As the Conference Chair, I sat there helplessly and watched these changes take place, painful as it was. As a result of this experience, NECTFL has now changed its approach regard-ing speakers at the opening general session.

The fiftieth anniversary brought together many of NECTFL's past chairs: (front row, left to right: Eileen Glisan, Joy Renjilian-Burgy, John Webb, Margaret Ann Kassen, Helene Zimmer-Loew, Don Reutershan.; Back row, left to right: Christy Brown, Steve Levy, Richard Williamson, Reginald Bishop, Heidi Byrnes, Frank Medley, Jr., Marty Abbott, Becky Kline.

Helene Zimmer-Loew (1981)

Political Awakening and Organizational Cooperation: The Northeast Conference Role

From its inception in 1954, the Northeast Conference format consisted of an annual report authored and edited by the most prominent figures in the field at the time. The chair chose a topic (as he/she does today) and then identified experts in the field to write chapters for the Report which we attendees read before attending the actual conference. The plenary sessions were held in a huge ballroom with microphones in strategic places as the panel of writers discussed and clarified their chapter (defended would be a better word for some topics). Often there were 2000 or more attending this opening session, many of whom had questions and opinions about the Report. The smaller sessions were generally focused on those chosen topics.

The topic and subtopics of the NEC Reports for several decades were mainly on language and culture. Despite the launching of Sputnik in October 1957, the Reports up until 1981 contain few references to key issues recognizing this historic event, such as internationalization of the curriculum, study abroad, student exchanges, or collaboration with others outside our field such as social studies and business.

It wasn't until 1979 that these and other issues were directly addressed on a national level. In 1978 President Jimmy Carter reacted to the final act of the Helsinki Accords which stated that all signatories (which included the United States) were obligated to "encourage the study of foreign languages and civilizations as an important means of expanding communication among peoples." He created the President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies with ample funding for many meetings all over the United States. The Commission was formed comprising representatives from the federal government, Congress, academia, trade unions, business, and the media. The foreign language profession represented by national and regional conference leadership quickly organized and became actively engaged for the next year with prominent members presenting supporting rationale for increased recognition and funding for the field at all hearings nationwide. Leaders of the Northeast Conference had a major role in organizing and presenting at these hearings.

The Commission's tasks were to:

1. Recommend means for directing public attention to the importance of foreign language and international studies.
2. Assess the need in the United States for foreign language and area specialists
3. Recommend what foreign language area studies programs are appropriate at all academic levels
4. Review existing legislative authorities and make recommendations for changes needed to carry out most effectively the Commission's recommendations.
5. Recommend means for directing public attention to the importance of foreign language and international studies for the improvement of

communications and understanding with other nations in an increasingly interdependent world.

6. Assess the need in the United States for foreign language and area specialists, ways in which foreign language and international studies contribute to meeting these needs, and the job market for individuals with these skills.

7. Recommend what foreign language area studies programs are appropriate to educate American students in international languages and cultural studies.

8. Review existing legislative authorities and make recommendations for changes needed to carry out most effectively the Commission's recommendations.

The final report comprised over 130 recommendations including:

- Improving foreign language competence at all levels
- Identifying the needs of college and university programs in undergraduate and advanced studies
- Advancing international research and teaching through academic exchange
- Promoting citizen education in international affairs
- Strengthening and supporting the needs of business, trade, and labor needs abroad.

In addition, several of the Commission's final recommendations state that a non-governmental group, a National Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies be supported with private funding to monitor and report on the field and encourage its support by government and the private sector. Fortunately, the field already had the structure for this Commission: The Joint National Committee for Language (JNCL) which began in 1972 as an informal coalition of several national foreign language associations which had as "its main purpose .. .the implementation of a continuing movement in favor of learning foreign languages in the United States, as well as the sponsorship of special projects to improve and enhance the teaching of foreign languages." (*Foreign Language Annals*, Vol.6., Number 4, March 1973, pp.292-293)

This recommendation was realized in short time with the establishment of the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) which was incorporated a a nonprofit trade association and JNCL's sister organization in 1981 (JNCL-NCLIS website). Since that time, almost all state and specific language associations among others have become members.

Shortly thereafter, the ACTFL Executive Council voted to add representatives of the five regional conferences to its Board of Directors: NECTFL, CSCTFL. PNCFL, SCOLT, SWCOLT.

The next unifier of the language field came in 1995 with the development, publication, and dissemination of the foreign language standards, which included and continues to involve and enjoy support from most language associations at all levels of instruction.

With its strong leadership and excellent well-attended conferences over the years, the Northeast Conference has become one of the leading organizations in this move toward political awareness and unity. Many Board chairs and members have gone on to lead national organizations with their talents and knowledge which have been developed in the unique environment of scholarship and political savvy that the NEC represents.

Although there is still an emphasis on the teaching of language and culture, the Conference has been a leader in broadening its focus to meet the needs of its attendees and the American student.

Toby Tamarkin (1982)

When I began teaching Spanish at Manchester (CT) Community College, the typical practice in high schools and colleges was to emphasize reading, writing and grammar. Speaking was important but in most 1964 classrooms content followed a textbook with additional reading based on literary short stories, preferably by an author of long-standing recognition. At the same time, many businesses in our Northeastern area were hiring a growing number of Puerto Rican workers with limited or no English and our college extension/outreach program was getting requests to help English- only managers work with these new hires.

I worked with faculty from our business, nursing and biology areas to create language lessons for English-speaking trainers to use with these new workers based on vocabulary necessary to the specific job for which these new workers were hired. Using videos and an overhead projector (remember those) to promote role-playing, these supervisors and managers learned everything from growing mushrooms in a Dole plant to doing intake on a patient in the hospital. We then brought these videos into our language classrooms along with culture capsules, including visiting and interviewing members of the Hispanic community in Hartford.

Although matching language learning with future careers didn't become the "hot new technique" to fluency, it did cause teachers to think more about the need for both speaking opportunities and cultural components in and outside the classroom.

It has been exciting to watch as our language organizations have helped teachers move steadily towards greater oral competency and "hands on" cultural understanding through a proliferation of travel and exchange programs. And in today's language classes due to the rapid development of technology, our students don't have to leave home or school to practice speaking or research cultural similarities or differences. We have come a long way from the mimeo machine and slide projector to the internet and AI!

June Phillips (1984)

MY FIRST CONFERENCE: 1960s

The setting: a farewell meeting for the group of teachers who had worked together during a 6-week NDEA Institute at Princeton University in 1964. Dr. André Maman congratulated us and suggested "Perhaps we could have a reunion at the Northeast Conference in April next year." For many of us, "What's the Northeast Conference?" was our response. We soon learned as Dr. Maman provided us with information and asked that we let him know if we could come, and he would arrange our reunion.

And so, my first Northeast Conference dated to Spring 1965. Additional good news: my school district was willing to pay the registration and transportation based upon the program I shared with the decision makers. I arrived at the Sheraton Hotel in NYC exhausted from the over eight-hour journey on the Broadway Limited from Pittsburgh.

I came forearmed with the 1965 Northeast Conference *Reports*, *Foreign Language Teaching: Challenges to the Profession* (Bishop, Ed.), which I had received in the mail several weeks earlier. My description of that first conference for me provides a context for aspects of NECTFL that have changed dramatically over the years. One could apply the Standards cultural framework of products, practices, and perspectives to NECTFL in its evolution. The perspectives, that is the purpose and impact of the conference have held steady through different methodologies, circumstances in schools, colleges, and universities, as the profession seeks to expand opportunities for the study of another language and to improve learners' proficiencies for an increasingly interactive world. Practices have certainly been different. That first conference I attended consisted primarily of a series of working committee panels convened around the topics in the *Reports*. The plenary was in a large ballroom with microphones dispersed in the aisles. Panelists spoke to explicate their writing and then questions (as well as some diatribes) came from audience members who went up to the microphones. Almost everyone who took to the mic represented higher education as did most panelists/writers. I recall being somewhat taken aback as I was not accustomed to that kind of argumentation in either my university studies or at the NDEA Institute. There were some smaller meetings, but basically, the Reports laid out the premises of discussions. They were the product, written evidence of current issues in the field. In 1965, the Northeast presenters had no Power-Points, not even transparencies, certainly no video clips, just a print edition to serve as the focus of discussion; the 'challenge' in the *Reports* title that year was the movement toward greater emphasis on oral language, everyday conversational topics as represented by the audiolingual approach, the methodology that NDEA institutes were exploring. At that time, this was an advance from the grammar/translation goals that preceded it. While that methodology is outdated now, at the time NECTFL was furthering its role in informing and promoting effective practices as currently conceived. Most importantly, it has continued in that vein. (See Shrum & Glisan, 2016, Figure 2.1 for a chart of Selected Foundational SLA Theories and Pedagogical Approaches).

WORKING COMMITTEE 1975

At some point in the 1970s participation on working committees included educators from the schools as well as higher education. In fact, when I was on a Working Committee in 1975, K-12 teachers were in the majority of all three working committees. The Report: Goals Clarification: Curriculum, Teaching, Evaluation (Born, Ed.) was soundly rooted in classroom practice and rich in examples of the approaches being explored at that time. No Zoom or email and even telephones carried long distance charges meant that to 'work,' committee members had to meet in person, and NECTFL funded several of those collaborations during our working year. On a personal note, I must say that several of the colleagues I met at those meetings became lifelong friends, not just colleagues. Discussions were lively, even argumentative at times; there were panels at the Conference where we presented our views, but that giant theatrical plenary had evolved to sessions conducted by individuals or groups who had submitted proposals. Thus, the conference became more dynamic, interactive, and drew from a wide variety of teachers/presenters.

NEW CHALLENGES in the 1980s

By the time I became Conference Chair in 1984, our topic once more was a focus on challenge, a flashback to my first conference that I hadn't realized until I began to work on this reflection. By 1984, the working committee organization had ceded to individual authors, selected to write articles addressing the conference theme. The term 'reports' no longer was visible on the print copy. As chair and in consultation with the editor, Gilbert A. Jarvis (my dissertation advisor captured to work for me), nationally known writers tackled the issue of *The Challenge to Excellence in Foreign Language Education*. A perusal of chapter titles could serve a more recent publication; they encapsulate issues we are still addressing today and could indeed still serve as chapters in a current publication, digital delivery now.

- For Teachers: A Challenge for Competence by Barbara H. Wing
- The Challenge of Proficiency: Student Characteristics by Diane W. Birckbichler
- Testing in a Communicative Approach by Michael Canale
- Of Computers and Other Technologies by Glyn Holmes
- The Challenge for Excellence in Curriculum and Materials Development by Christine L. Brown

The plenary panel discussion of individual chapters by authors had disappeared. Rather in the opening session, introduction of authors and acknowledgement of their work was given. By this time, Northeast had chosen to feature a speaker from outside the immediate language teaching profession as a keynoter. For the 1984 conference, Dr. Leon Botstein, Bard College's young President, Swiss born, of an immigrant family, student of music in Mexico, shared his innovative ideas and approach to education at Bard and the contributions he felt that foreign language learning made to the humanities and to his life. The 'Reports' continued to reach registrants in advance of the conference. Sessions were selected to the extent possible to address the themes. By this time, the conference committee also sought to assure

that sessions addressed different grade and proficiency levels; states in the geographical region were provided with slots as were groups such as the College Board's Advanced Placement programs; and individuals submitted session proposals for selection.

I was privileged to have the late Stephen L. Levy as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors. Since Stephen is not here to share information on his conference in 1985, let me add that the theme he chose was the issue of proficiency, a relatively new term then, one that continues to dominate discussions. That conference took the challenges from 1984 and turned them into an exploration of proficiency in speaking, writing, receptive skills, and cultures. (Omaggio, Ed.) Once again, key topics had not dramatically changed, but theoretical considerations, research into them, and applications to instruction had.

A REGIONAL CONFERENCE WITH A NATIONAL ROLE

Others will reflect more specifically on conferences after the mid-80s. What has remained constant is how the Northeast continues to investigate best practices as theories and research develop. It was a major forum as national standards were developed and adopted by states. It has attended to modern concepts of assessment of proficiencies. It has served its constituent states to share concerns related to educational issues specific to its geographical area. The size of regional conferences allows participants to become colleagues, to see familiar faces, to take part in events in one place over a long weekend. Technologies support more visual presentations and teachers can see exemplary practice and go home with concrete ideas and materials.

Yet today there are new challenges that go beyond effective teaching and assessment in our classrooms. Many of these issues will require new collaborations and approaches. As a profession we are being challenged and confronted with external pressures from educational and political pressures. Teacher shortages are rampant throughout grades and disciplines, and they are occurring in our discipline as well. Undergraduate majors in language education are fewer and fewer in colleges and universities; indeed, many have done away with their preparation programs. Alternative paths are bringing more career changers to the classroom. Many of those are native speakers with high levels of proficiency and cultural experiences. When states hold to requirements of at least some course work in second-language acquisition or methods, these individuals contribute greatly to students and to colleagues in their schools. Most states do have requirements for the alternative paths, but during the COVID period and now continuing as shortages grow, some are ignoring those to get a human in the classroom or even reverting to digital resources with minimal personal input. What can a conference such as NECTFL do to contribute to regional efforts to attract teachers to the field? No easy answer.

Just recently, the elimination of world language majors and faculty at West Virginia University could have ramifications not just in schools in the area but in other places as well. Deletion of certain majors at small colleges/universities

might be understandable; at a state's major public institution, it's another matter. Reading about that brought back memories of the late Dr. Frank W. Medley, Department Chair at WVU and NECTFL 2000 chair and of his predecessor as Department Chair at WVU, the late Dr. Robert Elkins. Bob Elkins used to bring a busload of graduate ESL students to the Northeast Conference; he felt that it was important for them to experience professional development of the highest caliber. The news is filled with articles about the decline in interest in the humanities at large; could what WVU did spread? If higher education abandons majors in languages, what happens to undergraduate general education requirements? Are they next? What happens to K-12 programs if languages are diminished in importance there? As travel worldwide increases, as increasing numbers of careers have international dimensions, as there are more needs for multilingual workers in the US, will communication come down to the best app?

I prefer not to end on a dire note, but the word 'challenge' has been used in many Northeast Conference Report titles, in the articles, and in the themes. So challenges may be taking a different path and my confidence is in the Northeast to continue its path toward meeting them.

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Christine Brown (1987)

Reflections on the Power of 70 Years of the Northeast Conference

I am honored to write this reflection on what the Northeast Conference has meant to me over my career in language education. I first attended the Northeast Conference in the early 1970s and felt it was the most profound educational exchange I could ever imagine. As a part of the foreign language department of the West Hartford Public Schools, I had heard about the privilege of being able to attend the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

From those first few years as a novice early language teacher in a department of dynamic and veteran language teachers and language leaders, I felt so excited and privileged to be supported financially to attend a conference of icons and leaders in the field of foreign language education.

In my district in Connecticut, language teachers looked upon attendance at the Northeast Conference as a rite of passage into a professional career as a language educator. I was part of a large language staff and in awe of the leadership in my own school district with such well respected language leaders as John Darcey and Doris Barry Owens as well as dozens of others. In 1974, they encouraged me to come along and stay at the New York Hilton to be a part of the annual pilgrimage to the Northeast Conference.

We were up at 5 a.m. to catch the train from Hartford in the hopes of making it to the opening General Session! From the first moment of our two-hour train ride into New York, I could tell what a special opportunity this was going to be. We had all received a copy of the conference preliminary program, and even on the train ride, we began the negotiation of who was going to go to what session. We had been told that we each had to cover different sessions so that we could report out on the entire conference to the colleagues who were not in the rotation to go this time. I read the overviews of the sessions and reviewed the pages of exhibitors but could not imagine the buzz that we would encounter when we arrived at the hotel. The first tip off came when we arrived at the imposing and beautiful New York Hilton. There were so many teachers and exhibitors with lots and lots of luggage in line to check in. Of course, four of us were in the same hotel room, sleeping two to a bed just to be able to cover the costs of being in New York. We threw our bags down and rushed to the registration area where we waited in what seemed to be an endless line to pick up our registrations. There was such an excitement and anticipation in that line. I was relieved that someone found my name so that I wasn't sent to the "losers" line where a volunteer teacher had to search for your credentials because you probably did not fill out the form correctly or your 'school purchase order' had not yet arrived.

The real magic though began when we crammed into the full house at the opening general session. Where did all these teachers come from? What an impressive outpouring of language educators! What an inspiring opening session! We split up then to find our selected sessions and had to stand outside some rooms as all the seats were taken and even the floor space was full. Everyone was engaged and most taking notes on what they heard that could be taken back to try out, share, and ponder for months to come. There were dynamic presentations, hours on end in the exhibit hall, small conversations as we met up with colleagues in area around the registration desks; it was a very full NEC Friday and then came the excitement of having an evening dinner with our team from West Hartford. This was Oz for me and a salve for our *esprit de corps* as a language teaching department from the West Hartford Public Schools.

This first experience at the Northeast Conference changed my life; not just my professional development life but my friendships and social life as well. Going to the Northeast Conference was an annual event and everyone in your family knew how important it was to be selected to attend the conference. Even if you had to spend your own money to attend, It was worth the investment. In reflecting on the impact of the first Northeast Conference I attended, it melted the barriers of the workplace with colleagues and provided the opportunity to socialize with people in a learning and relaxed environment. No matter how difficult the teaching environment could be, especially the intensity and the number of classes the elementary language teachers in the department were teaching on a daily basis, going to such a stimulating and fun event created special bonds with colleagues and nurtured deep friendships between teachers and supervisors. We all knew that this was a growth experience within the field that we loved and that so few outside the foreign language profession, back in the district, really understood.

The knowledge that we gained by attending the Northeast Conference as a team from the K to 12 level also solidified our understanding of one another's teaching challenges at every level of instruction in our own school system and provided us with insight into other districts, public and private schools in the northeast, and at the university and higher education level. I can recall trying to explain the power of this dynamic conglomeration of professional educators to my colleagues at the elementary schools in which I was teaching. Sometimes they were angry that we language teachers were permitted to miss school and therefore had to cancel language classes (usually without an appropriate substitute). We often had to justify to the elementary principals that this was our one chance at being immersed with teachers in our discipline who came from not just the Northeast to this conference but from all over the country. Most of the principals weren't overly enthusiastic about the fact that we were missing school even for one day. They were so worried about losing the coverage for the breaktimes (that our language classes provided) for the classroom teachers!

Some years if I wanted to attend the NEC was expected to cover the cost of the substitute to cover my classes as well as all expenses for the conference. I had to engage a substitute of the highest caliber months ahead of the conference, plan detailed lessons, and copy all materials for a sub who, in an unforeseen sub disaster, might not speak the language. The elementary language teachers were all practiced in rehearsing our students (10 daily, 30-minute classes of about 25 students in each class—250 students a day in two schools) to be the best students ever with no silliness for an un-initiated substitute or there would be "you know what" to pay when we returned. We did all of this just to be able to attend the NEC.

During those first 10 years of teaching, I learned so much from attending the Northeast Conference that I was willing to do whatever it took to attend. With colleagues in the district and across the region, we made close friends and

consulted on new ideas long before the ease of the internet. We developed workshop presentations that showcased our district and always brought back new materials, ideas, and connections each spring. My supervisor, colleague, and friend, John Darcey, encouraged me to become more active by submitting my name for consideration as a candidate for the NEC Board. I was terrified and convinced I would not make the slate let alone ever be elected. Another Connecticut mentor and chair of the NEC, Dr. Toby Tamarkin, convinced me to try. She and "Jack" Darcey would be my wingmen for this, and just about every other subsequent step I took in my career. Miraculously I was elected to the NEC Board.

As a board member, one of the few elementary language teachers to serve in those years, I was privileged to meet, serve with, and be mentored by the greatest language educators of my time. I can't express the experience of attending NEC Board meetings with Dr. Helene Loew, Jack Darcey, Dr. Toby Tamarkin, Dr. Heidi Byrnes, Dr. Judy Liskin-Gasparro, Dr. Helen Lepke, Dr. June Phillips, Dr. Dora Kennedy, Dr. Claire Kramsch; Protase Woodford, Steven Levy, Dr. Toni DiNapoli, Dr. Dick Williamson, Dr. Robert Terry and so many other language leaders were the giants serving as Chairs and NEC Board Members during my tenure and service on the Board and as Chair in 1982. The mentoring and excellence in language education, teaching, assessment, and advocacy shaped my entire life. Serving our profession on the shoulders of these giants was a lifelong pursuit for me. They were not only the mentors, but the trusted colleagues and friends who shaped my entire world view and ability to learn and to teach.

The Northeast Conference is and has been a kind of sacred place for me, and I believe for so many language educators over the last 70 years. It is a transformative event that annually soothes the challenges of being an educator in these times. The Northeast Conference is the cohesion that brings its arms around the chaos of change that we as educators have experienced and will continue to experience in our times. Almost every day in some way, I reflect on the educators and mentors from the Northeast Conference who have guided me over my career. The impact of the NEC on thousands of educators is immeasurable. Thank you to all, past, present, and future who continue to enter this special space that requires no membership, only that you show up and participate.

Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro (1991)

Reflections from 1991

A lot has changed in world language education since I was NECTFL chair in 1991. I have organized my reflections around three questions: (1) What was the professional landscape in our field in 1991, and what made it an important time in the history of world language education? (2) Looking back at that time 30+ years later, what did we get right? What insights and accomplishments served as the foundation of language teaching today? And finally, (3) What did we miss? What important directions and priorities in language teaching in 2023 were simply not on our radar screen in 1991?

1991: The professional landscape

The decade preceding the 1991 Conference was marked by the emergence and growth of what came to be known as the proficiency movement. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and the first series of oral proficiency interview (OPI) testing workshops in the early 1980s provided a novel framework for understanding and measuring oral language ability and, in turn, served as a catalyst for research, teaching, testing, and curriculum development projects. By 1991, many professional projects were underway.

The new focus on using the target language for communication in real-world contexts led to significant changes at the classroom, district, and state levels, and beyond. To give just one example, instructors who received OPI tester training learned how to incorporate role plays into the interview procedure to assess the Intermediate-level function of initiating and carrying out a social or transactional exchange, such as making arrangements to meet a friend for coffee or a house sitter getting information on how to take care of pets and plants. This oral proficiency assessment tool, the role play, quickly moved into the classroom teaching context. Student-to-student interaction was rare or, in most cases, absent from K–16 language instruction before that time. It is hard for us to imagine now how controversial student-centered communication was at that time: Who will correct their errors? Will their errors become fossilized? What will happen if they don't completely master (fill in grammatical structure here) before they go to the next level?

The professional landscape of the 1980s and early 1990s was one of excitement and innovation. The new conceptual framework of the ACTFL Guidelines and the OPI inspired teachers to focus on proficiency and performance outcomes as the organizing principle of curriculum development and lesson plan design, not on the linguistic building blocks (vocabulary and grammar) that had previously been at the center of instruction. New ideas about what to teach and how to teach found their way into textbooks and other instructional materials, and into conferences such as NECTFL and ACTFL. Educators found that proficiency and the ACTFL framework gave them a common language to communicate across levels about their expectations, their students' accomplishments, and how to bridge the gap between them. "Building Bridges and Making Connections," the theme of the 1991 conference, capitalized on the discovery of new collaborations—across instructional levels, across languages, between languages and other subject areas, between teaching and assessment, and between the classroom and the wider community. (For a bit more information, see the table of contents of the 1991 NECTFL Reports, edited by June K. Phillips, here: **https://www.nectfl.org/june-k-phillips-3/**).

If any of the topics in the 1991 NECTFL Reports seem familiar, it is because they appeared only a few years later in the guise of the Connections standard the *World-Readiness Standards for Language Learning, published as the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (1996, 1999). Looking back, that early understanding of the importance of extending language learning beyond the traditional confines of textbook and, for more advanced students, the literary canon, is one of the things that the 1991 NECTFL conference and its era got right.

Twenty–twenty hindsight: What did we get right in (the years surrounding) 1991?

The explosion of activity that resulted from the publication and dissemination of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in the decade leading up to 1991 continued in the 1990s and early 2000s as well. The major insights of that period became institutionalized in professional circles through their prominence in the textbooks and other materials used in language teacher preparation programs; as already mentioned, in the World-Readiness Standards; and in state-level curriculum frameworks. From my perspective 30+ years later, here are two of the insights that have had a lasting impact on world language education.

Performance at the center, not linguistic knowledge. Both the ACTFL Guidelines and the OPI focus on what a language learner can do in the L2, not on what that learner knows. This major change in orientation has continued to inform developments in assessment and in teaching until the present. The array of ACTFL-produced performance descriptors and can-do statements, along with state-level curriculum frameworks, all reflect the primacy of what students can do with what they know, not on what they know about the language as a system.

Professional discourse is open to all. The explosion of professional activity in the decade leading up to the 1991 conference included teachers at all levels and, with time, of a wide range of languages. Familiarity with the ACTFL Guidelines, exposure to talk about second language acquisition at workshops and conferences and, for many, experience with conducting and rating OPIs, gave classroom teachers with little or no background in second language acquisition a voice in the professional discourse. They had seen for themselves the disconnect between students' declarative linguistic knowledge, demonstrated in contexts of controlled exercises in teacher-centered classrooms, and their more limited ability to communicate in autonomous contexts. Thanks to this new conceptual framework, they could actively participate in heated discussions about error correction and grammar instruction, and they were challenged to think beyond the received wisdom about methods and classroom practices and to step back, observe, and analyze them with their students' speech as data. This expanded engagement by classroom teachers has had lasting resonance and is a significant feature of world language education today.

Twenty–twenty hindsight part 2: What did we miss?

As innovative as the decade surrounding the 1991 conference was, there were, of course, external affordances for language teaching (e.g., the internet, technology) that had not yet been developed. But if we look at the priorities of world language education today, there were also topics that my generation of language researchers and educators did not yet have the conceptual understanding to incorporate into teaching and curriculum development (e.g., multiliteracies, social justice, inclusivity in language instruction). In the interests of space, I will comment on just two of these.

The internet and its affordances. In 1991 the extent of our engagement with technology was email (servers accessed via dial-up), audio recordings, and audiovisual material recorded on videocassettes. Access to authentic audiovisual material was limited, given the different playback standards for video recorded in different countries. We could not have imagined then the wealth of cultural material and the ease of access that

educators have today, nor could we have imagined the plethora of technological resources and tools for language learning and cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communicative exchanges. If the COVID–19 pandemic had shut down classroom instruction for such an extended period 30 years earlier, teachers would certainly have been limited to providing students with assignments based on textbooks and worksheets. The internet, software applications, social media, interactive hybrid instruction, and more have laid the foundation for today's generation of language educators to expand language learning and language use outside the confines of the classroom, a notion that was sparked by the focus on student-to-student interaction in the years surrounding the 1991 conference.

Multiliteracies and multimodal language. In 1991 our understanding of literacy was still largely the traditional one: reading and writing. We had begun to find texts beyond the traditional literary canon to use in class, but we would not have characterized a song or a film clip as multimodal; that term was not in not yet in use. The learning strategy, drawn from proficiency-based insights of the time, of inferring meaning from context, extended beyond the printed text to include video; it was quite innovative to have students watch a video clip without sound, and to guide them in constructing and predicting meaning from setting, body language, and facial expressions. But we would not have thought of this teaching strategy as having anything to do with multiliteracies. Today's understanding of multiliteracies as language embedded in context and expressed in multimodal texts offers endless possibilities to classroom teachers. One particularly important approach, which responds to different learning styles and preferences, is the inclusion of creative and artistic productions in the target language as a way for students to demonstrate their learning.

A final note

Let me conclude by thanking the NECTFL and editor Bob Terry for the opportunity to share these reflections. The NECTFL was the first world language conference that I attended (starting in the late 1970s) at the beginning of my professional career and at which I gave my first presentations. Throughout the 1980s and until I left the Northeast region in 1993 for a faculty position in the Midwest, the NECTFL was a welcoming and stimulating venue to share ideas with colleagues, forge new professional associations, and nurture enduring friendships. I am sure that it continues to fulfill these important functions for thousands of world language educators today.

Rebecca Kline (1995)

It is an honor to be asked to share my memories of chairing the 1995 Northeast Conference and to reflect on how our profession has evolved in the nearly 30 years since that time. I thank NECTFL and Review Editor Bob Terry for the opportunity.

In 1995 when the conference theme was "Voices from the Field," editor Trish Dvorak gathered and trained a group of educators to use interview techniques grounded in qual-

itative approaches to research so we could hear from students, heritage language learners, teachers in other disciplines, leaders in government and the arts, and more, reflecting on their experiences learning languages. The volume's authors, newly trained, recruited interviewees, conducted interviews, and wrote chapters for the volume—an astonishing accomplishment by each one. Trish's guidance and editorial talents produced a multifaceted story of our field as it existed in 1995, including perspectives that were as useful as they were unexpected. The Voices volume constitutes the most salient memory I have of 1995. My debt of gratitude to Trish Dvorak and the researcher/writers on her team can never be repaid, nor can the debt I owe to 1994 chair Sylvia Brooks-Brown and to my consultant in 1995, 1993 chair Jose M. Diaz, for their steadfast and wise support.

Having served as the organization's Executive Director over the subsequent 20 years and having then switched gears to become a volunteer in my local food pantry following my retirement, my direct contact with the field has been too limited for me to comment usefully on its current products, practices, or perspectives. I thus look forward eagerly to reading the comments of other chairs who have been more involved in language and culture education these past years than have I.

During my time as ED, NECTFL benefited from the talents of a group of truly remarkable individuals who served as chairs. We called them "conference" chairs, but they led the organization, all the while fulfilling their own professional responsibilities. They led NECTFL through the aftermath of 9/11. They led NECTFL through the recession. They led NECTFL through major changes in leadership at ACTFL. They led NECTFL through mind-boggling growth in technology which affected the non-profit world (for better or worse!) as much as it did the classroom. My relationships with these 20 people resulted in everything from lifelong friendships to professional collaborations to agreements to disagree. But in all cases, their devotion to NECTFL's mission made my job easier. Their diversity made it more compelling. Their collaboration made it more satisfying.

It isn't practical for me to speak of each of the chairs with whom I worked, but I am deeply grateful to each one. Three are no longer with us, and they thus cannot write for themselves.

Julia Bressler was chair of the 1996 conference. She not only supported me through my first year but also oversaw a prescient and extraordinary conference devoted to ensuring that we excluded no student from the study of languages and cultures: "Foreign Languages for All: Challenges and Choices." One of our publications featured a photo of a student with a then-shocking Mohawk. Certain Board members worried that it would put off potential conference attendees. Julia stood her ground, as she did time and again, in defense of all students. It may not be radical now. It was then.

Julia also had a gift for recognizing each Board member's talents and for tapping into them by delegating tasks. She thus helped prepare her peers to assume new roles as leaders. Yet she claimed, in making regular donations to the organization, "My gift will never match in kind the impact that my affiliation with NEC has had on my life... beautiful and lasting friendships, rewarding and fulfilling professional growth and a chance to lead, for one glorious weekend in New York in April 1996, the profession that has given so much to me."

Frank W. Medley, Jr. was the 2000 NECTFL chair, overseeing not only the usual challenges but also those associated with a new conference location as we moved for a year to

Washington, DC. Appropriately, the theme chosen for that year was "Agents of Change in a Changing Age." Frank had every quality of a change agent, but his true gift was to mentor others as they evolved into playing that role. His confidence and belief in people emboldened them. His wisdom armed them. His humor helped them recover from failures. And his love for friends and colleagues knew no limits.

Like Julia Bressler, Frank was entirely committed to students and particularly to those who had chosen our profession. For many years, he brought more than 50 world language graduate students to New York so they could enjoy and benefit from NECTFL offerings, arranging transportation and housing, covering registration costs and, most notably, working with them ahead of time to ensure that they had identified appropriate sessions to attend. In 20 years as ED, I never saw anyone do anything on that scale to introduce our organization to future teachers.

How many of us will never be reconciled to the impossibility of sitting again with Frank in front of a carne asada and a beer, discussing the profession's most profound issues but also laughing till tears run down our faces?

In 2004, under the leadership of chair Francis J. Mulhern, NECTFL chose "Listening to Learners" as its conference theme. Like Frank Medley and like Julia Bressler, Frank Mulhern stands out in our field for his unshakeable dedication to students, and especially, in his case, to student teachers. That dedication, as with Julia and Frank, was grounded in a willingness – actually, in an eagerness – to listen.

Frank Mulhern's commitment at all times to world language organizations and their support for everyone in the field was legendary. He seemed always to be working. As a NECTFL leader, Frank never refused any request. We could count on him to represent us on the ACTFL Board, to tackle updating the mission and bylaws, to take over in my absence, to recruit, to advise, to provide support, to suggest pragmatic and effective solutions to problems. His generosity knew no bounds, and it was equaled by his prodigious intelligence.

And yet he also was a beloved husband, neighbor, father, son-in-law, cousin, community member. With the woman he never failed to refer to as "my bride" – his Marcella – he cared for endless numbers of otherwise rejected cats, often bringing them treats he himself was denied. Shrimp and KFC for "Herman," then the eldest among them, come to mind!

The privilege of serving and working with people such as these three is one of the greatest gifts a profession can offer. I am so grateful.

And given the collective commitment, knowledge, and skills of our field's leaders, it is tragic that programs are being axed right and left across the United States and that there are far fewer schools at any level with a broad range of offerings in world language and culture than there were in 1995. We remain a country with, in the best of cases, an attitude of embarrassment at our failure to overcome monolingualism, and in the worst, an attitude of fear and hatred toward those who have.

In light of that sad state of affairs, it would surely be useful for someone in our profession to do what Dorothy James did in "Kleiner Mann, was nun?," the final chapter of the 2000 Reports, Agents of Change in a Changing Age, edited by Robert Terry. The volume's aim was to "identify the changes in teaching and learning foreign languages," per

the Preface by 2000 Chair Frank Medley, that we were likely to encounter in the new century —an aim whose achievement depended on recognizing the realities of the old one. Thus, the second chapter, written by James N. Davis, was based on his reading of every single one of the then 45 Northeast Conference Reports in order to summarize the evolution of language learning and teaching over the previous 50 years. Professor James, in her concluding chapter, makes ample use of Professor Davis' findings to caution against the optimistic projections of the other chapter authors. In particular, she notes their tendency to describe what will happen without explaining how, a tendency Reports authors manifested throughout the series' history. Her skepticism is most salient in response to claims that the newly-published Standards would produce "seamless continuity" across grade levels K-16, leading to the achievement of high levels of proficiency by students. She reminds readers that the post-secondary community's reward system, by and large, would not encourage the necessary focus on teaching and learning. We could well ask in 2024 whether it has yet done so.

James' "worst case scenario" is all too accurate a description of our current circumstances, and it does not even include the discouraging number of program eliminations we have witnessed. Nonetheless, she ends her chapter with five suggestions NECTFL could take to unite the profession and move toward a more sustainable future. In one, she references the 1998 Reports, Stories Teachers Tell, edited by Douglas K. Hartman and based on the theme chosen by Richard Donato who chaired the 1998 conference. In creating a volume accessible and of interest to anyone in the profession—a volume, she notes, "that demonstrates the huge drawing power of narrative—the teacher-storytellers laid the groundwork for an entirely new approach to encouraging professional collaboration and community. Why doesn't our field return to that approach?

My wish for NECTFL is that it will continue to enjoy the extraordinary leadership that has characterized the past 70 years and that that leadership will be rewarded, as it should be, with a renewed commitment to the teaching and learning of languages and cultures.

Eileen Glisan (1997)

1997: On Collaborations, 'New Snow,' and Change in the Profession

Reflecting on the past years of the Northeast Conference, particularly 1997, and thinking about how they have informed the future of our profession has been a very thought-provoking exercise. Without having gone through this type of reflecting, I doubt that I would have realized the myriad ways in which the Northeast Conference had set the stage for key endeavors that would help shape the language teaching profession on a national level in very significant ways.

The Professional Landscape in 1997

My tenure as chair of the Northeast Conference in 1997 occurred at a pivotal moment when two advances in the field converged to have arguably the greatest impact on language teaching experienced up to that point: (1) proficiency testing (particularly of speaking) and (2) the first-ever national student standards for learning languages. The ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines, published initially in 1982 (American Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), offered a common metric by which to assess performance in speaking, writing, listening, and reading in a second language. Beyond providing a new way to re-think assessment, the proficiency concept prompted educators to begin to consider what types of classroom experiences might facilitate learners' advancement along the proficiency continuum. In 1997, a little over more than a decade after the release of the guidelines, language educators were still in the process of weaving the concept of 'proficiency' into their teaching by focusing on how learners could communicate meaningful messages in the target language (e.g., by interacting orally with others). The proficiency concept was still new for many teachers, who were flocking to Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) workshops, either to become trained and certified testers or to learn how to 'teach for proficiency-oriented goals' in their classrooms.

While many in the field were still excited about the new possibilities of teaching and testing for proficiency, 1996 brought another reason for language professionals to be invigorated: the publication of the first-ever standards for learning the world's languages. The release of national student standards in 1996 was a first in the language profession and offered a new way to articulate the purposes and objectives of language study for all learners across the nation (National Standards for Foreign Language Learning Project, 1996, 1999, 2006; National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015). While the impact of proficiency could be readily apparent in the standards, especially in the Communications goal area, it was clear that the standards went beyond skill-level proficiency in reflecting contemporary thinking that real-world communication really occurs in terms of the three modes—interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational, based on ways in which language users interact with language and with others. Further, the standards made connections to areas beyond communication—to other subject areas, cultures, language use in communities, to name a few—an effort that would serve to legitimatize language study and recognize its unique role in preparing a 21st-century citizenry.

While standards were so desperately needed to articulate a renewed reason for learners to engage in language study, language educators would face the daunting task of addressing these new expectations in their classroom practices. The challenge would indeed be great for the many language classrooms that were still stuck in the traditional grammar-based focus devoid of meaning and connection of language to the world beyond the classroom. As so aptly stated by Phillips, "…the need for experimentation, reflection, and reform will be great" (1997, p. xiii). Moreover, the type of experimentation with novel approaches, instructional materials, and strategies for diverse learners necessary to realize the vision of 'language learning for all' created by the standards would necessitate collaboration among professionals across levels of instruction.

The 1997 Northeast Conference occurred, therefore, in the midst of renewed excitement in the field. With the impetus of the standards and proficiency in the forefront, the 1997 annual meeting sought to provide a platform for collaboration among language educators at multiple levels of instruction (K-16) through small-scale action research projects carried out in language classrooms. Pairs of collaborators, each representing two different levels of instruction or types of constituencies, examined a particular goal area (e.g., Communication in the Interpersonal Mode, language use in Communities beyond the classroom) by means of projects that would be enacted in the language classroom and whose results would then be analyzed and interpreted. The projects were disseminated through a printed volume (North-

east Conference Reports) dedicated to their description and discussion, together with a video, featuring classroom footage of learners experiencing classroom activities from the projects, and a video guide with discussion questions for teachers. Little did we anticipate how this focus on classroom research and collaboration across instructional levels would set the stage for significant work in this area on a broader national level.

1997: Laying Groundwork for the Future

Proficiency testing and new student standards were a necessary step in the evolution of language teaching that would lead to future advances, particularly in the preparation of language teachers. In 1997, the field did not yet have a universal set of expectations or standards for language educators, which would come later in 2002. However, the development of student standards logically led language educators to begin discussing how language teachers should be prepared, what they should be prepared to do, and what specific teaching practices they should be able to enact when entering a classroom as a licensed teacher. The ACTFL/N-CATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), initially released in 2002, and then revised as the ACTFL/CAEP Standards for the Preparation of Language Teachers in 2013, reflect the profession's expectations for the specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions that language teachers should possess as they begin their careers in Pre-K-12 classrooms. For the first time, our profession had a mechanism for monitoring the quality of pre-service teachers being prepared and certified by post-secondary institutions in the US. Arguably one of the most challenging aspects of these new program standards was the expectation that teachers demonstrate a level of proficiency in speaking and writing (Advanced-Low for most languages; Intermediate-High for others). This would be the first time that teacher candidates and their programs of teacher preparation were being held to a proficiency expectation at the national level. The setting of this bar would spark a great deal of discussion in the field, through conference presentations and forums, scholarly writing, and social media. Although none of this was the fully realized in 1997, the foundation was being laid through the introduction of proficiency testing and teaching as well as the national student standards, both areas of which would naturally prompt a look at teacher preparation and expectations through new lens.

The foundation laid in the mid-1990's would also be an impetus for a later discussion regarding how language teachers were being prepared by teacher preparation programs in colleges and universities. This would occur more than a decade later when a strand of research in teacher education would introduce the notion of 'practice-based teacher education' that would call for engaging teachers in doing teaching rather than only talking about it (Ball & Forzani, 2009). An integral part of this discussion would be the identification of 'high-leverage teaching practices (HLTPs),' those specific practices that novices should be able to enact before assuming independent responsibility for a classroom (Forzani, 2014; Glisan & Donato, 2017, 2021). However, in 1997, most teacher preparation programs focused mainly on coursework with a separate student teaching or internship experience that was, in many cases, divorced from what was being learned in courses about how to teach languages.

It could be argued that the mid-1990s planted the seed for focus on the learner, an area that would continue to develop and change over the years. The primary impetus for a focus on learners in 1997 occurred as a result of the national student standards, which, first of all,

advocated language study for all learners, and secondly, were written in terms of what students should know and be able to do as a result of language study. Consequently, there was a great deal of excitement about creating a more 'learner-centered' classroom in which learners would be actively involved in their learning (and in using the target language) and would assume greater responsibility for charting their own progress (such as through self- and peer-assessment). Learners would be given greater autonomy in second language learning by gaining knowledge of how to manage and process their learning, and as a result, acquire new roles as partners in the teaching/learning enterprise. Much attention was given to ways to engage learners more actively in the classroom through opportunities for interaction in pairs and groups and strategy instruction, i.e., learning of strategies for communication such as negotiation of meaning, using contextual clues to make meaning of texts, group problem-solving. With a focus on 'all' learners, new areas of research emerged on ways to address the diversity of learners in language classes defined in terms of factors such as motivation, anxiety, cognitive differences, special learning needs, and learning styles. Focusing on the learner continued to increase in importance in the field, so much so that two years later, in 1999, the theme of the Northeast Conference would be "Language Learners of Tomorrow: Process and Promise."

The focus on the learner in 1997 would evolve considerably in the following decades, leading to areas of a more global scope currently being addressed in the profession such as diversity, equity, and inclusion in planning, instruction, and assessment. Further, it could be argued that back in 1997 we were just beginning to embrace the potential of what technology might offer language learners. Technology looked very different in the 90s, however, as the field explored tools such as the world-wide web, video, computer-assisted instruction, email, chatrooms, distance learning—and their applications to language learning. It might be a bit entertaining to consider one of concerns about access to some of these technologies back then, as pointed out by Gates: "Preschoolers familiar with cellular telephones, pagers, and personal computers enter kindergartens where chalkboards and overhead projectors represent the state of the art" (1995, p. 186—cf Shrum & Glisan, 2000, p. 347). We might consider how these rudimentary forms of technology first being 'considered' for their possible potential in language learning in 1997 have led to technology as an integral tool in the language classroom, so much so that we might wonder how learners (and teachers) could ever function without it in the learning process. Of course, the challenges regarding technology have changed since the era in which Gates gave the warning stated above. In this regard, it would be interesting to ponder what our predecessors might think about learning in virtual environments—and the myriad challenges that teaching in this mode entails—or the use of artificial intelligence by learners and the daunting obstacles that it is likely to pose for teaching languages.

Overall, a look back at 1997 reveals a period that was mostly concerned with what was happening in the classroom in a rather insulated way, given that we were on the cusp of a renewed vigor about using the language for real-world purposes and for justifying a place for language study within the curriculum. However, what was happening then would lead to a gradual evolution in the profession that would be shaped by research and advances in the broader field of education beyond the smaller sphere of language learning.

The Northeast Conference Impacts the Profession: From Regional to National

There is much evidence that the Northeast Conference has had an impact on language learning and teaching, not only on the regional but national level as well. First of all, a key result of the Collaborations theme of the 1997 Northeast Conference was an early attempt to bring together researchers and practitioners to conduct research sparked by the new student standards. Groups of language professionals from different contexts and instructional settings collaborated to examine ways to put the standards into practice in the classroom through action research projects focused on a particular goal area, standards, and research questions. The hope was that the projects and case studies presented would not be viewed as ends in themselves, but rather as examples of how, in the future, questions must be posed and investigated, experiments must be realized, and problems must be solved through collaboration (Phillips, 1997). In retrospect, this endeavor could be viewed as the precursor to our national Research Priorities in Foreign Language Education Project, first launched in 2010 by ACTFL, to (1) identify the key areas in which research is currently needed in language instruction and learning to inform and improve classroom practice and (2) encourage researchers to conduct research in these key areas (Glisan & Donato, 2012). Each year since 2010, research teams have received funding from ACTFL to conduct research around important issues facing the field involving language instruction and learning and to disseminate the results to the field through presentations and scholarly publications. Although the questions currently being investigated are relevant to today's state of language learning and teaching, the Research Priorities Initiative, with its emphasis on collaboration and research, bears a striking resemblance to the Northeast Conference work that was undertaken nearly three decades ago. It is not out of the question to suggest that perhaps the Northeast Conference planted the seeds long ago for the development of a national research agenda, with collaboration as the vehicle for investigating the pivotal questions facing the field today.

Secondly, it was the Northeast Conference that looked to other disciplines early on for direction and guidance as the language profession sought to embark on new initiatives. The 1997 Collaborations volume began with a chapter written by a team from the mathematics field—a university professor and Executive Director of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), who outlined the similar journeys undertaken by our two fields in designing new student standards. Further, these professionals offered several valuable lessons for the language educators of newly released standards as we faced the challenge of turning standards printed on paper to the reality of implementation in the classroom (Lindquist & Rosen, 1997). Fast forward five years and the publication of a special issue of Foreign Language Annals that presented synopses of the first Research Priorities projects (Glisan & Donato, 2012). Among these projects was one that introduced the concept of high-leverage teaching practices to our field, within the context of the trailblazing work accomplished in mathematics (Hlas & Hlas, 2012). Once again, collaboration with mathematics would be the impetus for a milestone for language education on a national level. The research that led to the creation of HLTPs in foreign language would play a pivotal role not only on classroom practice but also on the preparation of language teachers at all levels.

On 'New Snow' and Change in the Profession

A look back at the history of the Northeast Conference confirms the notion that 'things' in the language profession have changed, particularly when comparing my conference year of 1997 to today. However, this is hardly an eye-opening revelation, since as Phillips so aptly stated, "…as new snow sets off the avalanche, the paradigm will shift again. Our field is not static; change is inevitable" (1997, p. xviii). Back in the 1990s, it seemed that the 'new snow' developed from within the smaller (comparatively speaking, that is) world of language learning and teaching. For example, innovative ideas about classroom practice emanated from new research on language learning, which many labeled as a 'paradigm shift' with a change in focus from talking about a language to communicating in a language. This 'new snow' caused an avalanche of issues for language educators. Newly-designed student standards for learning languages prompted a need for an expanded repertoire of strategies for teaching a diverse student body—diverse in terms of how they learned and what learning needs they brought to the language classroom. The usefulness of instructional materials available for teaching languages, particularly textbooks, was called into question in light of a new communicative approach implemented by many teachers. In this regard, technology began to hold much promise as a prospective instructional tool in the language classroom. These are, of course, only a few examples of both the excitement and challenges brought about by the 'new snow' of the 1990s.

By comparison, it could be said that in our current day, the 'new snow' impacting our profession emanates from the broader sphere outside of our world of language learning and teaching. The world has shrunk dramatically in the last several decades and it has appeared at the doorstep of our language classrooms rather than being a foreign and faraway place that could barely be imagined in the minds of our learners. The 'avalanche' resulting from this global 'new snow' has prompted the language profession to consider the intertwining roles of cultures and languages in communities where languages are spoken at home and abroad, to maximize the many innovations in technology to expand learning and communicative interaction with others, to embrace the individual characteristics and backgrounds that learners bring to the language learning setting, among many other exciting possibilities. Of course, one of the major challenges of our times relates to the broader profession of teaching. Whereas in 1997 our focus was starting to be on teacher expectations and quality, our current concern has shifted a bit to the shortage of language teachers nationwide, the closing of language programs across levels, and the elimination of world language teacher education programs at post-secondary levels. Thus, how to recruit and maintain a teaching corps and how to keep language programs alive (particularly in specific languages) are current topics of great importance in the field.

Conclusion: Informing the Future for Seventy Years and Counting

My brief reflection of key contributions of the Northeast Conference, particularly during the 1990s and my conference year of 1997, has shed light on a few of the myriad ways in which the conference has impacted the language teaching profession far beyond its regional scope. The conference has brought language professionals together to collaborate in novel ways that would later occur on a national level. It fostered the notion of conducting

classroom-based research through work in professional teams across instructional levels and constituencies. Through its workshops, sessions, and opportunities for professional exchange, as well as its publications, the conference explored important themes being discussed and challenges being faced by the profession at large. Few would dispute the claim that the Northeast Conference was often 'ahead of its time' and indeed informed the future of language teaching. My prediction is that as the 'new snows' of the future set off unanticipated avalanches, the Northeast Conference will continue to serve as a leader in our field well beyond its remarkable seventy-year legacy by addressing the pivotal issues of the day through research, innovative practice, and professional collaboration.

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Martha G. Abbott (1999)

The 1999 theme of the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) was "Language Learners of Tomorrow: Process and Promise." On the cusp of the new millennium, the greatest fear in the U.S., known as "Y2K," was that our technology devices would not know how to deal with the year 2000, and the result would be a catastrophic meltdown of our cyber world. But in the language profession, we were focused on implementing the National Standards for Language Learning, released in 1996, and still relatively unknown not only in K-12 classrooms across the country but also in higher education institutions.

Language educators sensed the "promise" that the national student standards held in revolutionizing the teaching of languages by emphasizing new aspects of learning languages and how to best deliver them to students. The five C's of the standards provided a new framework for language pedagogy that would emphasize outcomes in terms of building students' linguistic and cultural competence. The Communications goal presented the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational aspects of communication rather than isolating the skills into listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The Cultures goal area offered the three P's of teaching culture by having students understand not just the practices and products of a culture but how they related to the perspectives or world views of the speakers of that language. The Connections Goal introduced the idea of relating the content in the language class to the other subject areas in the curriculum, and the Comparisons Goal elicited students' grasp of how the language and culture of the L2 classroom related to and intersected with their own language and culture. Finally, the Communities goal area, probably the most challenging new area for teachers during that time, was to help students connect the classroom content with the broader world, whether in their local communities or abroad. It was a radical change but one that was necessary in order to ensure that the teaching of languages in U.S. schools was apace with the "learners of tomorrow."

At the turn of the century, the demographics in U.S. schools was changing rapidly, and the language profession was intent on embracing that change by ensuring that the doors of the language classroom were open to all students. Embedded in the national standards were language learning strategies, critical thinking skills, and promoting active learner involvement in the classroom and beyond. The notion of learner autonomy was coming to the forefront, and teachers and professors were coming up with numer-

ous ways of having students become active participants in course planning, self-assessments, online chat rooms, and the concept of "student as worker."

As we made our way through the first two decades of the 21st century, implementing the standards and developing additional support documents such as the 21st Century Skills, Performance Assessments, Core Practices, and Can Do Statements were a top priority. In addition, issues outside the classroom began to loom large as the diversifying of language offerings, cuts in the more traditional language offerings, and the resistance of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to offer Board Certification in all languages became concerns for the profession-at-large. In addition, colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs began to see a shift toward lower student enrollments at the same time that national certification boards were tightening up requirements for K-12 teacher certification. Threats to language programs were being carried out in random areas of the country, and the national scene was flush with budget cutbacks for language programs.

Enter the third decade of the 21st century, and we endured a global pandemic which again shifted priorities and practices. As we make our way through this decade, the way has been paved for challenging course content and strategies to engage students and meet the diverse needs to all. The challenge for us now is to ensure that there are teachers to manage the learning process for students. Phrasing it as "managing the learning process" is no accident. As we face the new AI world and what it has to offer, the role of teacher remains vital but shifts somewhat as we were predicting at the turn of the century—placing students in the central role as learner and making the teacher the manager of that learning process. When students are charged with taking responsibility for their learning, they become skilled assessors of their language progress. When students know where their language learning progress is on the continuum of building language proficiency, they are able to articulate their needs in terms of moving up on that continuum. When students are able to articulate where they are on the continuum, they are able to make better choices in terms of moving from middle school to high school to college instruction.

The challenges we are facing as a language profession are not new. How we handle them should reflect the past and all that has been built in terms of common standards for learning and for learning outcomes.

Work smarter nor harder. Harness all the AI and the new technologies offer in terms of language learning for students and help students learn to track their learning progress.

Be proud of our profession. Teaching is tough and it's easy to become downtrodden in the daily hurdles, but it remains the most noble and rewarding profession. We need to stand up for its rewards and for the critical role that language teachers play in the lives of their students.

Encourage others to join us. Whether it's a student whom you tap to think about becoming a teacher or the neighbor who just retired from another profession, it is important that we encourage others to join us in this endeavor.

Only by working together with common purpose can we overcome the challenges we face. With grateful appreciation for all that you do.

Richard Donato (1998)

From Stories Teachers Tell to Enacting Professional Practice

Background

I had the honor of chairing the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in 1998, twenty-five years ago. At that time, the conference was a bit different from its current form. For example, from 1954 to 2002, the conference chair selected an editor for the volume devoted to the conference theme. The volume—a collection of chapters typically written by leaders in the field—was produced and distributed to all conference attendees. The theme for the year was selected by the conference chair and then presented, discussed, and eventually endorsed by the Board of Directors during one of its annual meetings.

As I began my year as conference chair, I spent a great deal of time poring over past conference volumes and themes dating as far back as 1954. What I uncovered was that, since its inception 1954, only two conference volumes (1958 and 1978) were devoted exclusively to the topic of foreign language teachers and the critical role they play in inspiring learners and supporting language proficiency. For this reason, I decided that it was time to re-visit foreign language teachers and the important work they do in various contexts and with various types of learners.

The 1998 conference was one of many firsts. It was the first conference to select an editor for the yearly volume outside the field of world language and culture education. The editor for *Stories Teachers Tell*—the title of the 1998 volume—was Professor Douglas Hartman, a leader in the field of reading research. The conference also did not present one plenary speaker during the opening session, but rather presented a reader's theater staged by several of the teacher-authors who wrote chapters on their storied experiences as K-12 world language educators. These experiences reflected self-selected themes such as Alchemy, Passion, Hope, Struggle, and Transformation, among other compelling concepts that captured the core message of each chapter (see Hartman, 1998).

Over the past twenty-five years, a lot has happened since 1998 concerning teachers and the teaching of world language education. For example, instructional coaching and mentoring have replaced supervision, and assessments have moved beyond paper-and-pencil tests. In 1998, the profession provided a host of 'best practices' that clearly indicated what to do but unfortunately failed to explain to teachers how to carry out these practices. Very soon after this 1998 conference, attention turned to the complex act of teaching as opposed to articles on researchers' preferred theories of instruction. It is to our evolving concepts of teaching from 1998 to the present to which I now turn and which I will discuss in the remaining portion of this piece.

Soon after the 1998 Conference, attention turned to the practice of disciplinary teaching and the complexity of this process (Ball and Cohen, 1999). Numerous articles appeared comparing teaching to other professions and to the ways that professionals were trained. One common theme emerged: Learning to be a professional was carried out in practices that were deconstructed and coached that made visible the intricate moves and decisions during the

conduct of professional activity. For example, clinical psychologists practiced counseling sessions and analyzed how these sessions were shaped through talk-in-interaction; novice pilots learned to fly alongside experienced pilots; and doctors learned surgery as legitimate peripheral participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991) during surgical procedures.

Of course, the certification of teachers, including world language teachers, always included a clinical practice element that took place in schools and in real classrooms. However, how clinical practice was carried out in language teaching significantly differed from how other professionals were initiated into their professional responsibilities. Reflection on teaching performance was routinely used, but the careful analysis of the actual practices of teaching for various instructional goals were never required or made visible. Teaching shifted from familiarization with the list of best practices to a detailed analysis of the pedagogical moves that teachers made to implement best practices and the ways these moves required 'adaptive expertise' in classrooms and institutional contexts. Instruction was now seen as complex, not entirely visible, and somewhat unnatural, built from a shared core of expert knowledge and skill that could only be learned by teaching under expert guidance and coaching. Every practicing teacher intuitively knew this view of their work. Now, the profession acknowledged that teaching world languages was hard and required a particular skill and knowledge to claim membership in the professional community. In short, learning to teach languages was transformed from knowing what best practices should be used during instruction to an exploration of how to enact complex pedagogy with skill, knowledge, and positive dispositions toward students.

This shift in thinking about teaching created a new way of talking about instruction. The term high leverage teaching practices (sometimes referred to as core practices), became the focus of this shared professional knowledge. The term was apt. A lever is a simple tool used to move or lift heavy objects by exerting only a small force on one end that results in a greater force at the other. But for the field of foreign language education, the question remained: "What are the core practices that are fundamental and necessary to claim membership in this professional community?" This essential question prompted several meetings of the ACTFL membership during open mic plenary sessions and meetings at the ACTFL headquarters in Virginia with leaders in the field. Based on these meetings, we began to identify the core practices that were believed to be foundational and essential to the teaching and learning of foreign languages. It was not until 2010 that this approach was implemented in a course which I co-taught with then doctoral student Kristin Davin. The course was based on a few high-leverage practices and revealed to us a number of challenges and successes when course content moved from discussion of readings and theories to actual enactments of teaching practices that engendered the topics presented in class (see Troyan, Davin, & Donato, 2013 for a description of this course and findings).

Because of this actual classroom experience with teacher certification candidates and based on what was learned at the meetings of the ACTFL membership, in 2017 my colleague Eileen Glisan and I decided to write a book that incorporated the ideas of this newly proposed practice-based approach to teacher education and the concept of high leverage teaching practices. Enacting the Work of Language Instruction: High-Leverage Teaching Practices was published in 2017. In this book, we proposed six high-leverage teaching practices that were identified as fundamental for teachers to enact to support language learning and develop-

ment. Specifically, we addressed issues of target language comprehensibility and interaction, classroom discourse, the interpretation of texts of various kinds and discussion, the learning of target language grammar, the role of culture, and the differing ways and purposes of providing feedback to learners' oral performance. These practices were linked to the World Readiness Standards for Foreign Language Learning and were systematically explored in each chapter through research on and theory about the topic, common questions that were posed by teachers, tools to assist teachers in the enactment of each practice, activities for rehearsing the practice, and rubrics for assessing the practice during instruction.

But our deep dive into essential questions about language teaching revealed that we had not gone far enough. When taken together this first set of practices focused primarily on the interpersonal and interpretive modes of communication. What was missing was attention to literacy and developing students' abilities to present information, feelings, and ideas in written language for various purposes that could be planned and fairly assessed. For this reason, we wrote a second volume that included four practices for designing and planning instruction in meaningful contexts, as well as ways to teach students how to present ideas in forms that went beyond the spoken word. We concluded this volume with a chapter on how all the practices addressed in these two volumes worked together to create a coherent program that could be embraced and reconstructed for various teaching contexts based on the expertise that teachers bring to their work.

It is clear that twenty-five years since that last conference devoted to teachers has produced major changes in the ways we prepare teachers and think about our work in the classroom. We have come to realize that teaching language is a complex interplay of art and science and requires a knowledge of a core of professional practices that shape our work. Of course, the inspiration and commitment of practicing teachers presented in the 1998 volume Stories Teacher Tell are still visible in the vast majority of language teachers but, as we now know, having the will to teach languages must be accompanied by the skill to provide high quality world language instruction. The skill complementing the will is the ability to enact and coordinate pedagogical practices into a program leading to student success.

Discussions are currently underway for a third volume to accompany the first two books. Our attention is now turning to advanced practices that require a deeper understanding of the complexities of pedagogical practice and transformative thinking about the future of language instruction. As Cutshall (2012) so aptly states, "Gone are the days when anyone would suggest that language could be taught on its own as only discrete grammar points." The issue of content-based instruction in world language classes and in programs such as dual language and immersion requires careful thinking about the integration of academic content with language instruction. Creating conditions for learners to expand their meaning making in the target language using multimodal resources such as text, image, space, objects, sound, and speech (Cope & Kalantzis, 2020) are paramount and essential in the digital age. Documenting learners' progress in ways that integrate all modalities of communication move us beyond our routine ways of thinking about teaching as independent from testing and assessment. These are clearly transformative ways of thinking about teaching world language. Against this background is the overarching need to create a community in the classroom built on

deep relationships of feeling, care, and self-awareness (National University, 2022). We are moving in positive directions for unpacking the complexities of our work with learners. How our work as world language teachers will evolve in the next 25 years is clearly worthy of our attention.

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Margaret Ann Kassen (2001)

NECTFL 2001 set out, like the cinematic space odyssey, to explore "Beyond the Boundaries" of our familiar classroom world. The Board recognized the changing contexts of our pedagogical landscape and set out to look at new directions in early language learning, heritage language instruction, distance learning, study abroad, community engagement, and language for the professions, all with implications for teacher education and research.

Jay Oliva, our 2001 keynote speaker and president of NYU as well as recipient of the James W. Dodge FL Advocate Award, noted in his keynote address, "English doesn't necessarily get the job done." Evidence in support of his assertion continues to build. The need for multilingual and culturally competent employees is growing. According to a study cited by Forbes in 2023, 9 out of 10 U.S. employers rely on employees that speak another language, especially when considering expansion into new markets. Preply's 2023 survey found that multilingual employees make 19% more than their monolingual counterparts. The survey also found that 85% of those who speak only one language said they wished they could speak more than one; the majority believed it could help them

advance their career. Our Gen Z students (and their parents) are demanding that we prepare them for jobs.

As exemplified by Oliva's talk and the many conference sessions since then on the topic of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP), NECTFL has played a key role in raising our awareness and in enhancing our expertise in this important area. While we may regret the current decline in interest in the humanities, we are fortunate that language and culture studies bridge the gap, providing both liberal arts and pre-professional education. The number of LSP courses continues to increase and we are seeing the integration of professional language throughout the learning sequence, starting with beginners.

Historically, one of the hallmarks of NECTFL has been to bring world language teachers together to meet, share, compare, debate, and learn from each other at an annual conference. The 2001 conference offered participants the opportunity to exchange ideas in special sessions on 8 Burning Questions related to the volume chapters. Lively discussions took place in these sessions but at the time, follow-up online was minimal. Today, digital connectivity facilitates routine collaboration with colleagues. NECTFL webinars reach countless teachers in their offices and homes around the country. Yet as those of us who participated digitally in conferences during the pandemic would likely agree, virtual connections do not fully capture the dynamism and energy of a face-to-face experience. The return of NECTFL to an in-person conference in 2022 was greeted with enthusiasm.

Since 2001, NECTFL has continued to look ahead, providing language educators the opportunity to explore timely themes such as linguistic and cultural authenticity (2019), diverse learners (2020), social justice (2021), and lifelong learning (2022) This year's theme encourages us to reflect, a key component of learning, self-efficacy, and professional growth. Once again, NECTFL is at the forefront, supporting language teachers and ultimately our students.

In addition to the conference and its many benefits, NECTFL continues to publish the NECTFL *Review* twice yearly, sharing with K-16 educators research and classroom- based articles. As recent articles on diversity and inclusion, mentorship, and Open Educational Resources demonstrate, NECTFL offers us insights into policies, resources, and practices that directly affect our field. With no paywall, this valuable resource is accessible to us all. Furthermore, NECTFL's advocacy efforts from the grass roots to the national level amplify our voices and help raise awareness in the public around the policies that affect language education.

The pandemic brought lasting changes to teaching and learning. Unmute, Breakout room, Virtual sticky notes, and Jamboard all became part of our practiced vocabulary. With new technologies, we can add questions to videos, polls to Powerpoints, and virtual visits with virtual reality. AI is rapidly transforming education and work in ways that we are only beginning to discover. Need a 200-word text at the A1 level on sports in a particular country and five multiple choice questions to go with it? Just ask Chat GPT! How can we use these new tools ethically and how can our students benefit from them? Stay tuned as we—and NECTFL—continue our exploration.

Post-pandemic, our field is growing more aware of the need to prioritize well-being, for teachers as well as students. Yoga and mindfulness activities have become a part of our conferences and our classrooms. There is hope that this more intentional focus on mental, physical, and emotional health can help address the issues of learner motivation and engagement as well as teacher burnout and teacher shortages. While these concerns are now front and center, NECTFL has long been an organization where colleagues come together with the goal not only of advancing language teaching and learning, but also of supporting and cheering each other along the way.

It seems that a necessary quality of being a teacher today is to focus on the positives in our field. That said, I would be remiss if I did not mention one concerning development at the postsecondary level. The elimination of world language majors at West Virginia University received much-deserved public outrage and attention. At my smaller, private university, long a bastion of liberal arts education, we too have experienced a similar "sunsetting" of our French, German, and Italian majors, leaving only the Spanish major. University administrators, while professing the importance of a global perspective, cut low enrolled advanced language classes and programs with limited numbers of student majors. These cuts are especially distressing when we consider that students who have been in K-12 immersion programs, those who have achieved the seal of biliteracy, and those who wish to pursue high levels of proficiency, will find that the number and variety of upper-level courses in their universities are greatly reduced. As is the trend elsewhere, my department is working diligently to devise a new major to accommodate students who value language and culture competence, but our ability to offer sequences of classes to develop the high levels of linguistic and cultural competence our students want and need has been severely reduced. I am counting on NECTFL to provide the space where challenges such as this one can be discussed, and new initiatives, relevant research and solutions be shared.

Reflecting on the 35 years I have been fortunate enough to be involved with NECTFL, I am confident that this vital organization will continue to address the evolving concerns of our field, providing world language educators with the support needed to thrive as we continue to go beyond the boundaries together.

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John Webb (2003)

2003!!! I find it hard to believe that twenty years have passed since I was Conference chair! It was the 50th anniversary of an organization that had been a significant part of my professional life for nearly 35 years. I had attended conferences, presented sessions, and served on the Board. The roster of Conference chairs, Board members, and presenters was a Who's Who in the profession, and I felt enormous pleasure, pride, and responsibility in having my work and my name associated with the very people from whom I had learned so much over the years, even as an undergraduate when the 1967 edition Conference Reports was one of the required readings. As I matured in the profession, I realized that those same people had been largely responsible for the ongoing transformation in second language pedagogy and that this transformation had always been grounded in the ever-evolving body of research in second language acquisition. Only recently, it had culminated in the release of national and state student performance standards that were defined in terms of communicative competence rather than the application of grammatical knowledge. I had served on the National Task Force and had been named principal author of the initial draft of the New York State Standards. It was an exhilarating era, both for me personally and for the profession at large.

Over the years, I had become familiar with much of the research that was guiding developments in my profession's pedagogy. From that, I derived a good deal of both know-how and confidence, not only in what I was doing in my classes as a teacher of French, but also, as a teacher educator, in what I was preparing prospective teachers to do in theirs. Having received and read the Northeast Conference Reports each year, I was keenly aware of their prominence in the ongoing documentation of this body of research and the related teaching practices. Moreover, I was convinced, and still am, that teachers' performance in their classrooms is ultimately strengthened and more grounded when they have an understanding of our ever-evolving pedagogy from an historical perspective. Knowing what elements of Grammar Translation, the Audio-Lingual Method, Total Physical Response, the Natural Approach, the Direct Method, Community Language Learning, The Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Functional-Notional, etc., had proven the test of time enough to survive and be incorporated into our ever-evolving approach to teaching and learning would make us all better. It would expand our repertory of techniques and approaches and thereby give us greater adaptability and spontaneity as we work with our students. I concluded, therefore, that all those volumes should not be shelved over time, but rather made readily available to everyone in the profession, both veterans and newcomers.

As a result, for the 50th Anniversary Conference, and with the enthusiastic, utterly indispensable, expert, and time-consuming hard work of then executive director, Becky Kline, NECTFL produce a CD containing all 50 years of the Reports. For the first time, and for posterity, not only were they all in one place, but the CD also incorporated a function that could be used to do searches of the Reports' content. I look back on that accomplishment with a good deal of satisfaction, and I hope that the CD is still available for use.

At the same time, in 2003 I was starting to truly settle into my new position as director of an entire teacher education program. Three years earlier, I had moved from being a foreign/heritage language classroom teacher and part-time teacher educator to what I referred to as a "full-time generalist"—leading a program that prepared undergraduates for certification, not just in foreign languages, but in all subject areas. As I transitioned to this new role, I had found myself buoyed by the research-based pedagogical practices that were central to foreign language education. In fact, at that time, we foreign language educators were somewhat unique in the education world because of our relatively longstanding, intentional, and focused attention to the marriage of research and practice, the very feature that had motivated me to want to consolidate the 50 editions of the NECTFL Reports in the first place. This served me well, because foreign language teachers' approaches to teaching were based on what research had taught us about how students learn, and those understandings could be readily applied across subject areas. In addition, my first-hand involvement with student standards and, I must add, ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines primed me for preparing my students in all subject areas to craft measurable learning outcomes, benchmarks, and all the other components of solid curriculum building, as well as creating effective instructional practices.

This was also the beginning of the era of teacher standards. The perceived value and effectiveness of student standards had provided serious impetus for the development of teacher standards, and enthusiasm was running high. Much of this enthusiasm emanated from a strongly felt desire to respond substantively to the criticisms being directed at teacher preparation programs and schools of education for their perceived shortcomings in preparing teachers for America's classrooms. I had been invited to serve on the foreign language teacher standards task force that was part of a larger initiative to prepare teacher standards in all subject areas that was being coordinated by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). That Task Force, like NECTFL itself, was composed of truly informed and experienced leaders of our profession, and we embarked eagerly, thoughtfully, and thoroughly on the development of performance standards for teachers of foreign languages, confident that the articulation of standards and the ensuing modifications in teacher education programs would indeed advance the profession and lessen the vitriol being slung its way. We were also aware that these standards were likely to become centerpieces in the national accreditation of teacher education programs that was gaining momentum across the country with the work of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). Surprisingly, frustratingly, and ironically, the matter of teacher standards and national accreditation presented me with challenges that would preoccupy me for the rest of my career, and by 2003, they had already started to become so serious and urgent that I was often forced to sideline my responsibilities as Conference chair so I could address them.

Call me naïve, but when I assumed my (new) position as director of the Program in Teacher Preparation at Princeton University in 2000, I was unaware that the size of a teacher preparation program could become its undoing. Princeton may be perceived as a large university, but in truth, its undergraduate college is modest in size, and while its teacher preparation program is on a par enrollment-wise with other smaller departments within the college, it is very small when compared to teacher education programs at larger schools, particularly public universities, many of which started as normal schools, whose original identity and whose cash cow reside in their K-12 teacher and school administrator programs. In contrast, overall enrollment in smaller liberal arts colleges is such that they cannot support a major concentration in education, and students there are much more inclined to concentrate their course time (and spend their sizable tuition) on academic subjects, like their major, and not on education courses. In addition, given the varied career paths available to them, teaching is not necessarily a popular choice. As a result, teacher education programs simply don't have a large pool of students to draw from, and thus they remain small.

That does not mean for one moment that no students in liberal arts colleges want to become teachers!!! *Au contraire*! There definitely ARE students who have always dreamed of becoming teachers—students who, like so many of us in our youth, lined our stuffed animals and even our friends up on chairs in front of a chalkboard that we had begged our parents to buy and taught lessons. They know why they want to teach; they've thought about it long and hard. However, they differ in one significant way from students in larger, particularly public institutions. They have to endure the scornful question from all fronts—parents, professors and peers (the three P's): "Why are you wasting your [college] education on becoming a teacher?" YES! They are hounded by this question; it's with them all the time, and the teacher education faculty and advisers have to do damage control on a regular basis. So yes, there are students in these schools who want to become teachers and are courageous enough to withstand that taunting throughout their entire four undergraduate years! I soon learned that this scenario was not unique to Princeton; it gets played out in virtually every moderate-sized liberal arts college in the country that (still) has an undergraduate teacher education program, even in the best-known schools! In response, I grew to be a fierce defender of their desire, and as it turned out, their OPPORTUNITY to pursue that career dream in their liberal arts setting.

And so, what does this have to do with teacher standards and accreditation, and why would it impact my work so profoundly . . . and I might add, the work of every director of teacher education in a small liberal arts college? Basically, it has to do with our notions of the kinds and number of requirements that students need to fulfill in order to become certified as beginning teachers. Teacher standards and, by extension, the entire accreditation process, generated dissention and polarization that diminished the profession. I cannot claim that it was intentional, but it did become personal, and damagingly so. I suspect that in our zeal to create standards and encourage accreditation for the betterment of the

profession, we failed to ask these two very basic questions and to then roll up our sleeves and use our collective insight and expertise to answer them:

1. What standards of performance are realistic for an entry level teacher, and how can we then identify appropriate standards along a continuum of professional growth and development?

AND

2. How does a person really learn to teach? In other words, what should the curriculum of an undergraduate program for beginning teachers look like, and by extension, what kinds of professional development beyond initial certification will yield the most effective classroom teachers?

Needless to say, we want our beginning teachers to perform effectively, but we must also recognize that when they leave our undergraduate programs, they still have a lot yet to learn. They do not come out fully formed. Yet back then, we did not deliberate adequately over what an entry level teacher should realistically know or be able to do. Nor did we think in terms of acquired competencies along a scale of development running from "novice" to "expert." In foreign languages, we should have done that, because the ACTFL scale offers a ready-made example of such a continuum. I suspect that, once again, in our zeal as educators to respond to critics and/or out of fear of succumbing to the mediocrity that we were accused of perpetuating, we ended up defining performance standards that could not realistically be met. Unfortunately, that led to a cascade of other confounding issues.

The second question really strikes to the heart of the matter, because it involves the structure of teacher education in the institutional setting, and that became the stumbling point that pitted small programs against large ones. Rather than embracing the opportunity provided by the advent of performance standards and the availability of information on how people learn to inspire us to redefine how a teacher is formed, we fell into an age-old school-of-education trap. We claimed to be describing teacher proficiency in terms of actions/behaviors, but we didn't really think anew about how those actions/behaviors are acquired, and we allowed a seat-time course requirement paradigm to prevail.

We ignored this unpleasant and little-acknowledged finding from much of the data emerging from the accreditation process that there is no statistically significant correlation between education courses and teacher performance. And yet, in many teacher accreditation audits, particularly those conducted by NCATE at the time, measures of program viability over-relied on a coursework checklist, and if the roster of course offerings didn't correspond to that check list, accreditation could be and was often denied.

We neglected to examine adequately whether learning to teach is better accomplished through an academic program like so many that exist in our schools of education, through a full-fledged apprenticeship similar to states' alternate routes to certification, or through a combination involving academic courses and credits in the student's subject area followed by full-time apprenticeship to acquire teaching skills. There's plenty of evidence that supports multiple and equally effec-

tive pathways to teacher preparation and certification, yet there was resistance to exploring those possibilities, resistance that came from institutions and, I am sad to add, from professional associations. There were probably many compelling reasons why that happened, ranging from inertia, to institutional economics, to faculty seniority, and a whole host of other variables.

The hesitance, and in some cases outright refusal, to explore, acknowledge, and accept the viability of multiple pathways played out harrowingly for small teacher education programs in liberal arts schools when it came to the accreditation process. Large teacher education institutions have always been dominant when it comes to education policy on both national and state levels. Their physical and fiscal capacity enable them to produce the majority of our nation's teachers as well as a large share of the body of research that guides the profession and informs the general population. That same capacity enables them to offer many and varied courses that, at least on the surface, appear worthwhile for a teacher candidate. The bottom line is that they are powerful.

Liberal arts colleges over the years have produced many teachers, but they have rarely garnered the kind of attention and power held by the large institutions. Their role in populating our nation's classroom has largely gone unnoticed. They were of course accredited by agencies like Middle States, and their teacher education programs were also generally accredited by their respective states. All that changed with national when states began to affiliate with the national accrediting agencies, NCATE and TEAC. With that came a loss of freedoms and some of their independence as they geared up to meet the national requirements. That wasn't all bad; it prompted long overdue changes and updates. However, with that came the complications of politics in states' government and the power hierarchy of higher education.

The large institutions seeking to maintain their existing programs gravitated toward NCATE, which favored the more credit-driven traditional pathway. The small liberal arts colleges favored TEAC, because its entire modus operandi was predicated on the concept of multiple pathways. This allowed the smaller schools to present programs of preparation that could be accommodated within the limitations of their smaller setting. It must be noted here that their programs included rigorous evaluation components in which they demonstrated with valid and reliable measurements that their students had met the standards, even though their programs included fewer courses and fewer hours of seat time. As it turned out, many larger schools would not condone it. They started having difficulty justifying to their students why they had to take (and pay for) thirty credit hours of courses in education when students at, say, Princeton only had to take fifteen. This led to accusations of inferiority and overt attempts to stop a state's education department from affiliating with TEAC because of its multiple pathways approach to accreditation. This of course destroyed any effort on the part of a small program to earn accreditation, leaving it with no other choice than to shut down, which many did, simply because they did not have the capacity to meet the requirements imposed by the state. I remember telling the dean of one of the large state institutions that

if her drive to exclude TEAC from accrediting programs in New Jersey, Princeton would have to shutter its program. Her response was, "It should be closed down."

In many places, this led to the organization of splinter groups composed of schools trying to protect the legitimacy of their chosen (and achievable) pathways to their students' certification. As the issue spread to the national level, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) assembled a panel of the nation's largest and smallest teacher education programs to tackle question #2 raised above. Subsequent to the panel's recommendation, AACTE issued a position paper supporting multiple pathways and urging states to accept accreditation granted to schools by either NCATE or TEAC. Needless to say, that did not stop the dissension, but it at least succeeded in legitimizing the viability of small programs.

Princeton's program survived, but the list of programs that were forced to close might surprise you. It was an all-consuming battle that greatly impacted my career, my work, and my feelings about many people in my profession.

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Mikle Ledgerwood (2005)

Reflections on The Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

2024 marks the 70th birthday of both the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and me. I have been asked, as a past Chair of Northeast or NECTFL to talk about my time as Chair and share some thoughts about both the conference and language teaching. It is my pleasure to do so in this reflection.

Language teaching in the United States has always been a difficult profession. With this country being so vast and now so powerful politically and militarily, it has helped English become the de facto lingua franca of the world. As a result, many U.S. Americans do not see the need for languages other than English and do not spend a lot of time and effort on studying and learning them. Two of my least favorite "jokes" are "I only speak English and don't speak that very well either," as well as "What do you call someone who only speaks one language? An American."

Language learning has a difficult history in the U.S. In the 1920s, the Modern Language Association decided that most U.S. Americans would not be able to spend enough time to learn foreign languages well, and a two-year requirement should focus on reading, thus language courses became courses in grammar and translation in which the focus was on translating literature into American English. This put aside teaching language as a tool for communication among cultures and better understanding among peoples. Modern languages thus became treated like "dead" languages and there was little to no teaching of all four areas of languages, with speaking and listening, and even writing, relegated to the service of reading. It took World War II to start to change this situation. During World War, II the U.S. military realized that ignorance of languages, especially communication in languages, was leading to a lack of effectiveness in the war effort. During the war and after, they started to push for Americans to learn all four areas of language as well as the culture of the countries where the languages were spoken and used.

It took a while for this fundamental change in teaching languages to be realized across the country, and language teachers, for the most part, were not ready to be part of the change. Most language teachers were firmly in the grammar/translation camp and were not taught or prepared to teach language as communication. It was to address this challenge and others that the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Language was created in 1954. A group of very insightful and forward-looking language professionals came together to work on this sea change. This group was primarily from the best colleges and universities in the country, at this time mainly in the Northeast. The story of the creation of NECTFL is well told elsewhere, including in the pages of the Northeast Conference Reports[1] and does not need to be repeated in detail here.

Still, the history of the Northeast Conference is a fascinating one that includes moments of brilliance as well as frustration.[1] With the help of the military and farsighted professors and teachers, it began the task of changing language teaching in the United States. It was greatly aided by the 1957 shock of Sputnik with the Soviets launching the first rocket into space. Sputnik was a "kick in the pants." People started to ask how this could happen and was the U.S. falling behind in the Cold War? Clearly there had to be a revolution in education and language learning, and teaching became part of this discussion.

It was soon understood that teachers had to be taught how to teach oral and aural language and there had to be a far-reaching professional development program for language teachers to equip them to do this. The Northeast Conference was a strong force in this effort and there was a lot of support nationwide for it. However, at this point, in my opinion, the U.S. government went in the wrong direction. Instead of creating an innovative program for the re-education of language teachers that involved teaching oral and aural language, language cultures, and significant study abroad in countries where the target language was used, it decided to look to technology, primarily as a cheaper and supposedly equally effective way of reforming language teaching. Thus was born ALM, whose acronym has been interpreted as both the American Language Method and the Audiovisual Language Method. The audio part of using technology for language learning going back to Edison's (et al.) invention of the phonograph and the fact that it was used for language learning very soon after its invention. The visual part was new.

This is where I come in. At the age of 6 on a family trip to Canada, my family wound up in Montréal. My father was dismayed by the use of French in Québec and decided to leave there as soon as possible to return to a place "where they speak my language." The next morning, we were leaving, and my little brother and I went out into the parking lot of the motel to play with model cars. Two little Québécois boys approached us. My brother and I were excited and ran to them to ask them to play with us, to give us new playmates. We jabbered at them in English, but they did not understand us and ran away. At that moment I decided I would always speak the other's language.

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1. See James N. Davis, "Perspectives on an Age: Forty-Five Years of NECTFL Reports," in R. Terry, Ed. *Agents of Change in a Changing Age*, Northeast Conference Reports (2000), National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, IL, pp. 23–46.

My very advanced school system in Oak Ridge, Tennessee decided to teach language to students at a young age. I learned Spanish colors and numbers in kindergarten and began to learn French in a systematic way starting in third grade. ALM was the methodology used. We watched film strips and listened to records. I learned all about Line and Michel Thibaut and that Line pours milk into the bowl of Michel. We were also all forced to watch an incredibly boring television program from Oregon that tried to teach French. Needless to say, the French I learned was stilted and not very practical. My teachers tried to make French more interesting by telling us stories and teaching us songs. That helped. But then I got to junior high and was introduced to the language laboratory. Later on, I had to teach in language labs and remembered how isolated and alone I had felt sitting in one of those partitioned booths hearing the ocean through those enormous headphones and trying to focus on the uninteresting drill and kill exercises. That kind of language lab was very unappealing to me, and I decided that if I were ever in a position of power, I would create something very different—a very different way to use technology for language learning. And I did.

In my first teaching position at the University of South Carolina at Sumter I replaced the now fossilized and broken-down language lab with a boombox to use the audio materials that came with the textbooks. At Rhodes College, I replaced the dinosaur ALM-style language lab with a beautiful state-of-the-art language center that relied on satellite broadcasts and laserdiscs. At the State University of New York at Stony Brook, I spent half a million dollars creating yet another state-of-the-art language center, this time with computers and multimedia classrooms. And it is here that the Northeast Conference comes into my life.

At Stony Brook I was tasked with teaching language methodology and teaching required courses in the Doctor of Arts in Foreign Language program, involving technology and language learning. I learned a great deal about second language acquisition and applied linguistics in teaching my courses. In doing so I began to see publications mentioning and praising the Northeast Conference as the "cutting edge" conference where innovations in language learning and teaching were presented and shared, as well as it being a "doable" conference where attendees could meet each other and share stories and experiences. When a colleague who had been on the Board of Directors of the Conference suggested that I join the Advisory Council of the Conference and run for the Board (since he declared it was a great "gig"), I decided to do so.

I was warned immediately by a Board member that people were most often not voted to the Board in their first attempt, but that I should run again and not be discouraged if I lost. Well, despite that caveat, I was elected to the Board. Thus began a wonderful experience as part of the leadership of this august organization. I soon got to know so many new people and renewed acquaintanceship with so many people as well. I found NECTFL to be a welcoming conference as well as the cutting-edge conference. Through NECTFL, I became a reviewer for several journals. I learned a great deal more about applied linguistics and second language acquisition through NECTFL and eventually was able to teach linguistics as well as teach foreign language methodology in a much better way with knowledge acquired through NECTFL conference presentations and conversations with attendees and board and council members. I recommended the

Conference to all of my graduate students and language teaching colleagues, and many of them began to attend. I helped mentor both students and colleagues and provided professional development for them as well. Simply put, my association with the Conference was a very fruitful one that helped me, my students, and my colleagues immensely over the years.

Northeast also helped propel me onto the national stage. I went to a few American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) meetings as an exhibitor for NECTFL. ACTFL has its own interesting history, founded as a riposte to the MLA, aimed at assuring language professors and teachers the same professional support that the MLA provides for literature professors and teachers. It is not my purpose here to go into the history of ACTFL, but that is certainly associated with NECTFL, and NECTFL members were crucial in the creation of ACTFL.

My association with NECTFL also helped me in many other ways. It gave me new leadership skills as well as knowledge, and to my great honor, I was elected as Chair of the Northeast Conference for 2005. That particular conference was a great one, I firmly believe. ACTFL had just declared that 2005 would be the "Year of Languages." NECTFL, under the advice of its Executive Director, Rebecca R. Kline, decided that it would also be the year of culture and that this conference would examine the role of culture in language learning. Its theme became "Opening Cultural Windows in the Year of Languages." I found this to be a brilliant and inspirational idea. I began to examine culture in a new light in terms of its necessity and utility for language learning and started to learn more about cultural anthropology and its relationship with linguistics, especially sociolinguistics. This deeper knowledge of culture, language, and communication would stand me in good stead in later years when I began to teach intercultural communication, both in Lithuania and the U.S., and became (full) Professor of Communication at LCC International University in Lithuania for my sabbatical semester in the spring of 2019.

The Conference of 2005 proved to be a turning point for my career, and it propelled me in new directions. And the opening session of the conference was important for my family as well as me. It was decided that the opening would not be a typical address by a well-known person from one of the areas addressed by the Conference, but rather that it would be very different in format. A series of questions were developed that all revolved around questions of culture and languages that were sent out to a variety of language learners of varying ages and schools. The response the Board received to the questions was gratifying. We received responses from universities, high schools, and middle schools, and even elementary schools. Rebecca R. Kline, with help, then put the questions and answers into a beautiful PowerPoint that had written words about culture and cultures as well as images of windows that were open, closed, and, of course, opening. The PowerPoint also included a link to a scene from an Australian movie depicting the developing relationship between a young Australian woman and a young Japanese man. In this scene the woman asks the man what he means when he says the Japanese word hai. In an amusing and poignant answer, he explains that it can mean "yes" as it is normally translated in English, but also "maybe" and even "no." [From Japanese Story, 2004] This was certainly a good example of the importance of culture in communication.

The Board of Directors knew each other quite well and learned about our families. In the planning stages of the opening session, Rebecca decided it would be great not only to have the PowerPoint, with written quotations both from famous writers and student answers to the questions sent to them, but also to have students themselves read from a script that contained student answers to questions, in a kind of "reader's theater." Rebecca knew that my two older children were both interested in languages and taking Spanish and German and asked if I thought they would want to be readers on stage for the opening session. Well, the younger child was in a theater arts program at his school and the older was in band and chorus. Both, not surprisingly considering their father, enjoyed being on stage and performing. Thus, they agreed to participate in the reader's theater.

In conclusion, it should now be evident that the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages changed my life in wonderful ways and helped me become the teacher, scholar, and researcher I had always desired to be. With its help and the help of the International Association for Language Learning Technology, I have many publications and have made many presentations, including keynote addresses in Japan, China, India, and Singapore. Even now in retirement, I continue to work in the area of language learning and technology and will give a presentation (with a colleague from Malaysia) in Vietnam November 2023 at the Asia Computer Assisted and Language Learning conference. Finally, I am also excited to be part of a Past Chairs of the Northeast Conference panel where the past Chairs will discuss how language learning affected their students' lives and helped change the course of them as part of the seventieth anniversary of Northeast Conference in February of 2024.

I hope this summary of language teaching in the United States and the role of the Northeast Conference in its development has been informative and that my own experiences with both has been helpful and also informative.

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"Japanese Story," (2004). Sue Brooks, Director

Nancy Gadbois (2006)

The 2006 Northeast Conference had as its theme, "Building on Common Ground: Within, Across and Beyond." Before I address the requested question directly, allow me to briefly reflect on how special that weekend was, to witness my for-

eign language supervisor, the late Kathleen Riordan, as she received the Nelson H. Brooks Award for outstanding leadership in the profession. Furthermore, the James W. Dodge Memorial Foreign Language given outside of the profession in recognition of work on behalf of languages was presented to Taj Mahal and posthumously to his sister Carole Fredericks. Working with the Fredericks family as we sought to bring recognition to a woman who was previously unknown in the United States was an honor for me personally. Three years later, Taj enchanted the audience with his live musical performance at the Opening General Session.

The question to be answered is how I think world language teaching has evolved, basing my thoughts on how things were when I was chair of NECTFL in 2006, how I see NECTFL's impact on and contributions to the profession, and how things have changed. Many workshops regarding the AP exams in language were offered in 2006 and were well attended. There were also online offerings and grammar and cultural opportunities for educators. The spectrum was varied and wide. Ironically, although I totally embraced technology as a helpful tool in promoting foreign language knowledge, until I left the public school system in 2008, my internet connectivity was severely restricted by the public school system. I then spent six years at a private school, and my freedom to use the internet on a daily basis was encouraged. 2006 was a year in which technology use was closely monitored and often deemed "potentially dangerous" in the K-12 setting. From 2008 until 2014, the morning news/weather broadcasts from France and the daily tips from the moderators of FL Teach kept me content. Assessment was always a popular topic and the Integrated Performance Assessment/Annenberg, preceded by the Standards movement, were highlighted in the 2006 Conference and were still discussed, refined, and reflected upon until I left the high school setting in 2014.

I then fell out of touch with what was happening in foreign language nationally but did retain membership in several national organizations to keep somewhat abreast of the field I so loved. Because I worked with *Class Measures*, an alternative program to traditional certification in my state, I was able to visit foreign language classrooms and interact with educators for several years until 2018. I found that teachers were struggling with many of the same issues I had, including technology and assessment. When I stopped that side job following Covid, I had no clue as to what was happening for future foreign language professionals.

In 2016 I became an APA writing tutor for the Elms College, and I interact daily with social work students in accelerated courses online and in class every Saturday at a local community college. Recently, I was involved in two trainings: suicide prevention/mental health, as well as a training seminar on Artificial Intelligence, in which college professors from six colleges focused on perceptions of both changes in student learning and adaptations in teaching predicated on their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The panelists offered their expertise and insights into how AI tools are altering teaching, learning, and research, as well as offered guidance on pedagogical best practices (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIRkf_rQm7w). The one-hour briefing was quite valuable and the professors shared the advantages and challenges of ChatBOT/GBT.

Serving on the NECTFL Board of Directors for several years prior to chairing the 2006 Conference, and seeing first-hand the excellence of previous chairs and co-directors, enabled me to accept the challenge of becoming the 2006 chair. There may have been one person designated as chair, but it was then and continues to be today a classroom of positive, inspiring educators who recognize the impact of K-16 teachers and their needs and meets them head on.

When I think back to 2006, my interaction today with future school adjustment counselors pursuing the social work degree would have made me adjust the Conference to include a panel with school counselors and mental health advisors. No one in 2006 was familiar with Zoom learning, although virtual high school existed, and current conference attendees can be assured that the pros and cons of video instruction are on the schedule. I am positive that sessions on how to cite ChatGPT similar to this 2023 blog, (https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt) will be well attended. As the needs arise, NECTFL meets them directly.

Marjorie Hall Haley (2007)

Reflections on Diversity – 2007-2023

African proverb from Zambia, "Start where you are but don't stay there."

It is a great pleasure to write as a former conference chair for the 2024 NECTFL Conference and the celebration of its 70th anniversary. My task is to describe what things were like in 2007 related to program development, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and what evolution of trends in teaching I have witnessed. Respectfully, I am going to divert a bit and instead share only one aspect, i.e., diversity. Why? Because it remains ever-present in situating and grounding epistemologies that undergird most research of consequence. I will conclude by sharing NECTFL's contributions and impact.

The honor of being elected the 2007 chair came with the responsibility of identifying a theme that would serve as the conduit for co-constructing new knowledge to enlighten world language teaching and learning. Since 2007, our profession has witnessed paradigmatic shifts between and across differing epistemologies. At that point in time, we were newly positioned in the first decade of the 21st century and at a juncture where we could agree that (a) there is no one best method for teaching or learning; and (b) while examining myriad aspects of diversity, we needed to acknowledge the plethora of realities that face us daily. Therefore, we acquiesced to the concept that diversity must be viewed through many lenses. In so doing, we quickly realized that it is indeed a complex topic and engenders multiple realities.

As chair of the 2007 Northeast Conference, I had the distinct privilege of Annenberg Media sponsoring the production of a DVD (See Figure 1) which provided the profession with valuable resources available in Teaching Foreign Language K – 12: A Library of Classroom Practices. This rich and robust body of re-

sources is still in use today (http://www.learner.org/) and remains an important part of my pedagogy in a graduate teacher education program which spans over thirty-five years. Of   primary importance was that we acknowledge that our schools are filled with a wide range of learners: linguistic, cultural, racial, and ethnic, socioeconomic differences, gender, different experiential backgrounds, special needs, gifted, heritage language learners, students who learn differently and who are differently abled. World language teachers today are expected to be accomplished as well as highly qualified, be versed in an ever-changing socio-political landscape, and have multiple teaching and learning approaches that respond to varied characteristics of diverse classrooms.

Figure 1

Perhaps not surprising to many, diversity in its many forms and iterations, continues to permeate, shape, situate, and influence the academic arena. World language teaching and learning is not exempt! As a former world language teacher and now as a graduate teacher educator, I have witnessed first-hand many of the twenty realities of diversity that the 2007 publication addressed:

- The many views of diversity: Understanding the multiple realities,
- The transformative power of diverse realities: Case studies of two teacher researchers,
- Attending to learner diversity in the lesson plan: Planning for the intensity of engagement,
- Viewing diversity of subject matter,
- Teaching diverse learners, and
- Planning, implementation, and evaluation in my diverse classroom,

to name but a few titles included in the volume/CD. One needs only to scan the literature from 2007 to 2023 and examine the multiple treatments of diversity. The more things change, the more things stay the same.

What evolutions of teaching have I seen? The trends in the changing evolution of world language teacher education have been marked by global events. Looking back to the decade of 2007, most teacher education programs were thriving. In fact, enrollments were, for many institutions, at capacity. As a professor at a large, public university, our graduate classes were filled with students who were undergraduate majors or minors in a world language, native/heritage speakers, career switchers (e.g., military or US Department of State, Foreign Service Institute, and/or a corporate position retirees), and they were excited about teaching. Because our university is comparatively young (only 67 years old), we've never been considered a "traditional" university. Therefore, we enroll a highly "diverse" population with a wide age range of students. It is not unusual for classes to have a mixture of 22-72-year-old students. I have always found this to be a bonus. In addition, because of where we are geographically located, just across the river from the

nation's capital, we attract many international students (roughly 12%). This is clearly a marker of cultural and linguistic diversity. The institution is truly a microcosm of the world.

From this posture, I will briefly describe my professional lived experiences around two influential events. These two major events are of great significance as they have impacted diversity and evolving trends in world language teaching: 9/11 and the advent of STARTALK Programs and COVID.

9/11 and STARTALK

On September 11, 2001, commonly now known as 9/11, some 2,750 people were killed in New York, 184 at the Pentagon, and 40 in Pennsylvania where one of the highjacked planes crashed. In the US intelligence community according to the 9/11 Commission Report (2004), there were fewer than 25 highly proficient speakers of languages such as Arabic and other critical need languages. This precipitated the creation in 2006 of the STARTALK Program, a National Security Agency (NSA)–funded initiative, launched by the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC). The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) launched STARTALK in 2006 and delegated executive oversight of the program to the National Security Agency (NSA). The NSA then awarded a contract to the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) at the University of Maryland. Its purpose was to increase the number of K–16 students learning Arabic and Chinese and to provide professional development training to teachers of Arabic and Chinese.

At its inception, STARTALK programs had three identified goals:

1. Increase the number of students enrolled in the study of critical need languages.
2. Increase the number of highly effective critical need language teachers in the US.
3. Increase the number of highly effective materials and curricula available to teachers and students of critical need languages

In 2008, the funding continued, and STARTALK added Hindi, Persian, and Urdu. The NFLC received a five-year contract to continue administration of the program and two new languages were added, Swahili and Turkish. In 2011, Dari and Russian were added, bringing the total number of languages to nine. Portuguese was added in 2015 bringing the total number of languages to ten followed by Korean being added as the 11th language in 2016. At various points in the illustrious span of the STARTALK program, all fifty states participated. It was the first of its kind to maintain federal funding for diverse language programs across political landscapes that changed at the national level. These programs benefitted both students and teachers.

The grants were awarded for a single year, and the competition included student programs, teacher programs, and combination student and teacher programs. While many programs initially only operated during the summer months, many chose yearlong activities that helped both teachers and students maintain momentum. In fact, the programs became so popular that many student and teacher participants returned as teachers in the programs and students went on to major in college in one of the languages, hoping to one day become a teacher!

STARTALK was a sterling example of embracing, celebrating, and enhancing diversity in the world language community. At my university we were extremely fortunate to be recipients from 2008–2020. We were able to produce a robust corpus of literature that provided cogent research-based evidence of the efficacy of these programs. At the onset of COVID and the global pandemic in 2019, all programs were put on hold, and even though we did not offer a summer program, we were able to use multiple online platforms to offer support to our teacher participants. We happily resumed in 2020 fully online and with the understanding that we would close the chapter at the end of the budget cycle. As a personal note, one of the most gratifying experiences in my professional career is the work we did in our STARTALK programs because of the plethora of experiences we created and shared as we co-constructed diverse spaces for both teachers and students to come together and learn from one another. We took great pride in facilitating the common discourse that evolved that highlighted our similarities out number our differences.

COVID

The second influential event that impacted diversity and evolving trends in world language teaching was COVID and the global pandemic— the creation of virtual and/or blended spaces that required construction of new knowledge using multiple platforms, addressing the needs of teaching not only millennials, but also Gen-Ys and Gen-Zs. We witnessed a high degree of unpreparedness for online, at-home teaching and learning during the global pandemic. Students who were on free and reduced breakfast and lunch experienced an immediate negative impact. And more often than not, these individuals represented black and brown communities, i.e., diverse. This result was further exacerbated by the fact that those families had limited, if any, access to the world-wide web for online learning. Added to that was an increase in the use of technological platforms that resulted in a steep learning curve for teachers and students, which in turn contributed to a notable decline in student engagement (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Herold & Kurtz, 2020). Students attending underserved schools felt the effect of the lockdown substantially more than students in more economically advantaged areas. This issue, which began long before the pandemic, has been framed in the context of the "digital divide" by Warschauer (2011), and van Dijk (2020).

In some sections of the US, COVID marginalized communities of diverse learners from engaging in schooling. This was due to socio-economic conditions and geospatial contexts to some degree. The National Education Association (NEA) reported that one-quarter of all school-aged children lived in households without broadband access or a web-enabled device (2020). Consequently, the education of learners in high poverty areas and rural schools, without support structures in place, was reported as most disrupted (Hamilton, Kaufman, & Diliberti, 2020).

NECTFL's Contributions and Its Impact

The contributions to the profession that NECTFL has made are wide, deep, and broad. It has been my experience that the annual conference has not only provided PK-16 teachers and communities resources, professional development, research-based

pre- and post-conference workshops, and sessions, it also has provided novice/nascent teachers the opportunity to come and find their community — to find their "tribe," if you will. The conference itself has been one that has focused a very broad lens that has embraced inclusion; it has fostered diversity, and the sheer size of the conference makes it extremely palatable, encouraging, inviting, and enticing for first-time conference attendees as well as veterans.

And in that same spirit of the conference itself, NECTFL *Review* has been extremely accommodating and encouraging to first-time, would-be authors by offering them mentoring, guidance, and encouragement that their work is important. The story they have to tell is one worth writing about and therefore, their manuscripts are not rejected out of hand immediately but where there is opportunity for growth and for mentoring a novice writer, the *Review* editor and editorial review board have served a critical role in providing both instructive and constructive feedback and support.

Since 2007, the NECTFL *Review* has taken up the topic of diversity in multiple iterations. In fact, if one were to go back through a digest of topics that have been covered in the past 17 years, it is very easily discerned that diversity was a topic that held great priority for not only the editorial review board but also the posture and position that NECTFL established, supported, and maintained.

Listed below is a representative sample of NECTFL *Review's* inclusion of articles on diversity:

"Diversity and inclusion in world language teachers' instructional practices" - 2020

"Teaching students with disabilities: Addressing the needs of adjunct and temporary faculty" - 2012

"Twenty Years of Culture Learning and Teaching Research: A Survey with Highlights and Directions" - 2016

"Picturing another culture: Developing language proficiency, empathy, and visual literacy through art" - 2019

"Representations of diversity in a novice-level language classroom and beyond: An engaging semester project" - 2023

"Creating safe spaces: Diverse instructional materials for world language learners" – 2023

"Diversity and inclusion in world language teachers' instructional practices" - 2020

"Critical cultural awareness in the foreign language classroom" - 2015

"Building global communities: Working together toward intercultural competence" - 2017

"DEI in world language education: Are we really committed to advocacy and action?" - 2023

Conclusion

The world language teaching profession continues to grapple with the simple but deep question: How can teachers address the array of learners in their classrooms? This multi-layered question is complex. Similarly, *diverse* has many meanings. A broad definition of diversity includes multiple lenses through which to view our work as language professionals in PK-16 settings. As we witness re-imagined curricula, international education, as well as innovation and diversity, my

eternal optimism dictates that we are well-positioned for intersections of identity, belonging and diversity, while examining world population movements. It is my ardent wish that NECTFL will continue to thrive and move in the direction of its next 70 years!

Happy 70th Anniversary, NECTFL!

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Sharon Wilkinson (2008)

Partnering with technology: Rethinking our approach

In 2006, I left my tenured position as a French professor at West Virginia University to revive a small French program at Simpson College in Iowa. Twelve years later, despite a ratio of 30 French majors and minors to one faculty member and a vibrant, innovative curriculum (see Calkins & Wilkinson, 2020), decision makers

at the college cut the French program and my position in the extensive layoffs they carried out that year. After pivoting briefly to an administrative role at Simpson, I happily landed at Duolingo, the company behind the popular free language-learning app, where I now have the privilege of working on a French course used by millions of learners worldwide. Recently, West Virginia University, my first professional "home," announced plans to shutter the Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics, stating that administrators would instead "explor[e] alternative methods of delivery such as a partnership with an online language app" (West Virginia University [WVU], 2023). As announced, WVU officials did reach out to representatives at Duolingo, who promptly declined the invitation to collaborate, emphasizing in an open letter that, while Duolingo strives to make language learning universally available, "an app cannot replace the rigorous study that undergraduates complete in university-level language and linguistics programs" (Blanco, n.d.). It is hard to imagine truer words. But if technology cannot and should not replace human-led instruction, what kind of partnership with technology will best prepare world language students for the future?

This question is not a new one. Our profession has long been navigating its relationship with technology—for example in 1969, NECTFL's theme was "Sight and Sound: The Sensible and Sensitive Use of Audio-visual Aids"—so it is not surprising that in 2008, when once-fictional technologies were becoming real with products like Skype and the iPhone, the Northeast Conference board decided to revisit the question: How can teachers and students use technology to best effect? The theme of the conference that I chaired that year was "The iGeneration: Turning Instruction Inside Out," and the point was for attendees to learn about technology from students. High school and college students served on panels, co-presented with their teachers, and staffed our Apple-sponsored tech playground (before Apple Stores existed)–all so that we could acquire new perspectives and new skills for effective integration of new technologies into our teaching.

Since that conference, technological advances have accelerated in mind-blowing ways. A colleague at Duolingo recently showed me several videos of himself speaking fluently in languages that he does not actually know well. He had used HeyGen's artificial intelligence (AI) video generator, which took an input video of him speaking English and transformed it into convincing footage of him as a native speaker of Spanish, French, and Hindi, saying the same message, cloning his voice and modifying his mouth movements to match the output language. The impressive quality immediately made my mind jump into existential crisis mode. Why do we need to teach languages anymore if people can now "speak" any major language they want with a touch of a button? The honest answer is that we do not need to teach languages anymore in the way that we have always taught them, but classroom instruction is still desperately needed. We just need to rethink our approach.

When I was a college French professor, I had a policy on my syllabus that banned the use of electronic translators like Google Translate for any use other than looking up the meaning of a word (and even then, I showed learners the ad-

vantages of dictionaries over translators). To further diminish the temptation of Google Translate, I worked hard to scaffold my assignments such that students would not need a translator to be able to succeed. Had I not transitioned out of academia, I would probably have added a similar policy against using generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Bard, concerned not only about academic dishonesty but also about creating a crutch that would stunt students' proficiency growth.

Now that I work in industry, though, I see these same technologies through a different lens. At Duolingo, my colleagues and I use Google Translate and Chat-GPT every day to support us with ideation, communication, and verification. Leveraging these tools is not cheating; it is the smart way to work. For example, ChatGPT boosts our creativity and speed as we design thematic units by helping us brainstorm alignment among scenarios, storylines, learning objectives, grammatical forms, and vocabulary. A set of well-crafted generative AI prompts can even produce the first draft of unit content in a fraction of the time that it takes humans to write it, and those prompts can be used over and over again in different languages, helping us get finalized content to learners in less time (see Henry, 2023). Similarly, Google Translate offers a quick way for my colleagues and me to review content in languages that we do not know well—for example, for me to understand exercises in our Japanese course or our Italian course, Google Translate is an efficient solution. The translations are imperfect, but they are good enough for the basic gist that I need to collaborate with other teams and align cross-linguistically on content style and quality. From my new vantage point, I see that banning the use of these tools in the classroom actually prevents students from gaining skills that they will likely need in the work world, where the ability to leverage the latest technologies is both expected and rewarded. Instead of limiting these tools in our courses, we need to lean into them, teaching students when and how to use them well.

I realize, though, that embracing these new technologies can be a tough sell in the education community. I often play out a conversation in my head between my current industry perspective and my former academic viewpoint that goes something like this:

Industry: Why shouldn't learners use tools like Google Translate or ChatGPT?
Academia: Because they will become dependent on them and won't ever acquire basic spelling, vocabulary, and grammatical forms themselves.
Industry: Why do they need to know them? They can just look them up.
Academia: Not when they are speaking.
Industry: Then why not focus classes on developing those skills that are beyond what technology can do? Why waste valuable time teaching, practicing, and testing students' ability to perform tasks that technology can just do for them?

My industry self has a point. Why not teach students to leverage technology to help them brainstorm and plan communication, practice pronunciation, select appropriate vocabulary, and edit and correct their work? Currently, when students

finish their language requirement, is their learning redundant to what electronic and AI resources could have offered them all along? What could their gains have been had their courses partnered with the latest technologies and built up from there instead of excluding these tools for fear the students' learning would be insufficient? Clever use of available tools can boost novice learners to control intermediate-level language and intermediate learners to perform at the advanced level, making it possible to use the target language for more interesting and motivating communicative purposes.

If I were to return to the classroom today, I would make three technology-infused adjustments to the approach that my colleagues and I were already pioneering (Calkins & Wilkinson, 2020). First, I would create assignments that actually require the use of the very technological tools that I would have forbidden before, but I would also make sure that these assignments help students discover the limits of these tools. Here are some examples:

- **Comparing Google Translate to speaking skills:** Have a synchronous conversation with a native speaker using nothing but Google Translate to communicate. Then reflect: What worked well and what did not? In which situations would Google Translate be "good enough" to get the communicative job done, and in which situations would it be inadequate?
- **Using ChatGPT for a first draft:** Write instructions (i.e., a prompt) for ChatGPT to draft in level-appropriate language the first version of an assigned essay. Then analyze and grade the output according to a rubric. What needs to be improved or fixed in order for the draft to become a high-quality essay? Could any of these improvements be generated in the first draft by changing the prompt? What will humans need to add or rewrite to increase the quality of the generated output? (AI-generated writing tends to be well organized, but dull and trite, so if the essay assignment requires some originality, the shortcomings of content generation will be more obvious and lead to more interesting learnings.)
- **Use HeyGen's AI video generator to create a personalized model to imitate:** Make a HeyGen video in the target language by first responding in English to a question that a guest speaker is going to ask the class. Use the dubbed video as a model to learn how to answer the question in the target language. If the resulting language is too difficult, simplify the English of the input video and try again. Come to class ready to answer the question in the target language when asked by the guest speaker.

Second, I would rely almost exclusively on electronic resources to help students learn and practice anything with a right or wrong answer. If students can look it up (e.g., verb conjugations, new vocabulary, grammatical patterns), then I would have them practice that material outside of class time using technology (e.g., in an online workbook, on a quiz app, etc.). Prior to leaving academia, I had already flipped my classroom, but if I were to return, I would lean even more heavily on technological resources for this purpose. Duolingo has shown in several

studies comparing app learning with classroom gains that the individualized practice learners receive on an app can be more efficient than classroom instruction, with learners arriving at similar levels of proficiency in half of the time (e.g., Jiang et al., 2021a; Jiang et al., 2021b). Other studies corroborate the finding that app-based instruction can accelerate language acquisition (e.g., Loewen et al., 2019; Loewen, Isbell, & Sporn, 2020; Sudina & Plonsky, 2023). I would let these types of technologies take care of the extensive practice that students need in order to get comfortable with new words and structures, and I would encourage students to consult online resources for linguistic information, showing them strategies for finding correct answers quickly.

Third, I would push the emphasis of my courses even further toward the nuanced skills and knowledge of the humanities and social sciences that are beyond what technology can do well: analyzing and leveraging cultural perspectives, participating effectively in real-time interactions to deepen human connections, interpreting and appreciating different types of esthetic expression, and so forth. Prior to the program cuts at Simpson College, my colleagues and I had already changed our curricula to make cultural perspectives the core content of our courses from the earliest levels. This refocusing brought with it a natural shift toward collaborative project-based learning, all of which I can now confirm to be highly beneficial for building valuable workplace skills. Now, though, I would layer in generative AI and other technological resources to boost the challenge, interest, and learning gains of these projects.

As an example, let's imagine an interview project designed for beginners. The purpose is to explore with native speakers some cultural practices that the class has been studying (e.g., holiday celebrations or practices related to daily meals or living situations).

- Step 1. Students work in groups, using ChatGPT to help brainstorm ideas for questions and write them in the target language. The final version of the questions must be worded within the scope of what students have learned so far in the course, which will provide some practice with basic generative AI prompting in order to limit the words and structures that can be used. Brainstorming, planning, and editing are all skills that students would do with or without technology at this stage of an interview project. Skilled use of technology allows them to prepare better questions more efficiently, which will ultimately improve their experience and their cultural learning.
- Step 2. Students each take responsibility for at least one of the questions. Since accuracy is never guaranteed in generative AI, each person double-checks ChatGPT's work by creating a HeyGen dubbed video, inputting in English their assigned question(s) and comparing the translation to ChatGPT's. If the resulting language is too difficult for them to work with, they must simplify the English input in order to get more manageable target-language output. Being able to control the input language effectively is a useful skill in the world of generative AI. Moreover, the work of comparing

and reconciling the language produced by different generative AI tools forces students to grapple with both comprehensible and incomprehensible input, increasing their accuracy and editing skills in the process.

- Step 3. Once the groups have finalized the wording of their questions, they use HeyGen to create videos of themselves speaking the target language fluently that will then serve as a pronunciation model to imitate. Rehearsal is an important part of preparing for an interview, and technology can make that practice more effective.
- Step 4. The groups decide how to start and end their interview gracefully, and they use the same generative AI tools to help them plan and practice that language, adjusting the English input until the output is simple enough for them to use it effectively.
- Step 5. The groups conduct their interviews live, recording them on Zoom. The resulting Zoom video will not only provide proof that the interview occurred, but the students can use the recording transcript to double-check their comprehension of what the native speaker said and to help them craft any follow-up questions. In places where the automatic transcript does not make sense, they will need to go back to the video and fill in the gaps. The interview in both spoken and written forms is excellent input for learners, pushing them to understand natural language that is a bit beyond their level for the purpose of learning about culture.
- Step 6. As needed, the groups follow up with clarifying questions for their interviewee by email or over Zoom, once again using AI tools to help them plan the questions and understand the answers.
- Step 7. The groups prepare a slide deck of their interview learnings that they will present live in class. They are encouraged to use the same technology-rich strategies that they honed when preparing for the interview, but this time, they must keep in mind an audience of their peers, and adjust their presentation's language complexity accordingly. Writing and delivering an effective target-language presentation is a common assignment in world-language classes; teaching students to leverage technology in that preparation can boost the resulting quality, such that the presentations provide both comprehensible language input for the class, as well as rich cultural content.
- Step 8. The groups make their presentations in class. Peer ratings of comprehensibility and creativity further incentivize careful collaboration with the AI tools. Simply borrowing AI output without understanding it, analyzing it, and shaping it for the purposes of the project is not acceptable work, and audience ratings provide an extra layer of accountability.
- Step 9. The class compares their observations about cultural practices and perspectives, based on the content of the presentations.

Partnering with technology to plan and practice communication enables beginners to do more with the language and learn more through the language than

their limited skills alone will allow, making language learning more immediately useful and interesting. In fact, for learners at any level, performing with higher proficiency can be motivating, giving them the vision of what their spontaneous communication skills will become if they continue to study and use the language. Classroom instruction clearly has a role to play in helping students acquire those communication skills for which there is no technological substitute, but it is also vital in teaching students to use new technologies for autonomous learning–skills that will be transferable and reusable throughout their academic program and beyond as true lifelong learners.

Ironically, I was never really drawn to new technologies during most of my classroom teaching career, making me actually the least likely board member to chair a conference with a technology theme. The exciting part of NECTFL 2008 for me was the opportunity to learn from our learners. If I were back in the classroom today, I would still turn to my students to help me integrate cutting-edge technologies into my classes. Truth be told, new tools like ChatGPT or HeyGen would seem daunting to me had I not transitioned to a job where they are part of my daily work, but partnering with students always had the dual benefit of flattening my learning curve while forging a reciprocal teaching-learning partnership between me and my students. As I reflect on NECTFL 2008, its lasting contribution was not so much the chance to play with particular technologies, especially given the speed with which technology changes, but rather the reminder that we have so much to learn from our students. If we partner with our learners, they will help us all collaborate with technology in ways that raise the bar on what we all can accomplish in the pursuit of language teaching and learning.

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Jaya Vijayasekar (2010)

The 2010 Conference highlighted people, programs, and practices that inspire. At the time, we were concerned about program development, teacher shortage, and saving our programs. The NECTFL leadership team brought together decision makers—supervisors, superintendents, and Board members to listen to key players—teachers, students, and parents who discussed and demonstrated the benefits of language instruction. Our hope was that participants leave with the conviction that language instruction is vital to the development of the twenty-first century learner.

We learned much from our interactions with the heads of school systems at our conference. While they understood our passion and our urgency, they were constrained by available resources, at times, limited, for all the educational programming in their district. How does the sustenance of a language program configure in the broad palette of special education needs, course requirements set forth by district curriculum committees, contract negotiations with bargaining units, necessary building renovations, and current trends in educational innovations? It would appear, that we continue to ask this same question 13 years later.

School systems that create and sustain successful world language programs tend to demonstrate to the decision makers that language learning supports the mission, goals, and objectives of the district. It is this strong alignment with district goals that help convince district and building leadership teams of the value that world language educators bring to the table.

In my current role as a faculty member in the World Languages and Cultures Department as well as the Education Department at Eastern Connecticut State University, I hope to encourage our students to pursue world language teaching. As the

teacher shortage continues to affect program offerings and development, we are obligated to address the issue in several ways: encouraging students who pursue a degree in elementary education to seek additional certification after completing the necessary courses for a minor in languages; expanding our offerings by creating courses that connect to other disciplines, such as social sciences, healthcare, law, business management, and the arts; creating courses in French culture, cinema, social justice, etc., for the general education student who may not necessarily major or minor in languages. The cultural component embedded in these additional offerings will help students gain a set of skills to make them more marketable in today's competitive world.

Our regional and national organizations have worked in recent years to engage heritage language educators in expanding the offerings in our public and private schools. In order to provide standardized curricula throughout all the heritage schools, ACTFL has assisted national heritage language organizations and communities to write the standards for their respective languages. For example, the American Tamil Teachers' Association (ATTA) recently completed the standards for the Tamil language that are now available through the ACTFL website. This measure helps all our heritage speakers participate in the AAPPL test and qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy.

State and regional organizations are expanding their professional development offerings by partnering with neighboring states and providing increased opportunities for online participation. At the university level, we are pleased to see participation in professional development even from our pre-service teachers.

As world events challenge us daily, we are charged with a responsibility to build cultural competence among existing and future teachers. Our message to our students that peace in today's world can be achieved by increased understanding and tolerance of diversity should be the driving force of our professional work.

Charlotte Gifford (2011)

It happened over a school break, when I was determined to get the desk in my little home office corner back under control. My work spaces, alas, are not generally prone to Marie-Kondo-style organization, and there was quite a pile of stuff to sort through. I settled in that morning with file folders and a recycling bin, and was off to a good start, when I made a discovery that upended my view of professional development.

A much younger teacher then than I am now, I was already a regular attendee of NECTFL. I am the child of two language teachers, and I was aware of the Northeast Conference long before I joined the profession; my father was active in the organization in its early years, and I remember well the row of the conference Reports on his bookshelves.

Each spring, NECTFL provided me with a much-needed shot in the arm of research and practical information to apply to my teaching, and I was soon a confirmed conference junkie. I had my favorite presenters whom I sought out, knowing that I'd learn something new and cutting-edge from my gurus, no matter what the topic they were addressing that year.

That morning, in my tidying-up, I found a set of NECTFL handouts, complete with my own notes, that I'd set aside on a top shelf. As I blew the dust (literally!) off them, I saw the lists that I had made of new projects and plans to implement; these "Back at GCC" lists brought me up short. Although I had started on an item or two, the rest of the ideas had remained untouched. They were all still germane, still important, still compelling, but sadly, once I was home from the conference, they had been shelved, pushed aside by the day-to-day demands of the semester.

This experience was still on my mind as I prepared to step into leadership in NECFTL. In November 2009, as the incoming Vice-Chair of NECTFL, I attended the annual ACTFL Convention in San Diego, CA, where I had a break-through moment in the planning of the 2011 conference with Executive Director Dr. Becky Kline during an early morning brainstorming power-walk.

The painful lesson of my dusty handouts had been on my mind as I grappled with what we were seeking in the design of the 2011 conference. In that morning discussion, a key element came into clearer focus: we wanted to extend the impact of the NECTFL experience beyond the single conference weekend. In radical shorthand, we dubbed the design that emerged *Before, During and After*: we wanted to offer participants meaningful preparation *before* the conference, the same excellent professional development as always *during* the conference, and effective follow-up *after* the conference. We wanted to affirm the reality that teachers are learners, too, and to offer them the structures they would need to maximize their learning.

At the time, the NECTFL board had recently shifted some regular meetings from face-to-face gatherings to the new-to-us technology of video conferencing. Originally implemented as a time- and cost-saving measure, it opened the door to a new approach to the conference—on that walk in San Diego, we sketched out plans for NECTFL's first pre- and post-conference webinars. Because of the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown, the world is now well-acquainted with platforms like Zoom, but at the time we were certainly early-adopters of the technology and its application to professional development.

Going forward, in the planning of the 2011 conference, the NECTFL board discussed ways to make the conference experience a model of sustained professional development within a supportive community of professionals. We invited participants to consider an over-arching question throughout the extended conference experience: *What will you do back at your institution to apply what you have learned?*

That year, we held three pre-conference webinars connected to the three-part conference theme, *Making Connections: Content, Colleagues and Curriculum.* They were designed to serve as a thought-provoking precursor to the conference offerings; they allowed participants to start thinking about key topics and their individual professional needs and particular interests well beforehand. We knew that we would have to ask for the help of leaders in our field. Fortunately, nine good friends of NECTFL immediately agreed to serve on the three working groups for the webinars, representing the three elements of the theme: Content, Colleagues, and Curriculum.

At the conference, we encouraged attendees to make connections with their peers and make plans to compare notes and confer with one another in the newly established

Teachers' Lounge while at the conference, preparing for the application of their learning in their home institutions.

Finally, a post-conference webinar brought the three strands together in an effort to summarize and extend the experience, and to offer participants the structure to come back to their learning from the conference with some time in between for reflection. In the end, the 2011 conference experience stretched from early March to late May, and for several years, NECTFL continued using pre- and post-conference workshops tied to the annual theme.

The pandemic forced us to consider new approaches to our professional development. Many conferences shifted to online events: some with live presentations, some with pre-recorded ones, and many with a mix of the two. Often, participants could continue to view sessions after the end of the conference; given the time, one could experience many more sessions than would be possible in the face-to-face conference format. Other organizations experimented with multi-day virtual professional development events, convening online.

We became more comfortable with the technology that offered us professional development in our own homes.

With the extensive experience in remotely delivered professional development that we gained during the pandemic, and the shift in our thinking that it prompted, now is the ideal time to explore anew how we approach conferences and professional development in general, and how we apply our learning to our professional practice. Such an approach does require thought and planning ahead of time, both by the sponsoring organizations and by individual participants. (If it were easy or automatic, we would already be doing it!)

Nevertheless, I remain convinced that the creation of mechanisms and opportunities for sustained professional development over time, with one's fellow practitioners and with a structure for reflection and application, offers us a model that can greatly increase the impact of a conference. We can enhance the power of NECTFL with this kind of support framework for teachers by sponsoring virtual pre- and post-conference events and encouraging participants to commit to working together, before, during and after each conference.

Arlene White (2013)

I chaired the 2013 Northeast Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Our theme was *Developing Leaders for Tomorrow's Learners.* We saved some money, we reached many first time attendees, and we were royally welcomed by the Marriott Waterfront Hotel and the city of Baltimore.

This theme was important to us as a board. We knew that we could not continue to move world language education forward if we did not intentionally focus on developing leaders—in classrooms, schools, and the profession. We knew that the learning styles and diversity of our students were constantly changing. We knew that diversity

and inclusion were becoming more important to our classroom environment. The Five Cs continued to be the guiding principles upon which our instruction was based.

Our leaders needed quality and focused professional development and the opportunity to interact with colleagues and to create new networks to inspire them after the conference was finished. They needed to see what were the most current pedagogical tools available and be able to share them with fellow teachers and colleagues.

World language teaching has changed dramatically since 2013 due to COVID and the increased integration of technology. Teachers were champs at adapting to new methodology and equipment. They continue to build today on what they did then. Culture has become so much more accessible, and that is a hook that reels students into language. AI is getting a lot of attention and we are all waiting to determine its impact in the classroom.

But I must say that some things have not changed—the care and concern of teachers for their students is still #1. Teachers are continuing to share their ideas with colleague across the hall, the state, and the world. They are passionate in their striving to be the best that they can be, even during difficult times.

I started attending NECTFL in the late 1970s (!). I became a conference geek overnight. I loved checking in with people throughout the year and seeing them face to face at the conference. Dinner with friends at La Bonne Soupe was always a treat. Being a member of the Board of Directors and Conference Chair was one the highlights of my life. I will be forever grateful to Becky Kline for her guidance and friendship. My connections with many board members continue and still give me much joy.

Janel Lafond-Paquin (2014)

The year before the conference, the city was rocked by two explosions near the finish line of the Boston Marathon. As a track and field official working at that event, I had completed my duties and was at the Prudential Center with a colleague when we were told to evacuate the building. Amid sirens and much confusion, we ended up in front of the 2Marriott Copley Place Hotel, the location of NECTFL's 2014 Conference of which I would be Chair. Everyone was truly shaken by this experience and I'm sure that many people were concerned about attending a conference there in 2014.

However, the following year, NECTFL's Boston conference brought hope and healing through fantastic professional development for those who participated from NECTFL's fourteen state region and beyond! Being an in- person, pre-pandemic event, this 61st conference, whose theme was "Sustaining Communities through World Languages." had 24 workshops as well as more than 150 sessions that enticed participants with such topics as technology, grammar, flipped classrooms, activities, cinema, assessment, and so many more!

As I scanned the topics addressed in NECTFL's offerings in 2014, it appeared that integrating technology into instruction, differentiation, and gaining proficiency through various activities were making headway; however, the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion were not specifically addressed. and the Can Do statements weren't as frequently referenced until their revision appeared in 2017. These topics have become a mainstay of conferences in recent years to the benefit of all in education who are striving every day to reach and teach all learners through an understanding of their social and emotional needs.

Regarding social emotional learning, educators always spoke in the past of teaching the whole child. However, this movement has been the impetus to ensure that teachers consider their students' well-being as part of the educational process. In a world in which children are faced with many diverse challenges such as bullying, world unrest, fractured families, illness, and pressure to excel, taking the time to check students' emotions is a way of knowing what is occurring in their lives so that instruction can be tailored to meet their needs.

Furthermore, due to the pandemic, many teachers have left the profession to do something else, foreign language programs have been cut, and district funds are drastically reduced for educators wanting to participate in professional development opportunities pertinent to their discipline. Online professional development opportunities have become more prevalent and hiring substitutes so that teachers can attend an in-person conference has become an expense that some districts don't want to incur. In addition, limits have been placed on field trips and outside activities that have often added to the experience of learning a language. Now, teachers must find virtual opportunities to immerse their students in target language cultures or find creative ways to bring those cultural opportunities into the classroom.

Regardless of all this, NECTFL continues to offer quality professional development with the bonus of networking in person which is not as easy to do online. Its offerings bring educators together and give them the opportunity to discuss, share, and sometimes commiserate over the potential loss of a program while seeking solutions to continue to offer that language. NECTFL is a gold standard for language professionals, and I am truly blessed to have been Boston's Conference Chair in 2014.

Cheryl P. Berman (2015)

It was 2003 when I was sent to my very first NECTFL conference as "Best of State" representing the New Hampshire Association of World Language Teachers. The NECTFL conference at that time was held at the Omni Hotel in Washington, DC. The session I presented was titled "Hands-on Cooperative Classroom Projects". The session presented group projects to promote cooperative learning and the 5 C's of language learning education in the K-6 classroom. To my surprise and delight,

this workshop was selected as a semi-finalist for "Best of the Northeast". This was the most wonderful experience of my teaching career. John Webb was Conference Chair that year. He and Becky Kline were nothing but kind and welcoming to me as a first timer. I wanted to be a part of this again!!

Fast forward, I continued to present at NECTFL year after year and made some wonderful friendships still in place today.

In 2007 I was honored as a Mead Fellows recipient and had an amazing experience. The project created was a "FLES Linguafolio for Teachers of World Languages K-6" that a few years later was put into an online format.

Needless to say, NECTFL advanced my career beyond my wildest dreams as an educator. Soon after, in 2009, I was a candidate for nomination to the NECTFL Board of Directors and was elected. I can't express how thrilled this opportunity was and how amazing the experience was to work with such accomplished colleagues. Teaching was a second career for me and I was ecstatic about the future of NECTFL and what I could contribute.

By the end of my four year term as a Board member, NECTFL had some difficult challenges ahead of them moving into 2014-15. I was elected the 2015 Conference Chair. For an extensive number of reasons, it was voted that NECTFL would not have a 2015 conference. Therefore, there was no theme to the 2015 conference year. Instead, there was much reorganization that was necessary for the continuance of the organization, and it was my privilege to work with the Board of Directors and get NECTFL back on track to move forward and be able to start up again in 2016. As challenging as it was, I am most grateful to my fellow colleagues for their support in the changes that ensued. I guess if I had to select a theme it might have been, "Reorganize, Redirect, and Renew the future of NECTFL."

In retrospect, I learned a great deal about myself, my personal strengths and weaknesses, and the endless admiration that so many educators have for NECTFL and all that it represents to so many of us.

As NECTFL celebrates its 70th Birthday, I am proud to have been (and continue to be) a part of its past, present, and future. I wish to congratulate the current Board of Directors on reaching this incredible milestone. NECTFL will always

Rebecca Kanak Fox (2016)

Reflecting on the Past to Inform the Future: Perspectives from the 2016 Conference Chair

To think that NECTFL has been in existence for 70 years is, to me, both awesome and affirming —awesome because this organization has stood the test of time as such a strong presence in the world languages profession and its research; affirming because through its support of language educators, language pedagogy, and language-related research, it has served as an anchor for language educators while linking theory to practice. Over time, I've seen how NECTFL (https://www.nectfl.org/) has worked hand in glove with ACTFL (https://www.

actfl.org/) and with state organizations to serve educators in our northeast region and beyond. One way to get a sense of how critical aspects of language teaching, research, and our field have evolved since that first meeting that took place at Brown University in 1954 is to look at the NECTFL conference over the years through the lenses of the yearly themes and consider any prevailing questions or issues that might have emerged about pedagogical approaches or learner needs at those times. The yearly NECTFL conference provides one important perspective on educational trends and language research, a way to view how the field and world language educational practices have evolved over time.

From someone who has been involved in NECTFL since the 1990s, I've been able to experience a 30-year perspective on the ways that I've seen NECTFL bring together PreK-16 language educators, teacher educators, and researchers in dialogue, while simultaneously serving as a yearly snapshot of our field of world languages. I began as an attendee and sensed right away that I was part of a greater profession of language educators. I soon became a presenter, thrilled that my own proposal might ever be accepted and that I could see my name on the NECTFL program with other amazing language educators. I later became a member of the NECTFL Board, the Advisory Council, and then 2016 Conference Chair. Each year, the conference theme called me to *really* think about what I was doing in my classroom and how my research aligned with or stood against the conference theme. Was I abreast of the times? Was I in tune with what was going on in the profession in other states and regions? Over time, that first proposal became my yearly commitment to submit a session or workshop proposal, wait for acceptances, and hopefully find that I was part of the program. I'd been involved for many years in my own language-specific organization and its local and national conferences, but NECTFL extended that professional opportunity for me and helped me to see my work in a broader sense. I started to see the parallel work occurring across languages, and that helped me to sense a place and a context for my teaching, my classroom, my students. So, I quickly came to see NECTFL as a strong force, one that has kept me and my fellow language professionals on our toes; I believe it kept my work as a language educator and teacher educator current and viable.

Another thing that NECTFL has done well is focus on both the collective and the individual. For example, NECTFL has fostered leadership growth: it enabled me to exercise my own leadership growth and to meet amazing language professionals from around the world. As an organization, I have seen NECTFL serve as a leader itself, each year its theme capturing at least one major idea that responded to teachers' needs with new ideas, teaching approaches, and research that propelled them into the next year and beyond. Bringing together major speakers, classroom experts, researchers, and teacher educators each year has been an invaluable opportunity for me as a language teacher and teacher educator, providing a space, either in person or virtually, to participate actively, to engage with one another, and create a broad community of practice. These spaces

invited and included everyone in what I saw as a common focus of quality language education for all. In addition to the annual conference, *The* NECTFL *Review* also provided an important space, an outlet, for sharing research through refereed journal articles, book and product reviews, and pedagogical approaches. I cannot leave out professional development and advocacy efforts because NECTFL has played an essential role to advance those areas articulated in the sixth ACTFL CAEP Standard, Professionalism.

So, with this as a backdrop, I would like to add a bit more insight into the 2016 conference theme, its context, and a few outcomes I've been aware of post-conference. Conference themes from other years will likely share some similar thought processes about their connections to language educator practice and research in their time. In the following sections, I first provide some contextual information about the 2016 conference. I then share some thoughts about where I think our field might be moving about some key areas and, of course, how I see NECTFL's ongoing role in the evolution of world language and language educator practice and research.

NECTFL in 2016

After several years of the NECTFL Conference being held in multiple locations around the northeast region, it returned to New York City in 2016. The conference theme of the 62nd annual conference was *Developing Intercultural Competence through World Languages,* which included invited and special sessions, workshops, research roundtables, and a technology playground. The theme was set purposefully within the context of a changing world in which the field of world language education was viewed as being even more important than it ever had been. Newly revised standards for language learners, *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (W-RSLL) (National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015) called for performance evidence showing what students knew and could do. Simultaneously, updated teacher education standards (ACTFL, 2013) also called for teacher education programs to provide evidence of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for language teacher education. These sets of standards and evidence-based assessments represented a paradigm shift in how languages and communication were perceived and taught. In addition to pedagogical changes that called for interactive learning and communicative classrooms, there was a strong focus on the growth of students' communicative ability and their deeper understanding of culture—not only the understanding of culture, but this understanding needed to embrace the development of intercultural competence, a two-way street.

At that time, there was also a strong call emerging for schools to prepare students to be global citizens who could be internationally minded cultural mediators and with strong skills in intercultural competence. The development of twenty-first century skills was emphasized across all grade levels and subjects with global citizenship and intercultural competence (IC) increasingly included in school and school division goals, such as *Portrait of a Graduate* (see for exam-

professional development providers to include the growth of intercultural competence in teachers? And, finally, what educational research might we use to expand upon the current scholarship on intercultural competence in WL education?

As an aside, since the 2016 conference, additional publications have emerged directly related to this important topic, for example, the dissertation by Webb (2022) investigating teachers' perspectives of IC in their classrooms and teaching settings, a study by Byram and Wagner (2018), and another by Webb & Fox (2022) on teacher educators' understandings of IC and how to teach it, but at that time, the strong call for research played a significant role in the conference's place in the context of WL research on IC in WL education.

Because the theme of intercultural competence (IC) offered many possibilities and drew on many perspectives from both within and outside the field of world languages, the 2016 conference took an exploratory approach to allow attendees to engage deeply with the topic and contribute their expertise and ideas to the outcome of the conference. The goal was to have deeper understandings emerge by the end of the conference. Attendees were called to ponder definitions broadly and specifically and considered the role that IC played in their classroom. This challenged attendees to work together to collect some answers. In 2016, advocacy for world language sustainability was viewed as being more important than ever. The general belief across all of us was that language study should enhance and increase twenty-first century skills through promoting the development of global competencies for all students.

Proposals were clustered around six strands that might allow the presentations to address specific aspects of that particular strand. The six themes, or conference strands, were

    A. Exploring the nature and scope of IC
    B. Developing global citizenship through world languages
    C. Providing PD to teachers for developing IC
    D. Building IC in our schools and communities
    E. Integrating IC in teaching, learning, and curriculum
    F. Exploring the role of technology in developing IC

From the opening and closing sessions, and throughout the conference, attendees were called on to connect with one another and share ideas, responses, and perspectives through both Padlet and hard-copy posts, as well as on Facebook and Twitter. The opening session included student voices from several local schools to capture their ideas about intercultural competence. There was a student panel, moderated by Dr. Lori Langer Ramirez, Dalton School, sharing student perspectives from public, charter, and private schools on IC. A compiled video from students who weren't able to attend in person was also part of the opening session to allow conference attendees to consider broad ideas from the voices of teachers and students. These ideas opened the notion that there is no singular definition for IC and underscored the important role that language plays in its development.

Throughout the conference, volunteers attended sessions on the six strands and took notes. They and the chair met to compile information and draw together ideas gleaned from the volunteer pool. In the closing plenary, Dr. June Phillips highlighted the findings across the six strands before providing a synthesis of this collective set of ideas regarding the nature and scope of IC, definitions, and descriptions. In this way, we set out to capture the ways IC had been represented and discussed in and through sessions during the conference: the essence of IC, ways to integrate it in schools and communities, ideas surrounding how to provide professional development for educators, and explore technology to support IC understanding. Dr. Phillips captured these ideas in a slide that described IC as a tapestry—an interweaving of perspectives, ideas, points of view, languages and cultures, strategies for learning about and understanding other cultures and our own. Teachers and students need to work together with other teachers and one another to grow and develop as citizens of a global community. The slide below shares her overview of this interweave.

Dr. Phillips shared that the interweaving of people, languages, cultureS [written with a capital S to emphasize the importance of multiple cultures], ideas, verbal and all types of communication, as well as respect and sensitivity were all part of the warp and woof of a complex tapestry whose design created both unique and complex results. As attendees filtered out of the closing session, conversations continued, folks wanted to keep discussing how to move the conversation forward, and we made a commitment to do what we could to encourage just that. In this next section, I share one avenue that NECTFL took to continue the dialogue and share more ideas and research related to the conference theme. As conference Chair, I felt that 2016 had helped to encourage additional voices to emerge, but there was more to do!

The NECTFL *Review*: Special Themed Edition on IC

Because the 2016 conference theme was complex and offered multiple directions and perspectives on Intercultural Competence, NECTFL *Review* Editor, Bob Terry and I decided to devote one of the editions to articles and re-

search related to Intercultural Competence. We felt that we should promote the ideas of interweaving the conference strands and threads to create an intricate work of published articles of "scholarly art." More importantly, research was called for to help us understand more about effective approaches and practices that promote a deeper understanding of intercultural competence and the ways in which we might continue to develop and nurture it in the lives of teachers and students.

The ten articles included in the special issue expanded upon the themes and strands of the conference itself. The NECTFL *Review*, Special Issue, Volume 79, February, 2017 (**https://www.nectfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/NECTFL-SPE-CIAL-ISSUE.pdf**) contains ten articles that presenters wrote to address the theme or present research related to the theme of intercultural competence. The two sections of the volume focused on (1) Developing IC through Curriculum and Content Instruction, and (2) Developing Intercultural Competence through Study Abroad & Experiential and Simulated Learning.

As mentioned at the outset of the volume, the five articles in the first section focus on developing curriculum and content that promote intercultural competence. Bornholdt and Sheffer took the approach of promoting global citizenship and cultural understanding in a college-level program through the integration of language and cultural studies through multicultural European Studies. In another article, Eddy provided ideas about how to use backward design to integrate elements of intercultural competence into K-12 language curriculum. Two other articles focused on language-specific contexts at the college level: Amanatidou presented ways that authentic Greek TV and advertising examples could meld to provide insights for student development of linguistic and cultural knowledge of contemporary Greek, and Kashuba addressed ways that French literature could serve to help students develop global understanding. Rounding out the first section is an article by Palpacueur-Lee, Khalpukova, Lee, and Melendez that introduced a mask inquiry project for pre-service language teachers to advance their understanding of intercultural competence in theory and in action.

The five articles that comprised Section II provided multiple ways that study abroad and experiential and simulated learning could serve to promote the development of intercultural competence. Venere and Watson provided a look at study abroad and the incorporation of social media for study-abroad and domestic world language programs. Pilon addressed short-term study abroad programs in her article, and Tozcu provided a look at ways that authentic immersion experiences might be accomplished even when travel to the locale where a language is spoken may prove difficult to impossible. In "Utilizing Willingness to Communicate Activities for the Development of Intercultural Competence," Vasseur presented a case study approach to describe the implementation and outcomes of activities designed to increase five college-level learners' willingness to communicate. Finally, Tan and Barbour introduced the concept of multi-dimensional language and culture learning in community college Chi-

nese courses to build global communities working together to achieve intercultural competence.

These publications helped extend the conference theme and brought specific examples to the broader readership regarding IC implementation and research in schools, programs, colleges, and universities, as well as in pre-and inservice teacher education. The articles also contributed to the body of published matter related to intercultural competence, and yet it remained clear that further research is needed to provide a better, perhaps more concrete, understanding of the results of programs as they seek to develop intercultural competence in students. The volume also left the readership with the questions: How will we better define and measure student growth, and how will we describe this growth? Equally important, we need ways to measure the results of our work with teachers and teacher candidates.

Trends and Next Steps

In the years since 2016, even with COVID's intervening, a conference was held each year, virtually during COVID, and then returning to face-to-face post-COVID but with measures that made it possible for folks to present virtually, if needed. The desire, the will to come together as professionals was not going to be let go. In 2017, the NECTFL conference theme was: **Strengthening World Language Education: Standards for Success**, with Carole Smart as Chairperson. In 2018, Bill Heller as Chairperson focused on language proficiency in his theme, **Unleashing the POWer of Proficiency**. This was followed by the 2019 theme, **Authentic Language, Authentic Learning**, Rosanne Zeppieri, Chairperson. All Chairpersons brought to their position the experience, perspectives, and contexts in which they were teaching while also representing our northeast region broadly. In 2020, Nathan Lutz captured this well in his theme, **Languages for All: Envisioning Language Learning Opportunities for Every Learner**. In the wake of the events of 2020, coupled with the COVID pandemic, social justice was a theme that took on a greater presence in the forefront of our work. In 2021, Conference Chairperson, Michael Bogdan, selected the timely theme, **Finding Our Voice: World Languages for Social Justice**. In 2022, the year just preceding this year's 70th anniversary, Christopher Gwin, that year's conference Chairperson, selected the conference theme of **Classroom Roots, Global Reach**, a theme that provided a broad opportunity for presenters, teachers, teacher educators, and researchers to really think about the broad impact of language education and share research and practice focused on ideas surrounding the local to the global and the global to the local.

As we turn now to the 2023 theme of the Butterfly Effect (**https://www.nectfl.org/2024-conference/**), I believe that this 70th anniversary conference theme captures the notion well that language education has grown, developed, expanded, and flourished over time; NECTFL has had both an immediate and far-reaching impact as a conference on its yearly attendees and its role in WL dialogue over time, first as a snapshot of that year's prevailing ideas and views

about teaching languages, and at the same time as a stepping stone to next steps that have led us forward to where we are now. As we stop for a moment this year to savor our conference over time and take stock of some of the important moments and stages in our history, I am optimistic that we will continue to learn from one another and from multiple perspectives across time. It's my observation that the conference has an established record of capturing and addressing new needs and research in WL education, particularly with regard to approaches to classroom teaching and learning, pedagogical practices, and language research.

Most recently, particularly since 2020, themes related to diversity, equity, and inclusion have taken a leading role in our work. Moving forward I can see these continuing to be at the heart of our work as educators, and certainly as language educators. Critical perspectives and critical pedagogy should also be at the heart of program and curriculum development and consciously incorporated in our research. Other areas we should continue to delve into should address teacher recruitment and retention, teacher preparation and a commitment to ongoing professional development as a lifelong journey, which could serve to help bridge the articulation gap between theory and inclusive classroom practice that meets the needs of all learners. We must continue to increase our global perspectives through international work and research. There is much remaining to be tackled, and I am confident that NECTFL will continue to be a leader in the field moving forward. I know I will be in the midst of these important conversations and engaged in research; I call on my colleagues to join together to address the research-to-practice we have ahead.

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Carole Smart (2017)

Reflecting on my years with NECTFL, there are so many emotions that return to me. There was fear, anxiety, nervousness, awe, comfort in friendships being made, but most of all, happiness and joy. NECTFL was one of the major influencers of my teaching career.

When I first attended a NECTFL conference, I was a young mother, traveling alone for the first time. I remember being so focused on absorbing everything around me, including the breadth and depth of each of the sessions that I attended. I was in awe of the presenters and their knowledge; I feared missing some critical piece of information. I was absorbing all that I could, nibbling at something quickly throughout the days, so that I didn't miss a single session. I never took a break, attending sessions from the first to the last of the day. I was exhausted by the time I returned to rural New Hampshire yet eager to start revamping my lesson plans for the next day to incorporate new ideas and strategies into each of my classes. And then, I realized that I was "hooked."

From that time forward, I attended as often as I could, going from NYC to Baltimore and back to NYC as the location changed. Throughout those years, I became more relaxed and enjoyed my time. I met some truly amazing professionals who shed light on their trials and tribulations of teaching in their respective school districts. These conversations were vital in instilling an even more thoughtful process into my planning and instruction for my students.

It was in Baltimore that I became a presenter for the first time. That's when the nervousness really surfaced. How was I ever going to "measure up" to all those who have been imparting words of wisdom to me for all this time? What an exciting time to hear how

others enjoyed my session and congratulating me, saying they had gathered so many great ideas. The support received from everyone—the attendees as well as the board members—brought me joy. When I presented a second time, I was far more relaxed and enjoyed my own presentation. As my friendships grew, so did my comfort within NECTFL.

Years later, I received a nomination for election to the NECTFL board. I was honored and overwhelmed to be considered. I nervously submitted all the required paperwork, wondering if I was truly worthy of such a leadership role. They were my most enjoyable years with NECTFL. This board's work is tremendous in developing and continuously improving programs for its membership. NECTFL is very much an educational body. What a kind, compassionate and nurturing group of professionals!

After some major changes in the organization, I stepped up early to become Chair for the 2017 Conference. During the time leading up to the conference, I couldn't have asked for a better team to help me with the tasks at hand. My theme on standards was to designate that year. There were many up and downs, many problems to work through and overcome, not mention the snowstorm on the first day of the conference. However, with the exemplary leadership of our dear friend John Carlino, the expertise of past chair Becky Fox, and the rest of the board, it all came together. This was truly the kind, compassionate, and nurturing board I have mentioned. Although she was no longer on the board, my dear friend Cheryl Berman (Chair of 2015) was always there to lend a hand. I am forever grateful to them all for their support.

Even though I am retired, I still use some of the skills that I learned and continued to develop over the years. I still work mentoring a fine group of professionals in my school district. I am still using what I learned through NECTFL while working with students. There is no finer place to be than to involved with NECTFL.

Happy 70th anniversary to NECTFL, one of finest organizations I know!

Bill Heller (2018)

NECTFL at Seventy - Still Leading the Way

Aside from being cause for celebration and nostalgia, milestone anniversaries offer an opportunity to look back on past accomplishments, achievements, and successes, as well as providing an impetus for looking forward with reinvigorated intention. In 2024, the Northeast Conference celebrates 70 years of service to World Language educators. As someone who has almost been on earth that long himself, NECTFL represents the scope of professional practice in teaching languages over my entire lifespan. Although the formats and venues have shifted over the years, the Northeast Conference has consistently provided an opportunity for leaders in the field from across the country to gather, share, discuss, inquire, network, and collaborate.

It was a very exciting time in the profession leading up to the 2018 NECFTL that I had the great honor to chair. In the over 20 years since the first iteration of the current *World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (2015) was released in 1996, scholars and practitioners of all languages across the country studied, collaborated, and experimented to de-

velop and share approaches to realizing the vision of language learning and instruction outlined in the "Five Cs." It seemed like the key tools that practitioners needed to enact the standards were being made widely available and accessible to the field. The 2017 release of the *ACTFL/NCSSFL Can Do Statements* (2017) connected the communicative modes of the World Readiness Standards with ACTFL Proficiency Levels in a concrete and accessible way. In addition, the first volume of Glisan and Donato's *Enacting the Work of Language Instruction: High Leverage Teaching Practices* (2017) was released which offered a detailed look at the recently-articulated ACTFL Core Practices (now, the ten ACTFL Guiding Principles). The conference theme, "Unleashing the POWer of Proficiency," captured the energy and excitement in the field using superhero imagery and a Roy Lichtenstein inspired logo.

This excitement was evidenced by the overwhelming number of session proposals received and the robust attendance which built on the moment of the previous conferences since the return of the in-person conference at the Hilton. Dr. Eileen Glisan, herself a past NECTFL Chair, and co-author of the *High-Leverage Teaching Practices* volume, gave the keynote address. Featured sessions aligned with the conference theme were highlighted during each of the workshop sessions.

The success of the 64th edition of NECTFL was a tribute to an incredibly dedicated, generous, knowledgeable, and collaborative Board of Directors; the kindness and model of the past Chairs I had worked with including Cheryl Berman, Becky Fox, and Carole Smart; and to Executive Director John Carlino's wise, steady, and experienced leadership. My biggest takeaway from the experience of chairing the 2018 NECTFL was the power of personal invitation. It was the power of invitation that brought me to fill a board vacancy and it was the power of invitation that made me even consider the possibility of being chair. When I listen to folks talk about how they became involved in any professional organization, whether at the state, regional, or national level, it usually comes down to being personally invited to consider participating made by a respected professional colleague.

As NECTFL moves forward to the century milestone, I believe its vibrancy, relevance, and accessibility will continue by the power of invitation. Through the reflection, learning, and hard work in which our field has engaged in after reemerging from the pandemic, I'm confident that the reach of our invitation will be even more inclusive, purposeful, strategic, and empowering. In doing so, NECTFL will continue to equip more educators to effectively help learners discover the gift and power of language proficiency.

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Rosanne Zeppieeri (2019)

When I reflect on my first experiences with the NECTFL Conference, I remember the excitement, the crowds, the extensive choices of workshops, and of course the vendors. Several years ago, when I first met Lea Kennedy Graner, she remarked that when she was introduced to NADSFL, she felt that she had found her people. That sums up exactly how I felt at NECTFL.

There was so much to learn, so many new strategies to try out in my classroom, people who exuded joy in teaching and learning. At times I had to beg for my district to subsidize the fee, at other times, I paid myself. But in each instance, I returned home with bags full of posters, books, teaching supplies, and many, many ideas to improve my students' learning. Yes, it was tough to maneuver all of that on the bus to New Jersey, but the effort was worthwhile.

For many years when I attended the conference, I was teaching and, as I mentioned, I learned new theories and strategies that were immediately applicable in my classroom. My students always knew when I had been at the conference because the next weeks were full of new experiences for them and for me. I learned the value of sponge activities from Sam Leone, Stephen Krashen's comprehensible input hypotheses and how to use them in the classroom, Total Physical Response (TPR) and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS). The list continues and I often wonder how I might have learned these methods had it not been for NECTFL.

When I attended the conference as a supervisor, I returned home with a year's worth of professional development material to use with the teachers in the district. It was at NECTFL that I first learned of the SOPA assessment developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). This assessment shaped the elementary FLES program in the district and led to national recognition as the ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award as an Exemplary Elementary World Language Program recipient. After attending a preconference workshop given by CAL, I invited the presenter to work in our district with the elementary language teachers. This workshop transformed (and I do not think I am exaggerating) the program to a proficiency-based approach. Teachers experienced the difference between teaching lists of vocabulary to guiding students to describe, explain, and give opinions. Students thrived and continue to do so as they learn to use language in authentic-like situations.

Aside from the high-quality professional development at NECTFL conferences, there were the people, leaders in the field, who made themselves available to attendees, shared their expertise, became advisors and friends. These connections were the most important aspect of the conference for me as they shaped my work and thus impacted the district teachers whom I supervised and ultimately student learning. It was at NECTFL that I first heard Greg Duncan discuss assessment, Helena Curtain demonstrate interactive, language-rich teaching techniques, Eileen Glisan and Rick Donato share their research. I was even able to present with Rick Donato at one conference. That was a heady experience!

For me and hundreds of other attendees, NECTFL has been a game changer. It guided me to understand and be able to implement a program aligned with research and transform my classroom to a student-centered space. It was at the

NECTFL conferences where I gained a clear vision of a world language program where students thrived and developed the ability to communicate in real-life situations that they might encounter with target-language speakers. My hope is that programs continue to look to research when implementing programs and remain steadfast in the need of providing students with authentic experiences in language-rich environments, of gaining perspectives on others and their cultures.

Nathan Lutz (2020)

Reflections on the Field

Since 2020, the year I chaired the NECTFL conference, the field of world language education has undergone significant changes, both positive and negative. The COVID-19 pandemic had—and continues to have—a profound impact on students' executive function, the increased use of technology, collaboration among educators, and an emphasis on social emotional learning (SEL) by school administrators. While all of these areas pertain to the entire field of education in general, I'll just explore these categories in the context of world language teaching and learning.

One of the most striking changes since the pandemic has been the enhanced attention toward students' executive function. In fact, I don't recall ever talking about this subject pre-pandemic. Now it is part of my daily discourse. For young people experiencing a disruption to their typical schooling for the greater part of 2020 and probably most of 2021, they missed out on valuable experiences to learn work habits, skills, socialization, and a plethora of other benefits derived from a consistent school schedule and typical school setting. Thrust into an emergency situation with often poorly-designed learning curricula and materials, paired with relaxed commitment to attendance and assessments, students didn't keep pace with their peers from just a few years before them.

Fast forward to 2023, we've been back in "regular" school for a few years now, and students still exhibit challenges with executive function. One teacher I interviewed said of their students, "They have trouble reading and following directions. [They are] less attentive and need more reminders to stay on task. [There are] some dynamics issues [among certain classmates]." That year or two of learning disruption resulted in many students' inability to "do school" as their peers did pre-pandemic. A question that lingers for me: did children simply not learn skills or did that home-bound experience impair them somehow? Or is there a truth somewhere in the middle?

In the shift to online learning, students had to adapt to new platforms and technologies, manage their time, and take responsibility for their own learning. This required them to exercise skills such as self-regulation, goal setting, and problem-solving. Whitney Najibi, a French teacher at Westmoore High School (Oklahoma City, OK), speaks about some of the consequences of students' poor executive func-

tion, "They do not want to do any work in class. They always say that they'll do it at home. Even with due dates, late work policies, late work extensions, parent contact, helping them organize their online space or a physical folder, they just don't want to do it." Najibi is not alone in her frustration; she is joined by countless other educators who face burnout due to the rise of some of the aforementioned issues, student engagement, and a rise in academic dishonesty bolstered by generative AI tools.

Another notable change in world language education since 2020 is the significant rise in technology use. With the transition to online and hybrid learning models, educators had to leverage various digital tools and resources to enhance language teaching and learning. For instance, language learning apps, interactive online platforms, and virtual reality simulations have provided students with immersive and engaging language experiences. These technological advancements have made language learning more accessible, interactive, and adaptable to individual needs. Students can now practice their speaking and listening skills through video conferencing, collaborate on projects using online platforms, and access authentic language materials from the target culture(s). The integration of technology has undoubtedly revolutionized world language education, offering students new opportunities for language acquisition and cultural understanding.

Collaboration among educators has also been a positive outcome of the changes in world language education since 2020. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and X (the platform formerly called Twitter) were all utilized pre-pandemic, but pandemic-time home boundedness created a need for educators to join one another in new ways. With the adoption of online meeting platforms like Zoom and Google Meets, educators have been able to connect and collaborate with colleagues from across the globe. This has facilitated the sharing of best practices, resources, and pedagogical strategies. For instance, language teachers have participated in virtual conferences, webinars, and professional learning communities to exchange ideas and learn from experts in the field. In fact, the NECTFL conference following my conference year, was completely virtual! Kudos to the 2021 Chair, Michael Bogdan, for leaning into the challenge and pulling off a successful event! The collective knowledge and collaboration among educators have resulted in the development of innovative teaching methods and approaches that have positively impacted students' language learning experiences—all with the ease of attending anytime, anywhere, and at low to no costs.

Lastly, school administrators' emphasis on social emotional learning (SEL) has become more prominent in education since 2020. Recognizing the emotional well-being of students during these challenging times, administrators have prioritized the integration of SEL into teaching and learning. For example, language teachers have incorporated mindfulness activities, emotional check-ins, and collaborative projects that promote empathy and cultural understanding. World Languages Department chair at the middle school of the Montclair-Kimberley Academy (Montclair, NJ), Yesenia Ravelo-Rodriguez, created *Pensamientos Positivo*s, which are posted as an affirmation of students' strengths. At the beginning of class, students chant in unison:

Yo *soy val*iente.	I am brave.
Yo soy suficiente.	I am enough.
Yo soy importante.	I am important.
Yo soy amable.	I am kind.
*Yo soy independient*e.	I am independent.
Yo soy increíble.	I am incredible.
Yo soy fuerte.	I am strong.
Estoy aquí y yo vivo en el presente.	I am here and I live in the present.
Me gustan los retos.	I like challenges.
Yo soy capaz de todo.	I am capable of everything.

These affirming statements not only manifest success, they also contractually bind students to take responsibility over their actions and mindsets—all in the target language! Rather than positing a list of rules that follow a "do not" format, these "I am" statements ensure that students are their best selves—for both personal and community reasons. By addressing students' social and emotional needs, language education has become a holistic experience that fosters not only linguistic proficiency but also personal growth and well-being.

The changes in world language education since 2020 are indeed significant. Students' executive function has been enhanced through the adoption of online learning, technology use has revolutionized language teaching and learning, collaboration among educators has flourished, and school administrators have prioritized SEL. These changes have transformed the landscape of world language education, offering new opportunities for students to develop language proficiency, cultural understanding, and essential life skills. However, it is important to acknowledge the challenges that arise from the digital divide, the lack of physical interaction, and the need for equitable access to technology. Moving forward, it is crucial to continue adapting and refining language education practices to meet the evolving needs of students in a rapidly changing world.

Michael Bogdan (2021)

The 2021 NECTFL Conference was unique to say the least. Due to the ongoing pandemic, we held an entirely virtual conference for the first time. It already seems like so long ago, but only two in-person conferences have passed since then. With the support of our Board of Directors and the leadership of Executive Director, John Carlino, more than 600 attendees joined us over two weeks. We strived to maintain the many traditions that NECTFL is known for, such as the Awards Ceremony, Keynote, and mentorship program, as well as the high-quality learning opportunities that have strengthened world language education for seven decades. We received so much positive feedback from those who participated, appreciating that we carried on with our

conference despite the challenges, and did so with as much flexibility and as many options for all involved.

Although I read many articles about how online learning would replace the "traditional" conference, I do not think that has been the case. As we have seen from our 2022 and 2023 conferences, there was a strong desire for those in-person connections, chats in the hallway, hugs near the escalators, and sharing a meal together in Manhattan. Yes, it costs time, money, and effort. However, particularly in language education, there is no way that a Zoom breakout room can replace face-to-face conversations and the ease of sharing and networking. To be clear, we will continue to utilize technology for professional development as we recognize that not everyone is able to attend in-person events, but we also will keep growing and improving our on-site conference experience based on what we have learned about the needs of teachers in recent years.

The 2021 conference theme was "Finding Our Voice: World Languages for Social Justice." Prior to this, there were only a handful of sessions offered at previous NECTFL events related to this topic. One of commitments that NECTFL made at the time was that this was not a one-and-done theme which would last for three days and then go away. In 2020-2021, we also hosted and recorded numerous webinars which were housed on a new YouTube Channel for all to view for free. Furthermore, we held several virtual workshops for smaller-scale discussions. Our 2022 and 2023 conferences featured dozens of sessions related to social justice, diversity, and meeting the needs of all learners. It does seem that this focus is now engrained in not only what NECTFL does but what is happening in most other educational institutions and organizations across the country. While it is a true that there has been backlash to some of these efforts, what we are doing is responding to the needs of the students in our classrooms, the current realities of the cultures about which we teach, and the societal and political circumstances under which pupils and educators live. We cannot ignore the world around us and continue with the status quo.

Looking at my own practice, I have become much more critical in my decision making as a language teacher and department chair: What supports are provided to our students to promote access, success, and retention in our courses and co-curricular activities? How well do our curricula and resources reflect a variety of life experiences in the target culture as well as connections to the life experiences of our learners? Do our teaching and assessment practices facilitate life-long learning opportunities for all? Are we listening to the needs and feedback of our students when making these decisions? I have implemented changes as I ponder these questions, fully knowing there is still more to do and more to learn. Furthermore, it seems that more and more teachers in all subject areas are considering their practices and what may need to be updated, discarded, or rethought.

Please consider how you can shape the future of world language education. We need to learn from diverse perspectives. If you have never presented before but are passionate about a topic, submit a session proposal. As you read through the NECTFL *Review* and have an idea to contribute, write an article. Volunteer your time to your state or regional language association. For those who are already seasoned leaders, you can co-present, co-author, mentor, nominate, and encourage the next generation

of leadership. When doing so, consider those voices that are not represented in our professional development events, the viewpoints that are missing, or the topics that must be addressed. Our impact grows stronger with each student and educator that we support.

Christopher Gwin (2022)

My Butterfly Effect, Creating a Lasting Impression

As a kid, I was painfully shy. It was a great concern for my parents. I was so shy that, whenever friends or relatives came to visit, I would hide under the worktable in the kitchen. And my parents had lots of visitors. They enrolled me in various clubs and activities as a young person to break the shyness. It is funny to think about that now, as nothing causes me to be shy. I am quite comfortable speaking in small and large groups, even leading meetings, or discussions. And I speak up and out about all kinds of things all the time. I think, to have an effect, one must speak up or out.

I did not love school as a shy kid and an awkward, pimply, non-athletic teen who could not fit in, but I loved learning new things and I think this led to me choose teaching as a career path. There were lots of issues in my teacher licensure program, way back when, including that the professor who was assigned as program director hated men and did not think they should be allowed to teach and discouraged me at every major step in the program, erecting hurdles that seemed unfair then, but now seem unethical. I persisted, passed the state exams, received my license and have been teaching for 34 years. I love it today as much as the first day—it is quite true—the intensity of the feeling has never dissipated. But! I never thought of myself as making a lasting impression. Apparently, I did.

Two years ago, I received an email from a student who had been in my course the first year I taught—when I was too young, too inexperienced and clueless about the world, but licensed (no thanks to the university program director)! She sought me out to tell me how thankful she was for those lessons 32 years prior. Yes! This is a true story. She was preparing to marry a man from Germany whose mother did not speak English and she was trying out her rusty German skills to get to know her future mother-in-law. I was rather impressed that she took the time to find me and share that with me. I happened to bump into a classmate of hers one day last summer, who stopped me on the street because she recognized me and told me that her son was entering middle school and that she had enrolled him in a German course, because of the powerful experience she had in my course. After undergraduate school, she worked for a few years in Germany.

There was another one of these coincidental moments, also in 2022, when we lost our cherished friend John Carlino as the Executive Director of NECTFL just before the start of the conference I was chairing. On the first night of the

conference, I finally got to my room in the hotel after midnight, exhausted to a depth I did not know was possible and just before collapsing on the bed, I noticed a large basket of German and Austrian chocolates on the table. It was quite an impressive gift. I was also impressed that the hotel liaison had taken the time to learn which language I teach and to order these specialty treats. I read the card to find out that it was not a gift from my hotel liaison rather from another former student, who now works in finance for the hotel corporation. She had studied abroad in Germany as an undergraduate and wanted to impress me that she still retained German language skills, used them sometimes in her work, and was proud to write the note to her old high school teacher without using online translation.

After my first year of teaching at a rural high school in the deep south of New Jersey (yes, NJ is also rural!) I took a position at a high school which is a 20-minute train ride from Philadelphia and have been there ever since. In my first year there, I had an Advanced Placement course with two students —yes! Two! They were two young women, and they did not start out the academic year liking each other. This was a tall task for me! Fast forward about twenty years, one reached out to me via email to ask about teaching. She had been working as a wedding photographer and wanted to make a career change. The email came in late May, and I thought… yes, I will invite her to see my lessons during the last weeks of school. We were in an un-airconditioned building, and my thinking was if she likes what she sees in June, she will love teaching. Fast forward to November 2023 and we caught up for a few minutes at ACTFL in Chicago. She is now a successful teacher of Spanish and takes professional growth seriously, participating in the ACTFL convention as often as she can. When she was at the table chatting, another former student, who now teaches German in Connecticut, stopped by to tell me that her former student is now teaching German and was exuberant to start calling me *Opa*!

These moments of wow, of connection, do highlight something about impression and effect when I think about them more deeply. I was honored a few years back by the alumni association in the town where I teach with a lifetime achievement award. This is code for "you are old now, please stop teaching." The recognition was a surprise to me, and the letters written in support of my nomination were humbling and illustrated this idea of butterfly effect. Sharing anecdotes about how their time in my classroom meant something later in life, the students' letters were impactful. That is powerful.

I have not often reached out alumni, but often hear from them. It is gratifying. There is one former student I would like to reach out to. When he was in my course as a senior, around 2005, if I have the year right, he was a goofy kid, who was less serious about academics, but a friendly and nice person. One day, he came to me after school and asked to speak to me because he was upset. I figured he would want to argue with me about his grade on a homework assignment, under the classic "May I see you after school?" rationale. He came into the classroom and said, "You are going to be upset with me." I was curious.

That year was the first year in a State Department program at our school, in which we hosted an exchange student from Afghanistan. It was a not a true exchange as we did not send any students to Afghanistan. It was still early days in our invasion in that region, still reeling from the September 11, 2001, terror attacks in New York and Washington. This program was established to bring young Afghans to the USA to immerse themselves in our culture and understand us as a people rather than just the country that attacked them. It was also designed for young Americans to see that Afghans are people and not terrorists. I had learned about the program while I was in another State Department program in Armenia. The school administration agreed to my globalist idea, and we hosted students twice in that program, one from Kabul and one from Kandahar.

My student then shared: "I thought all Muslims were terrorists. I was wrong." He went on to explain that he rode the bus to swim team practice after school each day with Qudrattulah, the Afghan student and that they had become friends, coming to know him as a cool kid, and that he felt bad for thinking that about Muslims. I said: "Thanks for sharing this with me but please do me one favor—tell this story to your child one day!" So, now it is time to seek him out and find out if he has a family and if he kept this favor.

I love small world coincidences, like being at a David Bowie concert in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1983 and the guy sitting directly in front of me in this massive stadium is wearing the t-shirt from a hoagie (yes! In Philadelphia, they are hoagies!) shop near to where I was living. Those are funny moments and make the world smaller.

The stories that show the effect of a teacher are the more powerful stories. Around 2004, we started an exchange program with a school in Wiesbaden, Hessen, Germany, at the insistence of a former student of mine who was a Congress Bundestag CBYX exchange ambassador at that public school. He liked it there and told his teacher of English that we should be exchange partners. We listened to him, started the exchange, and the first year I took the American students for that part of the exchange, it happened to be right at the end of their academic year. Just after landing in Frankfurt, I was whisked away to the teacher end-of-year picnic. Jet-lagged, worried my students now out of my sight, wondering what could go wrong in their host families, I tried to focus on meeting a zillion new people and trying to remember names and understand their various accents in my second language, on very little sleep from the overnight flight. My partner at the school told me several times that she wanted me to meet a particular teacher whose wife was American. I thought: "I flew all this way to escape those people! Why do I want to meet one here??!" Finally, the teacher and his wife arrived, when I was so much sleepier than when I had arrived at the gathering and Moni, my partner teacher said: "Here they come!" and I turned, looked at the teacher and his wife and screamed—loudly —and she screamed loudly! Everyone turned to see why the Americans were being loud …again! (stereotype!)

Joanna, now living in Wiesbaden and married to the teacher at our partner school, was a student in my course the first year I taught at the rural, deeply South Jersey high school. We had not been in touch since she was in undergraduate school, but her path had led from my German 1 course, to a major in German, advanced study, and time spent studying and teaching in Germany, Japan,

and the UK. She had met her husband while in London and they settled in Wiesbaden. We have remained in close contact and each time I am in Wiesbaden for the exchange and each time she visits her family in NJ, I have the chance to see her two children and to be a part of the people they know in their American community. Joanna and her husband are raising the children to be bilingual as a conscious act of globalism, equipping them to live in whichever culture they choose. Joanna credits me and my year of teaching her course when she was a freshman with her path around the world.

I think, upon reflection, that these anecdotes shine a light on this idea of creating a lasting impression, of a butterfly effect. I am proud to think that I might do something in the classroom that can lead to new horizons or new journeys for these young people on their paths in life. I pursue knowing and try to impart this as a value to my students.

Margarita Boyatzi Dempsey (2023)

When I became Vice-Chair of the 2023 Conference, I was excited, nervous, and a bit worried that it would be a difficult time, draining my time and energy. I already knew that our board was a hardworking, active board and our Executive Director, John Carlino, had all the pieces of the puzzle in place. I had a year to learn the ins and outs, and I would be fine. And then the unimaginable happened. John became ill. What happens now? How can we do this? Can we do this? John, being John, helped us to the very end, really…, the very end. Under Chris Gwin's stewardship, we were able to hold the first post-Covid conference without John. It was a humbling experience, filled with anxious moments, and many, many hours of work. But, as I said, we have a hard-working board, plus Michael Bogdan stayed on as Past Chair while Chris became acting Executive Director. Everyone pitched in to provide the best conference we could. It was so exciting to be together, to share, and to reconnect. We felt so supported by our fellow world language teachers.

We had survived 2022 and now, it was on to planning the 2023 Conference. We had learned so much from the 2022 Conference that the preparations for 2023 were clearer and more focused. It was still a lot of work, but it was gratifying work. What I learned from those two years is that we are a group of dedicated professionals, who support one another and work together to overcome whatever struggles we might face. There will always be hurdles to jump, and difficult situations to face, but I know that together, we will discover a way to overcome our adversities and continue to support one another. I am very proud to be a world language teacher, I am proud to have been on the board of NECTFL, and I am forever grateful to have served as chair.

Jimmy Wildman (2024)

Our Butterfly Effect: **Creating a Lasting Impact**

We all have a story to tell. Some stories are detailed with rich and eloquent descriptions, complicated intricacies, and difficult resolutions to what may seem basic problems. Other stories are more streamlined, short and sweet, but still just as impactful. Today's educational landscape can often take the stories that have etched in our minds and distort them. Teachers can often forget the impact of their class time, their successes, and the scope and reach of their work; teaching is hard. It's human nature to shelter and protect ourselves, but why is it so hard to find the joy in what we do? I'd like to thank Bob Terry, Editor of the NECTFL Review for his vision for this specially focused edition on Our Butterfly Effect: Creating a Lasting Impact. This year's theme is a celebration of all that has come before. We look back upon the 69 years of previous NECTFL history and celebrate NECTFL's 70th anniversary. I would also like to extend my special thanks to the numerous Past Chairs of NECTFL, who have helped immensely to contribute to this edition of the NECTFL Review and this year's conference keynote.

Curricular Ties

As teachers, we have a unique ability to touch the lives of not only the students that sit before us, but also their families, members of our communities, and our colleagues. Teachers spend countless hours preparing engaging lessons to help students develop life and linguistic skills that will carry them into the future. While we may plan the content of our lessons, we may never know the true impact that a particular lesson, unit, or course may have on any individual. Many years ago, I taught a course that focused on the history of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, and how their lives changed as a result of contact with Europeans. As part of our study, we did an in-depth analysis of religion, government, language, and even the mathematics of these native peoples. During our unit on the Mayans, I spent time teaching my students about a different mathematics system; the Mayans used a base-20 system and represented all numbers with three basic symbols. While I often was asked why I would teach this, I felt strongly that students needed to understand other ways of seeing the world. Using a base-20 system, as opposed to our more traditional base-10 system, was eye-opening for many students. When that particular freshman class graduated years later and headed off to college, I received a message from one of the students during her junior year at a local university. She had emailed me to let me know that Mayan math had actually come up in her college math class! She was the only student in the class who understood the concept and was able to easily help explain it to other students. Today, that former student is a certified math teacher, currently pursuing her doctoral degree in a specialized program, focusing on mathematics and special education. Who would have ever thought that learning about a different mathematics system would ever come up later in life?

The Student Teaching & Internship Experience

I remember my time during my Masters internship fondly, despite being nearly 20 years removed from it. I spent about 20 hours per week, working with two other

interns and the Director of World Languages. At the time, we had a FLAP (Foreign Language Assistance Program) grant which focused on assessment; we were invited to present at state, regional, and national conferences as part of our work. As a 22-year old I felt that I had no business presenting any type of information to teachers. They were experts; I was nothing more than a student. That year, we must have presented three or four times on our grant, and the work that we were doing. I had never learned so much about presenting, and what it took to be an engaging and dynamic facilitator of a workshop. (These are still skills and I continue to work on developing still today.) I became part of the "professional scene" and I have never looked back. I think about the opportunities I was afforded to work on these skills and have been forever grateful for my opportunities. Today, I am the "veteran teacher" and I look forward to having more opportunities to help show the next generation of teachers how to be professionals.

While our impact cannot always be measured or seen, stories help to bring moments of joy to us, as we reflect upon the incredible impact that we each have within and beyond our classrooms.

As pre-service teachers preparing for certification and life after college, we typically spend 8–15 weeks in a veteran teacher's classroom conducting our student teaching practicum. In my career, I have been fortunate to welcome five different student teachers into my classroom. These are inspirational individuals, who have shared countless activities and ideas for classroom management, student engagement, and so much more. I have always tried to use the time they have with my students to help shape these young educators as future professionals. While there are many who do not believe in professional memberships and affiliations I have worked to show my student teachers, the incredible value that our own professional learning has. I have served in many roles over the years in the state and regional associations. Today, three of the five student teachers have completed their degrees and are currently employed as classroom language teachers. The fourth is completing her Masters this year and will begin her professional career shortly, while the last will complete her student teaching this school year.

Each of the three women who have completed their student teaching and are currently employed have also served on state boards, helping to grow the language field. They each have their own unique talents that have served them well in their various roles. They have dedicated their time, effort and energy to helping to improve language teaching and learning in our state. One of these talented teachers has even been tabbed as her school district's Teacher of the Year. With her platform, she was able to draw attention to the importance of language learning and the many benefits of such. I couldn't be prouder of these student teachers and know that their future in the field of education is bright. While I may have a little control over what or how they teach today, I know that in some small way, each of them was able to have a successful student teaching experience and gained valuable knowledge and skills that were able to carry them forward into the classroom. When we think of the "butterfly effect" we know that the initial movement there from the wings of a butterfly are very small, and can seem inconsequential, but we also know that this small movement can move the world.

Moving Beyond our Classrooms

I'm fortunate to work in a district that believes in the importance and value of international travel. While students find real life opportunities to use their language, they also are able to understand the people and culture in a whole new way. For about the last 15 years, I have served as the coordinator of our Spanish Exchange program. This program pairs students from Madrid, Spain, with students from our suburban community in Glastonbury, CT. Over the years there have been numerous stories of lifelong friendships that have come from our exchange program. But there are a couple of stories that continue to outshine others. As part of their exchange experience, students from the exchange visit the University of Connecticut. There's an opportunity to see our state's flagship university, and it gives the urbanites from Madrid, an opportunity to see a rural college campus. I recently found out that one of the students that participated in our exchange is back in the United States studying at the University of Connecticut as an undergrad. The impact that our exchange had on that student was literally life changing. They visited the University as part of our exchange program, never knowing that one day they might return as a Husky.

Students that participated in our very first exchange back in the early 2000s still remain in close contact with their Spanish exchange students and families. Many of these students continue to travel back-and-forth to see each other, and have been invited to each other's weddings. They have truly become extended members of each other's families. One former participant has even looked into buying a place in Madrid. The impact of their relationship has been felt by members of these students' families and our entire community.

Our Challenge

Our impact as teachers can be seen, felt, heard, and must be celebrated. All too often, teachers leave our profession. While the reasons for departure may vary, the reality is that we see inspiring individuals leave our profession. What can we do to keep these talented educators in the classroom? Can finding joy in what we do help to sustain them? How can teachers measure the impact that they have had in the lives of those around them? As we look to find moments of joy, we need to find ways to celebrate them. Teaching is hard; you have to plan to work before you work, you must work at work, and then reflect on the work that was done, only to then begin the process over again for the next day. It's a difficult job, but one of the most rewarding jobs in the world. We need teachers, we need good people to help guide our students to become better people, wiser people, better educated people, all capable of making well-informed decisions about their lives and their world. Let's consider this our challenge: let's make an impact on students and challenge them to turn and make a lasting impression on others. This is our legacy. It's Our Butterfly Effect.

The Impact of Teacher Empowerment on Burnout and Intent to Quit in High School World Language Teachers

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Abstract

The burnout and attrition of teachers is a critical issue both in the United States and internationally. However, there is insufficient empirical research addressing these concerns among world language teachers. This paper reports the results of surveying high school world language teachers across all regions of the United States (N= 313) to investigate the relationship between three constructs: burnout, intent to quit, and teacher empowerment. The results of descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis suggest that teacher empowerment significantly impacts levels of burnout and intent to quit. More specifically, higher levels of professional growth, self-efficacy, and autonomy may predict lower levels of burnout and intent to quit in high school world language teachers. The findings of this study suggest that interventions that focus on increasing teacher empowerment may be effective in reducing burnout and intent to quit in high school world language teachers. Potential interventions focusing on these factors are discussed.

Keywords: teacher empowerment, teacher burnout, teacher attrition, world language teacher shortage

Introduction

Educators have reached a breaking point as research continues to show that the tsunami of teachers leaving the profession about which Der Bedrosian (2009) warned the public may be upon us (Cardoza, 2021; Fearnow, 2020; Swanson, 2022). Steiner and Woo (2021) reported that nearly one in four teachers in the

United States (US) stated that they were contemplating leaving the classroom by the end of the 2020-2021 school year, whereas one in six were likely to leave prior to the onset of the pandemic. Nguyen et al. (2022) reported that 163,000 US teaching positions were staffed by individuals who were underqualified. Findings from a survey conducted by the National Education Association (2022) indicated that 55% of teachers surveyed intended to depart from the profession earlier than expected.

While the aforementioned findings are alarming, teacher attrition and burnout were worrisome matters well before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (Swanson, 2008). A review of the literature showed that Charters (1956) expressed concern about the need for more teachers and the rate of teacher attrition more than 60 years ago. However, concerns related to the teacher shortage can be traced in the US as early as the 1920s (B.R.B., 1920) and the 1930s (Hicks, 1933; Peck, 1933).

With respect to the teaching of world languages (WLs), research shows that Russia's launch of Sputnik accelerated the need for more WL teachers in the US. To that end, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the National Defense Education Act (U.S. Congress, 1958) as a means to provide funds to foster not only more science and engineering education in the US, but also WL education (Flattau et al., 2006). Unfortunately, as US President Eisenhower and Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson called attention to the shortage of WL teachers following World War II, as well as others since then (e.g., Burke & Ceo-DiFrancesco, 2022; Ray, 1978; Swanson, 2008, 2012a, 2022), the shortage persists to this day.

According to District Administration (2023), "more than half—53%—of public schools reported "feeling understaffed" entering the 2022-23 school year" (p. 1). Among the 10 most hard-to-fill positions, WLs tops the list, ahead of special education, math, and science. Interestingly, Murphy et al. (2003) reported the same finding 20 years before. Consensus regarding the causes of this shortage has not been achieved. Some report that there is an imbalanced distribution of teachers (García & Weiss, 2019; Sutcher & Carver-Thomas, 2019) while others find a surplus of certified teachers who actively choose not to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003, Sutcher & Carver-Thomas, 2019). Regardless, there is a shortage of WL teachers at a time of critical need (Swanson, 2022).

Review of the Literature

As noted earlier, the WL teacher shortage in the US has been an issue since the mid-20th century and continues to be problematic. For example, in 2011-2012, the US WL teaching force consisted of 98,993 teachers. That same year, 15,607 language teachers were hired and 14,843 transferred or left the teaching profession (Hlas Cummings et al., 2018). During the 2017-18 academic year, "49 of 56 US states and territories experienced shortages in teachers qualified to teach WLs" (ACTFL, 2023, p. 1). Later, the US Department of Education (2020) reported WL teacher shortages in 44 US states and the District of Columbia.

The shortage of WL teachers also extends well beyond the US; it has become a global phenomenon. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2016) reported language teacher shortages around the world. Specifically, researchers find shortages of WL teachers in Australia (Wel-

don, 2015), Canada (Canadian Parents for French British Columbia & Yukon Branch, 2015), China (Lin et al., 2012), New Zealand (Richards et al., 2012), and the United Kingdom (Nuffield Foundation, 2000) to name a few countries. While the need for more WL teachers remains a topic of interest mainly in the Western media (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016), a review of the literature indicates that the shortage is a complex combination of factors (Swanson & Mason, 2018).

Contributory Factors Associated with the WL Teacher Shortage

While a dearth of research exists, studies regarding the WL teacher shortage suggest that there are multiple contributory factors. Swanson (2008, 2010a) initially identified five reasons that help explain the WL `teacher shortage in the United States: teacher attrition, retirements, legislation, perceptions of the profession (e.g., low salaries, low status), and student enrollments. According to Swanson and Mason (2018), a tsunami of baby boomers retiring from their school districts combined with increasing enrollments in pre-K through grade 12 WL programs has contributed to the shortage.

Additionally, federal legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act known as No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002), continues to make it difficult for school districts to find highly qualified WL teachers. Moreover, the legislation prioritized funding to content areas such as math and science (Rosenbusch, 2005; Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2004). Swanson and his colleagues and others have suggested that negative, and—many times—inaccurate perceptions of the teaching profession (e.g., poor salaries, low status, lack of respect for teachers) have defamed the profession (Aldeman, 2023; Swanson, 2012b; Swanson & Mason, 2018).

Later, Swanson (2008, 2012a, 2012b,) identified two additional factors that account for the WL teacher shortage: (1) the congruence between a person's vocational interests and their workplace and (2) one's sense of efficacy(i.e., confidence) in teaching WLs. Investigating the relationship between WL teachers' personality patterns and their decision to remain or leave the profession, Swanson found that a certain vocational profile is more likely to remain as a WL teacher. A person's personality pattern is the congruence between a teacher's vocational interests and the workplace environment. "Occupations represent a way of life —an environment, rather than a set of isolated work functions or skills" (Swanson, 2012b, p. 522). The more similar a person's abilities, competencies, and interests are to the occupational environment, the more vocational stability and satisfaction that person will experience (Holland, 1997). Conversely, the more conflicting one's abilities, interests, and competencies are to the workplace environment, the more vocational instability and dissatisfaction will result.

Holland (1997) posits that "people search for environments that will let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles" (p. 4). Swanson (2008, 2012b) reported that WL teachers who have the Social, Artistic, and Enterprising personality pattern are vocationally satisfied and tend to remain in the profession. That is, individuals who enjoy working with and providing services to others see themselves as expressive,

creative, and enjoy leading people will find vocational happiness in a work environment that rewards such characteristics.

With respect to one's sense of efficacy teaching languages, Swanson (2008, 2012b) reported that WL teachers having the Social, Artistic, and Enterprising personality pattern tended to have a stronger sense of efficacy and a decreased intention to leave the profession. Later, Swanson (2010b, 2014a) reported that WL teachers with a stronger sense of efficacy in teaching languages reported planning on remaining in the classroom compared to those who reported a weaker sense of efficacy in teaching languages. Additionally, Swanson (2014b) found that students of WL teachers who reported a strong sense of efficacy outperformed students of WL teachers with a lesser sense of efficacy on the National Spanish Exams. In general, research shows that teachers with a stronger sense of efficacy exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching (Hall et al., 1992), display greater levels of planning and organization (Jerald, 2007), are able to appropriately deal with high workload (Klassen & Chiu, 2010), have greater commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992), and generally tend to outperform those teachers who report a weaker sense of efficacy (Good & Brophy 2003), and are more likely to remain in teaching (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007).

Teacher Empowerment and Teacher Attrition

According to Lightfoot (1986), "empowerment refers to the opportunities a person has for autonomy, responsibility, choice, and authority" (p. 9) and is a significant factor when examining teacher attrition. For example, Peist et al. (2020) found that US K-12 teachers' feelings of disempowerment impacted their intentions or decisions to transfer, leave the profession, or retire. Similarly, Kang et al. (2021) reported that teachers in low-empowered schools were more likely to leave their school or leave the profession entirely.

Teacher Empowerment and Teacher Burnout

Teacher burnout can be operationalized as a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job—defined by exhaustion, cynicism, and a sense of inefficacy (Maslach, 2003). Specifically, burnout involves the chronic strain that results from an incongruence between the teacher and the job. Initial research indicated that symptoms of burnout can be both organizational and personal (Leithwood et al., 1999). Researchers agree that teacher burnout can be a detrimental factor both at home and on the job (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Schaufeli & van Dierendonck, 1993). Organizational symptoms for teachers include increased absenteeism, performance decline, and poor interpersonal relations with students (Cunningham, 1983). At the personal level, research suggests that teachers who experience burnout are less committed to and involved in their jobs, less sympathetic toward students, tend to have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, are less likely to prepare appropriately for class, are generally less productive, and have a decreased sense of efficacy in teaching (Blase & Greenfield, 1985; Farber & Miller, 1981; Friedman, 2003).

One's sense of self-efficacy and other factors related to teacher empowerment have been found to impact teacher burnout. Aloe et al. (2014) suggested that self-

efficacy is a protective factor against burnout indicating that those with a stronger sense of efficacy are less likely to experience professional burnout. Özer and Beycioglu (2010) reported correlations between the attitudes of Turkish primary school teachers toward professional development and their levels of professional burnout. Gavrilyuk et al. (2013) noted a relationship between burnout and autonomy in university teachers in Russia, while Fernet et al. (2014) noted an indirect impact of autonomy on burnout through passion for teaching in Canadian teachers. These results suggest that self-efficacy, professional growth and development, and autonomy can be potential protective factors against teacher burnout.

With respect to vocational happiness and teacher retention, research has shown that teachers who expressed lower levels of burnout worked in a nurturing environment. Additionally, these individuals experienced decreased levels of burnout when they had cordial relationships with colleagues, felt supported and empowered by school administrators, and overall believed that they were able to make a difference in their students' lives (Richards et al., 2018). Conversely, teachers with elevated levels of burnout viewed their work environment as combative and constrained; they felt governed by an administrative team that was unsupportive or oppressive, and experienced feelings of marginalization as well as a lack of community among colleagues. A sense of marginalization was especially problematic for teachers of non-core subjects such as WL.

Research suggests such constructs of interest will continue to plague education unless they are addressed (Diliberti et al., 2021; Goldhaber & Theobald, 2022). However, there is dearth of research regarding the extent to which high school WL teachers feel a sense of empowerment, a lack of which can lead to burnout and an intent to leave the teaching profession. The following research question guides the present study: To what extent does the level of teacher empowerment predict burnout and intent to quit in high school WL teachers?

Conceptual Framework

Teacher Empowerment

Empowerment is defined as "a process whereby school participants develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems" (Short et al., 1994, p. 38). Balyer et al. (2017) posit that "teacher empowerment involves investing teachers with the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies as informed by their professional judgment" (p. 1). Empowered teachers have the ability to discover their own potential and limitations along with developing competence in their professional development. Teacher empowerment has been studied in relation to a myriad of constructs such as job satisfaction (Rinehart & Short, 1994), participation in decision-making (White,1992), commitment (Wu & Short, 1996), and instructional practice and student academic achievement (Marks & Louis, 1997). Additionally, as noted earlier, teacher empowerment plays an important role in one's decision to remain or leave the teaching profession.

As shown in Figure 1, teacher empowerment is multidimensional and contains six factors: (1) involvement in decision making, (2) teacher impact, (3)

teacher status, (4) teacher autonomy, (5) opportunities for professional growth and development, and (6) self-efficacy (Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1992). With respect to this study, the researchers focus on Autonomy, Professional Growth, and Self-efficacy.

Figure 1

Teacher Empowerment Framework
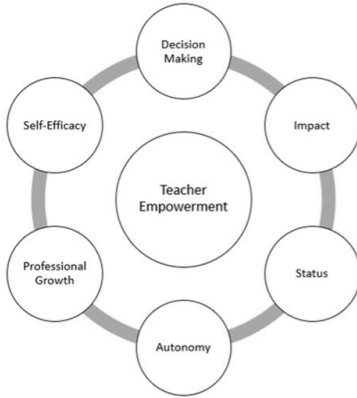
Teacher Autonomy. Autonomy—the individual legislation of choice by reason (Kant, 1997)—requires that individuals engage in choices and actions based on their own volition. Teacher autonomy relates to the perceptions of the amount of control they have over themselves as well as various aspects of their work environment (Wu, 2015). Also, it can refer to the extent to which they feel they have the freedom to take control of their own teaching (Sehrawat, 2014), their schedules, and their freedom to decide what to teach as well as the curricula (Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1992).

Research clearly shows that having an increased sense of autonomy has manifold benefits. For example, Nunnery (2021) noted that when teachers have a feeling of ownership in what they do, they are more motivated and even driven to perform well. Additionally, strong perceptions of teacher autonomy are associated with other important factors such as better standards of learning, a more stress-free and healthier work environment for teachers, increasing teacher motivation, and helping teachers achieve the learning goals for their learners faster and more easily (Nayak & Kumar Padhi, 2022). Importantly, teachers with a strong sense of autonomy have been found to be efficient and vocationally satisfied along with having positive perceptions of their work environment in which they feel empowered (Wilches, 2007). Supporting such findings, researchers from the U.S. Department of Education reported that teachers with a strong sense of autonomy were more likely to have increased levels of general job satisfaction and, subsequently, were less likely to leave the profession (Warner-Griffin et al., 2018). Worth and Van den Brande (2020) also noted correlations between autonomy, job satisfaction, and intention to continue teaching, as well as a more manageable workload, for teach-

ers in England. Conversely, those with a weaker sense of autonomy tend to have low levels of general job satisfaction. As noted earlier, teachers' perceptions of disempowerment played a significant role in teachers' intentions or enacted decisions to transfer schools or leave the profession. Some argue that teachers' working conditions, by either fostering or dampening teacher autonomy, have the most influence on teacher attrition rates (Sparks & Malkus, 2015; Sutcher et al., 2016).

Professional Growth. Much like teacher autonomy, professional growth—the "degree to which employees believe that the organization provides opportunities for development of skills and knowledge, including educational opportunities" (Landsman, 2008, p. 113)—has been shown to be an important part of one's decision to remain or leave the teaching profession. For educators, professional growth is the extent to which teachers believe that they have opportunities to develop their professional abilities, knowledge, and skills as well as their attitudes, beliefs, and values (Bakah, 2019; Wang et al., 2014). Professional growth also includes beliefs about being treated as a professional in a work environment, opportunities for collaborating with other teachers in the school, and having opportunities for continued professional development (Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1992).

Researchers for years have reported findings showing that teachers' professional development and growth as an educator are positively related to teacher retention. For example, Pivovarova and Powers (2022) found that by providing novice teachers access to mentorship and professional development opportunities there was an increased likelihood of teacher retention. Specifically, teachers are more likely to remain in the profession if they are allowed to build their own professional development program by selecting which types and topics of professional development they would like to receive (Shuls & Flores, 2020). In terms of WL teaching, Swanson (2012b) reported that language teachers who were able to participate in professional learning opportunities via language teacher associations were more likely to remain in the classroom.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy—a judgment about a person's belief about his/her ability to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001)—plays an important role in one's decision to remain in the profession as well as impacting professional burnout (Bing et al., 2022). Grounded in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy (i.e., one's confidence) emphasizes the exercise of human agency, the notion that people can exercise some influence over what they do (Bandura, 2006). Bandura posits that people are self-organizing, self-reflecting, self-regulating, and proactive. Moreover, individuals set goals, anticipate likely outcomes, monitor then regulate actions, and finally reflect on their personal efficacy in a cyclical fashion. That is, an increased sense of efficacy leads to greater effort and persistence, which in turn leads to better performance and further enhanced efficacy. Conversely, struggling to achieve one's goals tends to lead to a lower sense of efficacy, which in turn, leads to less effort expended, and ultimately, giving up. From this perspective, one's self-efficacy affects his or her goals and behaviors and is influenced by environmental factors. Additionally, Bandura suggests that these beliefs determine how environmental obstacles and opportunities are perceived. These perceptions then can affect an in-

dividual's choice of activities, how much effort is exerted, and how long one will persist when confronted with obstacles.

Research suggests that individuals with a strong sense of efficacy in teaching believe that challenging students are teachable if the teacher exerts extra effort (Bandura, 1997). However, teachers with a low sense of teaching efficacy tend to believe that there is little they can do to teach unmotivated students because students' success depends on the external environment (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Unfortunately, as teachers start to sense that they are less competent, they are more likely to perceive potential problems as much bigger than they may actually be (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). This perception may possibly foster attitudes that can lead to teacher attrition.

According to Bandura (2006), there are four sources from which one's efficacy beliefs are derived: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological reactions. Of the four, Pajares (1997) theorized that mastery experiences tend to be the most influential because they serve as the best predictors of future outcomes. Bandura suggests that these are the most powerful sources of self-efficacy because they develop through past successful accomplishments. Vicarious experiences involve individuals observing others, in this case, observing others teaching. For example, observing a veteran WL teacher succeed can raise a novice's beliefs that he or she, too, possesses the capabilities to overcome obstacles and direct comparable activities required to succeed. However, observing someone's lack of success tends to lower one's judgments of his or her own efficacy.

Social persuasion influences a person's self-efficacy as other individuals convince him or her verbally that he or she too can be successful. Bandura (1997) posited that those who are convinced that they can be successful tend to be more likely to exercise increased effort and sustain it when faced with impediments than those who focus on personal shortfalls or previous failures. Additionally, Bandura warns that the feedback involved in verbal persuasion must be realistic, credible, and task-oriented in order to maximize influence on a person's self-efficacy.

Finally, physiological conditions can affect self-efficacy beliefs. For example, as a novice teacher prepares to give his or her first class of the year, it is common that this individual may experience a variety of physiological issues (e.g., reddening of the face, increased heart rate).

Bandura (1995) suggested that people are generally inclined to interpret these types of physiological responses to stressful situations as a sign of personal weakness and of a possible fiasco. Such negative thoughts can lower perceptions of self-efficacy and lead to negative outcomes. Further, Bandura (1995) noted that it is not so much the apprentice's emotional or physiological reactions to the stressful situation, but how such reactions are perceived and interpreted. Positive interpretation of these responses tends to boost perceived self-efficacy while negative interpretations can reduce it.

Methods

Procedure

Following IRB approval, all surveys were placed into one questionnaire along with a demographic sheet. The Qualtrics online survey management platform was used to deliver the questionnaire. The decision to administer the survey online was due to the continuing worldwide pandemic precluding in-person interactions as well as the following advantages of using the Internet: reduced cost, convenience, automatic coding, high level of anonymity, and access to specialized populations (Dörnyei, 2007). Via the social media outlets for WL teachers and the ACTFL Research Special Interest Group community, potential participants could read the Call for Participation in the study and then access the URL to take the questionnaire. Given that low response rates for surveys can potentially reduce the representativeness of a study population and increase the likelihood of bias, the first author took steps to ensure a higher response rate by following best practices in survey research (e.g., thoughtful timing of invitations and reminders) (Sue & Ritter, 2012). By doing so, threats to the validity of the results were decreased (Manzo & Burke, 2012; Smith et al., 2019). Data collection began in May 2022 and concluded in June 2022.

Instruments

For the current study, the researcher used three surveys that use the same 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The School Participant Empowerment Scale (Short & Rinehart, 1992) contains 38-items and measures empowerment within six dimensions (Decision Making, 10 items), (Professional Growth, 6 items), (Status, 6 items), (Self-efficacy, 6 items), (Autonomy, 6 items), and (Impact, 6 items). Overall reliability for the scale (0.94) and the six dimensions (0.81 - 0.89) has been shown to have satisfactory consistency for research purposes (Henson, 2001). In addition to verifying the six dimensions, similar reliability coefficients have been corroborated in the literature (e.g., Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Yusoff et al., 2020).

The first author developed the other two instruments: the Intent to Quit Scale and the Perceived Burnout Scale. The Intent to Quit Scale contains five questions that assess a WL teacher's intent to leave the profession voluntarily prior to retirement (e.g., "Voluntarily leaving teaching before retirement appeals to me"). The Perceived Burnout Scale contains five questions to assess participants' perceived levels of burnout (e.g., "I often feel emotionally exhausted as a result of teaching"). To determine content validity—the degree to which a test or assessment instrument evaluates all aspects of a construct (McLeod, 2023)—of these researcher-created scales, the first author solicited the expertise of nine current and former WL teachers.

After developing the statements for each questionnaire, a content validity index (CVI) score—the most commonly used method to calculate content validity quantitatively—for each item was determined. While CVI scores are extensively used to estimate content validity, Wynd et al. (2003) recommend that due to chance agreement this index does not consider the possibility of inflated values; a

Kappa statistic should be calculated as well. Kappa values provide for the degree of agreement beyond chance. Therefore, the first author calculated CVI scores for each instrument and then calculated Kappa values. Results indicated that content validity and reliability were acceptable for the scales and subscales (see Table 1).

Table 1

Content Validity Analysis for the School Participant Empowerment Scale, the Intent to Quit Scale, the Perceived Burnout Scale

	Kappa Value
School Empowerment Scale	*0.82*
Intent to Quit Scale	*0.89*
Perceived Burnout Scale	0.84

Given that the instruments used a Likert scale, decisions had to be made about using parametric or nonparametric tests to analyze the data. Parametric tests make the assumption that the data are normally distributed whereas nonparametric tests do not make such an assumption. Sullivan and Artino (2013) state that descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations) have unclear meanings when applied to Likert scale responses. For example, "what does the average of "never" and "rarely" really mean? Does "rarely and a half" have a useful meaning?" (p. 542). Therefore, the researchers examined the data to determine if they were normally distributed and found that indeed, the data for each of the instruments were normally distributed. Such a finding indicates that parametric tests, which are described in the Findings sections, were appropriate to conduct (Norman, 2010).

Participants

The first author solicited participants (N = 313) by sharing the link to the survey on several social media groups (e.g., Twitter, Instagram) for WL teachers as well as the ACTFL Research Special Interest Group in order to expand the possible participant pool. Participants were required to be current high school WL teachers in the US or have quit within the last 2 years. The majority of the participants identified as female (50.5%), white (72.8%), and not of Hispanic, Latino, and/or Spanish origin (67.4%). Participants reported ages between 20 years of age to 71 years, with a mean age of 36.9 years old (SD = 8.70). Most of the participants had earned at least a master's degree (53.7%); a quarter of participants had earned a bachelor's degree and a fifth had earned a doctoral degree. Most participants taught only one (63.2%) or two (23.2%) languages, with the most commonly taught languages being Spanish (21.2%), French (20.9%), German (14.2%), or Chinese (11.4%). Other languages represented included Russian, Japanese, Portuguese, Italian, Korean, and Arabic.

Most participants (49.5%) taught a language that was the same as their primary language, either as the only language they taught or as one of multiple languages taught. However, almost as many participants (48.6%) taught a language that was different from their primary language, Participants reported having approximately six years of experience teaching a WL (M = 6.20, SD = 5.94) on aver-

age, with most of the participants having one to five years of experience (56.0%). Most participants reported having taught in an urban (63.9%) or suburban (26.5%) school setting. In addition, most participants reported having taught either public (54.6%) or private (36.7%) schools. Survey responses showed representation for all regions of the US to varying degrees, including the Southwest (25.9%), the Southeast (21.4%), the Northwest (16.6%), the Midwest (16.6%), the West (10%), the Mid-Atlantic (7.4%) and the Northeast (7.4%). Overall, the age, gender, ethnicity, and level of education of the participants in this study aligned with the general demographics of public-school teachers in the US (Zhang-Wu, 2021) as well as those of WL teachers in the US. and Canada (Swanson, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2012b, 2013, 2022).

Findings

Following data collection, the data were imported into SPSS 28 for data analysis. To begin the data analysis phase, reliability coefficients were calculated for the three instruments (see Table 2). Overall, the three scales have acceptable internal consistency (Henson, 2001) with coefficients ranging from 0.93 to 0.94. Next, with respect to the research question guiding this study, "To what extent does teacher empowerment predict burnout and intent to quit in high school WL teachers?", the researchers first calculated means and standard deviations for the School Participant Empowerment Scale's six dimensions (Short & Rinehart, 1992). As shown in Table 3, Decision Making was scored far higher than the other five factors. Status, Self-efficacy, Professional Growth, and Impact were scored similarly. However, the participants scored Autonomy the lowest of the six factors.

Table 2

Reliability Analysis for the School Participant Empowerment Scale, its six dimensions, and the Intent to Quit and the Perceived Burnout Scales.

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha
School Empowerment Scale	0.93
-Decision Making	0.85
-Professional Growth	0.85
-Status	0.80
-Self-efficacy	0.77
-Autonomy	0.70
-Impact	0.70
Intent to Quit Scale	0.94
Perceived Burnout Scale	0.94

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for the six dimensions of the Teacher Empowerment Scale

	M	SD
Decision Making (max. 50 pts)	34.15	7.28
Status (max. 30 pts)	24.92	2.88
Self-Efficacy (max. 30 pts)	24.79	2.89
Professional Growth (max. 30 pts)	24.11	3.77
Impact (max. 30 pts)	23.48	3.01
Autonomy	14.38	3.06

Professional Growth, and Impact were scored similarly. However, the participants scored Autonomy the lowest of the six factors.

Afterward, the researchers calculated means and standard deviations for each of the five statements of the Intent to Quit scale in descending order. As shown in Table 4, and keeping in mind the 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), the participants were uncertain about the appeal and consideration of voluntarily leaving teaching prior to retirement. Additionally, the participants expressed that they do not foresee voluntarily leaving the teaching profession if they had the opportunity.

Table 4

Means and standard deviations for the five statements of the Intent to Quit Scale

	M	SD
I have considered voluntarily leaving teaching before retirement.	3.03	1.26
Voluntarily leaving teaching before retirement appeals to me.	2.90	1.24
I do not see myself voluntarily continuing to teach in the future.	2.87	1.22
I would voluntarily quit teaching if I had the opportunity.	2.82	1.30
I frequently think about voluntarily quitting my job as a teacher.	2.76	1.26

Next, means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the five statements of the Perceived Burnout Scale (see Table 5). Keeping in mind the aforementioned 5-point Likert scale, the participant[s] seemed not to have a strong sense of professional burnout.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for the five statements of the Perceived Burnout Scale

	M	*SD*
I often feel stressed as a result of teaching	3.35	1.227
I often feel burned out as a result of teaching	3.17	1.216
I often feel emotionally exhausted as a result of teaching	3.12	1.283
I often feel overwhelmed as a result of teaching	3.01	1.242
I often feel unable to cope with teaching	2.76	1.213

Finally, the researchers conducted multiple regression analysis to explore the effect that teacher empowerments had on burnout because multiple regression is used for prediction purposes. Results revealed that teacher empowerment significantly explained 35% of the variance with a moderate effect size ($F_{(6, 286)} = 26.08$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .35$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .34$). Analysis of the six dimensions of teacher empowerment (Decision Making, Professional Growth, Status, Self-efficacy, Autonomy, and Impact) identified Professional Growth ($p < .001$, $\beta = -.29$), Self-efficacy ($p < .05$, $\beta = -.16$) and Autonomy ($p < .001$, $\beta = -.29$) as significant predictors of burnout.

With respect to one's intention to quit teaching, multiple regression indicated that teacher empowerment significantly explained 36% of the variance with a moderate effect size ($F_{(6, 286)} = 26.48$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .36$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .34$). Follow-up coefficient analysis indicated that of the six predictors of interest, decision making ($p < .01$, $\beta = .19$), professional growth ($p < .001$, $\beta = -.38$), self-efficacy ($p < .05$, $\beta = -.16$), and autonomy ($p < .05$, $\beta = -.13$) significantly predicted intent to quit.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine WL teachers' perceptions of their sense of empowerment, intent to quit the teaching profession, and their level of professional burnout. As noted earlier, the demographics of the sample resemble the demographics for the national teaching population in general (Zhang-Wu, 2021) as well as the demographics in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, and level of education for WL teachers in the US (Swanson, 2008a, 2010a, 2010b, 2012b, 2013; Swanson, 2022).

Overall, the results of the present study corroborate earlier findings that teacher empowerment is an important construct of interest when examining the WL teacher shortage, especially with respect to three of the factors of teacher empowerment: professional growth (Pivovarova & Powers, 2022, Shuls & Flores, 2020; Swanson, 2012b), self-efficacy (Swanson, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2012b, 2014, 2022), and autonomy (Peist et al., 2020; Sparks & Malkus, 2015; Sutcher et al., 2016; Warner-Griffin et al., 2018; Wilches, 2007, Wu, 2015). Each of these factors are discussed further below.

Professional Growth

As discussed previously, professional growth is a key factor of interest in research addressing teacher attrition and commitment to the profession (Aliakbari & Amoli, 2016; Bogler & Somech, 2004; Pivovarova & Powers, 2022; Swanson & Mason, 2018) as well as teacher burnout (Özer & Beycioglu, 2010). The findings of the current study support the need to provide WL teachers with opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as their attitudes, beliefs, and values. Providing WL teachers, particularly those who are novice teachers, with professional growth opportunities in the form of mentorship and professional development is crucial (Pivovarova & Powers, 2022). Participation in professional learning communities may also be helpful, as previous research has shown that it is positively correlated with teacher job satisfaction and self-efficacy (Yoo & Jang, 2022).

Furthermore, WL teachers should have voice and choice with respect to the professional development that they receive (Shuls & Flores, 2020). Rather than asking WL teachers to spend their valuable time to participate in generic professional development experiences, WL teachers should instead be encouraged to participate in learning opportunities that are tailored to their unique needs and experiences, such as those provided by language teacher associations (Swanson, 2012b). Offering WL teachers the opportunity to create their own professional development workshops may even provide a greater sense of autonomy. The content of these workshops may also foster a stronger sense of self-efficacy by providing ideas on how to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities with respect to teaching the target language. It is also important to provide WL teachers with the time necessary to take advantage of these opportunities (Swanson & Mason, 2018). In addition to time, incentives such as monetary support to attend content-specific professional development are suggested to help teachers overcome barriers to professional development (Fang et al., 2021). Information about stipends that have been created to help novice teachers attend conferences like ACTFL should also be shared. Overall, the findings of this study along with previous research show that by providing WL teachers with opportunities to grow professionally, they may become more efficacious and, thus, less likely to burn out and leave the profession (Swanson, 2012a).

Self-efficacy

As discussed earlier, one's sense of efficacy is cyclical (Tschannen-Moran et al.,1998). Each proficient performance a WL teacher has helps to create a new mastery experience, which then shapes future efficacy beliefs. A stronger sense of teaching efficacy leads to increased persistence and effort, which leads to better teaching performances later, which, in turn, leads to even stronger efficacy beliefs. However, a weaker sense of efficacy leads people to expend less effort and give up easily, which leads to poor teaching outcomes, and ultimately a decreased sense of teacher efficacy. Research on WL teachers continually shows an association between such negative feelings and the shortage of language teachers (Swanson 2012, 2022; Swanson & Huff 2010).

Findings of this study support previous research asserting that efforts to address teacher burnout and attrition should be made to reinforce WL teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy (Bing et al., 2022; Swanson, 2008a, 2012a, 2012b; Swanson & Huff, 2010). Pre- and in-service professional development should be designed specifically by content area. In this case, professional development should focus on what will benefit WLs teachers to strengthen their proficiency not only in the target language but also in developing the strategies necessary to promote student engagement (Swanson & Huff, 2010). WL teachers may participate in training or workshops that promote the development of their sense of efficacy as well as the ability to participate meaningfully in a professional community, which can provide them with the skills necessary to create positive learning environments for their students (Hlas Cummings et al., 2018). Novice WL teachers in particular should have "opportunities to observe and experience mastery early in teacher-preparation programs" (Swanson, 2012b, p. 95), which has been shown to alleviate WL teacher attrition. Teacher education programs should also provide WL teachers with the preparation necessary to feel highly efficacious in both traditional and remote environments, particularly when a change of context is necessitated by challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic (Swanson, 2022). Finally, in order for teachers to build and maintain their sense of efficacy teaching WLs, the researchers strongly recommend that schools provide more funding and opportunities for professional development. Research has shown that WL teachers who participate with their specialty professional organizations have a stronger sense of efficacy than their peers who do not and tend to remain in the profession (Swanson, 2012a).

Autonomy

As mentioned previously, autonomy has also been presented as a factor of interest in teacher burnout and attrition (Fernet et al., 2014; Gavrilyuk et al., 2013; Peist et al., 2020; Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). The findings of the current study corroborate earlier research where WL teachers should be empowered to have control over themselves and their environment when teaching (Wu, 2015). School administrators should support the development of autonomy in new teachers in particular (Fernet et al., 2014). The researchers advocate pairing new WL teachers with more experienced teachers because the veteran teachers may be able to help novices develop more confidence in their abilities, which may in turn lead to a stronger sense of autonomy. Meanwhile, singleton teachers should be provided with the support necessary to take action to grow their programs.

WL teachers should be granted the freedom and latitude necessary to make their own choices with respect to their teaching practices (Sehrawat, 2014; Wilches, 2007). WL teachers need access to the resources necessary to enact these teaching practices. For example, WL teachers should be provided with the technology to create multimodal, engaging lessons. In addition, WL teachers should have the opportunity to be involved in decisions related to curricula and scheduling (Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1992). This could involve encouraging WL teachers to help choose textbooks and other classroom materials. Whenever possible, the authors believe that WL teachers should also have a say in student placement,

particularly in situations in which WL teachers have the most information about a student's proficiency and language learning needs.

School administrators should adopt an autonomy lens when reviewing policies and practices, particularly with respect to professional development (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Teachers must feel that professional development opportunities are relevant, but also that they are able to have input about these opportunities. Taking steps to ensure a more manageable workload may also provide WL teachers with the time and energy necessary to focus on making important decisions that may affect their professional experience. Ultimately, by developing a comprehensive approach which incorporates professional development, self-efficacy, and autonomy as independent, yet interconnected, factors, steps forward may be taken to increase retention and reduce burnout in WL teachers.

Conclusion

For the past 70 years, US presidents, researchers, and organizations have been calling attention to the shortage of WL teachers (Swanson, 2012a). Finding that nearly a quarter of US teachers were contemplating leaving the American's classrooms by the end of the 2020-2021 school year (Steiner & Woo, 2021) was alarming. Learning that 22% of the US WL teachers surveyed during the COVID-19 global pandemic were considering leaving teaching (Swanson, 2022) is a serious threat to the teaching and learning of WLs in the US. The literature is replete with reports of US teaching positions being staffed by individuals who were underqualified because of the shortage of qualified and certified WL teachers (Nguyen et al., 2022).

As shown in the present study, burnout and attrition are serious issues confronting WL programs as well as other content areas. Of particular importance are professional growth, self-efficacy, and autonomy. By addressing these factors when creating and implementing interventions at all levels, key stakeholders may promote a greater sense of well-being and desire to remain in the profession of WL teaching. While this research has important implications for the WL teaching profession, it does have its limitations. First, the survey data were self-reported, which does not allow the participants' survey responses to be verified for accuracy. Follow-up qualitative interviews with participants would offer deeper insight into burnout and one's intent to quit teaching languages. Additionally, responses were collected for a single moment in time; longitudinal studies may provide additional insights on how the constructs studied change over time. The findings of the current study are specific to the experiences of high school WL teachers in the US. The researchers suggest that future research focuses on the extent to which these constructs may apply in other contexts (e.g., middle school WL teachers, WL instructors in higher education).

Nevertheless, the researchers call for more research on the shortage of WL teachers not only in the US but globally. The shortage is not unique to America as shortages are reported around the world (Swanson & Mason, 2018). It would be informative to know more about why WL teachers choose to change professions. Additionally, it would be helpful to know more about veteran teachers' profes-

sional development journeys, how they construct their professional autonomy, and how those with a strong sense of efficacy have built and maintain their confidence teaching languages in the face of professional burnout. It is time to stop alerting the public to the shortage of teachers in general and work actively toward the promotion of activities that retain highly efficacious teachers.

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The Influence of Emergency Remote Teaching on K-12 World Language Instruction

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Abstract

The abrupt shift to online instruction that occurred in spring 2020, often referred to as emergency remote teaching (ERT), caught many world language educators off guard. To prepare for future disruptions to face-to-face learning and illustrate promising online teaching practices that emerged during this extended period of time that could serve to expand and enhance world language instruction, it is important to understand how ERT influenced K-12 world language programs around the world. To help the world language teaching community better understand how ERT influenced world language instruction, a team of researchers collected interview data from world language teachers and students in the United States and Germany. Results confirmed that instruction was negatively impacted by the sudden shift to online formats, explained how and why instruction was influenced, and identified promising practices exhibited by teachers to mitigate the negative impact of ERT. World language teachers, stakeholders, and school leaders may wish to consider the results of this study to lessen the impact of future disruptions to on campus learning and to enhance the growing presence of online learning in schools.

Key words: online instruction, interaction, feedback, community-building

Introduction

The impact of Covid-19 on education was felt across the globe. Over 144 countries suspended in-person education affecting approximately 1.2 billion students (UNESCO, 2020). In Germany, the education of over 9.5 million primary and secondary school learners was disrupted (Gaebel, 2020). In the United States (U.S.), over 124,000 schools shifted to remote instruction affecting over 55 million K-12 students (Moser et al., 2021, p.1).

While the integration of technology in classrooms is pervasive and often associated with many related benefits, including convenience, accessibility, and reduced anxiety (Jin et al., 2021a; Kebritchi et al., 2017; Lee, 2021), the abrupt shift to online instruction that occurred at the beginning of the pandemic, often referred to as emergency remote teaching (ERT), caught many off guard (Jin et al., 2021a; MacIntyre et al., 2020). Distinct from traditional online instruction, ERT is characterized by little opportunity to prepare, limited technical support, inadequate faculty training, and a focus on making content accessible to all, with less attention to quality (Hodges et al., 2020).

All content areas were negatively impacted by the shift to ERT in spring 2020, including world languages. World language instruction relies heavily on interaction in the target language to develop communicative competence (ACTFL, 2014). Research in second language acquisition has consistently emphasized the highly interactive and social process of language learning and the importance of face-to-face and meaningful interaction (Glisan & Donato, 2017, 2021; Long, 1996). Given these critical ingredients in the language learning process, it is troubling that research emerging from the pandemic has underscored that elements of ERT both impeded interaction and increased social isolation (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Lee, 2021).

Despite the potential impact of ERT on world language teaching and learning, a very small number of studies have investigated how world language teachers and students around the world experienced this dramatic shift (Jin et al., 2021b; Moser et al., 2021). While the worst of the pandemic may have ended, there may be valuable lessons that can be learned from it. Researchers can identify effective online teaching strategies that emerged when all teachers were forced to abruptly shift their instruction online, offer guidance on how to respond to future disruptions to face-to-face instruction that may occur, and serve to expand and enhance online instruction.

When considering the impact of ERT on world language learning, it must also be recognized that world language instruction takes place across the globe, and that countries responded differently to the pandemic. Recent research has suggested that some countries were less prepared to adopt ERT in language classrooms than others (Kissau et al., 2022). A study by the Pew Research Center found that while almost 60% of eighth graders in the United States rely on home internet access to compete homework, 15% of U.S. households with school-age children do not have a high-speed internet connection (Auxier & Anderson, 2020). In Mexico, only 44.9% of the population owns a computer and 52.9% have an internet connection (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021). On the other end of the spectrum, a study

by Harsch et al. (2021) found that almost two-thirds of English teachers in Germany had online teaching experience prior to the onset of the pandemic. Studies involving different countries may illustrate how world language teachers with access to varying degrees of technology-related infrastructure and experience responded to the abrupt shift to online instruction.

To inform future decision-making, it is important to understand how ERT influenced world language instruction and how language teaching programs in different countries responded to it. Tseligka (2023) stated that it is "imperative to record and analyze how [ERT] was implemented across different educational systems in order to fully comprehend its repercussions [and] prepare for future contingency plans" (p. 8). Responding to this need, a team of researchers investigated the ERT experiences of K-12 world language teachers and students in the U.S. and Germany during the global pandemic.

Literature Review

To guide and inform the study, the researchers conducted a review of literature focusing on best practices in online instruction and the impact of ERT on world language instruction.

Best Practices in Online Instruction

Research on effective online instruction has underscored the critical roles played by the classroom teacher in creating a community of inquiry, in which students and teachers work together to create an optimal learning environment (Garrison et al, 2001; Lee, 2021). According to Garrison et al. (2001), in effective online learning environments, teachers must have a cognitive, teaching, and social presence. The cognitive presence involves exposing students to new information, providing them opportunities to ask questions and reflect on the content, and apply what they have learned. The teaching presence pertains to the selection and design of teaching strategies, and the social presence relates to the teacher's ability to create an engaging and supportive classroom community (Garrison et al., 2001).

Emphasized in the existing literature is the teacher's pedagogical role, or what Garrison et al. (2001) referred to as the teaching presence. Crews et al. (2015) emphasized that online teachers must use active teaching strategies to engage students in higher-order thinking, enhance learning performance, and increase student motivation. Also of critical importance is the strategic selection and design of technology-supported tasks that align well with online environments, since the task often determines the degree of student interaction, collaboration, and participation (Hampel, 2010: Lee, 2021).

Also stressed in the literature is the teacher's role in establishing a positive social presence (Garrison et al, 2001; Harsch et al., 2021). In online settings, teachers need to promote a sense of community (Garrison et al, 2001). In other words, they need to foster a classroom environment in which students feel that they know and trust each other. This is especially important in language learning contexts, where students are encouraged to interact with peers and take risks with the language (Long, 1996).

Research suggests that instructor feedback is a key contributor in enhancing the online social presence (Garrison et al, 2001; Lee, 2021). Consistent feedback makes the instructor's presence more felt in the online classroom, supports student learning, and promotes learner autonomy (Lee, 2016). Effective feedback includes identifying student strengths, areas for improvement, and recommended strategies to help the student make those improvements. Identified as a high-leverage teaching practice that can improve student learning (Glisan & Donato, 2017), feedback should be immediate, continuous, and formative to best guide student learning (Coll et al., 2013).

Impact of ERT on World Language Instruction

An emerging body of research has shed light on the extent to which the above-mentioned best practices (e.g., active teaching strategies, positive social presence, feedback) in online instruction were exhibited during the pandemic. Related findings focus on interaction, feedback, and teacher and student training, and highlight the need for additional research.

Interaction

Multiple accounts indicate that during ERT, world language teachers focused on presenting content to students with little opportunity for interaction in the target language (Harsch et al., 2021; Troyan et al., 2022; Tseligka, 2023). In a study describing the post-secondary experiences of 26 English language faculty members and 32 of their pre-service teachers during the pandemic in Mexico, both the teacher candidates and their professors reported that faculty provided content and assigned homework without giving students much opportunity to ask questions (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021). In a study involving 35 post-secondary world language teachers in Germany, the majority reported that their online courses during the pandemic were less interactive than the previous classes they taught face-to-face (Harsch et al., 2021). In a survey of K-12 world language teachers in the U.S. that examined how they perceived the impact of the pandemic, teachers reported that their ability to address the interpersonal mode of communication had "gone out the window" due to the absence of an online platform that allowed for synchronous communication and lenient pass/fail grading practices that allowed students to avoid speaking activities (Troyan et al., 2022, p. 30).

Even in cases in which opportunities to interact were present, reports suggest that a lack of community and social contact further impeded student interaction in online world language classes (Harsch et al., 2021; Troyan et al., 2022). Students had little chance to get to know each other outside of class. This lack of social contact left them feeling inhibited in class and negatively affected their participation (Harsch et al., 2021; Troyan et al., 2022).

There were, however, isolated reports of language instructors who succeeded in providing students with opportunities to build classroom community and interact during ERT (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Lee, 2021). These teachers tended to use online tools such as Flip.com (a web and mobile app that allows users to record, edit and share videos) to establish a sense of community (Yeh et al., 2022) and platforms including Zoom, for example, that allowed for interaction, feed-

back, and explanations synchronously. Such online tools allowed them to incorporate a variety of collaborative tasks (e.g., speaking partners, discussion boards) and online resources (e.g., games, Google My Maps) that promoted relationship building and interaction (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Lee, 2021). College students studying English in Korea reported that their instructor was able to promote a sense of community and increase student interaction by keeping online meeting spaces open before and after class (Lee, 2021).

Feedback

Multiple studies found that instructor feedback suffered in ERT (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Maican & Cocoradă, 2021; Tseligka, 2023). Students want and appreciate feedback in a variety of modes (i.e., spoken, written, synchronous, and asynchronous) and methods, such as email and discussion boards (Chong, 2020; Lee, 2021; Van Boekel et al., 2023). The lack of feedback during ERT was reported to leave students with questions and a sense of not having learned (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Tseligka, 2023). College students in the study by Harsch et al. (2021) recommended that teachers provide whole group feedback in synchronous video-conference sessions (e.g., Zoom), and individual feedback during online office hours or while visiting small groups of students in breakout rooms.

Need for training and support

Multiple studies have underscored the need for world language teachers to receive training on best practices in online language teaching (Jin et al., 2021b; Troyan et al., 2022). In their study involving both K-12 and post-secondary world language instructors, Moser et al. (2021) argued that "while general best practices in technology-enhanced teaching are useful, it is also vital that language educators have opportunities designed specifically for them" (p. 12). Research involving ERT in world language learning contexts has also consistently referenced the new roles played by both instructors and students, and the need for training to prepare them (Harsch et al. 2021; Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Troyan et al., 2022). Teachers in ERT settings need to not only present content to students, but also act as motivators, counselors, and facilitators of student interaction (Alharbi, 2022; Harsch et al., 2021). Students, in turn, need to take greater responsibility for their learning in ERT settings. Huang et al. (2020) reported that the university students in their study lacked autonomy and displayed low self-management skills in ERT, and frequently relied on their instructors for guidance. In another study involving post-secondary language learners, Juárez-Díaz and Perales (2021) reported that a lack of student netiquette contributed to course challenges. Students frequently did not turn on their cameras, which impeded interaction and community building.

Need for research

Analysis of the literature revealed a clear need for additional research. Many of the above-mentioned studies involved post-secondary language learners (Harsch et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2020; Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Lee, 2021, Maican & Cocorada, 2021). As a result, their findings may not be applicable to K-12 world language instruction. Younger students may have shorter attention spans and different preferred learning styles.

Further, much of the research investigating online world language instruction has involved teachers who chose to teach online and had time to prepare. Moser et al. (2021) stated that "the abrupt shift from face-to-face contexts to remote [language] learning is fundamentally different from planned online learning" (p. 1). While future disruptions to education are likely, there is little research to guide ERT in world language contexts (Jin et al, 2021a; Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021). Responding to this void, this study investigated the following research question: How did ERT influence K-12 world language teaching in the U.S. and Germany during the global pandemic?

Methodology

In order to investigate the above-mentioned research question, the researchers used a collective case study design (Stake, 2005). A case study is an empirical inquiry that examines real-life events and experiences through a participant's perspectives (Yin, 2014). In their study investigating the perspectives of 377 K-12 and post-secondary world language educators in the U.S during the pandemic, Moser et al. (2021) recommended that follow-up studies "take advantage of qualitative methods of inquiry, including interviews with language educators [and] learners" (p. 13). Troyan et al. (2022) also called for further research using interviews to corroborate the findings of their study to investigate world language teacher perceptions of the pandemic's impact on their instruction. Prior to data collection, the researchers obtained Internal Review Board (IRB) approval from their institutions and participating school districts.

Participants

Data sources included interviews and focus groups involving world language teachers and students in the U.S. and Germany. The selection of participants was facilitated by a long-standing research partnership between faculty at a college of education in the southeastern U.S. and a university that focuses on teacher preparation in Germany.

U.S. Sample

The recruitment of participants in the U.S. was facilitated by a grant from the Department of Public Instruction in the state where the study took place to investigate the impact of ERT on K-12 world language instruction. Grant funding allowed the researchers to incentivize participation and led to a robust sample of world language teachers and students in 10 school districts and in the state-legislated virtual public school, the second largest state virtual school in the nation, offering 100% online instruction in a variety of content areas, including world languages.

World language teachers. A purposive sample of three world language teachers in each district (including the virtual school) participated in an individual interview. To ensure a variety of perspectives were considered, supervisors recommended teachers representing different languages and levels of instruction. Of the total 33 teacher participants, 22 taught Spanish, five taught French, three taught Chinese, one taught Japanese, and two taught Latin. Sixteen teachers taught at the

secondary school level (grades 9-12), nine taught middle school (grades 6-8), and eight were primary school teachers (Kindergarten through grade 5). Three of the teachers taught at the virtual school, and all but 4 were female.

World language students. The 33 teachers emailed students whom they taught during the pandemic and invited them to participate. A total of 59 provided the necessary parental consent and participated in a focus group interview. The students were studying Spanish (24), French (22), Chinese (10), and Japanese (3) at the primary (22), middle (15), and secondary school (22) levels. Thirty-four were female and 25 male.

German Sample

The German sample was distinct from the U.S. sample due to a lack of grant funding and contextual differences. The two German researchers reached out to five schools, all located in the state of Baden-Württemberg (southern Germany), where they frequently placed their English teacher candidates and invited their world language teachers and students to participate.

World language teachers. Eight English teachers at the five participating schools participated in an interview with the German researchers. Half taught at a primary school and half at a secondary school. Three were female and five were male.

World language students. A total of seven secondary school students studying English participated in an interview. Six of the seven were in fourth grade in spring 2020, and one was in eighth grade. Four were male and three were female.

Data Collection & Analytic Procedures

Data collection took place in two phases during the spring of 2022 and consisted of interviews and focus groups with world language teachers and students.

Phase 1

First, the researchers in each country interviewed world language teachers. The interviews were virtual, lasted approximately one hour, and were audio or video-recorded. The teachers were asked to describe (1) their experience teaching a world language during the pandemic, (2) the teaching strategies they used, (3) what prepared them to implement these strategies, (4) what strategies were most and least effective at engaging students and promoting language learning, and (5) what they would do differently should they have to return to ERT.

Phase 2

The second stage involved student focus groups in the U.S. context and individual interviews in the German context. In the U.S., the researchers conducted 11 focus group interviews, involving 59 students who were taught by the 33 participating teachers. Focus groups were used to create a less threatening environment for the K-12 student participants (Krueger & Casey, 2015), with the aims of enabling them to feel safe sharing information (Vaughn et al., 1996) and providing a space where interaction might yield critical insights (Morgan, 1988). All focus groups were virtual, lasted approximately half an hour, and were video-recorded.

In the German context, the researchers conducted individual, audio-recorded, 30-minute interviews with each of the seven student participants. Student participants were asked to describe (1) their experience learning a world language during the pandemic, (2) how their teacher taught the language remotely, (3) what language skills were most/least emphasized during the pandemic, (4) what activities or teaching strategies they felt were most beneficial to their learning, and (5) what recommendations they had for their teacher related to teaching a language online.

Data Analysis

The research team analyzed the qualitative data collected to investigate how world language teachers and students in the U.S. and Germany experienced the transition to ERT during the pandemic. Once Author 5 transcribed the U.S interviews, and Authors 3 and 4 transcribed and translated the German interviews, Author 1 uploaded all of the transcripts into NVivo—a qualitative data analysis software. He first classified transcripts into cases, with one case designated per country (U.S. or Germany) and included all accompanying data sources. Within each case, he created subcases for participating teachers and students. Within-case analyses were followed by cross-case analyses.

Garrison et al.'s concept of Community of Inquiry (2001), relating to best practices in online instruction, provided the theoretical framework that guided the data analysis. More specifically, the key components of Garrison's theory described earlier in the literature review (i.e., technology-supported tasks, community-building, interaction, and instructor feedback) were used as first level descriptive codes. Author 1 used this a priori set of parent codes to deductively code the data. In other words, when reading the qualitative data, excerpts were assigned to the predefined codes. Once the data were coded using the initial set of parent codes, the excerpts were reread and further coded (child codes) based on emerging sub-themes, such as training, interpersonal communication, and breakout rooms.

Findings

To understand how ERT influenced K-12 world language teaching in the U.S. and Germany during the pandemic, findings are presented for each critical component of online instruction (technology-supported tasks, classroom community, interaction, and feedback).

Technology-Supported Tasks

As a result of the transition to ERT, teachers in both the U.S. and Germany gradually began to incorporate more technology-supported tasks, albeit to varying extents. Technology integration also varied by level of instruction. For example, in the very early stages of the pandemic (spring 2020), many primary school teachers, whose students were less familiar with web-based tools, sent home paper-based packages (i.e., worksheets) that students completed at home and returned for correction. A primary school teacher in the U.S. explained, "On Fridays, I was allowed to come to school to gather materials, make copies and parents picked them up." A primary school student studying English confirmed that simi-

lar practices were common in Germany: "We always received things in an envelope in the mailbox. It had all the work we were to do." On the other hand, older students, particularly in the U.S., were often already using a learning management system (LMS) in their world language classes, which allowed their teachers to capitalize on these platforms to share resources and communicate with students. The transition to technology-based resources and tasks was reported to be even more seamless by the three participating virtual school teachers in the U.S. One commented: "The wonderful thing about my program is it has a set curriculum. While teachers in traditional schools were scrambling to find resources and materials, mine were already in place. My job just continued. It didn't get harder."

As the pandemic progressed into summer and fall 2020, world language teachers and students in both countries reported access to more sophisticated technology-based resources. While many relied initially on pre-existing infrastructure that allowed for the completion of basic tasks, such as recording attendance, posting grades, and communicating with parents and students via email (e.g., Class Dojo, SeeSaw), by fall 2020, teachers in both countries reported using more advanced platforms that allowed for synchronous instruction (e.g., Zoom, Teams) and an LMS (e.g., Google Classroom, Canvas) that allowed them to house all instructional materials in one place and their students to access them at their convenience. A teacher in the U.S. explained the benefits of using Canvas in her Spanish classroom: "Having a good platform really helped, because you can find everything there. You can have your apps and links and everything."

Learning management systems were also reported by teachers to provide access to online resources that were otherwise not permitted by their school district, and thus add variety to their instruction and engage students. A French teacher in the U.S. explained, "I wasn't allowed to use Youtube, but Canvas let you [incorporate it into your Canvas platform]. So, the students aren't watching a Youtube video [directly through Youtube.com]. They're watching Youtube videos you incorporated into your Canvas page." Supported by an LMS, teachers in the U.S. reported to use a wide variety of online resources like Kahoot to play instructional games, Quizlet to learn and review vocabulary, PearDeck to make Powerpoint presentations more interactive, and Flip.com to allow students to record themselves speaking in the target language. A middle school student studying Spanish in the U.S. confirmed the variety of web-based tools used by his teacher: "We would use Kahoot, Blooket, Gimkit, and Duolingo." The use of online games and resources to supplement instruction was less emphasized by the students and teachers in Germany, with only Wizadora, Youtube, and the ANTON app mentioned by three German teachers and two students.

English teachers in Germany were less familiar with the many web-based resources used by the U.S. teachers and students, and they tried to a greater extent than their American counterparts to emulate traditional face-to-face instruction. For example, the most frequently cited instructional strategy used by teachers in Germany was to upload instructional videos and deliver live instruction using a web-based platform like Zoom. One secondary school teacher in Germany explained:

> So I entered them in Teams in the calendar as a lesson. And then, it was actually the case that I imitated how we do our normal lessons. So, I really did it as if I were standing in front of the classroom, and I showed them the lesson, and they were just at home.

Multiple primary school teachers in Germany also tried to maintain traditional storytelling as an instructional strategy but acknowledged its limitations. One elaborated, "So, I would read them a story, but it was very difficult to do that in online lessons. When I held the book up to the camera, you could only see it to a limited extent." Efforts to maintain the characteristics of traditional, on-campus instruction among teachers in Germany were confirmed by three of their students. When asked to describe how his teacher taught English during the pandemic, one commented, "So actually, it was the same as he would have done in class, but online."

Even when technology-based resources were used, data collected from both teachers and students, particularly in the U.S., suggested that inconsistency in how they were implemented negatively impacted students. A teacher in the U.S. acknowledged this limitation:

> My son has 8 teachers, and he missed 2 days last week. Every single teacher sent him a Canvas message with where he was supposed to get the work. But everyone was different. Some said to click on the day. Some said, "click on the announcements", and some said click on "Day One."

Community

In the transition to ERT, world language teachers struggled to develop a sense of community in the online environment but identified some effective strategies. The most frequently mentioned by teachers in both countries, and confirmed by their students, was taking time at the beginning of each class to touch base with their students, ask them questions, and provide them with the opportunity to share a little bit about themselves. Multiple references were made of students and teachers showing their pets, siblings, and even meals during live classroom sessions to build community. It was also noted by teachers that while these "wellness checks" took up time during already abbreviated classroom instruction and were frequently conducted in the students' native language, they were critical. A Spanish teacher in the U.S. explained, "Sometimes, we would not even get to teach the whole lesson, because it was more about what they were going through and trying to find a space to connect."

Other community building strategies mentioned by teachers and students in both countries included (1) offering office hours, where students could drop in to chat with their teachers and fellow classmates outside of regular class time, (2) breakout sessions during live instruction, so that students could interact with their peers in small groups, and (3) leaving Zoom or Team meetings open after class ended to provide students with additional time to interact. A teacher in Germany found this last strategy particularly effective: "They would just talk a bit more, and in some cases, we were still there for half an hour to three quarters of an hour just talking. That was of the greatest benefit." The benefit of playing online games to build com-

munity was also repeated multiple times, but only by teachers and students in the U.S.

A final, unanticipated strategy that appeared effective in building classroom community was the integration of culture into instruction. More specifically, during live instruction, teachers reported to share both tangible (e.g., cultural artifacts, literature) and intangible (e.g., Samba dance, make crepes, and sing songs) cultural products with their students. Data collected from students suggested that the integration of such cultural products helped them connect.

Despite these efforts, students in both the U.S. and Germany frequently reported feeling isolated and disconnected from their peers during the pandemic. A common factor that was reported to undermine efforts to build classroom community was that students often did not turn on their cameras during live sessions. A U.S. student studying Spanish commented, "Everyone had their cameras off. Everyone was muted. We never worked together. We never talked. It was just individual work … so it really wasn't a great learning experience." Teachers and students in both countries frequently reported that it was difficult to make connections and build community when they could not see faces. Despite this common sentiment, none of the total 40 teachers interviewed reported having received training on how to build classroom community online.

Interaction

Another result of the abrupt transition to ERT was a decrease in target language interaction. Teachers and students in both countries underscored the challenge of addressing interpersonal, oral communication that involved a spontaneous exchange of information in the target language. Breakout rooms were commonly used in large class instruction, but this strategy was reported to be largely ineffective, particularly when the instructor was not present with the students. A secondary school student in the U.S. explained, "In my experience, breakout rooms never really worked. Usually, when you get pulled in, there'd be only one person there who is actually willing to talk, and the others just saw it as an opportunity to opt out." Teachers added that it was challenging and time-consuming to visit multiple breakout rooms in a short period of time, and that often upon entry into a breakout room, they were greeted by silence. Multiple reports suggested that students were reluctant to communicate in breakout rooms in front of peers who they often did not know, and that this lack of community was exacerbated by students not turning on their cameras. A teacher from Germany elaborated, "The interactive speaking was problematic, since the students were even more exposed in breakout rooms. Due to the total silence in the meeting, every speech contribution was highlighted, and this was paralyzing for many."

While some teachers reported completely abandoning the use of breakout rooms and attention to interpersonal, oral communication, others reported using a variety of strategies to mitigate the above-mentioned challenges. Multiple U.S. teachers reported giving participation grades in breakout sessions to encourage participation. Others reported assigning student roles in breakout rooms. A Spanish teacher explained, "I often would have jobs per group. So, you know, this person has the role

to get students talking." The most common, and reportedly most effective strategy, employed by teachers in both countries, involved teachers scheduling individual, or small group sessions with students to practice language skills under their supervision. A secondary school teacher in the U.S. explained this strategy:

> So each week I'd give a different little group of kids an office hour time to come. And during that time, it was like a mini breakout room. But I would do something with just like 3 or 4 kids to work on communication. Just to lower that affective filter. They weren't in front of everybody on a screen, and that worked.

A student in Germany confirmed that this was also a common strategy in her school: "Every student got an individual appointment. But that took too long. And then we were always together in groups of four or five. That's what he did. I also thought that was the best solution."

Due to the reported challenges associated with interpersonal speaking, teachers and students provided compelling evidence that other language skills were given greater attention during ERT. More specifically, many teachers opted to focus on interpersonal and presentational writing via online chat (e.g., Jamboard), Google Docs, and Google Slides or presentational speaking using recorded videos (e.g., Flip.com). Echoing the sentiments of multiple teachers, a Spanish teacher in the U.S. acknowledged, "Trying to get that interpersonal communication online was very difficult. So, I said, well, I'm just gonna have to focus on presentational speaking. That's just the way it's gonna be. And I'm not going to fight it." Students confirmed that they were provided little opportunity to interact orally in the target language. A U.S. student said, "I think being able to hear was really pressed on, and being able to write. But not so much speaking, because we didn't really practice speaking much." It was interesting to note that the challenge of addressing interpersonal speaking had less impact on some language teachers. For example, while many Latin teachers may include speaking as an important component of their instruction, the two who participated in the study felt that due to the focus on reading skills in the teaching of Latin, their instruction was less impacted by the transition to ERT. A Latin teacher explained, "I would say my students rarely speak to each other in Latin. They might do simple things like my name is, or I like. It's just that the whole discipline is so focused on reading fluency."

The data suggested that the reported lack of interpersonal speaking practice did not come without consequence. Teachers and students from both countries felt that students' oral communication skills suffered during ERT. A U.S. Spanish teacher lamented, "I have to recognize that during this time a lot of my students lose [sic] a big chunk of their language skills." A student in Germany added, "I think if the online classes had gone on longer, I wouldn't have learned to speak English half, not even half as well as I can now."

Feedback

Teachers in both countries reported that it was difficult during ERT to provide individual feedback to students. While technology allowed teachers to provide suggestions and comments to students on their submitted assignments, without live

contact, they often found it difficult to understand how students arrived at certain answers, which limited their ability to provide beneficial feedback. A teacher in the U.S. explained, "They would just send me the assignment, and some answers would be empty, and I would provide feedback, but I didn't really know why the question was empty, or how they came to that answer." A teacher in Germany added: "At the end of the week you got all the students' assignments … but it was actually more difficult to give good feedback when something really wasn't quite right."

Providing feedback was further complicated by the fact that teachers were often unsure whether submitted assignments were true indicators of ability. Teachers often suspected that technology (e.g., Google Translate) and parents assisted in assignment completion. A Mandarin teacher in the U.S. commented, "We are not sure if we're checking the work that the children did themselves, or you know, [if] Google did it."

Another common concern raised in the interviews related to the timeliness of feedback. During live instruction, students reported that instructors were unable to respond to all individual questions due to the large number of students, and if they sent follow-up email inquiries, it often took days to get a response. As a result, they often felt they had little support. The data suggested that providing feedback on assignments took even longer, and as a result, was less effective at improving student learning. A teacher in Germany explained that while he could provide immediate feedback to students in a face-to-face setting, his more traditional means of providing feedback online took a long time: "The methods of correction were very complicated…I downloaded the images into GIMP, used a red pen, corrected them, exported them again, and sent them back." He acknowledged that this delay in providing feedback diminished its impact: "They'd rather have seen it right now than weeks later, because you don't know whether they'll actually look at it again when it's corrected."

To address the above-mentioned limitations, several teachers in both countries recommended the use of synchronous, individual, or small group meetings in which they could get an accurate sense of student ability and provide immediate and individual feedback. A teacher in the U.S. explained, "If I could have more time for small groups, not breakout rooms, where I'm jumping between groups, but a time when I can address individual needs…Maybe we won't cover as much, but it's going to be well learned." Students concurred. Multiple U.S. students suggested making weekly Zoom sessions with individual students mandatory, and two of the seven German students recommended teachers schedule live meetings with small groups of students to provide feedback and answer questions.

Discussion

The experiences of the teachers and students described in this study offer multiple contributions to the existing literature. The study confirmed previous research speaking to the critical role played by the classroom teacher in online instruction. Supporting the work of Garrison et al. (2002), the study's findings made it clear that teachers should establish a community of inquiry in their online classrooms where teachers and students interact to create an optimal learning

environment. Students in the study craved interaction with their teachers and peers and reported a lack of teacher support (e.g., little personalized feedback). In further support of Garrison et al. (2001), the study's findings emphasized the important role of the teacher in promoting a sense of community. Students were often reluctant to participate in classroom activities due to a lack of established trust and camaraderie among their peers. Consistent with previous research emphasizing the importance of the strategic selection of technology-based tools and resources that align well with online environments (Crews et al., 2015; Hampel, 2010: Lee, 2021), students in the study reported to be motivated and engaged by a variety online games and resources that generated competition and encouraged them to communicate. Building upon prior research, the study suggested that students also play an important role in effective online instruction. For example, in online settings, students can build classroom community and promote interaction by turning on their cameras. Further, they can enhance their learning by managing their own classroom behaviors and taking greater responsibility (e.g., actively participating in breakout rooms).

The study's findings also contribute to the emerging body of knowledge indicating that ERT negatively impacted the components of effective online teaching. Teachers scrambled to identify and become familiar with online resources, and often focused on presenting content, especially in the early stages of the pandemic, in a manner that emulated face-to-face instruction (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021). They struggled to build classroom community (Harsch et al., 2021; Troyan et al., 2022), provide students with individual feedback (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Maican & Cocoradă, 2021), and address interpersonal oral language skills (Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Troyan et al., 2022). The data suggested that ERT's negative influence may have been exacerbated by the diminished status of world language instruction in comparison with other content areas. Teachers reported receiving less training, having fewer resources and fewer face-to-face instructional opportunities than teachers of more prioritized subjects (e.g., math).

While the data provided compelling evidence that instruction was negatively influenced by ERT, they also suggested that not all languages and language teachers were impacted to the same extent, or at least in the same ways. Primary school teachers often had to teach their young students how to use online resources, more so than their middle or secondary school peers. Teachers of less commonly taught languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Latin) reported access to fewer instructional resources in the target language. Teachers of logographic languages (e.g., Japanese and Chinese) struggled to show their students how to write the unique language characters in an online setting, and teachers of modern languages (e.g., English, French, Spanish) struggled to address oral communication skills, more so than teachers of Latin, a language that generally places less attention on speaking. The three participating virtual language teachers were least impacted by the shift to ERT.

Complementing the existing research that illustrated the negative influence of ERT on critical elements of world language instruction, the study shed light on how and why these elements were impacted. The adoption of technology-based tools among teachers, particularly in Germany, was hurt by a lack of training and

inconsistent district policies and practices with respect to how to use them (e.g., Canvas). Community building was impacted by students not turning on cameras and failing to participate in interactive activities (e.g., breakout rooms). Feedback was hampered by questions related to who actually completed the work (i.e., parents, siblings, Google Translate), time delays, and the number of students in classrooms, and interpersonal oral communication was challenging due to student anxiety and time constraints. While many of these challenges (e.g., student anxiety, cheating, and delayed feedback) existed prior to the pandemic, the dramatic shift to 100% online instruction appeared to make them even more prevalent in ERT.

While the study showed how ERT negatively influenced world language teachers, it also illustrated their flexibility and resilience. Perhaps the study's greatest contribution is that it shared multiple strategies employed by teachers to overcome, or at least mitigate these challenges. Teachers, particularly those in the U.S, showed how a variety of web-based tools and resources can be used to address language skills. They reported incorporating online games (e.g., Kahoot, Gimkit) to learn and review vocabulary and grammatical structures, digital tools to practice reading and interpersonal and presentational writing skills (e.g., discussion forums, shared Google docs and Google slides, Jamboard), online videos (e.g., Youtube) to enhance listening skills, and web-based resources like Flip.com, Padlet.com, and Nearpod.com to hone presentational speaking skills. How to effectively use breakout rooms in language instruction to counteract some of the limitations of ERT was another key takeaway from the study. To provide individual feedback and address oral interpersonal skills several teachers scheduled live, individual, or small group sessions with students. Teachers who reported the benefits of breakout rooms emphasized that they should be small (no more than 4 students), attended by the instructor (to provide individual feedback and encourage interaction), and involve the use of cameras (to promote community building). To further build community in ERT, teachers offered online office hours, kept their "live" classrooms open after scheduled class sessions, and incorporated "wellness checks". Another interesting finding was that the integration of the world language culture, a topic often neglected or misunderstood in world language classrooms (Yang & Chen, 2016), appeared to be an effective online strategy for teachers to build community. While these findings my serve to mitigate the negative impact of future disruptions to on campus learning, it is important to note that online instruction (at all levels) continues to expand due to administrative mandates and/or the realities of a changing student clientele. Sharing how teachers navigated many of the challenges associated with teaching a world language online, therefore, provides the opportunity to guide and inform online instruction in all contexts, not just in response to a global pandemic.

Implications and Applications

World language teachers, stakeholders, and school leaders should consider the results of this study to lessen the impact of future disruptions to on campus learning and to enhance the growing presence of online learning in schools. To support the adoption and effective implementation of online instruction, districts

should invest in the necessary resources and offer training to support teachers in their implementation. Given that many teachers reported continued use of technology after the pandemic, it was discouraging to hear reports from teacher participants that districts were eliminating the funding of various technology-based tools that they had become accustomed to using. When offering training to world language teachers, particular attention should be paid to training them how to address the interpersonal mode of communication, and in particular oral communication. The study's findings suggested that breakout rooms may be an effective strategy to develop oral language skills, but world language teachers need training on how to effectively use them. They need guidance on how to logistically schedule multiple, small group breakout sessions in short class sessions, and the optimal number of individual sessions necessary to provide oral communication practice and individual feedback. Supporting the recommendation of Troyan et al. (2022), world language teachers need models and support on how to engage students in oral, interpersonal activities online.

Further, districts should consider adopting consistent policies and practices for how these online resources are used, so that students, teachers, and parents receive consistent messaging. Access to a vetted online curriculum that mirrors the standard curriculum taught in a traditional on campus setting might be another investment that districts consider to prepare for future disruptions to face-to-face instruction. The ERT experience of the three participating virtual world language teachers appeared to be far less stressful, in large part due to their pre-existing online curriculum.

Districts and schools should also consider offering training to students and their parents. The study's findings support previous research indicating that students have a new role to play in online instruction (Harsch et al. 2021; Juárez-Díaz & Perales, 2021; Troyan et al., 2022). These roles and responsibilities need to be clearly explained to them. They should, for example, be taught self-management strategies to help them monitor their own participation and progress, and best practices in online learning behavior (e.g., turning on cameras). Parents too, have a role to play, and should be taught how to use online tools and resources to support their children, particularly in primary school.

To help build classroom community and support teachers in promoting the well-being of their students, schools should consider institutionalizing time for teachers to touch base with students to ask questions and see how they are feeling. Multiple teachers in the study spoke about online wellness checks (e.g., Wellness Wednesdays) during the pandemic, and how they often missed this time to touch base, or continued to build this time into their schedule post-pandemic. Given the attention in world language instruction to the use of language for meaningful purposes (Glisan & Donato, 2017, Long, 1996) and the teaching profession's growing awareness of the importance of social and emotional learning, teaching students the necessary vocabulary and structures to express how they are feeling, and offering regular time to practice this skill still seems like a very relevant and effective use of instructional time (post-pandemic). The continued integration of web-based tools and resources like online discussion forums (e.g., Canvas) and videos

(e.g., Flip.com) could also allow language teachers to continue daily wellness checks outside of instructional time (e.g., as a homework assignment or enrichment activity). The integration of the target language culture into world language instruction as a means of building classroom community was another interesting finding in the study that merits further attention. The multiple examples provided by teachers of how they integrated culture into their online instruction to build community reflects a traditional approach that emphasized cultural products (e.g., songs, food, artifacts, and dances). World language teachers could also benefit from models of how to integrate culture into online instruction that reflects the more current approach (The National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015) that also addresses cultural practices (i.e., patterns of social interactions and behaviors) and perspectives (i.e., attitudes and beliefs that underlie the cultural practices and products of a society).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While the study's results are interesting and worthy of consideration, there are limitations to consider when interpreting them. Although multiple teachers and students participated in the study, they represent only two regions in two countries. Given that research has shown that countries were affected by and responded to the pandemic differently (Kissau et al., 2022), the study's results cannot be generalized to all K-12 world language teaching contexts. Further research should involve additional countries, especially those that may be less developed than the U.S. and Germany.

It should also be acknowledged that for many teachers and students, their ERT experience is a distant memory. Teacher and student participants often struggled to recall their experiences from spring 2020. To combat this limitation, the researchers shared interview questions in advance, so that participants had time to reflect, but it is possible that some memories may have faded. The time that has passed since the pandemic also placed limitations on who participated. Since most secondary school students in advanced levels of language instruction during the pandemic had already graduated by the time of data collection, the secondary school participants were all studying at introductory levels during the pandemic. It might be interesting to investigate what impact ERT had on more advanced language instruction where perhaps students were more self-motivated and exhibited greater autonomy.

When interpreting the findings and how they might influence current online instruction, it is also important to consider that technology continues to evolve at a rapid pace. This is particularly true with respect to artificial intelligence (AI). Recent advancements in AI could help to lessen some of the negative impacts of ERT reported in this study, such as the lack of individualized feedback. Brisk Teaching, Language Tool, and ChatGPT, for example, are free AI tools that teachers can use to quickly generate student feedback (see **briskteaching.com)**. Future research should investigate how AI tools can be utilized to further enhance online world language instruction.

Finally, while the study provided evidence related to how ERT negatively influenced world language instruction during the pandemic, it did not investigate the influence of ERT on student language skills or world language enrollment. What consequences are world language teachers and students currently facing due to their experience during the pandemic? Has the oral language skill development of students who studied a world language during the pandemic suffered due to the challenges reported in this study related to opportunities for interpersonal oral communication? Has enrollment in upper level language courses been impacted by negative student experiences in lower level language courses during the pandemic? These are all interesting questions for further investigation.

While the focus on related research has been on the negative influence of ERT, future research might also explore its benefits and what may have been lost as we transition back to on campus learning. Will districts maintain attention to student mental health via daily check-ins? Will they continue to invest in some of the technology-based tools that were reported to be effective? If not, what may be the consequences?

Conclusion

Responding to calls for research involving the perspectives of K-12 world language students and teachers (Jin et al., 2021b; Moser et al., 2021), the researchers investigated the influence of ERT on K-12 world language instruction in the U.S. and Germany. Results confirmed previous research indicating that the shift to ERT negatively influenced critical components of effective online teaching, helped to explain how and why these components were influenced, and illustrated effective online teaching strategies that emerged to mitigate the negative impact. These effective online teaching practices can serve to guide and inform online instruction in all contexts, not just in response to a global pandemic. Teachers and school leaders should consider the results when preparing for future disruptions to on campus learning and to support the expansion and enhancement of online world language instruction.

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The Language Classroom

Articles focusing on research-based teaching and learning in world language education

The Language Classroom section of the NECTFL *Review* focuses on classroom-based applications of research in world language education, including articles anchored in a solid research base that focus on practical, in-class applications of research and student experiences. We invite world language teachers of all levels and languages, administrators, and researchers to submit an article. Your voice and experiences are important and worth sharing with the field!

In this spring edition, Rosanne Zeppieri's article, "Questions, Critical Thinking, and Language Proficiency," discusses the importance of the types of questions we ask learners. Questions are frequent in all classrooms, and we can reframe them to engage learners in critical thinking while using the target language.

Isabel Avens and Gisela Hoecherl-Alden's article, "Integrating Decolonization and Anti-racism into the World Language Curriculum," explores how anti-racist principles and practices can be embedded in world language classrooms to better engage learners in relevant content. Through the lens of German university-level classes, numerous examples are examined that show how the curriculum can be diversified and decolonized while fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and transcultural sensitivity

Angela Lee-Smith's article, "Sing My Story: Lyrics and Music as Storytelling for Language Learners," details the 'Sing My Story' project that learners in a university-level Korean class engaged in. Language students creatively write their own lyrics to existing songs in the target language, and then collaborate with student musicians or target language-speaking musicians within the school community to perform the songs. This creative and interactive project provides students with opportunities for meaningful language application, creativity, and a transformative language learning experience.

And finally, Beckie Bray Rankin and Nikki Prasad's article, "Finding the Student's Voice: Authentic Assessments Make Language Personal," gives voice to a language learner and her experiences with authentic assessments in a high school French class. The student (co-author Nikki Prasad) shares her experiences with different kinds of French assessment in her teacher (Beckie Bray Rankin)'s classroom, reminding us of the importance of learner "voice and choice" in our classroom tasks.

Each article in **The Language Classroom** undergoes a double-blind review process, and we are indebted to the reviewers of the above articles for their careful consideration and detailed feedback, an invaluable service to the authors and to the NECTFL *Review*.

We hope you enjoy the articles in **The Language Classroom**!

Happy Spring, and happy reading!

Catherine Ritz
Editor, The Language Classroom

Reviewers —The Language Classroom

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Questions, Critical Thinking, and Language Proficiency

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ABSTRACT

Research confirms that critical thinking plays a fundamental role in decision making and problem solving, skills that are essential to function as successful adults in a complex world. Consequently, it has been a focus of educational research for decades. Faculty meetings and teacher training sessions repeatedly run sessions on ways that teachers can adapt their methodology to foster higher-level thinking. This article discusses the definition of critical thinking and the pivotal role that questioning can have in developing those skills. Out of the hundreds of questions teachers ask daily, few demand higher-level thinking. In fact, most ask for basic information or check for current learning rather than causing students to infer, analyze, evaluate, or demonstrate creativity. Further, the article includes a sampling of teaching techniques adapted from cooperative learning and other disciplines that have the potential to transform the world language classroom into a vibrant, learner-active space where students use critical thinking to solve problems.

Keywords: questioning, critical thinking, proficiency

Introduction

There are legitimate reasons that critical thinking remains a topic of faculty meetings and teacher training sessions. It can be overwhelming for teachers–who have large amounts of content to cover–to find time to include opportunities for students to explore different perspectives related to content or to identify underlying assumptions; curriculum and standardized tests frequently require students to

internalize a body of information, rather than question what they are learning. Some teachers lack training in critical thinking skills; others do not believe that young children have the capacity to think critically. However, toddlers demonstrate the beginnings of critical thinking. They ask numerous questions, solve problems they encounter in their world, make use of what they know/have learned to make decisions. Typical three-to five-year old children question everything they see and hear. Their curiosity is unlimited. They are ready for challenging learning experiences when they begin their schooling.

What are critical thinking skills? (Critical Thinking, n.d.).

- Interpretation: figuring out what something means from text, context, physical, and emotional cues.
- Analysis: discerning what a question or problem means by examining its elements and how they connect to one another.
- Inference: considering the outcomes of different options.
- Evaluation: assessing the credibility and reliability of a claim.
- Explanation: giving reasons, describing evidence, telling why a given approach or method was used, how a set of standards for success were selected and used.
- Self-regulation: evaluating and revising one's thoughts based on evidence discovered.

Today, the ability to think critically is more important than ever. We are bombarded daily with an ever-increasing amount of information and disinformation from social media, television news programs, radio, newspapers, podcasts, the internet—all of which makes it essential to be able to discern what is valid, what is partisan, and what information means for oneself and for society. Schools need to be leaders in promoting, expanding, and perfecting thinking skills that equip students to deal with this phenomenon.

Teachers have the unique opportunity to play a pivotal role in building critical thinking through the types of questions they ask and the manner in which they pose those questions. They ask hundreds of questions a day. However, most are low-level, procedural, or display questions. Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and Wiliam (2004) state that, "More effort has to be spent in framing questions that are worth asking: that is, questions that explore issues that are critical to the development of students' understanding" (p.11-12). And for language teachers, questions also need to elicit more thoughtful answers and richer dialogue.

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, small changes in how questions are formulated have the effect of causing substantive improvements in students' thinking and language use. Asking more "how" and "why" questions, probing for additional information by asking follow-up questions, and allowing students to question one another prompt higher-level thinking and result in more complete and complex responses in the target language.

Asking effective questions is both an art and a science. There are many teachers who ask high-level questions intuitively. However, with adequate preparation, all teachers can conduct powerful, thought-provoking questioning sessions. Bloom's

Table 1
Levels of Questions

Low-level questions	High-level questions
What's in your bedroom? (one-word responses)	How do your possessions reflect who you are? (explanation)
What are you wearing today? (one-word responses and we already know the answer)	What do the clothes you wear tell others about you? (inference)
What expressions do the French use when greeting others? (one-word responses)	Describe one or two cultural differences you noticed during your stay in France and how those changes affected you. (explanation)
	How did you structure your paragraph so that it engages your readers? (self-regulation)

Table 2
Original Versus Reframed Questions

Original Question	Reframed Question
Which words does the author use to describe the main character in the story?	Why did the author use the word "ambitious" to describe the main character?
Would you prefer to attend a French or American school?	Explain how a French or American school would best suit your needs.
Who are the best teachers in your school?	What makes Mr. or Ms. X a "good" teacher?
Which sites did you visit in Paris during your trip?	Tell me about the most amazing day you had during your time in Paris. What made that day amazing?

Revised Taxonomy (Figure 1, p. 158) (Armstrong, 2010), Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Framework (Guido, 2022), and Fink's (2013) Taxonomy of Significant Learning all add insights into questioning and its impact on student learning.

Bloom's Taxonomy begins with knowledge/memory questions and slowly pushes to seek more information as the levels of questions become more complex. The questions range from basic understanding to creation of new ideas with one question building on the previous one. Teachers, however, do not need to begin questioning at the knowledge level. They might begin a question/answer sequence at the inference level to check that students have acquired basic information about a topic. If so, they can continue to explore students' understanding by asking higher-level questions. If students are not able to answer the inference questions, teachers revert to lower-level questioning until it is clear that students have acquired the requisite knowledge. Teachers can also use the taxonomy as a tool for differentiation. They can target specific students for questions that suit their level

Figure 1

Levels of Questions Based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy
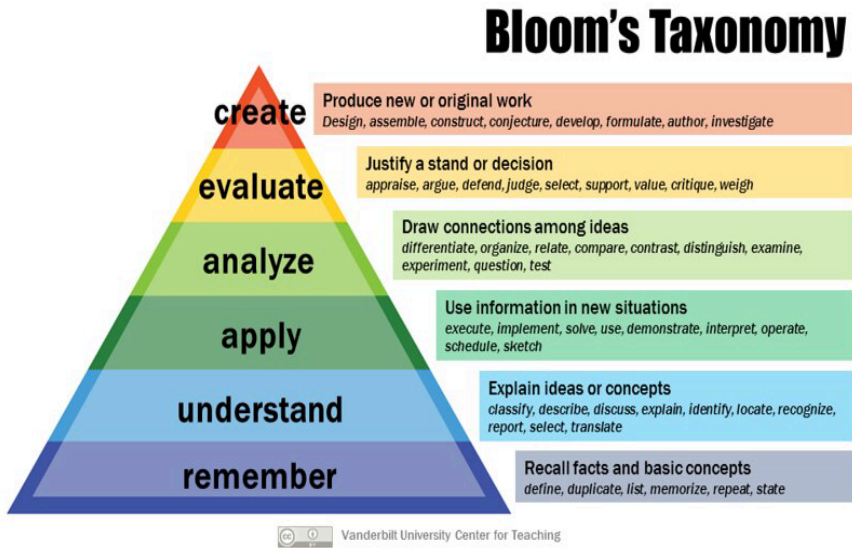
(Armstrong, 2010)

This graphic, released under a Creative Commons attribution license, shows an overview of the hierarchical thinking processes on the revised version of Bloom's taxonomy. Retrieved from cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Flicker. https://www.flickr.com/photos/vandycft/29428436431. Created: 19 November 2020. CC BY 2.0

of understanding and push those students toward higher levels of thinking. When planning learning tasks with the taxonomy in mind, teachers encourage classroom discourse that is rich, meaningful, and interesting to students. All students have a legitimate role in the learning process; problem-solving activities arise as do debates that include analysis and evaluation of evidence (Vickram, 2023).

Norman Webb's DOK Framework (Guido, 2002) focuses on the complexity of understanding needed to answer questions and engage in learning tasks, not merely the difficulty factor. A level one knowledge question might ask for a definition of a complicated term or the names of all the presidents of the United States (difficult but not complex). A level two question might ask a student to compare and contrast two items or ideas. A level three question/task might ask for more inference or analysis, and a level four question/problem would target multifaceted, authentic problems with variable outcomes. Both frameworks guide teachers to focus on asking a range of questions at different levels that guide students to not only think but to reason using their knowledge and skills (Guido, 2022).

Another important aspect of questioning is how teachers ask questions. Often, they call a student's name and then ask a question. This process signals to the other students that they do not need to formulate a response. Consider the

results when teachers ask a question to the whole class, allow a few seconds (10 to 20) for everyone to process the question and formulate an answer, provide an opportunity for them to turn and talk with a classmate to share their ideas or steal a response if needed, then call on a few respondents. Everyone has had the opportunity to participate in the thinking and learning. Although the change may not appear significantly different, it energizes a classroom and heightens the level of student engagement. Student responses are generally more complete and contain higher-level language.

In a world language classroom, as is the case in all other disciplines, it is easy to teach, question, and assess without pushing students to higher-level thinking. The following teaching techniques–which are examples of interactive, learner-centered approaches–can further increase critical thinking when the teacher's prompts and questions require interpretation, analysis, evaluation, problem-solving, and creativity, and involve all students in using language during the time they spend in classrooms. Most of these strategies are not original, but learned from colleagues in all disciplines, at workshops and conferences, and during collegial discussions. Although they have prescribed protocols for implementation, the classroom teachers adapt and revise the techniques to meet learning objectives and students' needs.

It is important to note that before using these protocols, students need to be prepared, both for what the teacher expects as outcomes and the vocabulary chunks and structures that will allow them to stay in the target language when working with classmates. It is important that teachers directly present and practice language chunks students will need to converse in the target language, post those expressions on a large chart in the classroom, on a word wall, or allow students to make individual chat mats with commonly used expressions.

- *Follow Up Questions:* Teachers ask a variety of questions after students respond to questions in order to elicit more information, to spark authentic dialogue, and deepen students' thinking. For example:
- Why? Can you say more? How do you know that? Do you have evidence to support your response? Class, do you have any questions for your classmate (who gave the response)? Do you disagree with his response? Please give your reasons. Do you have a different idea? Please elaborate.
- *Pose-Pause-Pounce-Bounce:* This questioning strategy elicits input from the entire class by altering the typical questioning models of Ask-Response-Evaluate or Ask-Response-Evaluate-Teacher Answers the Question. In these cases, conversation is stifled and deep thinking discouraged. However, if the teacher poses a well-formulated question, waits for at least 10-20 seconds for all students to formulate a response, and then calls on a student to answer the question, more students become cognitively engaged and responses are improved. Often, this strategy results in whole-class dialogue in which teacher-to-student and student-to-student dialogue ensues. Conversations occur naturally.
- *Think-Pair-Share:* This is a simple, no-prep strategy that can be used

repeatedly during a lesson to encourage student-to-student exchanges in the target language. When the class is unable to answer a question or proceed with an exercise, teachers give a visual or verbal cue for students to turn and talk. Once teachers hear a few appropriate responses, they reconvene the class, ask for a response, and continue with instruction.

- *Numbered Heads Together:* This protocol works well for review, formative assessment, and small-group student discussions. Students form groups (preferably four students per group) and they count off; the teacher poses a question or states a problem. Students confer in their groups to agree on a response(s); the teacher calls a number and the designated student in each group becomes the respondent; once the initial response is given, the teacher asks the other students with the same number if they agree with the response or asks them to elaborate. This technique, similar to turn-and-talk and think-pair-share, adds short, focused student-to-student exchanges of information and ideas.

- *Speed Dating:* This protocol is used for short classroom dialogues among students. The teacher arranges the classroom to facilitate pair conversations. Desks are facing each other or a long table is set up with spaces for students to sit opposite one another when talking. The teacher asks a question, poses a problem, or sets up a role play situation. On the teacher's signal, students converse about the topic with the classmate seated opposite; they have mini "speed" discussions (3 to 5 minutes). When cued by the teacher. students rotate to a different peer and discuss the same or a different topic on their discussion "dates." The teacher's questions must signal higher-level thinking. This is student-centered, kinesthetic, interactive, and attention-span friendly.

- *Chat Stations:* This technique generates high level discussions among students as they answer the teacher's questions, solve problems, or discuss similarities or differences between cultures. The teacher attaches butcher paper or large stickies around the room, each with a discussion question, prompt, or problem. Working in pairs or small groups of no more than four, students move from chat station to chat station on a cue from the teacher. Their discussions must be in the target language. They record their responses on a handout or on the poster paper. Once each pair or group has addressed all prompts, the teacher reconvenes the class to debrief the task using students' responses.

- *Keep the Conversation Going:* The goal is to use as much classroom time as possible for student-to-student dialogue and to teach typical conversational expressions that mimic authentic dialogue. It provides short, focused opportunities for students to discuss open-ended questions with a classmate with the goal of maintaining the conversation as long as possible. Teachers pose a question based on a curriculum topic, a cultural phenomenon, or a current event in the target culture. Pairs of students try to sustain a conversation as long as they can about

one question dealing with the stated topic (essential and/or guiding questions work well). Teachers say, write, or project a question; students find a conversation partner and begin to talk. This can be used at the start of a lesson to resurface current knowledge, as a transition from one lesson segment to another, or as closure. Teachers time the conversation and ask the pair that spoke the longest to model their dialog in front of the class. Prior to implementing this activity, teachers introduce and practice conversation starters, expressions that maintain/extend a conversation, and language that brings a conversation to an end (Table 3). These phrases can be explicitly taught and posted on a word wall for students to use as they interact with one another or each student might create an individual "chat mat" with these and other useful expressions. It is best to teach one or two expressions at a time and ask students to use them during the conversations when appropriate.

Table 3

Vocabulary to Maintain and Extend Conversations

Conversation Starters	Maintaining a Conversation	Interjections	Ways to End a Conversation
Hello. My name is... Hey, nice to see you. How's it going? Excuse me. Can we talk? I have a question. I'm in a hurry. Only have a few minutes to talk. Do you have a minute?	Er…I didn't understand that. Can you please repeat that? Would you speak more slowly? Do you mean…? I think that…. I believe… In my opinion… For me… Can you tell me more about…? I have a question. I agree/disagree because…	Awesome! Right. Uh huh. That's awful. I'm sorry. Good for you.	Sorry. I have a date/class/an appointment. Can we talk more about this later? I have to go now. See you soon. Take care. It was good to see you. Say hello to your family for me. Call me Text me.

- *Socratic Circle:* This activity is often used by social studies or English teachers. Students sit in two concentric circles, an inner and outer circle. Teachers begin a discussion by posing one of the unit essential questions, by making a controversial statement, or by asking students to take a stand on an issue studied in class. The students in the inner circle begin to talk to one another giving their opinions and supporting ideas with information previously learned during the unit or read in authentic documents. Students in the outer circle listen, take notes, and write questions they have about the discussion topic. There is no leader. Rather, it is the responsibility of all the inner circle students to participate in beginning the discussion, keeping the discussion going,

and ending when the question has been sufficiently explored. Teachers only interrupt when the discussion stalls. At that point, teachers either end the talk or ask a follow-up question to promote additional comments from the students. Next, students in the inner circle turn to the student(s) seated behind them and answer any questions that their classmates might have. The students then change places (the inner circle becomes the outer circle and the outer circle students move to the inner circle) and a new conversation starter is announced.

- *Agreement Circles:* Students stand in a large circle in the center of the classroom. Teachers pose a thought-provoking question, provide thinking time (five to ten seconds), and then ask students to show their agreement or disagreement by forming smaller agreement or disagreement circles. In those circles, students share their ideas. Next, students reorganize into mixed circles of those who agree and disagree to defend their positions. The conversations continue. At any time, a student might decide to change his opinion and argue for the other side of the issue.

- *The Frayer Model or Square:* This is a graphic organizer (see Figure 2) that helps students determine or clarify the meaning of words, expressions, and/or cultural practices. It can be used prior to reading an authentic text in order to activate background knowledge, preview vocabulary, or after reading to assess comprehension or guide interpretation. It is also useful to clarify and expand students' vocabulary (Plankers, n.d.).

Figure 2
The Frayer Model
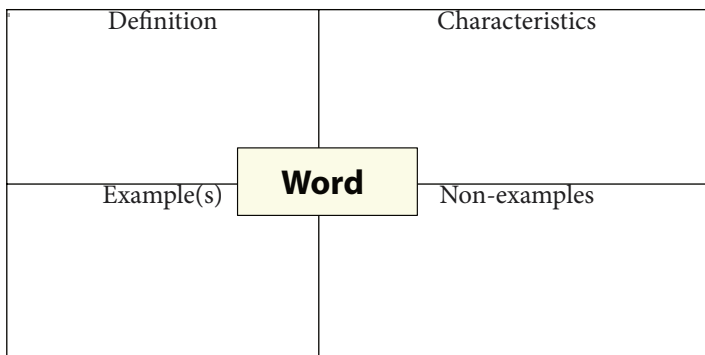
The boxes can be altered to suit the task. For example, the expression in the middle might be "Spanish Meals" and the boxes labeled Similarities to American meals, Differences Between Cultures, Which I Prefer, Why I prefer Spanish/American meals. Teachers can use students' work to generate conversation by asking low- and high-level questions.

There are innumerable strategies that begin with questions and that foster engagement, discussion, and higher-order thinking. However, it is teachers' well-formulated questions that encourage students to share ideas with a partner; it is the manner in which teachers select a student to respond, when and how they ask follow-up questions, how they encourage students to comment on their classmate's answers or elaborate further on a topic that make these strategies successful. When observing these strategies in action, it is apparent that students feel empowered to talk about important ideas and issues, the atmosphere in the classroom is energized, and the learning is meaningful and important.

To summarize the impact of questioning on critical thinking and language development, it is important to remember that excellence in thought has to be cultivated and teachers can and should purposefully plan questions and learning tasks that are interesting to learners, ensure that all students have time to process language and formulate a response, and extend authentic conversations by probing students' answers. They should prepare follow-up questions, include students in commenting and questioning fellow classmates, make the classroom a place for authentic exchanges of information and ideas, and ask the challenging questions.

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Integrating Decolonization and Anti-racism into the World Language Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores ways to integrate social justice issues pertaining to decolonization and anti-racism into the world language classroom at all levels of instruction. It describes tasks designed to introduce language learners briefly to German colonialism, raise awareness of colonial legacies in contemporary German-speaking societies, and familiarize students with current decolonization initiatives. By engaging students with the complex diversity of German-speaking societies, the tasks provide examples for diversifying and decolonizing the language curriculum while fostering collaboration, critical thinking, and transcultural sensitivity. The examples highlight approaches to anti-racist pedagogies and ways of incorporating social justice practices across all levels of instruction and applicable to all languages.

Keywords: social justice, curriculum design, anti-racism, critical thinking

Introduction

As a recent survey of fourteen to twenty-four-year-old Americans indicates, more than eight out of ten are most deeply concerned about pervasive racism and social injustice, the environment and climate change (Gilbert, 2021). German surveys of fourteen to twenty-nine-year-olds indicate that such concerns are not unique to the U.S., but young Germans feel equally strongly (Schindler, 2022), prompting many to speak out for change as they strive for a more socially just and

sustainable world (M'Barek, 2020). These statistics should compel instructors to adapt their teaching approaches and instructional materials to foster inclusive and socially aware classroom environments that provide students with tools to identify and address social justice issues both inside and outside the classroom.

In an educational landscape where equity, inclusion, and justice take center stage, world language classes can serve as pivotal environments for the on-going process of diversification and decolonization of curricula. Teaching practices that engage with social complexities help students recognize biases, call attention to and, ultimately, destabilize hegemonies. This requires critical reflection on questions of knowledge production, intellectual traditions, and power structures, as well as the integration of diverse voices, identities, and perspectives–in particular those often marginalized–into existing curricula.

In her interactive guide *Exit Racism*, anti-racism trainer Ogette (2020) emphasizes that "[c]ritical engagement with racism thrives on a change of perspectives. The more perspectives we come to understand, the better. Racism sustains itself by repeatedly reproducing and perpetuating its dominant viewpoint" (p. 97, our translation). Accordingly, pedagogies which allow for analysis of historical inequities help students and instructors recognize structural and institutional forms of privilege, address biases, and challenge dominant narratives. While aiming to foster skills for critical analysis, anti-racist teaching encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning, "attempts to create a sense of community in the classroom through decentering authority," and supports close collaboration (Kishimoto, 2018, p. 549). In her own reading of anti-racist pedagogy, Kishimoto finds that equitable and collaborative class environments are more likely to empower students to discuss problems of racism as well as collect ideas for the world they want to live in (p. 549). Furthermore, offering opportunities to identify and challenge power dynamics helps learners develop greater self-awareness and intercultural competencies, and refine their ability "to think and act critically, and to negotiate the complexities of today's world" (Byram & Wagner, 2018, 141).

Piccardo and North (2019) find that collaborative tasks designed to help students engage with diverse communities further their awareness of multiple perspectives; this action-oriented approach also allows them to explore pathways towards possible social action both inside and outside of the classroom. Following both action-oriented (Piccardo & North, 2019) and anti-racist approaches (Kishimoto, 2018) to language pedagogy, this paper explores ways to integrate discussions about decolonization and anti-racism into the curriculum at all levels of language instruction. As students encounter diverse perspectives, they also gain a more nuanced understanding of contemporary discourses and current decolonization efforts. While situating social justice issue-based tasks within political and historical contexts, students draw connections to their own experiences and current activism and initiatives in their own and target language communities more easily.

The tasks are designed to foster an understanding of how colonial pasts inform current institutional and social practices—in this case, in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland—while also illustrating how to integrate diverse experiences,

voices, and perspectives into an existing curriculum. Activities promote reflection, critical thinking, and interaction, and aim to foster intellectual curiosity, intercultural comparisons, and transcultural sensitivity. The assignments' collaborative and action-oriented nature strengthens students' sense of a learning community in the classroom, while equipping them with linguistic and communicative skills needed to reflect on and respond to a variety of media and develop skills that are adaptable and transferable to other contexts and settings.

Classroom activities at varying proficiency levels

The following steps provide models for integrating decolonization and anti-racism discussions into the language curriculum: first, students gain knowledge of German colonialism through a brief historic overview; secondly, students analyze how specific colonialist concepts still prevail in German-speaking cultures; thirdly, learners engage with authentic, open-access materials about current decolonization efforts, such as maps, photographs, articles, advertisements, and social media posts; and, finally, students engage in collaborative hands-on classroom activities putting what they have learned into practice.

The following examples are structured into two sections: The first showcases how to introduce context and background to help students gain basic insights into colonial histories and prevalent current practices. Here, learners critically engage with issues of terminology and language and analyze authentic materials. The second presents examples on how to integrate discussions of current activist practices, for which students engage with the (re)naming of streets and hashtag activism. All tasks can be adapted to any language level.

Introduction to colonial history, decolonization, and diversity: Raising awareness

As an introduction to the topic of German colonial history, decolonization, and diversity, students watch a video entitled *What does it mean to be Black in Germany?* (Laskowski, 2021). It offers information on specific terminology—such as the differences between the terms "Black German" and "Afro-German"—and highlights the work of several prominent writers, activists, and academics of color. While most of the speakers in the video use English, English subtitles are provided for German sections. Although scaffolding and visuals support the use of German, in beginning classes, students initially have the choice of using either the target or their shared language in discussions until they feel comfortable to proceed in German. Regardless, they are encouraged to familiarize themselves with and use new vocabulary (e.g. *Schriftsteller**in [author], *Aktivist**in [activist], and *Philosoph**in [philosopher]). Students watch the video multiple times: The first time, they watch the entire video for global understanding. In small groups, they discuss what they understood, saw, heard, or what they find particularly interesting. Students then watch shorter segments of the video, which center on specific members of the Black German community. A handout with the names and screenshots of individuals featured in the video helps guide students and their partners when taking notes, comparing, and adding to their mind-maps. While watching the segments more than once, students add specific information about each person. The screen-

shots prepare students to recognize individuals as they appear in the video. The mind-map format creates flexibility on what kind and how much information students write down. It also allows them to build on their initial notes, by adding information not only when watching the segments more than once but also when discussing what they understood with their partners.

At higher proficiency levels, the video serves as a springboard into a brief overview of German colonial history with a short timeline and through authentic materials such as maps, art, postcards, event posters, and poetry. These materials enable students to analyze how colonial expansion was promoted, justified, and legitimized. In-depth discussions of images that engage with specific events and histories enable shifts in perspective and allow learners to identify and question hegemonies inscribed in dominant historical narratives. As they view specific images, students consider why they were produced, by and for whom, and how they could have been published. For example, analyzing a painting of two European explorers with indigenous people in Ecuador (Weitsch, 1806), a photograph of a German colonizer carried by four African men (Anonymous, ca. 1885), or popular early 20th century advertisements for tea, coffee, and cocoa (examples in: Zeller, 2008) helps students gain a more nuanced understanding of how different perspectives shape discourses of colonial pasts to this present day.

In one example, students analyze the impact of the *Kongokonferenz* [Berlin Conference], in which global colonial powers gathered in Berlin at the end of the 19th century to divide up the African continent without input from Africans. Students interpret a poem and two images to gauge the long-lasting effects of the conference's outcomes. First, they discuss a German translation of Michel Kayoya's (1968) dialectical poem "*Das Selbstbewusstsein des Kolonisierten*" [The self-confidence of the colonized, original French: *La confiance en soi des colonisés*]. In this poem, the author juxtaposes Western or colonialist to African or colonized perspectives which students list, categorize, contrast, and analyze. Students then consider an image published in a Berlin newspaper in 1884. This etching, which is one of many illustrations of the so-called "scramble for Africa" (Rößler, 1884), depicts German chancellor Bismarck and other European dignitaries seated in front of a huge, blank map of Africa showing only the continent's largest rivers and lakes. Students compare it to an art installation with the same title by British-Nigerian artist Yinko Shonibare (2003), depicting headless mannequins dressed in colorfully patterned African fabric sitting around a table (Appendix A). Together with the juxtaposition of a map, which divides the continent into territories controlled by European countries and conveys a seemingly peaceful colonized Africa, to one that chronicles pervasive resistance across the continent (Appendix B). This helps students question the perceived neutrality of maps. Since cartographers choose what information to highlight, center, or omit, maps influence how regions, countries, even the world are viewed, and how maps can constrain critical thinking. Analyzing the maps helps students contextualize the materials they have already discussed and develop a deeper understanding of the challenges both the local African populations and European colonizers might have had. It also clarifies why creating buy-in from the respective European countries was essential for the suc-

cess of their colonial projects. Taken together, these materials enable students to prepare short presentations with diverse historical and contemporary perspectives on colonialism.

In an Intermediate-level class, the preceding activities prepare students to analyze the ways in which colonial expansion was promoted, justified, and legitimized. Here, they consider the role institutions such as zoos, museums, and universities played in the global colonization process. Most Western institutions founded in the 18th and 19th centuries first studied, then defined, and classified nature, history, and world cultures, often through publicly exhibited artifacts obtained by explorers and scientists. Using zoos as an example, students are asked to find out who Carl Hagenbeck was. The information they have found, together with newspaper notices and posters the instructor provides, allow students to discuss that Hagenbeck created the notion of the zoo as an animal park that also exhibited non-Europeans next to animals from their home regions and that he marketed his exhibits as *Völkerschauen* [ethnological exhibitions] and pseudo-scientific *Kulturbegegnungen* [cultural encounters]. The popularity of these exhibits ensured that this practice was quickly emulated all over Europe and the United States. It is essential that students compare Hagenbeck's exhibits to others like Buffalo Bill Cody's internationally popular *Wild West Show*, so they come to understand the pervasive ties of white supremacy to the global colonial project, which included westward expansion on the U.S. mainland to Hawaii, Alaska, other Pacific islands, and the Philippines. It is equally important that students come to realize that these practices are not ancient history, and that generational trauma persists today, as exemplified by an interview with V*ölkerschau*-survivor, Theodor Wonja Michael (1925-2019), born in Germany to a Cameroonian father and a German mother (Zeitler, 2017). These discussions also allow them to make meaningful comparisons to current U.S. and Canadian debates about indigenous rights and reparations for slavery.

In Advanced courses, where students analyze trademarks, advertising campaigns, and develop their own product marketing ideas, they first notice and then describe explicit or implicit Eurocentric biases. After identifying aspects of an advertising campaign they understand as problematic, they propose a more equitable redevelopment. This provides another effective way to integrate anti-racism into the curriculum. In recent years, Austrian, German, and Swiss corporations like *Julius Meinl, Bahlsen, Sarotti*, and *Lindt* have undergone decolonization processes for their logos and products, which are good examples for students to analyze. Studying those corporate decolonization campaigns provides learners with the concepts and vocabulary needed to look at companies, which do not appear to be aware of their current, problematic marketing practices. The latter provide rich opportunities for students to develop proposals for alternative marketing solutions.

While the rebranding of chocolate and coffee products mentioned above and the recent controversies surrounding the renaming of the popular *M-----kopf* [m---'s head] pastry to *Schoko-Schaumkuß* [chocolate foam kiss] demonstrate that the broader public now tends to be more aware of racism pertaining to African and

Middle Eastern stereotypes, others seem to persist. One example comes from the Eat Happy corporation, which introduced "sushi to go" to German supermarkets. In an article detailing the company's plans for expansion, the CEO is unironically quoted as explaining that his 4,000 workers are mainly of Asian descent because they have "a high affinity to rice and fish" ([*eine hohe Affinität zu Reis und Fisch*], Terpitz, 2021, n.p.). While the advertising materials frequently refer to Japanese fish markets, employee images depict mostly smiling South Asian individuals. After studying the advertising material, students develop proposals for decolonizing the campaign and company information.

Making the invisible visible: Restoring voices at all levels of instruction

In order to diversify classroom content and ensure students learn about significant roles individuals of color have played in German-speaking histories, instructors could broaden common biographical research assignments for written or oral presentations on well-known individuals (including, for example, for Austria: Angelo Soliman; for Germany: Anton Wilhelm Amo; for Switzerland: Alois Wyrsch). To allow for cultural comparisons, instructors could also include examples from the U.S. (e.g. Pocahontas, Caleb Cheeshahteaumuck, Minik Wallace) or the students' own countries. While learners are generally equipped with vocabulary to present biographical information from the first semester on, the inclusion of people of color helps students develop a deeper understanding of the diversity of German-speaking societies (for a wide range of projects, see: Rothe, Tsui, García, & McCloskey, 2023).

At the Intermediate level, that same list of people forms the basis for more substantial projects: After students pick someone, they first write a short biography, then they research existing memorials (a portrait, a plaque, a statue, etc.) about the individual. Based on their findings, students create a proposal for a type of memorial, which they believe would better honor their respective subject, which they present to the entire class. Students' ideas have ranged from exhibitions in a historical museum, and memorial markers on a decolonization walk through the individual's hometown, to statues in historically meaningful locations.

In an Advanced-level culture course, students analyze museums' websites and rewrite problematic descriptions, adjust pertinent information the website glosses over, or add missing information. One such example is information about globetrotting prince, master gardener, and chef Fürst Pückler-Muskau, whose castle park is a German-Polish UNESCO World Heritage site. The park's website refers to the married aristocrat as an eccentric *Frauenverehrer* [worshiper of women] (Muskauer Park, n.d.), while the palace's website states "*Aus Kairo bringt er Machbuba, ein junges Mädchen vom Sklavenmarkt, mit nach Muskau*" [From Cairo, he brings Machbuba, a young girl from the slave market to Muskau.] (Stiftung Fürst-Pückler-Museum, n.d., n.p.). European travelers the prince encountered abroad mention two young Abyssinian slave girls in his entourage (Volker-Saad, 2017), but only one came with him to Germany, died shortly after arriving, and is buried in a nearby graveyard–not under her given name Bilillee, but as *Machbuba* (Arabic for "Beloved"). Castle tours and promotional materials suggest a strong personal

connection and emphasize her gratitude towards him. Since these references to their relationship ignore the power dynamic, the 40-year age difference, and the denial of her status, this provides rich material for students to decolonize.

Anti-racist activism

Three websites provide an informative introduction to contemporary anti-racist initiatives in German-speaking societies: *Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD)* [Initiative of Black people in Germany] (n.d.), *Each One Teach One*, and *Citizens for Europe* (n.d.). Students read, discuss, and share information they have found on each of the websites, answering the questions *Wo? Seit wann? Wer? Ziele?* [Where? Since when? Who? Goals?] in a jigsaw activity. The discussion and comparison of different initiatives helps raise awareness of the diversity and multitude of anti-racist approaches. Statistics from the *Afrozensus* (2020), a comprehensive online survey containing data on lived experiences of racism and discrimination of Germans of color, provide additional context. This brief overview and contextualization of examples of anti-racist initiatives prepares students from the beginning level on to engage with two timely debates: one about the renaming of streets, the second about hashtag-activism.

Renaming of streets

To engage students with contemporary debates around the renaming of street names in Germany, students first consider the 2010 re-naming of the *Gröbenufer*, named after Friedrich von der Gröben (1657-1728), a 17th century aristocratic privateer who established the fort *Großfriedrichsburg* in present-day Ghana in 1683. The street is now named *May-Ayim-Ufer* after the Afro-German poet and activist. Secondly, students learn about debates surrounding the renaming of the *M-----straße*, both a street and subway station in Berlin. As authentic material, students analyze the information board at the *May-Ayim-Ufer* and photographs of activists altering the street name of the *M-----straße*. They also view a video on the renaming of Berlin's streets (Bilandzija, 2018). The video provides different perspectives on multiple efforts to rename streets in Germany that bear racist terms or the names of colonial-era individuals linked to oppressive and exploitative regimes.

Both discussions on the renaming initiatives begin with a broader reflection on the function and significance of street names and signs. With reference to the *May-Ayim-Ufer*, students discuss why certain streets and places are renamed, and collect arguments for and against the renaming of streets. To discuss the on-going debate around the *M-----straße*, students watch the video *Straßennamen: Rassismus auf Straßenschildern* [Street names: Racism on street signs] (Bilandzija, 2018), offering two perspectives for students to consider: that of an activist, who underscores the importance of renaming specific streets, and the perspective of a historian, who expresses reservations about the renaming of streets. Both perspectives provide rich examples for arguments against and in favor of change.

Subsequent discussions of the video, social media posts, newspaper headlines, and articles provide additional information about the outcomes of these activist initiatives and protests, which also allows students to make cross-cultural comparisons with examples from their own socio-cultural contexts.

Hashtag activism

Hashtag activism has been effective in addressing social injustices and forms of racism across cultures and can provide rich material for the language classroom. One such example for German is the hashtag *#vonhier* [#fromhere], which refers to experiences of everyday racism [*Alltagsrassismus*] in Germany connected to the question of "Where are you from?" For this unit, students engage with a video entitled *Wenn die Frage 'Woher kommst du?' zur Belastung wird* [When the question 'Where are you from?' becomes a burden] (Franzke, Vu, & Kasper, 2022), as well as an article about this specific hashtag (Hille, 2019) to gain awareness of current debates. The video features six individuals who share their experiences and perspectives on when the question 'Where are you from?' becomes an issue. The engagement with *#vonhier* is framed in relation to broader questions on the significance of social media and their relationship with activism.

In preparation for in-class engagement with *#vonhier*, homework assignments encourage students to reflect on the significance of social media and its relationship with activism. They are first asked to rate the importance of social media for specific aspects of their everyday lives, such as being part of a community, sharing information and experiences, or communication (Appendix C). This aims at equipping students with vocabulary and phrases needed for in-class discussions on the topic. Subsequent homework assignments center on activating students' prior experiences with and knowledge of #-activism. Here, students are asked to write down associations with and examples of #-activism in German and then share and discuss their ideas with their classmates.

At the beginning of the class, students discuss their ratings from assignment one with a partner and negotiate aspects from the list of aspects that they both find most important. Students then reflect on the significance of hashtags more generally and share their associations with #-activism more specifically as they compare homework assignments two and three, first in groups of three and then as a class.

The video allows students to analyze the question of when the question '*Woher kommst du?*' becomes a burden from multiple perspectives. It showcases six different professionals (bloggers, actors, writers, artists, and television hosts) who speak about their experiences with the question. After first being introduced to the video's context and useful vocabulary, students watch the first minute, where the individuals describe how they are repeatedly asked where they are from in a variety of everyday situations. In the second part, the individuals speak about issues, clichés, and stereotypes, while emphasizing how important it is to debate them.

After viewing the first two sections of the video, students engage with the specific hashtag *#vonhier*, which has brought to light multiple layers to a seemingly innocent question, subsuming current debates around notions of *Herkunft* [descent, background, origin] and *Heimat* [homeland]. The hashtag, popularized in response to a 2019 Twitter post by Black German journalist Malcolm Uzoma Ohanwe, was used to comment on nation-wide, diverse responses to this question. Students' discussions of the hashtag are guided through a multi-step process: Step 1 – In plenary discussion, students are introduced to the context of the article *Woher kommst Du? #vonhier* [Where are you from? #fromhere] (Hille, 2019)

through the title and brief description of the article's content. Here, important vocabulary is also introduced and clarified. Step 2 – The instructor divides the article's text into two parts and provides the necessary vocabulary. Students respectively read Part A or Part B of the adapted and shortened article. Step 3 – Students pair up with another student who read the same part, discuss and write down important information from their part of the text. The focus is on the two central, intentionally open-ended questions regarding information the article provided on *#vonhier: Wer?* (*Personen*) *Was*? (*Informationen*) [Who? and What?]. Step 4 – Students then pair with a person who read the other part of the text and exchange information. Finally, students discuss and express their opinions about the hashtag in the plenary, based on the information gathered collaboratively from both parts.

To conclude the discussion around *#vonhier*, students return to the final part of the video, entitled "*Bessere Fragen*" [better questions]. Here, the six individuals offer suggestions and thoughts on what better questions one could pose to learn about a person's background in more productive, respectful, and culturally sensitive ways.

Conclusion

While integrating discussions on decolonization and anti-racism into the curriculum may seem like a challenging task, the authors hope the examples offer strategies and ideas on how to engage with social justice issues in the classroom in multiple languages and at various proficiency levels. Instructors need to acknowledge their students' complex backgrounds and also consider how their own positionality may shape their understanding of the course material at hand. Critical engagement with sensitive topics and diverse viewpoints requires both instructors and students to be mindfully empathetic and patient, as well as to work continuously on remaining open and self-reflective. Students tend to be hesitant to address potentially difficult issues within larger group settings or teacher-centered classes. Small group discussions, which decenter the teacher in the classroom, allow students to take responsibility for their own learning and helps foster a strong sense of community.

Designed to raise student" awareness both of the target language cultures and their own, the activities presented were successfully implemented in two different collegiate educational settings at various proficiency levels. Feedback from both language programs indicated that the classroom activities allowed students to make insightful connections between the class materials and current issues, controversies, and debates in German-speaking societies. Simultaneously, the assignments also encouraged students to make intercultural comparisons and transfer insights gained to other social justice contexts well beyond what was discussed in class. They were often motivated not only to raise questions about inequities in their own environments but also take action, for example by writing emails to the museum at *Muskauer Park* or commenting on the *Eat Happy* social media posts to propose more just solutions. While instructors will adapt material and tasks to best fit their own institutional contexts and student populations, the authors hope they have provided replicable examples.

Acknowledgements

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Appendices

Appendix A

Sie sehen zwei Bilder. Vergleichen Sie das erste Bild von der Kongokonferenz aus der Allgemeinen Illustrierten Zeitung von 1884 mit dem zweiten Bild von Yinko Shonibares Installation Scramble for Africa*. Was will Shonibare im Jahr 2013 damit sagen?*

[Compare the first image of the Berlin Conference from the Allemeinen Illustrierten newspaper of 1884 with the second image of Yinko Shonbare's installation *Scramble for Africa*. What does Shonibare want to say with this in 2003?]

Erstes Bild links Kongo [First image can be found at: **https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kongokonferenz#/media/Datei:Kongokonferenz.jpg)**]*; zweites Bild rechts* [second image can be found at: **https://africa.si.edu/exhibits/shonibare/scramble.html**].

Appendix B

Vergleichen Sie die zwei Landkarten: Die erste ist eine Karte von Afrika vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg, wie man sie in den meisten westlichen Lehrbüchern finden kann . Die zweite ist eine Karte, die die afrikanischen Perspektiven zu der gleichen Zeitperiode zeigt. Welche unterschiedlichen Geschichten erzählen sie?

Compare the two maps: The first is a map of Africa before World War I, which you can find in most Western textbooks. The second, a map showing African perspectives on the same time period. Which different stories do they tell?]

First image can be found at: *Kolonien in Afrika* 1914: **https://de.wikipedia.org/ wiki/Wettlauf_um_Afrika#/media/Datei:Afrika_Karte_1914.svg**

Second image can be found at: African resistance to European colonialism: **https:/ /vividmaps.com/colonization-of-africa/#Historical_map_of_African_resistance_ to_European_colonialism**

Appendix C

Reflexionen zu sozialen Medien & Aktivismus [Reflections on social media and activism]
[As homework, students fill out the table under assignment number one, and prepare number two and three.]

1.

    a.   *Sprechen Sie in einer Gruppe (3 Student*innen) über soziale Medien und über die Bedeutung der Aspekte in der Tabelle. Sie können auf Deutsch oder Englisch sprechen.* [In groups of three students, speak about social media and the importance of the aspects provided in the table. You can speak in German or English]

    b.   *Welche Aspekte sind am Wichtigsten für Sie? Wählen Sie gemeinsam zwei Aspekte.* [Which aspects do you find most important? Choose two aspects together.]

Redemittel [useful phrases]: *Wie wichtig sind soziale Medien für ... / für dich?* [How important are social media for ... / for you?] *Was für soziale Medien benutzt du dafür?* [What kinds of social media do you use for that?] *Am Wichtigsten sind für uns ... und ... , weil ...* [The most important for us are ... and ..., because ...].

Wie wichtig sind soziale Medien für ... [How important are social media for ...]	sehr wichtig [very important]	zum Teil wichtig [partially important]	gar nicht wichtig [not important]	Ein Beispiel: z.B. Facebook, etc. [An example: e.g. Facebook, etc.]
Kommunikation (communication)				
Neue Freund*innen finden (find new friends)				
Teil einer Gemeinschaft sein (be part of a community)				
Erfahrungen teilen (share experiences)				
Bilder posten (post pictures)				
Dating				
Nachrichten (news)				
Memes und Unterhaltung (memes and entertainment)				
Politik (politics)				
Aktivismus (activism)				
Kommerz und Werbung (sales and advertising)				
(Platz für einen weiteren Aspekt [space for a further aspect])				

2. *Was assoziieren Sie mit #-Aktivismus? Schreiben Sie zwei Aspekte auf Deutsch.* [What do you associate with #-activism? Note down two aspects in German.]

-

-

3. *Welchen #-Aktivismus kennen Sie? Schreiben Sie ein Beispiel und **wofür*** [for what] und ***wogegen*** [against what] *es ist.* [What #-activisms do you know? Write down one example as well as for and against what this hashtag argues.]

- *Beispiel* [Example]:

- ***Für/* Pro [For]:**   **Gegen/*Contra* [Against]:**

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Sing My Story: Lyrics and Music as Storytelling for Language Learners

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ABSTRACT

This article explores how music and lyrics serve as modes of storytelling in the language classroom, integrating a multimodal approach and the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. In the 'Sing My Story' project, language students creatively write their own lyrics, which are subsequently performed by either student musicians or target language-speaking musicians within the school community. This initiative encourages students at the Intermediate or Advanced proficiency levels to collaboratively produce a music album, creating narrative lyrics for existing songs. Through this project, students are provided with opportunities for meaningful language application, fostering creative and transformative language learning experiences.

Keywords: *classroom instruction*

Introduction

Storytelling has been an integral part of human culture since time immemorial. It enables us to express emotions, share experiences, and connect with each other. In contemporary society, music remains a powerful tool for storytelling. It is capable of evoking strong emotions and conveying complex narratives. This article explores the utilization of song lyrics as a means of storytelling in language learning classrooms (Carlson, 2010; Ludke, Ferreira, & Overy 2014; Piri, 2018, Rukholm, 2015), using a multimodality approach and learning goals based on the

World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (The National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015). Learners can experience transformative learn-ing through "Sing My Story," a project in which language learners write their own lyrics for existing songs, and then student musicians sing those lyrics. This project focuses on using music and song lyrics as a mode of storytelling and provides op-portunities for personal reflection, cultural exploration, critical thinking, creativ-ity, collaboration, and language development.

Multimodality—the multiliteracies approach (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Jewitt, Bezemer, & O'Halloran, 2016)--acknowledges the diverse ways in which individ-uals engage with and make meaning from different modes. It encourages the inte-gration of various modes of communication, including visual, linguistic, aural, gestural, textual, and spatial modes, to enhance language learning. In the context of lyrics as storytelling, this approach invites students to engage with music, lyric writing, and language holistically, promoting multimodal literacy. For example, lyrics, as a textual mode, enable students to transform their experiences and aspi-rations into stories, while music, as the aural mode, adds emotional depth. The combination of these two modes—lyrics and music—creates a powerful story-telling medium that turns language learning into a vibrant, enriching, and holistic experience.

The World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages serve as a blueprint, guiding our language learners to communicate effectively and interact with cul-tural understanding in multilingual settings. Within these standards, the 5C goal areas—Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communi-ties—emphasize the importance of applying language learning in practical con-texts. They help language learners use the skills and understanding set by the Stan-dards, preparing them for real-world applications and experiences (Cho, 2015; The National Standards Collaborative Board, 2015). We can effectively address these goals and foster a comprehensive language learning experience by utilizing lyrics as storytelling.

Through creating lyrics as a means of storytelling, students engage with lan-guage in a practical and culturally resonant manner, effectively closing the divide between classroom language instruction and its real-world application. This ap-proach within the language classroom empowers students to communicate effec-tively, comprehend, and establish connections with various cultures and commu-nities, aligning seamlessly with the overarching objectives of language learning standards.

The Project 'Sing My Story'

Through the 'Sing My Story' project, students at the Intermediate or Ad-vanced proficiency levels produce a music album collaboratively by recreating ex-isting songs with their own lyrics, or writing lyrics and music from scratch. The project highlights music and song lyrics as modes of storytelling.

Our students create lyrics for their favorite music or songs in various genres. They then collaborate with other students; the project can be seen as a multi-way collaboration between a lyricist, a composer, and a singer. Instructors facilitate a

unique collaboration by pairing language students with singers from various backgrounds within the institution. These singers may be graduate students from the music school or undergraduates participating in different a cappella groups. Throughout their collaboration, singers and student lyric writers exclusively communicate in the target language: Korean. While the language students enhance their narrative skills, the singers bring their musical expertise. In their discussions, they address several aspects of song creation in Korean, such as tailoring lyrics to melodies, ensuring rhymes, and deliberating over singing styles and expressions. This collaborative effort amplifies the learning experience, using the target language for creative and purposeful applications. Continuing the collaboration, the music students sing the songs with the lyrics created by language students. Finally, the singers and lyricists produce a digital album and a concert, or a digital podcast.

Objectives

Through this project-based learning unit, students are able to demonstrate ability in the following areas:

- communicating and expressing their thoughts and emotions through rewritten song lyrics in the target language while maintaining the rhyme and rhythm of the original song;
- analyzing and identifying cultural references, customs, and traditions depicted in song lyrics from different cultures;
- making connections between the target language and other subjects by identifying subject-specific vocabulary or concepts in song lyrics;
- comparing and contrasting song lyrics from different cultures, highlighting the cultural perspectives, language use, and musical elements;
- collaborating with peers to create original song lyrics in the target language, demonstrating effective communication and engagement with the target language community.

Procedures

Teachers can use the following step-by-step procedure to implement the use of lyrics as a mode of storytelling in the language learning classroom:

1. *Song Selection*: Choose existing songs with compelling narratives, relevant themes, and appropriate linguistic complexity. Consider songs from different genres, themes, languages (the target language or other languages with translations into the target language, such as Korean-pop, Chinese pop, English pop, etc.) and cultures to expose students to a variety of musical styles and perspectives. Also, allow the students in the class to choose songs they like or from their playlist.
2. *Analysis and Discussion*: Engage students in active listening and critical analysis of the chosen songs. Encourage discussions about the meaning of the lyrics in the target language (e.g., *What do you believe the lyrics of the song convey or express?Are there specific lines or words in the song that seem especially meaningful or symbolic to you?*), the song's cultural context (e.g., *Can you identify any cultural references in the song that someone outside*

Korea might not be aware of? Based on the lyrics, do you see any similarities or differences between your own culture and Korean culture? Are there any shared experiences or contrasting values highlighted in the song?), and its emotional impact (e.g., *How did the song make you feel the first time you heard it? Did your feelings change after understanding the lyrics? Which part of the song resonated most with you, and why do you think it had that effect?*). Students can share their interpretations, personal connections, questions related to the songs, and reviews as critics (e.g., *On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall impact of the song, and why? What aspect of the song stood out most to you, and would that make you recommend it to others? Why or why not?*).

3. *Storytelling Workshop*: Guide students through a series of writing workshops to develop their own storytelling lyrics. During the writing workshop, provide prompts, examples, and guidance on narrative structure, character development, and thematic coherence. Encourage creativity and exploration of different storytelling techniques.

   The writing workshop phase aims to offer students a guided, hands-on experience in lyric writing in the classroom. Students will hone their lyric-writing skills and deepen their understanding of the language through discussions and the lyric-writing process.

   Instructors may spread this over three class meetings:

   - In the first workshop meeting, as an introduction, instructors underscore the value of lyric writing in language comprehension and the emotions and stories songs can evoke. They then provide a few sample song lyrics in the target language. Students collaboratively analyze these lyrics, focusing on expressions, content, style, and how storytelling is woven into the songs. Instructors present several prompts for students to scaffold; these may involve writing about personal experiences, addressing societal issues, or translating literature into lyrics. The prompts might also touch upon colloquialisms, shortened/omitted forms, or English insertions in lyrics, which are common in K-pop lyrics today.

   - The second workshop meeting is dedicated to hands-on writing and collaboration. Students prepare outlines of their lyric writing outside of class, either individually or in groups, and bring a rough draft or summary into the workshop. During this phase, instructors facilitate by answering students' questions and offering language-related advice (e.g., grammar, vocabulary) to assist students in writing and refining their lyrics. Students are encouraged to share their drafts with their peers. This process is both productive and essential, as peers and instructors can provide constructive feedback, suggesting improvements in language use, rhythm, or overall storytelling.

- Finally, students refine their lyrics both linguistically and artistically to craft them as song lyrics. The workshop concludes with students sharing their lyrics and reflections on the lyric-writing experience.

4. *Collaboration*: Facilitate collaboration between student writers and volunteer singers. Language students are primarily responsible for writing the lyrics. These lyrics are then sung by collaborating singers not part of the language class. Typically, the language students select the songs they wish to work with and write lyrics accordingly. This dynamic brings together the language students' exploration of lyric writing as storytelling with the musical talents of the singers. It is a collaborative process where the language students focus on the content—lyrics–and the singers bring those words to life through their performance.

   Encourage students to work together to refine their lyrics, compose melodies, or create harmonies. Emphasize the importance of effective communication and respectful teamwork. Given that the recruited singers are either fluent Korean speakers or advanced-level language students, they are well-equipped to serve as language mentors during collaboration. They can offer helpful corrections and provide valuable language advice to the students.

   To foster successful collaboration between the language student (lyric writers) and singers, it is essential to set clear guidelines. All interactions should preferably be conducted in Korean, ensuring language immersion and clarity. While lyric writers can offer input on singing style, feedback must always be constructive. Mutual respect is crucial; the lyricists bring their carefully written stories, and singers contribute their unique musical interpretations. Both parties are encouraged to have the flexibility to make minor lyric adjustments to better fit the melody or rhythm.

5. *Performance, Production, and Reflection*: Organize a final performance or recording session (video production of each song and make a collection using platforms like Padlet or VoiceThread) through which students can showcase their storytelling lyrics in a final song produced. At the start of the session, each lyric student introduces their song and the context offering a summary of their lyrics. This personal touch allows the audience to understand the inspiration and background of the song before they hear it. Following the introduction, the produced music is showcased in a video format. As the song plays, lyrics are displayed on the screen as subtitle captions, ensuring comprehension and immersion by the audience. This visual element not only aids in understanding but also enhances the overall experience of the showcase. This allows students to experience the joy of performing and sharing their creations with others. Follow up with reflection activities, in which students evaluate their language learning journey, the challenges they faced, and the skills they developed.

It is worth noting that while students are generally encouraged to share and present their work, some may hesitate to showcase their lyrics in front of the class. For those considering implementing this project, it is advisable to offer alternative arrangements for such students. Possible alternatives could include having students submit a written reflection on their songwriting journey, offering a one-on-one presentation opportunity with the instructor, or allowing them to share their work within smaller peer groups for a more intimate setting.

Table 1 is a summary of the 'Sing My Song' learning tasks, organized in the 5 C's goal areas. The learning tasks, as shown in Table 1, foster meaningful and creative language applications, cultural understanding, critical thinking, and collaboration skills, while also providing opportunities for self-expression and creativity within the context of the 'Sing My Song' project. This project lets students choose songs to write lyrics to enhance accessibility and promote diversity in their language learning experiences. However, note that teachers who implement this project may simplify it by choosing a single song from their target language as the springboard for new lyrics, making it an alternative and flexible option.

Table 1

Sing My Song Learning Tasks

The 5C Goal Areas	Task	Description
Communication	Create a songwriting collaboration	Divide the students into pairs or small groups, ensuring that each group includes at least one language student who writes the lyrics and one music student, often a singer fluent in the target language from outside the language class (unless there is a singer student within the language class). These pairs (a lyric writer and a singer) collaborate and communicate entirely in the target language as they work together to create and perform newly crafted lyrics.
Cultures	Explore cultural influences in music	Ask students to research and present on a genre of music from a target language-speaking community. Students can discuss the cultural aspects, social significance, and themes commonly found in that genre. The presentation can include audio or video examples of songs from that genre to help classmates understand its (socio)cultural context. (For example: Regarding various themes of the songs, *talk about how K-POP looks and sounds, and what kind of stories K-POP songs tell. Share what you think makes K-POP cool or interesting.*) (Note: for other world language classes, it can be modified

The 5C Goal Areas	Task	Description
Cultures	Explore cultural influences in music	using different examples, such as C-pop, Latin pop, etc.). Furthermore, provide students with intercultural prompts. (For instance, *Choose a K-pop song and analyze its lyrics for cultural elements, such as references to cultural products, practices, and perspectives. Look for words or phrases related to '가족 관계' [family relationships], '사회적 이슈' [social issues like military service], '장소 이름' [place names], unique '어휘나 표현' [vocabulary or expressions], and any other cultural aspects you can identify within the lyrics. Describe what you learn about Korean culture from the song, considering both its content and the perspective.)*
Comparisons	Analyze the original song and the student's creation	Assign students a couple of sample song lyrics created by their peers, along with the original songs, for comparison. In the target language, students examine and discuss the changes made to the lyrics, analyze the themes and messages conveyed. Students also talk about how the adaptation relates to their own experiences or viewpoints. Finally, students can present their findings and share their insights with the class.
Connections	Making connections using the target language to understand and create lyrics about various themes, expanding language skills and cultural understanding	Let students choose a song they are interested in or they like and explore song lyrics, gaining an understanding of the messages they convey and researching the songs and singers. They will also appreciate existing lyrics and create their own, fostering language skills and nurturing creative thinking while gaining diverse perspectives. Students write a short reflection paper or create a multimedia presentation discussing the connection they feel to the chosen song, explaining the reasons behind those connections, and sharing any personal stories or anecdotes related to the song's themes.
Communities	Organize digital podcast or in-person performance concert	Collaborate with the school's music department or local musicians to organize a virtual concert or podcast featuring the songs created by the students. Students collaboratively invite the language and music students, as well as the singers, to perform the songs live, or record them for the podcast. Promote the event within the school community and invite other students, faculty, and parents to attend or listen. Encourage students to interact and engage with the performances by providing feedback and discussing their favorite songs.

Assessments

Assessments play a crucial role in evaluating student progress and the effectiveness of lyrics as a storytelling approach in language learning. Additionally, student reflection provides valuable insights into their learning experience and allows for self-assessment. Assessments can be conducted by observing group activities through presentations (such as student-written lyrics), class discussions, or reflection reports.

Table 2 provides an overview of how each assessment aligns with the corresponding project task, ensuring that the project objectives are met and offering a rationale for each assessment.

Table 2

Project Sing My Song Assessments

5C Goal Area	Project Task	Assessment	Alignment Rationale
Communication	Create a songwriting collaboration, emphasizing collaboration in the target language.	Can collaborate with peers to create song lyrics, effectively sharing ideas and negotiating meaning in the target language.	Directly relates to the task of collaborative songwriting and communication skills in the target language.
Cultures	Explore cultural influences in music, including research and presentation on a music genre.	Can explore and integrate cultural practices and perspectives of the target language into song lyrics. Can create song lyrics that embody cultural products of the target language.	Focuses on understanding and integrating cultural elements into song lyrics, aligning with the cultural exploration aspect of the task.
Comparisons	Analyze original songs and student creations, focusing on linguistic and thematic elements.	Can interpret and analyze thematic and linguistic elements of existing songs. Can compare linguistic elements and cultural themes in song lyrics.	Emphasizes analysis and comparison of songs, both linguistically and thematically, as required in the task.

5C Goal Area	Project Task	Assessment	Alignment Rationale
Connections	Make connections using the target language to understand and create lyrics, expanding language skills.	Can research and incorporate diverse perspectives and information from the target language culture. Can reflect on the use of the target language in a creative context.	Encourages understanding and creation of lyrics through diverse perspectives and reflection on language use, as per the task.
Communities	Organize digital podcasts or in-person presentations, collaborating with the school community.	Can engage the school and wider community through performances or presentations of the created songs.	Aligns with the task, focusing on community engagement.

Table 3 (next page) showcases sample lyrics created by a student. The participating students in the project were from an Advanced Korean course, the 5th semester Korean language course in a higher education setting. (Students' proficiency in Korean in this course varies within the range of Intermediate-Mid to High.) The 'Sing My Song' project can be adapted for Intermediate-level language courses with thoughtful modifications. Language teachers should consider simplifying the language complexity of song lyrics and offering more structured guidance during the project's initial stages. Such adjustments, along with aligning project activities with the course's scope and objectives, will allow language teachers to tap into the motivational and engagement benefits of the 'Sing My Song' project while ensuring its appropriateness for Intermediate-level language learners.

Figure 1 displays one of the lyric cover pages from the 'Sing My Story' project, with the accompanying link leading to a corresponding song performed by a student singer.

Figure 1

Final production sample

(Link to the audio: **https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IZnqUfwJKx_VUsmc5ck5AdWLNqvhXWUG/view**
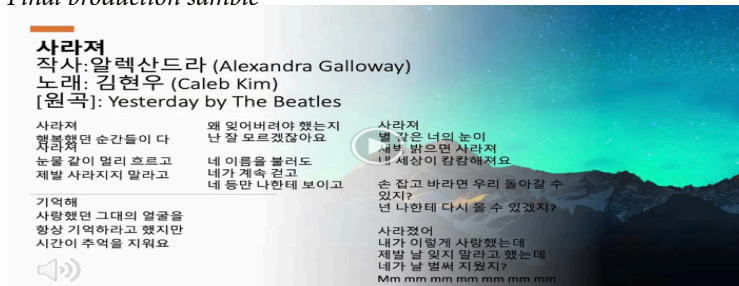
Table 3
Sample lyrics recreated by a student

제목: 사라져 작사: Alexandra Galloway 원곡: "Yesterday" by The Beatles)	Title: Fade away Lyrics: Alexandra Galloway Original Song: "Yesterday" by The Beatles)
사라져 행복했던 순간들이 다 사라져 눈물 같이 멀리 흐르고 제발 사라지지 말라고	Fade away All the moments of happiness, they fade away Flowing far away like tears I beg, don't disappear
기억해 사랑했던 그대의 얼굴을 항상 기억하라고 했지만 시간이 추억을 지워요	Remember Your face that I loved I always told you to remember But time erases the memories
왜 잊어버려야 했는지 난 잘 모르겠어	Why I had to forget I really don't know
네 이름을 불러도 네가 계속 걷고 네 등만 나한테 보이고	Even if I call your name You keep walking away Only your back is visible to me
사라져 별 같은 너의 눈이 새벽 밝으면 사라져 내 세상이 캄캄해져요	Fade away Your eyes, like stars Disappear at the break of dawn My world is turning dark
손 잡고 바라면 우리 돌아갈 수 있지? 넌 나한테 다시 올 수 있겠지?	If we hold hands, can we go back? Can you come back to me?
사라졌어 내가 이렇게 사랑했는데 제발 날 잊지 말라고 했는데 네가 날 벌써 지웠지? 음음음음 음 음 음	It's gone I loved you like this I told you not to forget me But you've already erased me, haven't you? Mm mm mm mm mm mm mm

To gain a better understanding of the creative process behind the student's lyrical adaptation, here is their explanation regarding the background of their lyrics:

> The Beatles' 'Yesterday' has always been one of my favorite songs, and I thought its simple yet haunting melody would suit the story I wanted to tell through my lyrics. I wanted to tell a love story about parted lovers, but as the Beatles do in the original 'Yesterday,' I also wanted to express a bittersweet longing for what is gone, for things and people we've loved but can't meet again.

The student undertakes a transformative language learning experience by writing these lyrics and applying the language meaningfully while utilizing their creativity to write their lyrics. As showcased in the student's recreation of lyrics, 'Yesterday' by The Beatles aligns with the project's primary goals. It demonstrates how language learning can extend beyond traditional frameworks, blending linguistic ability with cultural appreciation and emotional exploration. The student's work intertwines personal narratives with universally resonant themes and is a noteworthy example of meaningful and impactful language learning.

Reflection

Instructors can gain valuable insights into students' progress, strengths, and areas for improvement by incorporating various assessments and reflection questions. In addition, student reflection encourages metacognition and fosters a sense of ownership of their language learning.

In this project, students are encouraged to use the target language (Korean) for in-class discussions. However, consider allowing students to use English for reflective writing responses, especially those at the Intermediate level. This accommodation prevents their language proficiency from becoming a barrier to deep reflection and caters to students' varying language proficiency levels.

Here are sample questions for student reflection and discussion:

- 왜 이 노래를 선택했나요? [Why did you choose this song?]
- 가사를 통해 무엇을 표현하고 싶었나요? [What did you want to express through the lyrics?]
- 가사 스토리텔링 프로젝트가 어떻게 여러분의 언어 학습에 도움을 주었나요? [How has the lyrics-as-storytelling project enhanced your language learning experience?]
- 가사를 쓰면서 어떤 어려움이 있었나요? 그것들을 어떻게 해결했나요? [What challenges did you face while creating your storytelling lyrics? How did you overcome them?]
- 여러분의 가사를 불러준 가수와의 협업이 어떻게 여러분의 언어 발달에 도움이 되었나요? [How did the collaboration with singers (musicians) contribute to your language development?]
- 원래의 노래 가사와 여러분의 가사를 비교할 때, 언어 사용, 주제, 또는 문화적 측면에서 어떤 비슷한 점과 다른 점을 발견했나요? [When comparing the original lyrics and your lyrics, what similarities and differences did you find in terms of language use, themes, or cultural aspects?]
- 이 프로젝트가 교실 밖에서 여러분의 한국어 사용, 문화 감상, 평생 학습 등에 어떻게 영향을 주었나요? [How has this project influenced your language use, cultural appreciation, community engagement, and lifelong learning for personal enjoyment and enrichment beyond the classroom?]

Table 4 (next page) provides excerpts of reflections highlighting the transformative experiences of lyrics and storytelling through the 'Sing My Song' project from a learning perspective.

Table 4

Excerpts from learning reflections

[Excerpt 1] The 'Sing My Song' project was an incredibly fun and enriching experience that allowed me to work closely with singers and composers within my school. Collaborating with them not only resulted in fantastic musical collaborations but also led to the formation of new friendships and ongoing collaborations beyond the project. We continued to work together on concerts, song-making, and performance through other cultural shows in the community.
[Excerpt2] This project was unlike any other language learning experience I had in other language courses. It was highly engaging, relatable, tangible, and even rewarding. I didn't realize how much I was learning until I reflected on the outcomes. The project exposed me to new vocabulary, grammar structures, and language features through the process of analyzing and rewriting lyrics. It provided an opportunity to apply my language skills in real-life situations, such as discussing and writing about the meaning and emotions conveyed in the lyrics.
[Excerpt 4] The lyrics-as-storytelling approach offered a transformative learning experience, pushing me to think critically, express myself creatively, and develop my language proficiency. It was a non-traditional and unconventional approach that allowed me to fully immerse myself in the target language and culture. Through collaborating with talented singers and musicians, I not only refined my communication skills but also gained valuable insights into pronunciation, intonation, and musical interpretation.
[Excerpt 5] The project provided a platform for me to explore my artistic side and strengthen my language skills, and made me appreciate my language learning even more. It was an engaging and memorable experience.
[Excerpt 6] This project taught me to use Korean with flexibility and creativity. (…) using these skills I can navigate complex situations much more effectively and use Korean in new and unexpected ways with confidence.
[Excerpt 7] The original lyrics and my lyrics tell similar stories of lost love, but the execution is different. Korean, compared to English, allowed more flexibility in word order and let me emphasize this sense [of meaning]. Additionally, Korean grammar allowed me to capture this with more nuance than I could in English.
[Excerpt 8] [My singer] was so kind and helpful. Gifted in music and excellent at Korean, he helped me adapt my lyrics to the music in a more natural way. He also helped smooth out which grammar I was using to make sure everything worked with the melody. It was also so rewarding and confidence-building to hear the final product.
[Excerpt 9] At first, I was too attached to writing in English. I would start by writing my thoughts down in English and then translate them to Korean, but whenever I translated my ideas from English to Korean, it would sound awkward, and the syllable count wouldn't align with the melody. I realized then that I needed to write from start to finish in Korean. To see what would sound natural in Korean I listened to Kim Kwang Seok [K-pop singer] and other Korean artists, and they helped my lyrics sound more natural.

> [Excerpt 10] The project encouraged me to use Korean in a new, exciting way and [made] me more thoughtful of my use of Korean itself. I had to consider the rhythm and sounds of the words I chose, what grammar I should use and when, and how different grammatical choices could change the feeling of what I was writing. It also helped boost my confidence in my Korean skills: Writing a song at first was intimidating, but after doing so, other tasks (like speaking to native speakers, writing essays, etc.) felt less daunting.

The sample student reflections from the 'Sing My Song' project show how the project relates to the 5 C's Goal Areas in language learning. Firstly, Communication: the development of communication skills is a prominent theme, as seen in Excerpts 1, 4, 8, and 10. These reflections reveal how students engaged in collaborative songwriting and performance, which significantly improved their ability to convey ideas creatively and interact effectively in Korean. This aspect of the project underscores the practical application of language skills in a collaborative and creative context.

Secondly, Cultures: an appreciation and understanding of cultural nuances were evident, particularly in Excerpts 4 and 7. Here, students delved into the exploration of cultural expressions through music, gaining valuable insights into the emotional and stylistic aspects unique to Korean culture. This exploration highlights the project's role in deepening students' cultural awareness and sensitivity.

In addition, Comparisons between English and Korean were a key part of the learning experience, as illustrated in Excerpts 7 and 9. Students noted differences in grammar, word order, and expression, which enhanced their understanding of the linguistic structures and cultural contexts of both languages. This comparative approach helped students appreciate the nuances and complexities inherent in language learning.

Furthermore, Connections: Excerpts 3 and 10 indicate that students made meaningful connections between their language learning and real-world applications. They applied their language skills in practical situations like songwriting and cultural interpretation, effectively linking classroom learning with authentic, real-life language use. This aspect of the project demonstrates the relevance and applicability of language skills in diverse contexts.

Lastly, Communities: Excerpts 1 and 6 highlight students' engagement with the broader community. By extending their learning beyond the classroom and using the target language in various community settings, students demonstrated the practical application of their language skills in a community context. This engagement not only reinforced their meaningful language use but also fostered ongoing collaborations, showcasing the project's impact in bridging language learning with community involvement.

The reflections indicate a beneficial effect on language learning and cultural appreciation, yet there is room for improvement. Extending activities to include broader community engagement, such as soliciting reflections from community singers who participated, would also enrich the learning experience. While the reflections are favorable, incorporating a balanced view acknowledging accomplish-

ments and ongoing challenges could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences. Such a detailed analysis could uncover whether the experiences are genuinely positive or if there are understated ongoing issues. For instance, asking for students' recommendations for project enhancements could be beneficial.

Teaching Reflection

The 'Sing My Song' project, with its focus on storytelling by recreating lyrics, has shown potential as an effective approach for language learning and promoting transformative learning experiences. Through incorporating songs and lyrics as tools for communication, students are exposed to authentic language use and cultural contexts, leading to enhanced language learning. The multimodal nature of the activities, incorporating music and visuals caters to diverse learning styles and allows students to express themselves through various mediums, fostering a deeper engagement with the material.

One of the significant benefits of this project is the promotion of cultural awareness and appreciation (as students work on intercultural tasks shared in Table 1). By exploring songs and lyrics from different cultures, students gain a deeper understanding of how language, music, and culture intersect. This exposure fosters an appreciation for cultural diversity and provides a platform for students to explore and celebrate different cultures. The collaborative nature of the project also promotes teamwork and communication, encouraging students to work together with musicians and singers. Through collaboration, students engage in social interaction, develop intercultural understanding, and share ideas, leading to a richer learning experience.

Critical thinking and analysis are essential components of the 'Sing My Song' project. Students are encouraged to analyze and critique songs, lyrics, and performances, promoting critical thinking skills. Through discussions on artistic choices, cultural influences, and societal issues, students are challenged to question, reflect, and develop their own perspectives. This process empowers students to think critically about the material and contributes to their personal growth and transformation.

The project cultivates students' creative expression. Rewriting lyrics, composing music, and creating their own performances provide students with the opportunity to unleash their creativity and express their thoughts, emotions, and experiences in the target language. This creative outlet enhances their language skills and empowers them to communicate authentically.

The 'Sing My Song' project effectively taps into students' interests, enhancing the learning process by making it more engaging and motivating. According to Cope and Kalantzis (2015), learners should be motivated by what they are learning (what, why, and how), and in this regard, the project aligns with their perspective. By involving students in the design of their learning (actively engaging them throughout the project tasks) and connecting with music and culture they enjoy, the project encourages higher levels of engagement and motivation. Students are

more likely to invest themselves in the activities, knowing that they have a meaningful role in shaping their learning experiences.

Overall, the integration of multiliteracies and the 5 C's Goal Areas in the context of lyrics and storytelling provides a dynamic and inclusive approach to language learning. Through this project, students develop language skills, cultural awareness, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and authentic communication. The project also offers transformative learning experiences by encouraging personal reflection and expression, cultural exploration and understanding, critical thinking and analysis, creativity and agency, collaboration and community engagement, language, and communication skills.

Closing Thoughts

The 'Sing My Song' project, centered on storytelling through recreating lyrics, demonstrates significant potential in enhancing language learning and fostering transformative educational experiences. Going beyond conventional language instruction, it involves students in the creative process of making and discussing song lyrics, thereby not only aiding in language learning but also enriching the overall educational journey.

In this project, students transition from passive learners to active creators. As they engage in creating and discussing song lyrics, they delve into the practical use of language, intertwining theoretical knowledge with real-world application. Writing their own lyrics, students embark on a reflective journey, exploring the meanings, emotions, and cultural contexts behind their words. This process fosters a deeper connection with the language, emphasizing self-expression, storytelling, and the appreciation of diverse perspectives. Through this holistic and culturally responsive approach, the 'Sing My Song' project transforms language learning. It offers more diverse, inclusive, and transformative learning opportunities, pushing the boundaries of conventional language learning classrooms.

In wrapping up the report on the 'Sing My Song' project, these key takeaways may be useful for fellow language teachers to consider adapting in their language teaching:

- Cultural Responsiveness: Emphasizing the importance of integrating students' cultural backgrounds and interests into the curriculum, fostering a more inclusive and engaging learning environment.
- Cultural Exploration: Encouraging educators to enable students to explore and discuss music from diverse cultural backgrounds, thus promoting cultural awareness, empathy, and a broader worldview.
- Intercultural Competence: Highlighting the opportunity to develop intercultural competence, with activities aimed at enhancing students' ability to appreciate and navigate diverse cultural perspectives.
- Student Engagement: Underlining the significance of student engagement in learning and suggesting the incorporation of students' interests, like favorite songs, to motivate active participation.
- Global Language Use and Communication: Focusing on designing language learning activities that emphasize global language use and cross-cultural

communication, encouraging students to communicate effectively across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

- Holistic and Transformative Language Learning: Demonstrating that language learning, rooted in the 5C goal areas (Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), goes beyond vocabulary and grammar to foster transformative learning through cultural competence, intercultural connections, and community engagement.

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Acknowledgment

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FindingFinding the Student's Voice: Authentic Assessments Make Language Personal

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ABSTRACT

Motivating students towards language learning includes embedding meaningful themes, communicative tasks, and authentic assessments. When voice and choice are held as essential qualities of the task, students invest in the resources to make meaning and express their own thoughts, thus moving us away from traditional assessments that emphasize surface-level understanding and towards critical thinking and proficiency. Applying the unit's learning to an interpersonal or presentational assessment that values not only the structures and vocabulary but also the students' synthesis makes their language learning personal.

Keywords*: assessment, UDL*

Research on Relevance

"Does it matter to me?" is the implicit filter learning goes through before sticking. Neuroscience reminds educators that meaning and relevancy have a high impact on students' understanding and retention. Ausubel's (1963) Meaningful Learning Theory states that in order for learning to be meaningful, students need to have some prior knowledge on the topic, relevant material, and engaging tasks that connect the two. Biochemists Champe, Harvey & Ferrier (2005) insist: "To learn meaningfully, individuals must consciously choose to relate new information to knowledge that they already know, rather than simply memorizing isolated facts or concept definitions," (p. 10). Expanding on this theory, McCombs & Miller (2007) add that the motivation to learn is directly related to the relevancy of the materials and tasks to students' lives. When students find a task to be meaningful and eye-opening, their incentive to apply their learnings into their lives in-

creases. But beyond simple engagement, teachers must find ways for learning to last. *Making It Stick* authors Brown, McDaniel, and Roedgier (2014) found that when students connected with their learning through activities like paraphrasing or applying/transferring skills, there is a high correlation with long term retention. In narrowing the literature to world language education research, Glisan and Donato (2021) underscore meaningful context as a high leverage teaching practice because connecting students' lives to language learning engages learners. Learning a language is often viewed as a difficult task because it requires hours of dedication to practicing, and without drive and proper engagement, students may struggle to find meaning in their learning process. However, when meaningful, choice-based language learning replaces the traditional approaches, students naturally form those lasting connections to their everyday lives.

Research about purposeful learning doesn't surprise teachers. When designing units, teachers can integrate social justice standards and social emotional learning, which connects our students to the global world. Not everyone has the opportunity to immerse themselves in different ways of being and doing, but implementing authentic assignments/assessments that spark students' interests and personal voice goes a long way. Educators find ways for all students to access the curriculum via tenets of Universal Design for Learning such as anchoring (Ausubel, 2012), offering choice (Novak & Rose, 2016), providing multiple entries, and opening assessments to student design (Feldman, 2019). These gold standards checklists help show us *how* to teach in a way that students can transfer their learning, but *what* do we teach? To lift the curriculum from the themes of old (food, clothes), we move towards topics that today's students see in their own world (food trucks, thrifting) with real world assessments designed to lead them towards global citizenship. Opening our curriculum to new topics that foster intercultural understanding allows students to change their perceptions on everyday life to learn not only about other cultures, but to understand themselves in a way that couldn't be done before.

To bring the how, the what, and the student to the center, here are three examples of assessments that increase student voice and could be tied to several engaging topics for long-term learning. Each assessment requires language production that connects prior learning from interpretive activities of authentic resources. This significant, rich input offers windows and mirrors to students and engages them to think beyond language structures and vocabulary. The assessment examples described below are primarily written by a student (Nikki Prasad) who experienced them as a learner in an Intermediate Mid-High French course, while the details of the assessment mechanics and rubrics are provided by her teacher (Beckie Bray Rankin). The student perspective allows us to see how the assessment makes language learning meaningful, and how educators move from input to output because the content and tasks matter to students.

Sample Interpersonal and Presentational Assessments

Discussion écrite (Interpersonal writing)

The *discussion écrite* starts off with a choice of prompts with a direct connection to what is being taught/worked on in class, but then there's also the real world aspect. Whether it be analyzing a text or a movie, students start off by responding to a teacher-created question by tying together what has been discussed in class with new authentic resources. But then they get the opportunity to go deeper. They
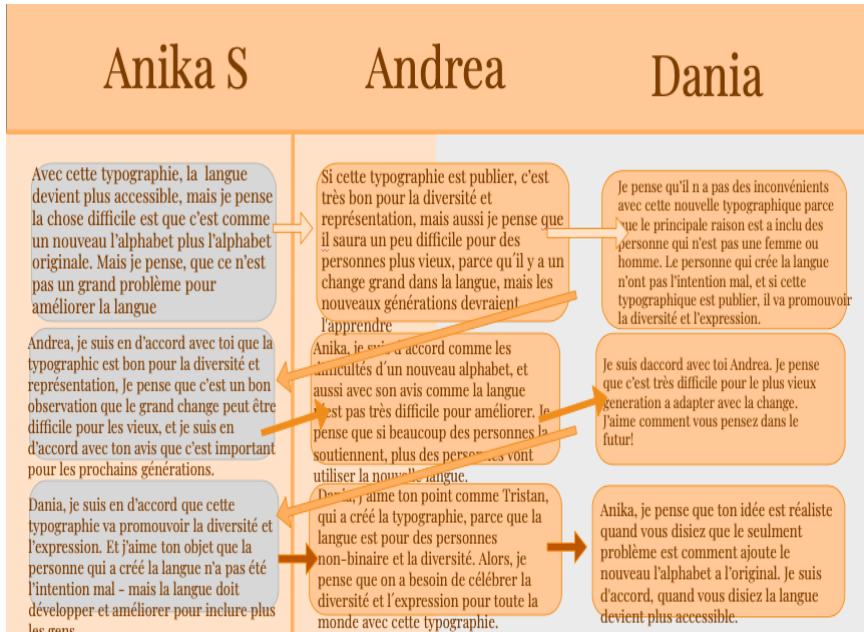
get to ask themselves questions such as, "How do I see this message in the real world?" or, "In what ways can I help others like this character did in the future?" In other words, students can take the prompt in the direction in which they interpret it. And that's the cool thing to learn about language — the way in which one person takes something in is often not the same as someone else, and that difference is a student's personal voice. Students also respond to other classmates' responses which are likely to differ in perspective or in prompt. But again, that's an important part of learning a language: realizing that other people's views can be different than yours, but it's crucial to be open and accepting. The back and forth interaction between students is what allows students to go deeper, to figure out what parts of their identities they might have overlooked or thrown into the mist, and to just learn more about who they are as young adults.

For each prompt, find two short authentic resources that relate to the topic of study. In this example, Intermediate Mid French students read Saint-Exupéry's (2001) *Le petit prince*. After the first five chapters, they are given the option to focus on the Prince's routines or the Astronomer's clothing and how it relates to today. One prompt discusses a racist social media post about a politician's outfit and the other gives statistics about the time consuming activity of getting the day's water in countries that don't have indoor plumbing. Each class is set into a group of 3-4 students who share access to a collaborative Google Doc. Each student decides which prompt to cover and indicates that after their name on the left column. In the first chunk of time, students select their prompt, review the resources, and formulate their question. If they are stuck or need a brain break, they can read what their other group members are writing. The second chunk of time focuses on this written discussion, where each groupmate comments on each other's post, and then the original post writer responds to the comment (see Figures 1 and 2). Depending on the language level of the learner, this can be done in one class or extend into a second.

Figure 1
Interpersonal Writing Template

Membre 1: _____ Option _____	Member 1 writes their initial post here. Member 2 will comment. Member 1 will respond. Member 3 will comment. Member 1 will respond. Member 4 will comment. Member 1 will respond.
Membre 2: _____ Option _____	Member 2 writes their initial post here. Member 1 will comment. Member 2 will respond. Member 3 will comment. Member 2 will respond. Member 4 will comment. Member 2 will respond.
Membre 3: _____ Option _____	Member 3 writes their initial post here. Member 1 will comment. Member 3 will respond. Member 2 will comment. Member 3 will respond. Member 4 will comment. Member 3 will respond.
Membre 4: _____ Option _____	Member 4 writes their initial post here. Member 1 will comment. Member 4 will respond. Member 2 will comment. Member 4 will respond. Member 3 will comment. Member 4 will respond.

F**igure 2**
Completed Interpersonal Writing Template

Anika S	Andrea	Dania
Avec cette typographie, la langue devient plus accessible, mais je pense la chose difficile est que c'est comme un nouveau l'alphabet plus l'alphabet originale. Mais je pense, que ce n'est pas un grand problème pour améliorer la langue	Si cette typographie est publier, c'est très bon pour la diversité et représentation, mais aussi je pense que il saura un peu difficile pour des personnes plus vieux, parce qu'il y a un change grand dans la langue, mais les nouveaux générations devraient l'apprendre	Je pense qu'il n a pas des inconvénients avec cette nouvelle typographique parce que le principale raison est a inclus des personne qui n'est pas une femme ou homme. Le personne qui crée la langue n'ont pas l'intention mal, et si cette typographique est publier, il va promouvoir la diversité et l'expression.
Andrea, je suis en d'accord avec toi que la typographic est bon pour la diversité et représentation, Je pense que c'est un bon observation que le grand change peut être difficile pour les vieux, et je suis en d'accord avec ton avis que c'est important pour les prochains générations.	Anika, je suis d'accord comme les difficultés d'un nouveau alphabet, et aussi avec son avis comme la langue est pas très difficile pour améliorer. Je pense que si beaucoup des personnes la soutiennent, plus des personnes vont utiliser la nouvelle langue.	Je suis daccord avec toi Andrea. Je pense que c'est très difficile pour le plus vieux generation a adapter avec la change. J'aime comment vous pensez dans le futur!
Dania, je suis en d'accord que cette typographie va promouvoir la diversité et l'expression. Et j'aime ton objet que la personne qui a créé la langue n'a pas été l'intention mal - mais la langue doit développer et améliorer pour inclure plus les gens	Dania, j'aime ton point comme Tristan, qui a créé la typographie, parce que la langue est pour des personnes non-binaire et la diversité. Alors, je pense que on a besoin de célébrer la diversité et l'expression pour toute le monde avec cette typographie.	Anika, je pense que ton idée est réaliste quand vous disiez que le seulment problème est comment ajoute le nouveau l'alphabet a l'original. Je suis d'accord, quand vous disiez la langue devient plus accessible.

A note for lower levels: In a Novice High or Intermediate Low course, these prompts may be written on the first of a deck of slides with sentence starters and/or vocabulary words on the following slide. Then, each group can fill a separate slide with their discussion.

The rubric (see Figure 3) separates the expectations for the first post and their participation in their discussion to separate the initial presentational writing from the interpersonal writing. In each of these sections, the rubric highlights the relevant content (examples, details) as well as the communication strategies (paraphrasing, negotiating) important to the assignment. The final row is for language use, which is across both the initial post and the students' comments and responses. Before submitting, students italicize their personal example or intercultural comparison, underline transition words, bold risks they take with new language structures, highlight complex structures in purple, and highlight descriptions (the structure for the unit) in yellow. This way, students are giving themselves feedback before submitting, and also directing the teacher's attention to the important elements.

Une leçon (Interpersonal speaking)

Students are used to having their teacher conduct each lesson of each class. However, when they are presented with the opportunity to teach and engage the class themselves, it's a completely new, but important, experience. With this, students engage in a creative learning experience. Students present the material they are responsible for, and–to make it interactive and engaging–they come up with

activities and games to draw the class in and invite them to share their voices. Through the interaction between the presenter and the rest of the class during these mini activities, students are able to share their valuable lessons and/or personal experiences with each other. And that's when connection happens; students realize they're not alone, and that their voice matters just as much as anyone else's. The purpose of this type of assessment isn't to merely present facts, but rather to interact with each other in a meaningful way. A student can take away so much more than what the words on a slide says: they take in the presenter's voice, hopefully helping them form their own.

Figure 3
Interpersonal Writing Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations	**Meets Expectations**	**NY**
1ᵉ poste	- *intercultural comparison* - full, complete, specific answer - multiple details from le Petit Prince (1,2,3) - details from prompt	- *personal example* - basic, repetitive answer - a reference to le Petit Prince - a main idea from prompt	
Convers-ation	- detailed responses - paraphrase + negotiate for meaning / clarify - respond always + a ? adds to each conversation	- basic responses - paraphrase to ensure understanding - respond to all comments	
Language Use	- easy to understand - use transition words to create paragraphs - accurate complex structures - rich, irregular descriptions	- needs some interpretation - organizes with simple sentences - **risks** complex structures, accurate basic - **risks** rich descriptions, accurate basic	

Une leçon (Interpersonal speaking):

Students are used to having their teacher conduct each lesson of each class. However, when they are presented with the opportunity to teach and engage the class themselves, it's a completely new, but important, experience. With this, students engage in a creative learning experience. Students present the material they are responsible for, and–to make it interactive and engaging–they come up with activities and games to draw the class in and invite them to share their voices. Through the interaction between the presenter and the rest of the class during these mini activities, students are able to share their valuable lessons and/or personal experiences with each other. And that's when connection happens; students realize they're not alone, and that their voice matters just as much as anyone else's. The purpose of this type of assessment isn't to merely present facts, but rather to interact with each other in a meaningful way. A student can take away so much more than what the words on a slide says: they take in the presenter's voice, hopefully helping them form their own.

Ideally, this task is based on a large resource with as many components as students. For example, in a class of 25 students, divide a movie into 25 scenes or a text into one section per student. Most importantly, the student "teachers" must understand what the goal of their teaching is: to lead the class to better understanding

through interaction–not to make a flawless one-way presentation. In focusing on the success criteria, or list of required elements of the lesson, the students find themselves able to interact with the class rather than just read from a memorized presentation. For this particular unit on Saint-Exupéry's (2001) canonical text, each student had a chapter or two to present to the class and the criteria included a brief summary, comprehension questions, vocabulary, noting language structures, and analysis. To be successful, student "teachers" engage the class with activities like chronologies and turn and talks, games like Kahoot or Gimkit, and Socratic discussions. Their creativity is fun to watch unfold as they learn how to engage each other. As always, the rubric (see Figure 4) follows the key elements of the assessment, which in this case were more about students' ability to communicate their understanding of a text.

Figure 4
Une Leçon Rubric [A Lesson Rubric]

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations
Content	Summary: Succinctly identifies and paraphrases the most important plot points + … activity in presentation applies learning from text to life	Summary: Identifies and restates some of the chapter's key moments Analysis: Shows some understanding of characters, themes, chapter lesson, and their importance
Lesson Structure & Strategies	+ … flows smoothly between well-directed, fresh, humorous, and engaging activities + … quotes from text and a new, engaging game that practices the definitions in context. + … beyond the obvious, described thoroughly + … selects essentials, ensures classmates have full & correct answers	Lesson is logically structured, interesting, interactive, with continuity and clarity Vocab meanings are practiced with a game Adj/adv are irregular and not repetitive; rules explained Class responds to most chapter questions
Impact	Presenter engaging due to eye contact, structure accuracy, and dynamic (memorized) delivery + … complex structure accuracy, varied vocabulary, visuals	Presenter comprehensible due to understandable structures Slides engaging due to key words highlighting important information and simple, accurate structures

A note for lower levels: This type of task also works well for songs, where individual students could each take two lines or groups of students, in a jigsaw style, can take one stanza each. After analyzing the meaning, each student or group can create a visual and engage the class in an activity to understand the meaning and practice the vocabulary of that section. Requiring students to pay attention to certain language structures is an excellent way to integrate inductive grammar in context.

Personifying a piece of art (presentational speaking):

With this activity, students are provided with the opportunity to personify an art piece of their choice. Art is a way for students to learn about expressing themselves, but also seeing the expressions of the world around them. Students are able to select a piece that appeals to them, research it, and really immerse themselves into the specific form of expression. In the process, students figure out what makes the piece unique and what its message is. Throughout, students are exposed to new ideas and new symbolic aspects that they find they can apply to their own lives. As

they quite literally put themselves in someone else's shoes, they learn about the essence of seeing the world from a new perspective, which learning a language conveys perfectly. When students are given the opportunity to explore different cultural aspects with their own freedom like this assignment, they are able to have a meaningful learning experience while trying to find their creative voice.

As part of a unit on representation–how we perceive the world and how we want the world to perceive us—we focus on how artists influence society through their work. An introductory video on the art offers a global perspective on movements and artists before students choose a genre to study more deeply. In a shared deck of slides, students add their image/artist/year to "claim" their piece of art, which is approved or adapted before moving forward. Students then have time to research the biography of the artist and artwork, and find the perspective of the artwork itself (or something represented within the artwork such as an apple, picnic blanket, or person). Because the unit focuses on representation, students personify the artwork in their one-minute presentations (see Figure 5), telling their classmates about "their artist" and "their home" as well as how they had an impact in their community as the piece of art is projected behind them. While becoming a person in a painting seems straightforward, some students select a movement, dance, or building for a challenge.

A note for lower levels: At any level, the rich input of art is cause for discussion of how the art impacts the viewer. Novice students can work from a template or anchor chart to create a scaffolded paragraph about what they see in the work, what they like about the work, and what draws it to them.

Figure 5
Personifying Art Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	NY
Content	+ Major events of artist's life (your creator) + description of message artist is sending + Impact of artist on community/culture	biography of art (you) description of what you represent Impact/influence of art on community/culture	
Language Level	Complex sentences Accurate complex structures Accurately integrates rel pro & negation Connected thoughts	Simple sentences Simple structures Takes risks with rel pro & negation Transition words	
Impact	Rich in detail Engaging Memorized, refers to notes once	Organized Believable Refers to notes often	
Comprehensibility	Easy to understand	Takes a moment to understand	

Student & Teacher Reflections

In allowing choice, autonomy, and creativity to take the stage over grammar and vocabulary, students are motivated to share themselves in these types of authentic presentations. Because of the personal connection, the learning sticks; even students from ten years ago may reminisce about their growth through their *Petit Prince* lesson or how they still chuckle when they see a piece of art that was personified by a friend. These authentic opportunities to engage with language make intercultural communication more realistic for learners, which is the gold standard for why we teach.

For any teachers interested in revising assessments towards more authenticity to "make it stick," here are some reflection questions:

- How is this topic/task relevant to the world today? What old themes are being challenged?
- How will students be able to form personal connections between the topic/task, language, and their everyday lives?
- How does this topic/task promote connection between other students?
- How are students' voices and agency incorporated?
- What new perspectives and ideas are introduced through input and how is that incorporated in output?
- How will students grow as a result of this topic/task?

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Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts — NECTFL Review

Below, you will find a summary of the Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts and the Checklist for Manuscript Preparation. The complete documents for both in PDF format can be downloaded at **https://www.nectfl.org/nectfl-review/**

All articles submitted will be evaluated by at least two, normally three, members of the Editorial Review Board. Elements to be considered in the evaluation process are the article's appropriateness for the journal's readership, its contribution to foreign language education and the originality of that contribution, the soundness of the research or theoretical base, its implications for the classroom, and finally, organization, focus, and clarity of expression.

As you prepare your manuscript for submission to the NECTFL Review, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. We use the most recent APA [American Psychological Association] Guidelines (**http://www.apastyle.org/**), and not those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the Chicago Manual of Style. Please use the latest edition (7th ed., 2020) of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association or the Concise Guide to APA Style as your guide. For models of articles and references, examine The NECTFL *Review*, recent issues of the Modern Language Journal, or Foreign Language Annals. These journals follow the APA style with minor deviations (and those being primarily changes in level headings within articles). Citations within articles, bibliographical entries, punctuation, and style follow the APA format very closely.

2. For an article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers, please follow these guidelines carefully to expedite the review and publishing process. Submit your article electronically to NECTFL at **https://nectfl.wufoo.com/forms/ authorarticle-information-form-nectfl-review/**, uploading it using the Author/ Article Information Form.

3. Please think carefully about the title of your article. It should be brief, preferably without subtitles, and no longer than 12 words.

4. We require an abstract of your article. See p. 13 [Section 1.10] in *Concise Guide to APA Style* (2020) for clear guidelines for writing an abstract.

5. Articles will not be accepted if they appear to endorse or sell software, hardware, books, or any other products.

6. Do not include the names of the author(s) of the article on the first page of the actual text.

7. Include a short biographical paragraph (this will appear at the bottom of the first page of the article, should it be published). Please include this paragraph on a separate page at the end of the article. This paragraph should be no longer than 4-5 lines.

8. Please note that the typical length of manuscripts averages approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages, including notes, charts, and references. This does not mean that a slightly longer article is out of the question.

9. Authors should read the manuscript very carefully before submitting it, verifying the accuracy of the citations (including the spelling of names, page numbers, and publication dates); the accuracy of the format of the references; punctuation, according to the APA Guidelines; spelling throughout the article.

10. Please consult the Checklist for Manuscript Publication **https://www.nectfl. org/nectfl-review/** Promising articles have been rejected because authors did not spend enough time proofreading the manuscript. Proofreading includes not only reading for accuracy but for readability, flow, and clarity.

11. Remember: Authors must complete the Author/Article Information Form, which is found at **https://nectfl.wufoo.com/forms/authorarticle-information-form-nectfl-review/** for the article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers. This form matches the author's description of the article with the appropriate reviewers according to (1) instructional level; (2) areas of interest; (3) the type of content; (4) relevant language(s); (5) keywords that best describe the article content [no more than four should be indicated].

Checklist for Manuscript Preparation

Here are a few reminders, many of which are taken directly from the APA Guidelines, 7th edition. Please use the links provided to access the major changes in this 2020 edition of the guidelines.

☐ Please remember to use the spell check and grammar check on your computer before you submit your manuscript. Any portions of text in a foreign language must be followed immediately by an English translation in square brackets.

☐ Do not submit an article that includes tracking in Word.

☐ Remember that in the APA guidelines, notes (footnotes or endnotes) are discouraged.

☐ Do not use your word processor's automatic footnoting or endnoting.

☐ Do not use automatic page numbering,

☐ Please double-space everything in your manuscript.

☐ Use left justification only; do not use full justification anywhere in the article.

☐ The required font throughout is either Times New Roman 12 pt. or Minion Pro 12 pt.

☐ There should be only one space after each period.

☐ Punctuation marks appear inside quotation marks.

☐ In listing items or in a series of words connected by and, but, or use a comma [the Oxford comma] before these conjunctions.

☐ When providing a list of items, use double parentheses surrounding the numbers or letters: (1), (2), or (3) or (a), (b), and (c).

☐ All numbers above nine must appear as Arabic numerals ["nine school districts" vs. "10 textbooks"]; numbers below 10 must be written out.

- ☐ Page number references in parentheses are not part of the actual quotation and must be placed outside of the quotation marks following quoted material.
- ☐ Use standard postal abbreviations for states in all reference items [e.g., NC, IL, NY, MS], but not in the text itself.
- ☐ Do not set up automatic tabs at the beginning of the article (i.e., as part of a style); rather you should use the tab key (and not the space bar) on your computer each time you begin a new paragraph. The standard indent is only ¼ [0.25"] inch.
- ☐ Please reflect on the title of the article. Quite often titles do not give readers the most precise idea of what they will be reading.
- ☐ According to APA guidelines, the References section contains only the list of works are cited in your article. Check all internet addresses/hyperlinks before submitting the manuscript.
- ☐ Be judicious in using text or graphic boxes or tables in your text.
- ☐ Please makes certain that the components you submit are in the following order:
  - ☐ First page—with the article title, names and titles of authors, their preferred mailing, addresses, home and office phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and the name of the primary contact person [also, times in the summer when regular and E-mail addresses may be inactive].
  - ☐ First page of the manuscript—containing the title of the article and the abstract
  - ☐ The text of the article
  - ☐ Notes; References, Appendices—in this order
  - ☐ A short, biographical paragraph (no more than 4-5 lines).
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