2017 MaFLA Conference
~ So Much To Celebrate!

After many months of planning we are thrilled to share with you some information about this fall’s annual conference. Join us October 26 through 28 in Springfield for high quality professional development with presenters who are acclaimed on a national and regional basis as well as with many local favorites. Network with friends old and new and help us celebrate MaFLA’s 50th Jubilee!

This year’s conference will take place in the beautiful Sheraton Springfield Monarch Hotel. Special group pricing is available for accommodations. Please follow this link to reserve your hotel room: https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/MAFLA2017. Come with the whole family! While you’re participating in great professional growth opportunities your family can enjoy Springfield by exploring the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden (https://www.seussinspringfield.org/dr-seuss-memorial-sculpture-garden) and the Basketball Hall of Fame (http://www.hoophall.com/).

This year as we celebrate language learning and being part of a global community, let us remember that Languages Transform Individuals into Communities. Languages are at the core of who we are as human beings. Through language we share information, communicate feelings, and connect with others. Now more than ever, in a time of accentuated political differences and discord, let’s use the occasion of MaFLA’s 50th anniversary as an opportunity to pause, go back to the basics with an eye to the future, and reflect on the importance of forming networks and relationships with our colleagues in the profession.

This year’s conference has much to offer! Starting on Thursday, October 26th there are five 6-hour Pre-Conference Workshops featuring Thomas Sauer, Señor Wooly, and Tiesa Graf & Nicole Sherif in Pedagogy as well as Kara Jacobs & Arianne Dowd in Spanish, and Julien Suaudeau in French. In addition to the 6-hour workshops there are two 3-hour Workshops offered in the afternoon with Dr. Alvino E. Fantini & Beckie Rankin and Señor Wooly in Pedagogy. Along with the workshops, there are many 75-minute Sessions to choose from happening throughout the day.

Ted Zarrow, the 2016 ACTFL Teacher of the Year, will deliver his Keynote Address entitled Languages on the Rise: We are All Advocates at 12:00. The day ends with the MaFLA Member Reception from 5:30 – 8:00 PM. Join us at this complimentary event with hot and cold hors d’oeuvres and wine, beer and soft drinks. Unwind, socialize with colleagues, and listen to some great live music.

Saturday, October 28th starts with the Immersion Buffet Breakfast followed by three 3-hour workshops with Alison Nelson, Rita Oleksak and Joshua Cabral all in the Pedagogy strand. Finally, don’t miss the MaFLA Business and Awards Luncheon. All weekend long we’ll have special ways to celebrate our Jubilee year. Watch for prizes and surprises! Online registration for the conference is available at www.mafla.org. We look forward to seeing you in Springfield!
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The MaFLA Newsletter

The MaFLA Newsletter is the official publication of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. It is published four times per year - Winter, Spring, Back To School, and End of Year. Subscription is available through membership in the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. MaFLA welcomes short articles, anecdotes, brief reviews of books and other teaching materials, and other items of interest to members of the profession. The opinions expressed by the authors of articles published in this newsletter are their own and are not necessarily shared or endorsed by MaFLA or its Board of Directors.

Deadlines are:

Winter - January 5
Spring - March 5
Back to School - August 5
End of Year - November 5

All submissions should be sent to:
Ronie R. Webster Email: ronie@mafla.org
41 Glenn Drive
Wilbraham, MA 01095-1439
Tel: 413-596-9284

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in MaFLA is open to anyone interested in the learning and teaching of languages. The basic membership runs one year from date of inception. There are four categories of membership - Individual, Student, Retired, and First-Year Teachers.

Individual memberships:
$45.00 for 1 year
$120.00 for 3 years
$25.00 for 1 year (new to profession teacher in first year)

Retired memberships: $25.00 per year
Student memberships: $15.00 per year

For more info and/or a membership application packet, contact:
Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin
membership@mafla.org
PO BOX 590193
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Now you can join, renew or update your profile online! Just visit mafla.org

Taking advantage of your MaFLA membership this year, you have enjoyed outstanding professional development events: the Core Practices Seminars, Diversity Day, Proficiency Academy, and the Summer Institute! Listen to our members who tell us “This is the PD! I love the presenters and meeting other teachers with the same interests. We have formed a group to continue our learning!” (Summer Institute participant). Come experience the learning, the camaraderie, and the sheer fun of being a MaFLA member!
“Celebrate Good Times…”

The 2017 MaFLA Conference in Springfield will be celebrating our 50th year as a professional organization supporting teachers of foreign language. In addition to the engaging and informative workshops and sessions, there will be lots of golden reminders of the celebration. We have many prizes and surprises in store!

One request: If you have any pictures (jpeg format, please!) from past MaFLA events, please share them with jeannemafla@gmail.com. Nothing revives great memories better than photos! Check your photo albums and send them along!

We are looking forward to a great conference!

Hope to see YOU there!

Italian Teacher Community
Save the Date

Dear colleagues

MITA/AATI cordially invite you to attend our back to school luncheon on September 29, 2017, at Lucia’s Restaurant in Winchester, MA at 1:00 pm.

We will be hearing from a diverse group of colleagues about the status of Italian language in our schools and universities. The luncheon will also provide an excellent opportunity to meet with colleagues of all levels and participate in organizational decisions of the association.

All MITA/AATI members and prospective members are welcome to attend.

The event is free to AATI/MITA members while the cost for non-members is $20 per person.

This is our “aperitivo” before the MaFLA Jubilee in Springfield.

Come learn, share, eat! Alla salute della comunità italiana!

Please reserve your seat by September 20. Email Anna Tirone at atirone@winchesterps.org. If you are not a member but would like to participate, please send a check of $20 to Stella Cocchiara at 36 Stanley Street, Medford, MA 02155.
Editor’s Message

Welcome back! I hope you have had a restful and relaxing summer and are returning to your classroom with new resources and with a renewed enthusiasm for the work you do each and every day. As I am writing this I am sitting on an island in the lower basin of Lake George, NY and enjoying these last few days of the season. As I reflect on my own summer, it has been another summer of tremendous growth and new perspectives for me. I traveled and relaxed a bit during the month of July which seemed to fly by.

August began with my participation for the three summers in a row in the MaFLA Proficiency Academy. I joined over 100 foreign language colleagues who attended. This year the Intermediate level of the academy was lead again by Thomas Sauer. His focus was Assessment and Feedback. I left with so many new ideas about rubrics, about providing good feedback to my students and about grading. I am still trying to write that perfect rubric and attempting to wrap my head about what is feedback and grading. The sharing of ideas and the materials that were developed during the academy were so helpful and I came to realize the value of gathering foreign language professionals together to work together and to share. I am delighted that MaFLA will continue this phenomenal professional development series and am already looking forward to summer #4 at the academy in July of 2018. Before I knew it, the end of August was approaching and I was off to the MaFLA SPED Workshop which was offered this summer during the annual Summer Institute. This workshop was outstanding and I also left with lots of new knowledge and skills which I will implement in my classes. I know that all of my students will benefit from my participation in this.

To learn more about my personal experience at this workshop, be sure to read my article included on page 24 of this newsletter. If MaFLA offers this SPED workshop again, I strongly advise you to participate. It was transformative. I am now already two days back into the school year and waiting in anticipation for the 50th Jubilee Conference of MaFLA. It promises to be a very special event and looking at the schedule I can already see that there are more sessions that I will want to attend than I will have time to attend. I guess I will have to make decisions and ask colleagues to share what they learned from all of the sessions I will not be able to attend. I hope to see you all here in Springfield (yes, I am from the western part of the state) in the fall.

This edition of the Newsletter features our conference theme “Languages Transform Individuals into Communities.” You will find numerous articles on the topic of “communities” from a variety of authors, some new to our publication and some of our regular contributors. In addition to this “featured section” we have some fascinating articles on staying in the target language and we even have a student voice in the article The Capacity of the Human Mind by Andover High School student Viswajit Srirmrajan. Also be sure to check out the Seal of Biliteracy Update and the great resources that have been provided. Also you will want to read the reports on our Summer Institute which attracted more participants than ever. We also have a complete listing of our student award recipients and don’t miss out on the results of our Poster Contest.

As we think about Community, I hope that I will see members of my MaFLA community at the fall conference. It promises to be a first-class professional development experience with another opportunity to network. I hope to see you there.

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I believe that when people experience an event as a community, it can transcend and change people’s lives.

Andy Serkis

Our End of Year issue of the MaFLA newsletter will be a reflection on our Jubilee Conference. We encourage conference attendees to send in an article about your experiences at the conference and how what you learned has impacted your practice. We also would like to hear from you about your celebrations. How do you incorporate celebrations into your classroom? Share your activities and your experiences! The deadline for this issue is Nov 5 but if you drop me a note to tell me that you will have an article by Nov 15, I can save space for your contribution. I realize that there is very little time between the end of the conference and our deadline, so a note will suffice!

See you soon!
Ronie

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Reasons why you want to be at the 2017 MaFLA Conference at the Sheraton Monarch Place, Springfield

1. MaFLA will be celebrating its 50th Conference and we want you to be part of this great celebration.
2. The 2017 conference will allow you to continue exploring the great PD offered at ACTFL 2016, the MaFLA Proficiency Academy, the CORE Practices Seminars, Diversity Day and MaFLA Summer Institutes.
3. As always, MaFLA will have workshops and sessions presented by the top FL researchers, practitioners and educators in the country.
"Language is not a genetic gift, it is a social gift. Learning a new language is becoming a member of the club—the community of speakers of that language."

Frank Smith, American psycholinguist

The theme of this year’s MaFLA Fall Conference is Languages Transform Individuals into Communities. Communities, one of the 5 Cs of the Massachusetts Foreign Languages Framework, is an important but illusive one to incorporate into the curriculum. This article will offer a definition of the word community and will suggest ways to implement the “School and Global Communities” strand into the L2 curriculum.

Definition

Wiktionary defines community as a group of people sharing a common understanding who reveal themselves by using the same language, manners, tradition, and law and who have certain attitudes and interests in common.

ACTFL’s World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages defines the Communities Standard as the ability to communicate and interact with cultural competence in order to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world according to the following:

- School and Global Communities: Learners use the language both within and beyond the classroom to interact and collaborate in their community and the globalized world.
- Lifelong Learning: Learners set goals and reflect on their progress in using languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and advancement.

The Communities Strand of the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages encourages foreign language (L2) teachers to expose their students to the presence of the foreign language in their own community so that they see the language not as something that exists just in their classroom but that exists everywhere around them. As one learns a foreign language, one gains entry into the community of those who speak that particular language and as such widens the circle of community one lives in. It becomes the responsibility of the L2 teacher to prepare the student for entrance into the L2 world by providing opportunities for language usage and cultural preparedness necessary for survival in that world. The foreign language is the key to opening the door to a much wider world than the one the student lives in. To achieve that goal, L2 teachers need to broaden the definition of “community” by adopting a broader view of that word. Their immediate community is the classroom and then it is the school, the town, the state, the country, and finally the world.

classroom >>> school >>> town >>> state >>> country>>>world

The following will illustrate the many ways that L2 teachers can incorporate the Communities Standard into their curriculum.

Classroom

The step consists in making the foreign language the primary language of the classroom. It is the language used not only when doing the activities relating to the lesson, but also when engaged in those activities relating to the administrative aspects such as giving directions, explaining classroom rules, announcing future events, disciplining students, and engaging in the everyday idle talk that goes on in every classroom. By following the simple rule that once a word is learned in the foreign language, its English equivalent should never be used in the classroom again, the goal is to make the foreign language become the natural and normal language of the classroom. To facilitate this effort, lists of words and expressions are hung from the walls of the classroom, and although the natural by-product is Franglais or Spanglish that interlanguage gradually diminishes as the year progresses. As the students gain proficiency and confidence, they will hopefully be encouraged to speak the foreign language outside of the classroom with the teacher and with one another.

It is also important that the classroom itself look like and feel like those countries whose language is being studied: authentic L2 materials are plentiful, non-stereotypical posters abound on the walls, L2 music is heard in the background, native guest speakers address the students on occasion, etc. In one of the schools I taught in, I encouraged those students who were artists to decorate the upper windows of the classroom facing the corridor with illustrations from Le Petit Prince. By showcasing student work on the bulletin boards and/or the walls of the classroom, the successful L2 teacher is adept in making the language come alive outside of the textbook and workbooks and vocabulary lists and grammatical exercises. The classroom can become a vibrant linguistic and cultural community full of the sights and sounds of the foreign language.
School

Rather than consider the classroom as a separate unit, teachers of a particular language can widen the scope of the community by planning joint activities between classes of the same level and between classes of different levels or by making an activity available to other students in the school. The following is a list of some of the activities that I have done over the years:

1. I planned an interdisciplinary activity with the art department in order to create a foreign language mural competition encouraging the students to create a mural representing French, Spanish, and German speaking countries without resorting to stereotypes. The winning murals in each of the languages were painted and signed by the student artists directly on the corridor walls of the foreign language department.
2. My French 2 students published a four-issue literary magazine called “Le Petit Echo” which covered many topics chosen and written by the students themselves and which was distributed to all the other French classes in the department.
3. French, Spanish, and German music were broadcast from the language lab into the corridors of the foreign language department every morning before homeroom.
4. The French 3 classes presented a student written and directed version of Le Petit Prince in the school planetarium.
5. Students in the middle school posted every month the student written cinquains on the corridor walls outside of the language classrooms.
6. My AP students visited some elementary grades and presented some French lessons to the students.
7. My AP students created TV programs in the school’s TV studio.
8. I conducted my behind-the-wheel driver education sessions in French to my students who were enrolled in driver’s ed.

Town

Students could research the extent to which the foreign language is evident in their town. In the case of French, students could identify French street names, business names, family names; they could research the number of French speakers in the town or the number of French societies or French churches and schools. What role did the French play in the development of the town? Did the French come from France or Quebec? How many Haitians or French-speaking Africans live in the town? To what extent is French still spoken in those towns and in the state? How involved were the immigrants in the building of the towns, i.e., what businesses did they start? did they build churches or schools? Were any of them involved in politics or in community service at the town or the state level? The following is a list of some of the activities that I have done over the years:

1. I taught French to students in another town through the medium of a long-distance TV experiment.
2. Some of my French 5 AP students participated in the Massachusetts Community Educational Television (MCET) program about Quebec and Indochina.
3. We teamed up with another Massachusetts school system in order to participate in a French exchange program with a lycée from Paris.

State

As with the town, students could research the extent to which the foreign language is present in the state they live in. In the case of French, there are many towns in Massachusetts that received many immigrants from Quebec such as Lowell, Taunton, New Bedford, Fall River, Marlboro. Students could research where the immigrants came from, where they settled, and where they worked. To what extent is French still spoken in those towns and in the state? How involved were the immigrants in the building of the towns, i.e., what businesses did they start? did they build churches or schools? Were any of them involved in politics or in community service at the town or the state level? The following is a list of some of the activities that I have done over the years:

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Country

It is a fact that our country was built by numerous waves of immigrants and traces of their presence can be found in various regions of our country. Are your students aware of the contributions the foreign culture has had on the development of the United States, i.e., the Germans in the midwest, the Spanish in the southwest, the French in the northeast and in Louisiana? When I was an active French teacher, I knew that there were American cities that
Communities: Live Locally, But Think And Speak Globally

had French names such as Detroit, Butte, Montpelier, Pierre, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Saint Louis, Fayetteville, and a few others, but I really never did anything with that information other than to mention it. As I became a part-time university professor of Foreign Language Methodology and a leader of summer workshops for L2 teachers I discovered that I was not alone. The vast majority of my students in those situations were Americans who like so many of our own students did not seem to know very much about France’s involvement in the development of our nation and of the important role that it played in our struggle for independence.

For information about the French presence in America, I offer the following articles that I wrote for the Culture Club sponsored by the now defunct National Capital Language Research Center:

1. The French Writers of New England
2. French Writers of Louisiana
3. America’s French Heritage

For access to those three articles please click on the following links:

In the last article I listed as completely as I could those American cities, towns, and counties that have French names and gave the history behind those names. I also recommend the following book entitled Unlikely Allies: How a Merchant, a Playwright, and a Spy Saved the American Revolution by Joel Richard Paul.

By knowing the contribution that so many countries have made to the development of the United States, our students will perhaps understand that they are members of a wider community than just the narrow one they live in.

World

The next step in our community building voyage is to look at the extent of the language that we are teaching by adopting a whole world strategy. Many years ago, one of my French 2 students in telling me that he and his family went to Quebec City over the February holidays very seriously proclaimed that “they really speak French over there and they also use the passé composé.” It was obvious that for him French existed only in the classroom. The Communities Strand will help students understand that foreign languages have an existence outside of the classroom.

For information about the French presence in the world, I offer the following articles that I wrote for the Culture Club:

1. The Francophone World as Seen Through the Eyes of Poets of the French Language
2. Black Writers of the French Language

For access to those two articles please click on the following links:

The Francophone World as Seen Through the Eyes of Poets of the French Language

For access to that article please click on the following link:

The French Writers of New England

For access to those two articles please click on the following links:
http://nclrc.org/cultureclub/collection/speakers_corner/French.html

For access to those three articles please click on the following links:

For access to that article please click on the following link:

In the last article I listed as completely as I could those American cities, towns, and counties that have French names and gave the history behind those names. I also recommend the following book entitled Unlikely Allies: How a Merchant, a Playwright, and a Spy Saved the American Revolution by Joel Richard Paul.

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Conclusion

As mentioned at the outset of this article, the Communities Strand gives one membership to a group of people sharing a common understanding who reveal themselves by using the same language, manners, tradition, and law and who have certain attitudes and interests in common. The student learning a new language acquires a broader vision of his/her world by opening one more door to a different culture and way of thinking. The L2 teacher enables the student to exceed the limits of his/her world by demonstrating that the target language exists far beyond the classroom and that indeed it exists in the town, the state, the country, and the world.

“The limits of my language are the limits of my world.”
Ludwig Wittgenstein

“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”
Frank Smith. To Think: In Language, Learning and Education
Communities For The 21st Century Learner
by Michael Travers

When I look back at journals and lesson plans from student teaching and my first two years in the classroom I can't help but ask: what was I thinking? Asking a student to simply communicate is such a vast and unusual task for novice and intermediate learners. My lessons gave no context and showed no mention of life outside of room 108. Don't even get me started on the antiquated vocabulary lists and precise grammar points construed together to create "fun" activities. Seriously though, who can create a dialogue incorporating double object pronouns? Who finds that fun? How is that engaging? I am thankful for ACTFL and professional development for showing me that communication is an integrated skill. One of the most important factors is this idea of connecting your learners to the greater community. To me, this means creating a link between what is taught in room 108 (my classroom) and what is used in the real world.

With this realization at the forefront of my curricular planning this summer, I approached my units with an infectious, new enthusiasm that made planning enjoyable. For each unit I have developed activities and assessments that integrate communication with the other four C's. Cultures, connections and comparisons were all easy and lent themselves to enhance communication. However, when it came to thinking of communities, I struggled with how to bring my 90 minute classroom into the greater world. How can I go into the community with my students and promote them to use the language with or without me? After what felt like an eternity trying to find creative yet practical solutions, I took a break and went scrolling through my phone (like a true millennial). Halfway through my social media scrolling I realized the answer to my planning problems was right in my hands.

I know that some of you probably shutter at the mere idea of a cell phone having a place in the classroom (a question that, ironically, students debated in their AP persuasive essays this past year). But if we take a minute to really think about it, this is the most realistic way to connect students to the target culture's communities. We all know that our students have their phones with them at all times and are constantly checking social media for the latest news or gossip. Their community relies heavily on what the next iOS updates include. So, I thought why not tap into this potential and bring the target culture to my students with the click of the "follow" button.

For this upcoming school year I have planned social media related activities for all of my courses from novice-low to the pre-AP level. Within the first days of school I will start by asking students who have Twitter to follow famous people from the target culture. This could include the newly elected president of France, Emmanuel Macron, the Real Madrid soccer team official page or any of the endless news channels depending on their personal interest.

This year in my French 1 course at the end of each unit I will ask students to explore and find a reputable Twitter user whose tweets relate to the unit’s theme. For example they may choose to follow Le Cochon Dingue after our unit on food or Météo-France after we study weather. Meanwhile in Spanish 4, they will engage more with hashtags based on our current thematic unit. Some may choose to follow a career hashtag that they find useful while studying contemporary life while others may be intrigued by Gabriel Garcia Marquez after reading some of his literature while studying beauty and aesthetics.

The possibilities are endless and all student driven, connecting them with the simple click of on screen. In my ideal world the students would be tweeting in the target language on their own but let’s take this step by step!

My hope with this new tool is to achieve a few goals: 1. To encourage students to use language outside of the classroom with retweets and replies. 2. To increase student interest in the language by choosing which accounts they want to follow. 3. To continue to develop 21st century learning skills by teaching them how to properly use social media in the target language. 4. And to show the importance of another language in other careers to help promote lifelong learners. If we continue to embrace the new technologies as they become popular, we only strengthen what we do both in the classroom and our communities.

Michael Travers is starting his third year at Norton High School teaching both Spanish and French. He attended Stonehill College for his Bachelor’s Degree in Foreign Languages and just graduated from UMass Boston with his MEd. This year, he was awarded one of MaFLA’s New Teacher Commendation Awards. Besides teaching, he loves cooking, country music and traveling (especially throughout Spain).

More Reasons why you want to be at the 2017 MaFLA Conference at the Sheraton Monarch Place, Springfield

4. Networking opportunities will be enhanced through exciting new technologies
5. Visit our exhibitors and find the latest and greatest products and technologies
6. The Energy of like minded individuals will refresh and rejuvenate you. The celebration and excitement will be contagious!
7. Invest in yourself, your attendance at the conference is an investment in yourself, your career, your school and your school systems. Don't miss out! You deserve it!
8. Learn and grow in a new space. Breaking out of our routines and our comfort zones allows us to see new places, people and perspectives. Our conference site in Springfield has a great professional feel and top quality facilities.
We live in narrow-minded times, wherein insularity and nationalism are pervasive in public discourse. If you’re among the many people looking for ways to take political action, one of the most effective things you can do is devote yourself to learning a new foreign language.

Learning a new language is a way to foster community and understanding between people of all political persuasions and nationalities. This can act both as a potent corrective force to any tendencies of narrow-mindedness we may be harboring, and as a form of political resistance. It’s a concrete action that all of us can take to move the needle toward a more just and open-minded mentality.

To understand why this is the case, it’s useful to consider all the ways in which learning a language helps steel us against the prevailing small-mindedness of our times.

Learning a language helps you understand your own culture better

Though we speak our own language all the time, we don’t tend to notice how it works until we learn another one. Until then, we lack the necessary perspective. As the German poet Goethe said, “Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own.”

When we learn a second language, all the “decisions” our language invisibly makes for us become visible. We notice how our way of describing the world is just one of many, and that there is a dazzling variety of ways in which we could see the world if we had the language to do so.

The Russian language considers light and dark blue to be separate colors, and in Slavic languages, there is one word for both fingers and toes.

This shows up in the smallest details. For instance, Russian considers light and dark blue to be separate colors—as we might red and orange. As you learn to speak Russian, you are obliged to pay attention to this distinction and begin to categorize your experience differently, simply due to the language. This idea that the structure of language determines how its speakers experience the world is known as the Sapir Whorf hypothesis, named after two early-20th-century linguists who proposed the idea.

As another example, consider how we use different words for fingers and toes in English. Not so in Slavic languages, which make do with one word for both. In learning them, you get used to the idea that your toes are in fact foot-fingers, a subtle reclassification that nonetheless makes you experience the sheer fact of your embodiment differently.

Learning a language encourages new ways of thinking

Few modern scientists have done more to advance our understanding of how language influences thought than Lera Boroditsky, a professor of cognitive science at the Uni-
Learning A Second Language

versity of California, San Diego. Her publications have demonstrated all sorts of ways in which our grammars rearrange our ways of perceiving and understanding the world.

“Even flukes of grammar can profoundly affect how we see the world,” Boroditsky says. For example, the word for death in German is masculine, whereas in Russian, it’s feminine. “German painters are more likely to paint death as a man, whereas Russian painters are more likely to paint death as a woman,” she says.

The Kuuk Thaayorre people of Australia say “my north-western leg” instead of “my left leg.”

Boroditsky also points to her work with the nomadic Kuuk Thaayorre people in Australia, who have a unique way of referring to direction not in egocentric coordinates (“my left leg”) but according to direction in space (“my north-western leg”). To be able to refer to objects in this way, they naturally have to pay constant attention to their orientation in space. This mandates an entirely different overall experience of the environment around them.

This extends even to their experience of time. We Westerners tend to think of time as going from left to right. When asked to arrange pictures of people of different ages, we will tend to do so with the youngest beginning on the left through to the oldest on the right. But for the Kuuk Thaayorre people, the natural arrangement of time is from east to west, following the sun. In other words, depending on whether you’re pointing north or south, the arrangement of young to old will go right to left instead of left to right.

Learning a language frees you from your habitual mind

People who speak several languages frequently self-report that they feel like different people when speaking in different languages. When I quizzed my own team, which contains 29 different nationalities, I got some very amusing anecdotal examples.

Our Japanese specialist becomes a much more direct person while speaking English; our resident Israeli becomes much less so; and the French enjoy eating less when speaking in English.

Nairan Ramírez-Esparza, an assistant professor of social psychology at the University of Connecticut, has conducted experiments that demonstrate this phenomenon. In one study, she had Mexican-American subjects talk about themselves in relation to their families, relationships and hobbies, in both Spanish and English. “In English, they spoke of their achievements, college, and daily activities. In Spanish, the subjects talked about themselves in relation to their families, relationships, and hobbies,” she says. Ramírez-Esparza explains this is because language primes behavior so that different emphases are focused on different values: In the case of English, toward individualism; in that of Spanish, toward community.

The impact that shifting languages can have on us reveals how central it is to our identities and social connections. In a series of intriguing studies, Boaz Keysar and his colleagues at the University of Chicago have shown that when speaking a second language, people tend to behave more rationally. In our native languages, we’re somewhat stuck in our habits, and likely to be susceptible to classic cognitive biases. But the more thoughtful effort that is required to speak a second language helps elevate us into more rational territory.

Learning a language increases your empathy

As the Roman stoic Seneca said, “One of the most beautiful qualities of true friendship is to be understood.”

A side effect of learning a second language is that we become better at empathetically assuming others’ perspectives. A variety of studies, especially in children, have shown that speaking another language can improve our ability to imagine the perspective of another.

Speaking another language can improve our ability to imagine the perspective of another.

Why should this be? One theory relates this phenomenon to the fact that the multilingual brain absorbs languages in an overlapping way. Many tens of millions of the same neurons involved in your speaking French, for instance, will also contribute to your speaking Chinese. The intertwining of these networks confuses your brain: Its Chinese-speaking parts will tend to activate the French-speaking ones and vice-versa, and thus a hybrid of Chench or Frinese threatens to babble forth.

To keep such creativity at an acceptable level, scientists opine that the brain’s systems of cognitive control are forced to work harder—and in the course of that workout, they grow stronger. That serves to enhance people’s ability to inhabit their personal perspective, and as a result, they’re better at assuming other people’s perspectives.

** **

In these various ways, someone who has learned a foreign language or three can benefit from increased empathy, selflessness, flexibility of thinking, and self-awareness. It is surely no coincidence that these qualities are commonly cited as absent in the characters of US president Donald Trump and former leader of the UK Independent Party Nigel Farage, the two monoglots who’ve done perhaps the most to narrow political discourse in America and Britain in recent years.

A few language lessons won’t reverse Brexit or get Trump impeached. But they may be able to sprinkle a little empathy into the void. And in the meantime, the rest of us can get on with opening our minds by learning a language as soon as possible—lest we come to resemble those whom we abhor.

You can follow Ed on Twitter. Learn how to write for Quartz Ideas. We welcome your comments at ideas@qz.com.

Written by Ed Cooke, Co-founder and CEO, Memrise
Link to Original Blog Post
E Pals Is The Answer!
What Is The Question?

by Callie Egan

Communities

Extending learning experiences from the world language classroom to the home and multilingual and multicultural community emphasizes living in a global society. Activities may include: field trips, use of email and the World Wide Web, clubs, exchange programs, and cultural activities, school-to-work opportunities, and opportunities to hear speakers of other languages in the school and classroom.

http://globalteachinglearning.com/standards/5cs.shtml

How do we integrate the communities component into our classroom instruction?

Over 8 years ago, using E pals (https://www.epals.com/#/connections,) we made friends with a college just outside of Paris. Five times during the year, the students would write an email to their penpals alternating writing in French and in English on a topic established by the 2 teachers. Over time, technology has offered improved formats. We now use Google docs*, in which 4 people have access to each student pair (American teacher and student, French teacher and student). This gives us control over the quality of what is being written and if our students are completing the assignment. We've had a Skype session, which began timidly, but ended with one French student using the international language of music, calling out, "Do you like Thriftshop by Macklemore?", and both classrooms burst into the song. We hosted a French student (with her mom and sister) for the day bringing in all the grade 8 French students for lunch provided by the parents. The menu was decidedly "typically American"- Mac n Cheese, hamburgers, chocolate chip cookies and brownies. This year, one of our students spent the day with the students in France. In addition to email, we exchange packages of typical items. Students often bring in old books, magazines, decorations of Halloween, Easter, 4th of July, Red Sox pictures, and stickers. In addition, I often slip in a few boxes of Mac n Cheese, and chocolate chip cookies, which the teacher uses as prizes for special projects. This past year we made valentines that highlighted plays on words: Bee mine! I cannoli be your valentine! Yoda best! You're my butter half. We make a perfect pear! The students illustrated them, and then wrote an explanation on the back to help the students understand them. In return, for Mardi Gras, we received the French version of jeu de mots.

Another nod to technology, the students created introductory videos of themselves, Americans in French and the French students in English. The excitement on the day that the videos arrived in their email boxes was off the charts. One challenge to this: commonality of format. There was a huge variety of video formats, which necessitated my changing them all into a single one.

Many students maintain the correspondence after they finish with my class. Recently I received an email from a student who participated in the first year doing this. She wrote that she had been corresponding with her French penpal since grade 8 and now she is graduating college. They are both ballerinas, and were making arrangements to meet! The C of community has many goals. One is: living in a global society: mission accomplished through E pals!

Details on how to do it:

• Google docs details: create a folder for the class. Create a doc with the class title (B block) and the names of the two students (B Emily S Nicholas P). SHARE: anyone with a link, add both teachers’ emails, and both student emails; change to “can edit”; create a shortened URL through google URL shortener. Create a table and put the information in the table and share it with the other teacher.

• **Sending items to France can be costly. If you have a grant opportunity in the school, apply for $200.00 to cover mailing costs. The 50 Valentines cost about $60.00. Also, it takes a long time.

• Remind students to not share personal email, or Facebook information. This is not possible to enforce, but good to suggest.

• Students (most female to female) began sending packages of goodies to each other via the school.

• Video formats: ask students to use the same format mov or wmv. Create a naming format (B Claire K Jean P) so when they are sent, it is easy for each to find their own.

Challenges:

Inevitably, some student (American or French) does not maintain the correspondence. I'd suggest adding them to another pair that is successful.

More Reasons why you want to be at the 2017 MaFLA Conference at the Sheraton Monarch Place, Springfield

9. Plan to stay onsite and engage and have fun in off hours social activities. Springfield has great museums, the Basketball Hall of Fame, and the new Dr. Seuss museum is now open. You could be some of the first visitors.

10. Return to your childhood in the city that was home to the famous Dr. Seuss and see the “Places you will go” as a result of this great conference. The Cat in the Hat will miss you if you are not present for this great event.
Ahoy! On June 19th, more than 500 Boston Public School students and staff were invited by Mayor Martin Walsh to board the Tall Ships in Boston Harbor and to meet the crew of these vessels from around the world. What a great opportunity for students to practice their language skills! Julie Fouhy and Leisa Quinones Oramas, teachers of French and Spanish at Excel High School and Mayra Figueroa, Spanish teacher from Another Course to College, along with their students, took part in the Sail Boston event at the Charlestown Navy Yard.

In order to prepare students for this event, teachers prepared lessons that included authentic resources in Spanish and French about each vessel. A real-time radar site [http://yb.tl/rdv2017#](http://yb.tl/rdv2017#) was used both as a way to track the Tall Ships’ progress across the Atlantic Ocean and as a teaching tool about the 24 hour clock for Novice learners. In one lesson, etymology/cross cultural comparisons of shipping vocabulary were employed and each student selected a ship for which he or she was the “specialist.” Students then created an ad in the target language demonstrating why their chosen ship was special, what made it different from the others, and prepared a brief oral presentation of the ship’s origin.

Another class incorporated an historical aspect into the lessons by discussing the history of the American Sail Training Association and the historical perspective of the slave trade on the Schooner, Amistad. Students then discussed The United States vs. The Amistad case brought before the US Supreme Court in 1841. They debated whether the mutiny of the slaves aboard this ship was lawful and discussed John Quincy Adams’ argument in favor of the Amistad rebels before the US Supreme Court.

At the event, students boarded the ships and were proud not only to communicate with crew members in their native language, but to learn about life on board the ships while sharing their own life experiences with the crew.

At the end of the day, students were treated to lunch by Mayor Walsh and had time to share their experiences with students from other schools. What a great way to showcase ACTFL’s National Standard of Community!

We Want To Hear From YOU!
How does your school connect to the Target Language Community?

Share your experience in a brief article.

Send your contribution to Ronie@MaFLA.org
This summer, thanks to Nicola De-Santis, the Consul General of Italy, and C.A.S.IT., Italian students from Medford High School, Revere High School, Waltham High School, Winchester High School and Harvard University experienced MaFLA’s theme of what it means for Languages to Transform Individuals into Communities.

The Amerigo Vespucci, also known as “the most beautiful ship in the world”, is the official training ship for the Italian Navy. Making a stop in Boston as part of its 2017 world tour, and participation in Sail Boston was special for the Americans as well as the Italians. Students had an opportunity to use the language they were learning to converse with the crew of the ship and listen to the captain as he spoke to them.

The meticulously planned program was “L’italiano a Gonfie Vele”. Teachers and students received a special invitation to visit the ship. During the visit, they spoke with the cadets, learned about the ship’s history and what the crew does. The teachers gave a lesson on the ship with related vocabulary and comprehension activities. Students and teachers were also provided with Italian snacks and drinks. At the end of the visit, the students received gifts such as T-shirts, posters, calendars. The students connected with the crew of the ship as well as with students from other schools, on the Amerigo Vespucci which is also considered UNICEF’s Ambassador. In truth, we are all ambassadors.

Coming in January . . .
What are your favorite tools for your class? Let us know.
Send a short article to Ronie@MaFLA.org
Like most teachers, we have had different experiences in this profession, but we both have in common this innate desire to research and collaborate in order to find the best teaching practices to put into praxis in our own classrooms. Learning a language is alive—evolving and reshaping the way we listen, read, and write, but especially how we speak and think about language. For this reason, we are motivated to share what we have researched and used in the classroom in regards to promoting and maintaining a welcoming environment in the target language. We hope you all enjoy our question and answer format of the common issues that we have contemplated throughout the years, and probably you have too.

1. **What are some ways to set the tone and promote speaking in the target language on the first day of class? What different types of activities can be initiated by the teacher?**

   **Visuals!** Our learners need to walk into a classroom that has visuals, where they are able to see visuals and memorabilia and respond in the target language. Flags from different countries and memorabilia such as calaveras (skulls) to commemorate the Day of the Dead can prompt us to ask our students questions such as, ¿Qué es? (What is it?) and ¿Cómo es? (What is it like?). Instating a **Pregunta del día (Question of the Day)** segment of the lesson when your students enter your classroom sets the tone for students listening and then responding in the target language about interesting and diverse topics. Setting this type of daily routine for your students creates consistency and reinforces the expectation that the target language is the language of class interaction. This can also foster a skills-building and a team-building environment, where students work together to complete activities in the target language. To create a team-like environment, activities known as “icebreakers,” allow both teachers and students to get to know each other better. Depending on the type of game, students work together in the target language strategizing and establishing an expectation of circumlocution, which is an essential part of staying at least 90% in the target language. An example of an icebreaker game could be the following:

   **Two Truths and a Lie:** Students write two truths and lie about themselves in the target language, on a note card. They write their name at the top, and give them all to you. Then, the teacher passes one notecard to each student so they can read someone else’s note card out loud. Don’t say the name, but let the class first guess who wrote the sentences. Once everyone understands them all, and knows who it is, have the students guess which sentence is a lie using the following sentence starter… “Adivino que (I guess that)…..porque (because)…”

2. **How can we help our students maintain a target language infused class environment when they are stuck or do not know how to say something? What strategies can we teach them?**

   Helping increase our student’s ability to communicate through vocabulary gaps will enable our students to see language as a valuable tool both inside our classroom and outside the classroom as well. An integral component of 21st century learning expectations, emphasizes the importance of students being able to use the target language in their community and beyond. For students to have the necessary skills in order to communicate, circumlocution is one of the most integral strategies to teach our students so that they are able to be successful and feel confident speaking in the target language when we are not present. When teaching vocabulary to our students we should teach them by using a definition in Spanish to accompany the word along with its part of speech (and an antonym). For example, to teach the word manzana (apple), we can say: una fruta roja que crece en un árbol (sustantivo) (a red fruit that grows in a tree (noun)). In order to practice circumlocution, here is a fun activity to try with your class:

   **Circumlocution game:** Prepare slips of paper with vocabulary words pertaining to your particular unit or theme, and divide the class into two groups. Set a timer (1-2 minutes). One student draws a slip of paper, and tries to get his/her team to guess the term without saying the word itself. After the word is guessed, the next team member draws a word, and so on until the timer goes off. Count the slips up and give those points to the team. This game is a great way to introduce students to circumlocution through talking around a word you don’t know in order to avoid resorting to English.

3. **What are the students so afraid of? What can we do to ease the tension or resistance to speaking in the target language?**

   Students are afraid of making mistakes. Like most academic subjects, students want to do their best, and are often hesitant to speaking in the target language for fear of not being able to say something properly. Of course, students should be told that making mistakes is a necessary component of language learning. However, to ease the resistance of speaking in the target language due to fear of making mistakes, give students ungraded activities or assessments and make the goal be to say as much as they can given a prompt. Push for quantity of information. You can even have students work with other students using the rubric as a guide. For example, giving students a performance-based oral rubric can help guide their expectation both in terms of performance and in terms of the types of suggestions students might give to their classmates. The informal assessment prompt can be as simple as: Pretend you are leaving a voicemail message for your favorite restaurant giving them a Yelp Restaurant Review about their last dining experience of what made it an enjoyable experience. Students’ post-activity can be listen to their recording with a partner and discuss one strength, one improvement or a goal that they want to set for themselves in the future.
4. How can I motivate the language learner who doesn’t want to speak the target language?

Some students are taking your language class because their guidance counselor told them they need it in order to get into college or because they actually want to learn, yet have no motivation. Teachers cannot fix all the issues with the student, but here are some strategies that might help you motivate the reticent learner. Ask yourself: What kind of class is it? Is it mixed grades? Who are my students? Do they play sports, are they members in the band, drama, or even class officers? What are their interests? If your answers vary it will be tougher, but there is always a common theme in the class that can peak student interest: sports, activities in school, social life, etc. Use these indicators to create an atmosphere to take advantage of those pros and cons. For example if you have a “talker” in class, depend upon that student to do major announcements; he or she will pass out work back to the class etc. As opposed to negatively correcting the student’s behavior of talking, the teacher can make it a positive for the class by using that student as a helper, then the other students will not be distracted by that student. Ensuring that all kids participate is the key to getting your students to participate, and having students that are “disruptors” on your side and playing an important role in your class can go a long way to achieve whatever goal you have set out for the day. In short, use the talents or lack of talent of your students to motivate your non-interested students, and that will turn your motivated students into shining stars and who doesn’t necessarily like being a shiny star. Here is a fun activity that should motivate even the least motivated student:

Let’s play the game “tell me who you are” in 5 sentences or less. You are being interviewed for a magazine such as Times, National Geographic, or ESPN. If you are interested in sports, then pick ESPN as the magazine you would like to interview you. It is up to you how humble or not you want to be. This can be used for low to high level classes, students can modify their questions based on what they know about the magazine their partner chooses or based on what their partner’s interests are. Teacher will pair up students to interview each other, teacher will walk around the classroom and interact with students or listen in to interviews. The teacher can provide guiding questions for the interviewer, and the students will take turns asking questions. For example, if it’s TIME magazine, talk about your work in the community. Some guiding questions can be: ¿Quién eres? (Who are you?) or ¿Qué te gusta jugar y qué no te gusta jugar? (What do you like to play?) Examples of a low level question modifier to help students out could be ¿Cómo te llamas? (What’s your name?) ¿De dónde eres? (Where are you from?) The goal is to get your students speaking in a topic of their interests. Students can have a choice on what magazine they pick, in doing so they will know something about what they are being asked about.

5. What is it that we want our students to be able to do as a result of the target language practice in class?

As a native Spanish speaker from The Dominican Republic, Elias Reinoso came to the United States at eight years old. As an English language learner, he was taught in a small class setting with about five students sitting in a round table discussion forum. The teacher would ask questions while the students would try to answer. The teacher asked personal questions about each student such as: What do you like to do after school? When did you come to the United States? The questions were meaningful and personal. When answering it felt as if he was allowing others to know a bit more about himself. The questions were of a topic that was interesting to each person, not just on a generic level. Interesting questions yielded interesting answers.

Now as a high school Spanish teacher with classes of twenty or sometimes many more students, he cannot get to all the students, but why not? It can be done, by setting up time each day or every other day with a smaller group of students while other students work on something else. For example: While Mr. Elias works with a roundtable of five students, the others will work in pairs to read a short story in Spanish. The roundtables can be rotated, so that all students have this time for individual attention.

This can be a way to use prior knowledge to speak in a spontaneous way with a focus within a specific context. As language learners get used to speaking in the target language, it becomes part of their daily routine. Teachers must try to create that environment in their class as much as possible. Knowing what the teacher is talking about is key to getting students to participate. The more you interact with students, the more they hear the target language getting a sense of what sounds right in the language and getting a feel for what conversational exchanges are like. Having a back and forth conversation with students can yield very positive results, if done correctly. Students will only engage fully when they are interested in the topic and when they know the topic fairly well.

It is one thing to have the teacher initiate the conversations in class but our ultimate goal is student to teacher and student to student communication. Teachers must allow students to converse in a topic that they might have had some prior knowledge about because this allows them to feel that they can contribute. Teachers must also allow students to think in the target language by giving them sufficient wait time to think about their response. Teachers must understand that if your students don’t give the best answers about what they did on their summer vacation—that is ok because there might be another way to ask so that your student might be able to answer. Understanding is key to asking the right questions. What teachers should want is to have students that want to talk about a topic in the target language or to at least attempt to answer based upon prior knowledge. Teachers are not always going to be there to initiate the conversation, so let’s give our students a little bit of ownership. If we strive for proficiency, then let us take a step back and make the content that we want the students to discuss meaningful for them.
Research-Based Tips For Staying In The Target Language

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.

Coretta Scott King

6. How can I become a better TL teacher? What can I do to be better at staying in the target language?

Break up your class in sections or activities. Instead of having forty five minutes of dialogue with yourself and having your students “zone out”... get them involved! It can be a back and forth two-way communication, where you keep pushing your students to continue to converse. This can also be challenging for your students to hear the target language for a longer period of time, so stop sporadically and repeat, reiterate, and do informal check-ins asking the students questions about their experience with what was said or to give an example. At the end of the day you're the coach, but you have to know how hard and fast you can push them, and that all starts with you listening to you.

Native speaker teachers have a tendency to have less patience with low level foreign language learners, also there is a tendency to be very critical about speaking errors. Non-native speaker teachers might feel that they are doing more explaining to students versus giving their students an activity that is a little bit above their level so that they are able to challenge themselves a bit more. Native speakers can serve their students better by teaching basic grammar or common vocabulary, since they may assume at times that students already know it. At times it can be helpful to go back to the basics. Freshening up on a bit of grammar and recycling the common vocabulary will ensure that the students know what the native speaker is referring to instead of the teacher assuming the student is not interested or lacks the ability. It is a common mistake that most native teachers make to run away from grammar and enabling non-native speakers to perform at a higher level.

Elias Reinoso and Kristen Duhamel are two Spanish teachers who met through Salem State University’s Masters of Arts in Teaching Spanish program. Elias is currently at Burlington High School. Kristen is in his tenth year as a Spanish teacher at Peabody High School and Kristen is in her third year of teaching Spanish, and is currently at Burlington High School.
In a progressive world where upwards of six thousand languages are spoken, the generally monolingual state of American citizens seemed not only unacceptable to me, but also baffling. Hence, as Noah Webster, the founder of Merriam-Webster Dictionary, learned twenty-six languages in order to evaluate the etymology of words, I learned a handful of languages, my only driving force being passion.

At a very young age, I learned Tamil. Tamil, my mother tongue, is an official language in India and Sri Lanka, and a recognized minority language in Malaysia, Mauritius, and South Africa, not to mention its heavy diaspora in Europe and North America. Clocking in at over 75 million total speakers, the internationally recognized classical language is not only one of the oldest languages in the world, but also the twenty-first most spoken language in the world. Spoken Tamil was never taught to me, but rather, picked up through continuous exposure, as my parents would converse in the language predominantly. Later on, I took it upon myself to conduct research about the language, and in no time at all, began reading novels and literary epics with ease.

Growing up almost entirely in the linguistically diverse regions of Chicagoland and Greater Boston, I was exposed to a medley of languages early on. In addition to the obvious English, the Spanish language was ubiquitous, and Hindi was rampant among scattered pockets of North Indian communities. Back in Illinois, a handful of my friends were of North Indian descent, and as their parents conversed with them in Hindi, Ifurtively tried absorbing their vocabulary. Interacting with Gujarati food vendors and Marathi immigrants also helped me immensely. India is an uber-diverse nation, which, in addition to English, boasts twenty-two official languages, many of them being mutually unintelligible from one another. In fact, throughout the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where my parents hail from, Hindi was abhorred for a while — my parents lived through a time period in which Hindi road signs were marred and Hindi speakers were outcasted, as the language was viewed as a symbol of coercion to dilute the prevailing Tamil language.

Political stances aside, I began to slowly and steadily pick up on the Hindi language, for sheer practicality purposes. Hard work continues to guide me in learning Hindi, vastly different from my mother tongue, Tamil. Soon, I began to perceive the concept of language differently. A language did not belong to anyone — it wasn’t their language or our language. Rather, a language was merely a reflection of human thought, yet another display of the intricate fabric of mankind. Learning another language makes one cognizant of the world around them. In my case, Malayalam and Hindi not only broaden my understanding of culture but also serve as vehicles to better connect with my family and friends.

I took Spanish courses beginning in the seventh grade, and into the first three years of high school, as I observed myself rapidly advancing my knowledge of the language through extraneous sources — Spanish news and other modes of exposure. By my third year in high school, I was taking an Advanced Placement course in the language. Where the vast majority of my classmates were concerned about résumé development and career advancement, I continued to embrace the language out of sheer enthusiasm and began studying for the Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera, a globally recognized Spanish diploma offered by the Instituto Cervantes in Spain. I was never quite satisfied with my grasp of the Spanish language. Often, I would venture into the cities of Lawrence and Boston, and strike up a conversation in the language, with store owners, arbitrary civilians, and even the receptionists at my dentist’s office. While I hoped my Spanish was immaculate, I had also secretly wanted myself to make mistakes, so that early on they could be identified and corrected. Surprising my instructors with my perseverance, I was granted the Excellence in Advanced Placement Spanish award by my school’s administration later that year.

A couple months prior to the award, I kickstarted a well embraced language-based initiative within my high school. Scrivi, a multilingual school periodical, was founded to raise emphasis on language acquisition within the community, where over forty languages are spoken. Focusing on language, culture, diversity and global ideas, all of which play significant roles in societal and cognitive development, Scrivi has already received submission requests in over fifteen languages, and its first issue is on track to be published in the autumn. As language education in North American schools is predominantly Eurocentric, Scrivi also hopes to introduce the community to languages and cultures beyond the traditional Spanish, French, and Latin.

As Italian screenwriter Federico Fellini once famously vindicated, “A different language is a different vision of life.” As a strong believer in the power of polyglotism, this quotation is a true-to-life one. Language acquisition has taught me the vastness of the world, the diversity of mankind, the broadness of thought, and the surrealness of experiences, lessons that neither mathematics nor life sciences could teach me. There has yet to exist, in my humble opinion, a career path which can be negatively impacted by the procurement of another language. Learning these languages, dare I say, has opened up my eyes to the capacity of the human mind.

Visvajit Sriramrajan is a student at Andover High School, and is Founder, and Editor-in-Chief of Scrivi

The Capacity Of The Human Mind
by Visvajit Sriramrajan

This world of ours... must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be, instead, a proud federation of mutual trust and respect.

Dwight D. Eisenhower
As most of you are aware, Massachusetts has been involved in a Pilot project administering proficiency testing for the past two years. The state is considering passing legislation that would award a Seal of Biliteracy to students who demonstrate their ability in one other language besides their own including ELL students. A seal is affixed to their diplomas and transcripts indicating that proficiency based on this testing. There are many districts involved at this point and many students who have achieved this recognition and honor. They have met their proficiency benchmark as seniors or at other times throughout their foreign language careers if they enrolled in Immersion programs.

Testing takes place at a variety of times and in many grades and levels. My district, Falmouth, this year tested a random sample of high school students at the end of their required coursework in grade 10 as well as all seniors in all languages. We also include the grade 8 students since we have to see if they too have met their target levels. The majority of them, in fact, do just that. Out of 65 grade 8 students this year, 50 earned recognition with ‘commendations toward biliteracy’. That is 77% of that population.

As Joshua Cabral says: “We need to motivate beginning learners since they appreciate and enjoy learning another language”. I believe they do.

After taking the STAMP proficiency test this year, Grade 8 French students at Lawrence Junior High School in Falmouth, MA took the time to actually provide some feedback to their teacher, Adrienne Forns, who in turn passed it along to me. Their comments are insightful and validate their love of learning French and how much they realized that they knew and ‘could do’ with the language. It is gratifying for teachers to hear comments like this since it makes what we do all worthwhile.

I think their reactions are insightful and show that they are invested in language study:

“Overall, I had a good experience taking the STAMP test. I found some parts challenging, especially the listening part. Some of the selections were very long, and hard to understand. Also, there were a couple of speaking/writing parts that I didn’t know the right vocabulary for to make a complete response. Overall though, I think it was a valuable experience to test my French knowledge by taking the STAMP test.”

One student had difficulty with the audio, but stated:

“pretty much everything else is A–okay.”

One student found both speaking and writing difficult, but said the

“reading was ok and the listening was easy.”

Some had more trouble with listening and speaking but found that

“everything else was easy.”

“I thought that the STAMP test was a good experience. I found the multiple choice/listening parts were the easiest, but the writing parts were the hardest. All in all, it was somewhat challenging, but not impossible.”

Personally, I find it gratifying to hear that it is challenging but not impossible. To me that means students feel as if they ‘can do’ it!

“I personally enjoyed taking this test. I did not find it too difficult.”

“I feel that the Stamp test was a very effective way to evaluate the French knowledge that I had.”

One student also suggested adding video to help with listening and liked the writing parts because she could think of a lot to write. She also liked how it got more challenging as it went on.

“I thought the test was easy.”

As you can see, their reflections are not only food for thought, but show evidence of real and authentic understanding of another language. We hope they continue to enjoy their language study and that their skills will progress to Intermediate Mid and beyond!

Pat DiPillo is the Foreign Language Dept Chair 7-12 for Falmouth Public Schools

A true community is not just about being geographically close to someone or part of the same social web network. It’s about feeling connected and responsible for what happens. Humanity is our ultimate community, and everyone plays a crucial role.

Yehuda Berg
Seal of Biliteracy Updated
by Nicole Sherf

The Massachusetts Language Opportunity Coalition (LOC, www.languageopportunity.org) is an organization seeking to support and strengthen ESL, dual language and world language programming. The unique collaboration between members of the Boards of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA), the Massachusetts Association of Bilingual Education (MABE) and the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English Language Learners (MATSOL) has resulted in increased awareness related to the demands, the process and the results of proficiency development and the need to explain this to district administration and community as well as the Department of Education and legislators. We have been making legislative strides with the Seal of Biliteracy legislation and the Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) Bill, which also includes a provision for a state Seal of Biliteracy. This spring, the Joint Committee on Education held a hearing for each of the bills, which were well attended with supporters and for which strong testimony was given. We are waiting now to hear about next steps as the bills land in the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. We believe that rewarding students for biliteracy underscores the need for higher levels of proficiency in multiple languages as a critical college and career readiness skill.

The Steering Committee of the LOC is now in its third two-year legislative session working to pass the Seal of Biliteracy legislation. Because of the delay in passing the legislation, the LOC Steering Committee began an effort to create resources for implementation and to recruit districts to begin to pilot the Seal of Biliteracy. The Pilot in the 2015-16 school year resulted in nine districts implementing and rewarding more than 300 Seals to students. In 2016-17, the number of districts involved jumped to 15 and the number of pilots rewarded tripled to more than 900. More importantly, 75 members of the Seal Workgroup are involved in monthly GotoMeetings to standardize practices, create models and resources and outline the process of district implementation in what we call the Seal Toolkit. Our Seal Workgroup joins our GoogleGroup to receive messages, have access to our materials and participate in our meetings.

Our collaborative efforts have not yet resulted in passed legislation though we have made significant progress through legislative meetings, bill hearings and a variety of types of community outreach endeavors. In this newsletter update, I have decided to share our lessons learned with our national organizations through a Frequently Asked Questions format.

What is the Seal of Biliteracy?
The Seal of Biliteracy is a national movement that began in California in 2011 as a way to recognize and reward students that had attained a functional level of biliteracy as a result of their schooling. Since that time, 27 states have enacted Seal of Biliteracy legislation.

Why is it necessary to pass legislation for a Seal of Biliteracy?
One legislator asked us this question in a Hearing remarking that if we were already running the pilot successfully, why was the legislation necessary? We responded that the Seal of Biliteracy movement is a national effort to value and reward biliteracy and that the legislation represents a formal commitment to the importance of language learning in this global environment. This is especially important in states like ours whose Departments of Education do not have a foreign language coordinator and who leave most programming decisions of untested subjects up to district choice. More importantly, legislation and state oversight creates a directive to language programs

that the historic grammar-based language instruction is not effective and does not produce proficiency.

What is proficiency?
The proficiency movement began in the 1970s when the government needed to describe what communicative functions were necessary for diplomats and the armed forces that were working abroad with the understanding that there would be a need for those personnel to interact with the native population. Certainly, the linguistic needs of a clerk are different than those of a soldier and those of a hostage negotiator. The levels extend from Novice, to Intermediate, to Advanced, to Superior to Distinguished and have sub-levels of low, mid and high. Each sub-level outlines the range of tasks or communicative functions that the person can complete, in which communicative contexts and how well the person can understand and be understood. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) adapted the scale for use in language development in K-12 and beyond. Though it has taken some time to become the national movement that it now is, best practices in foreign language teaching now focus on what the learner can do with the language. The purpose of language learning is to develop proficiency to be able to interact with the language in real-world communicative contexts for authentic purposes.

An understanding of the proficiency scale allows language programs to create proficiency targets and pushes the teacher to create a learning environment that focuses on the communicative needs of the target level of performance. This encourages programs and teachers to move away from the historic grammatical focus of language learning that did not develop proficiency or lead to much enjoyment in language learning. Language teachers are united in frustration over consistently hearing some version of the statement; “I took X number of years of X language in high school and I can’t say a word now.” Historically, language learning has not focused on what students can communicate as a result of programming.
How is proficiency measured?
Along with the proficiency scale, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was created as a formal assessment process through interview to assign the specific level of proficiency that the person can sustain in the language. In 2015, ACTFL in cooperation with the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), the National Association of Teachers of Other Languages (TESOL), and the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) designated Intermediate Mid as the minimum standard of functional proficiency for the Seal of Biliteracy. See the Guidelines for Implementing the Seal of Biliteracy at [https://www.actfl.org/news/press-releases/seal-biliteracy-guidelines-released](https://www.actfl.org/news/press-releases/seal-biliteracy-guidelines-released).

Over the last ten years, as language programming shifts to proficiency development and teachers have wanted to assess how well their students are attaining the departmental targets, two companies have created tests over the computer for use in schools to simulate the OPI interview process. The tests take about an hour or so and cost about $20 per student.

What if a district or a student does not want to participate in the Seal of Biliteracy?
The Seal of Biliteracy is voluntary for districts and voluntary for students within those districts that elect to participate.

What is the potential impact of the Seal of Biliteracy?
There is no other school-based test that we can think of that so perfectly describes what a student can do as a result of programming that has such a clear connection with a necessary career skill. In this age of seeking evidence of student learning, we have a perfect measure to describe what it is that our students can do as a result of their language learning programming. Even more exiting, it is a scale that is understood at the national level and can be used to document college and career readiness. We envision a near future where college credit is allocated through proficiency attained in K-12 and where jobs require a specific level of proficiency for the positions they post.

Resources for State Seal Implementation:

**ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines:**

**NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements:**

**Guidelines for Implementing the Seal of Biliteracy:**

**Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (poster created by ACTFL):**

**Language Opportunity Coalition Flier about Proficiency in the Workplace, Seal Toolkit and PowerPoint:**
[www.languageopportunity.org](http://www.languageopportunity.org)
Joy Renjilian-Burgy has taught at Wellesley for 38 years and has served in key leadership roles in regional, national, and international organizations.

Renjilian-Burgy's path to high honor in Spain began in the industrial city of Holyoke, Mass., in the Connecticut River Valley. Her mother, who came to the United States after the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1917, worked in a paper factory, while her father, also Armenian, worked in a silk mill. "We were a family of modest economic means, " said Renjilian-Burgy who was one of four daughters. "We were a traditional family, old-fashioned in many ways but joyous. My parents were immigrants. Although they had no formal schooling, they were the most intelligent people I knew, and instilled in us life-long values."

Renjilian-Burgy had many jobs, including making factory notebooks like the ones she would later use in college. She studied hard and took time to listen to her parents speak in their native language, as well as Arabic. She became fond of the rhythms and tone of Arabic. "I loved the sound," she said.

Later, she recognized the same sounds when she listened to people speaking Spanish, which led her to major in Spanish at Mount Holyoke College. "I loved the Arabic influence and the vocabulary," she said.

In college, she devoured Don Quixote and other books in which adventurous, chivalrous heroes and heroines fought for justice. "My classmates and I immersed ourselves in chivalric adventures and experienced the heights and depths of the human condition while embracing the rich, diverse Spanish language," she said. "I was mesmerized because I had found my life's passion."

After graduating from Mount Holyoke, Renjilian-Burgy earned a master's degree from Harvard University and joined the Spanish Department at Wellesley in 1979. "I was the first generation in my family to finish college, and I felt a connection with Wellesley because of the value placed on educating women," she said.

During her career, Renjilian-Burgy has won numerous prizes and awards, including induction into Holyoke High School's Hall of Fame and being named Massachusetts Spanish Teacher of the Year in 1981 by the Spanish Heritage Society. At Wellesley, she won the Pinanski Prize for Excellence in Teaching in 1983.

She has chaired the Spanish department three times and has held leadership positions in organizations such as the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and the United Nations Fund for Women.

Looking back over her 50-year career, Renjilian-Burgy said, "I get fulfillment from teaching new ideas and receiving responsive inquiry. I strive to build student self-expression and confidence."

"Her devotion to students is legendary, having hosted many of them in her own house during summers and after graduation," said her colleague Carlos Ramos, professor of Spanish. "She also pays it forward as a dedicated board member of the Wellesley Student Aid Society."

"She is also a beloved presence in our athletic facilities, where she attends numerous games to encourage our student-athletes. Her students love her, and very quickly establish long-lasting bonds with her."

Link to original article.
Read more HERE.
Close to 100 participants attended the MaFLA Summer Institute, held at Lasell College in Newton the weekend of August 18-20, 2017. This year, there were 4 strands: SPED, French, Latin and Spanish. The SPED strand, which allowed participants to receive the 15 hours needed to satisfy the DESE requirement, was very popular and most likely will be offered again next summer. Thanks to the SPED Co-Presenters: MaFLA Board member Kim Talbot and her colleague from Melrose High School, Cari Berman.

The Spanish strand, Co-Coordi by Helena Alfonzo (Newton South HS) and Nilza Gonzalez-Pedemonte (Boston College) included both cultural and pedagogical workshops. On Friday, Christina Toro (Arlington HS) presented on gender and racial bias in the Spanish classroom and Nilza presented on traditions, holidays and famous people from Latin America. On Saturday, Cynthia Irish (Wilmington MS – retired) presented on the Hispanic Heritage in the US, followed by Ryan Casey (Lexington HS) who spoke on designing and aligning AP tasks from middle school onward. He was followed by Katia Marticorena (Arlington HS) who presented on diversity without borders: social justice in the Spanish classroom. Sunday saw the return of Helena who presented on the Arab legacy in Spanish culture, followed by Carla Mulet (Wellesley HS) who gave the history of flamenco including steps, music and costumes and then had all the participants up and dancing following her lead. We hope to repeat this workshop at the 2018 MaFLA Fall Conference!

Coordinated by Dominique Trotin (newly appointed Director of World Languages at the Holliston Public Schools), the French strand began on Friday with Janel Lafond Paquin (Rogers HS- Newport, RI) who presented on Martinique and Guadeloupe followed by Helen Orvoen, who presented on Brittany, her native region of France, complete with a tasting of samples of authentic Breton specialties. On Saturday, participants learned about the history of lace-making in Puy-en-Velay, France from Judy Chapman (Worcester State University) and tried their luck with bobbins and thread on pillows which Judy had prepared for them. Beckie Rankin (Lexington HS) followed with a session on improving intercultural competencies with films. In the afternoon, Lethuy Hoang (Springfield College) discussed how to approach gender, sexual inequality and bullying through songs. On Sunday, Charlotte Gifford (Greenfield Community College) presented on incorporating authentic resources into your curriculum, followed by Louissa Abdelghany (Salem State University) who discussed the use of comic books to introduce students to francophone culture.

Both the French and Spanish strands had pedagogical exchanges (Swap Shops) on Saturday afternoon and participants also attended a one-hour session on the Seal of Biliteracy presented by Kim Talbot.

Latin Strand Coordinators, Madelyn Torchin and Debra Heaton, were thrilled to welcome guest presenter Sherwin Little,
Executive Director of the ACL (American Classical League) who gave many sessions throughout the weekend (See related write-up on the Latin Strand).

To celebrate MaFLA’s Jubilee, a special dinner was held on Saturday evening where participants sang “Happy 50th Birthday” to MaFLA in French, Spanish and Latin and enjoyed a dessert of cake and ice cream.

Thank you to all the MaFLA Board Members who contributed to the success of this weekend: Cherie Baggs, Maryann Brady, Pat diPillo, Jeanne O’Hearn, Kim Talbot, Beckie Rankin, Ronie & Larry Webster and President Tim Eagan, our IT guru! Gratias Madelyn and Debra! Gracias Helena y Nilza! Merci Dominique! The dates for the 2018 MaFLA Summer Institute are August 17-19 and we hope to see many returning participants as well as some new attendees!

Submitted by Joyce Beckwith, Director MaFLA Summer Institute.

Latin Strand

“Innovative, informative, upbeat! Outstanding” Comments from participants in the 2017 MaFLA Latin Summer Institute! Co-Facilitators, Debra Heaton and Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, were joined by Sherwin Little, Sarah Cain, Sally Hatcher, Corrado Russo, and Holly Engvall, to offer three days of critical and creative thinking on “Integrating the New ACL Standards into Latin Instruction.”

The new Standards have something to help every teacher or student of Classics at every level and the Institute vigorously delved into them.

Sherwin Little, ACL Executive Director and Standards team member, shared what is in the standards, how teachers and students can use the standards to understand the progression along the proficiency continuum, and guided participants to explore all five standards as well as the different modes of communication by looking at classroom examples and sharing their own activities. Debra Heaton began the discussion by presenting on Grading and the Standards and Sally Hatcher gave an overview of her new course, Cleopatra, engaging participants in activities that incorporated the new standards. Excerpts from various film representations of Cleopatra, from Cecil B. DeMille’s version to the latest cartoon, elicited participants’ discussion of ways the standards could be engaged through film.

Showcasing ways the standards can inform instruction were Sarah Cain, who presented on “Listening to Latin,” Cori Russo, on “One of the most perplexing aspects of the Standards is assessment—proficiency testing? performance descriptors? can-do statements?” … and that is just the start! In “Aligning your Assessment Practices with the New Standards,” Sherwin guided participants to examine best practices for assessment so that they left feeling not so overwhelmed by all those tests. As he pointed out, “Once you feel more educated about what the different types of assessments can tell you (and what they can’t) you [are] able to make an informed decision matching the assessment with the goal.” Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin followed up with a presentation on the present status of the ACTFL-NCSSFL Can-Do’s, v2.0, and offered strategies to encourage student participation in using can-do statements and led participants in a work session creating can-do statements for use in their own classrooms.

“Teaching Kids with Learning Needs: See How Standards-Based Learning Shines!” If we mean it when we say “Latin is for all students,” then we have to be ready to teach all kinds of learners. Learning needs can be everything from enrichment for the high-achieving students to support for the students who need it. The session examined teaching and learning strategies that can have an impact on students who need that approach, but they are also helpful for all your students.

Submitted by Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, Latin Strand co-facilitator.
Time Flies When You Are Engaged!

Were we really busy for 15 hours?

On Friday and Saturday, August 18 and 19, eighteen MaFLA members participated in the SPED workshop at Lasell College offered this year as part of MaFLA’s Summer Institute. It starts at 8:00 AM? What was I thinking when I signed up for this at the end of my precious summer? Yes, we had to start at 8:00 to get in all of the hours to meet the 15 hours required for re-certification by the state. As I left my house in Western Massachusetts at 5:40, I couldn't help but ponder – How am I going to get through 15 hours of this? I am starting out sleep deprived! I am already exhausted!

Being good students, the workshop participants promptly assembled at 8:00 AM and I am sure that I was not the only one in that room thinking about how long this was going to be. Would you believe, however, that within minutes I was energized and engaged? Our two amazing presenters, Kim Talbot and Cari Berman, had us setting goals, establishing norms by stating what we would need for optimal learning during the workshop, practicing attention getting with Kim’s lovely chimes, and using the talking piece activity circle protocol to build community.

I was already thinking, “This might not be all that bad. I am relaxed and having fun.”

We spent the morning analyzing what we already do in our classes to meet the needs of special needs students. We also delved into the MaFLA-developed crosswalk of the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation and the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Project and shared our impressions and thoughts, and we framed our work for the session.

Since our expert presenters wanted to model best practices, the activities were interspersed with Brain Breaks which we had to learn either in pairs or in groups so that we could teach and present them during the “Brain Breaks” of the workshop. They also provided us with processing time during which we were provided numerous choices of activities which we could do to further our learning.

There also were numerous checks for understanding using Fist of Five! Our presenters wanted to be sure we were understanding and feeling comfortable with what we were learning and that we could find ways that suited our needs to process all that we were taking in.

After our refreshing processing break, we immersed ourselves in DCAPs, 504s, and IEPs. We learned about the purpose for these, some historical background, the qualifications, a school district’s responsibilities, and referrals. We also had a very clear explanation of the various types of meetings including eligibility meetings, annual reviews, progress/reconvene meetings and transition meetings. I had heard all of these terms in my practice but really never understood the true purpose or expectations for most of them.

Our presenters also helped us to know the difference between accommodations and modifications. We spent some quality time learning about IEPs and the critical pieces of information that they contain, and later we each had the opportunity to complete a Scavenger Hunt through an IEP.
For me, this was so relevant and informative. I am now so much more aware of what I need to read and know when looking at an IEP. This investigative activity was followed by vital information about our individual roles as teachers on the team, and information to help us be professionally prepared for team meetings for student support.

Children with disabilities must always be considered general education students first.

It was now mid-afternoon and guess what? – I wasn’t asleep in my chair trying to keep my attention on the presentation. I was curious. I was inquisitive. I was excited to return to my own district and deal with IEPs because I had such a better understanding of the documents. What had produced this excitement? Kim and Cari were using inclusive practices which were helping us all to process and reflect on what we were learning by continually interspersing best practice strategies for all students (modeling in the session those structures we could and should use in our classrooms to benefit all) and in spite of the time of day and the early start, we were still focused and energized in the workshop.

The rest of the day featured information on Core Assumptions, John Hattie’s research on Teacher Effect, Student Motivation and Motivation Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Brain Research and Primacy/Recency. We ended with a powerful presentation on Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

With each new concept, we investigated in a manner that best fit our own background knowledge, our preferred learning styles and our individuals needs. We reflected and shared our take-aways and always demonstrated our learning using the variety of choices our presenters offered. It was truly refreshing to have varied ways to show what we had learned and I discovered that my choice depended upon which I felt I could use to best show my new knowledge and understanding. As we finished Day One – (Yes, 10 hours), we found that we were all looking forward to MORE!! I left with newly found confidence and a spring in my step!

My early departure (5:40 again) for my Saturday final five hours of instruction was much more positive. I was actually looking forward to learning more.

Day Two started with a recap of key ideas of Day One. Next we worked on learning styles and the various categories of disabilities. I was surprised at the spectrum of disabilities that were listed under each category.

We finally had the opportunity to put our learning into practice by creating a lesson plan to celebrate our learning. I actually enjoyed writing out this new lesson plan, even though it was still “summer vacation,” and was so proud of all of the “best practices” I was able to include. I know that all of my students will benefit from this lesson.

As we concluded our workshop with a Community Circle in which we shared two strategies or take-aways with the group and those in the circle who shared those mentioned stepped into the circle and shouted “Me Too.” I am so grateful to MaFLA for this phenomenal PD experience and although I am reluctant I can thank the DESE for incorporating this new requirement into re-certification (Wow, I never thought I would say this).

I know that I will be a better teacher now because of this workshop. Thanks to all of the other participants in the SPED workshop. The collegiality we developed was greatly appreciated. To our two presenters, Kim and Cari, thanks for all you did to make this workshop so meaningful, relevant and impactful.

Submitted by Ronie R. Webster
MaFLA Student Awards

MaFLA Excellence and Leadership Awards: 2017

Andover High School
Peter Hall, Teacher – Awards to Megan Hartnett (LAT), Benjamin Kesler (SP), Alison Mackenzie (FR), Rachel McIntosh (CH), Dylan Ross (LEAD)

Arlington Catholic High School
Carol Elices, Teacher – Awards to John David Biagioni (SP), Elena Bonetti (LAT), Samantha Donahue (FR) (CH)

Arlington High School
Catherine Ritz, Teacher – Awards to Grace Mungenast (LAT), Olivia Bonardi (IT), Y. Grace Caulo (CH), Tarangana Thapas (FR), Eleni Blanas (SP) (LEAD)

Attleboro High School
Peter Pereira, Teacher – Awards to Samantha Lamar (FR), Matthew Abate (SP), Emily Vieira (ASL)

Auburn High School
Daniel Creamer, Teacher – Awards to Alexi Archambeault (SP), Emily Narel (FR) Meg Beuregard (LEAD)

Bishop Feehan High School
Linda Ausiello, Teacher – Awards to Isabelle Chan (CH), Juliana DeSimone (FR), Charlotte Vogel (SP)

Bishop Fenwick High School
Diane Eromin, Teacher – Awards to Derek Dellisola (SP), Sarah Arnold (FR)

The Bromfield School
Jennifer Fraser, Teacher – Awards to Erika Jones-Mollod (SP), Charlotte Durham (FR)

Concord-Carlisle High School
Iolanda Volpe, Teacher – Awards to Stephanie Hellman (CH), Emma Garrison (FR)

Duxbury High School
Diane Mehegan, Teacher – Awards to Mathew Campbell (LAT), Megan Bruce (FR), Sophia Roy (ASL), Marisa Cartee (SP), Meghan Guilfoyle (LEAD)

Falmouth High School
Pat DiPillo, Teacher – Awards to Elizabeth Taft (FR), Louis Kilfoyle (SP), Kerry Shanahan (LAT), Emma Armstrong (LEAD)

Fontbonne Academy
Anke Herbert, Teacher – Awards to Alana Adams (LAT), Corinne Gillenwater (SP), Anne Carroll (FR), Margaret Haley (LEAD)

Foxborough High School
Debra Gran, Teacher – Awards to Hannah Georgia Traianou (FR), Allison Avery Curran (LEAD)

Franklin High School
Laura Evan, Teacher – Awards to Christopher Regan (LAT), Ffion Titmus (SP), Olivia Sabini-Leite (FR), Alejandro Marzoratt (LEAD)

Matignon High School
Paula Gaffey, Teacher – Awards to Gianna DeAngelis (SP), Zehao (Domenic) Zhang (FR) Mary Cara Listro (LEAD)

Melrose High School
Kim Talbot, Teacher – Awards to Isabel Bates (FR), Alva Ronn (GER), Emily DiPietro (IT), Samantha Sweet (LAT)

Mt. Greylock Regional School
Amy Turner, Teacher – Awards to James Ellingwood (SP), Zachary Armet (LAT), Daniel Schie (LEAD)

Monson High School
Ronie Webster, Teacher – Award to Samantha Gilmore (SP)

North Reading High School
Amy St Arnaud, Teacher – Awards to Kristina Copleas (SP), Logan Stansbury (LEAD)

Notre Dame Academy
Linda Gustafson, Teacher – Awards to Sabrina Hallal (SP), Isabella Van Atten (FR), Madison Duquette (LAT), Eleni Kiorpes (CH)

Revere High School
Albert Mogavero, Teacher – Awards to Leandro Montoya Araque (SP), Mauricio Martinez (IT), Xianghui Lei (CH), Christian Molina Herrera (FR)

Ste Jeanne d’Arc School
Monique Le tendre, Teacher – Award to Liya Mooradian (FR)

Taconic High School
Angela Johansen, Teacher – Awards to Ashley Elizabeth Keegan (SP), Rebecca Eve Herbert (LEAD)
Triton High School  
Jean Symonds, Teacher – Awards to Nathan Nicholson (SP), Abigail Booth (FR), Sarah McLellan (LEAD)

Tyngsborough High School  
Sara Silva, Teacher – Awards to Jake Fitzgerald (SP), Owen Carter (LAT), Mariya Shtilyanova (SP)

Wakefield Memorial High School  
Reuben Reinos, Teacher – Awards to William Holman (SP), Andrew DiCarlo (IT), Jenna Mello (LAT), Kylie Dubé (LEAD)

West Springfield High School  
Sara Switzer, Teacher – Awards to Jared Davis (IT), Joanna Buoniconti (LAT)

Whitinsville Christian School  
Karen Exoo, Teacher – Award to Heather Cornwell (SP)

Winchester High School  
Anna Tirone, Teacher – Awards to Derek Diaco (LEAD), Katherine Deng (FR), Olivia Hofheinz (IT), Joy Zhang (LAT), Erika Nakajima (SP)
Dear MaFLA Colleagues:

The 2017 Poster Contest was once again an exciting activity for 28 MaFLA members in 21 schools across the state. This year’s competition attracted 75 individual interpretations of the 2017 theme Languages Transform Individuals into Communities. Foreign language students in grades one through eleven portrayed this theme in many creative ways and the artistic talent demonstrated was exceptional. Once again the importance, relevance, and value of foreign languages in the lives of our students were represented enthusiastically with teacher support and encouragement from our members. Divisional winners as well as their teachers, principals and superintendents have been notified of the results of the contest. Certificates, awards, and acknowledgements have been sent to all participants. Judging of the entries took place in Hampden, MA. Many thanks to our poster contest judges Mary Ellen Robinson, Caitlin Follett, Nancy Willoughby and Sarah Willoughby for taking on this challenging task.

We thank all the students and teachers who participated and we are pleased to announce that the following students were selected as this year’s winners:

**Poster of the Year**
Christina Pathrose, Grade 11
Acton Boxborough Regional High School
Teacher: Suzanne Hogarty

**Middle School Winner**
Eunchai Kang, Grade 7
Wood Hill Middle School
Teacher: Norma Villareal

**Elementary**
Grant Hasner, Grade 3
Woodland School
Teacher: Kristen Sheridan

**Honorable Mention**
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aditya Mehta</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Country School</td>
<td>Teacher: Kimberlee Kasanov</td>
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<td>Ally Giebutowski</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Field School</td>
<td>Teacher: Danuta Bujak</td>
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<td>Sofia Grauera</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Woodland School</td>
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<td>Elizabeth White</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Tyngsboro Elementary</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Gilmartin</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Wood Hill Middle School</td>
<td>Teacher: Norma Villareal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amelia Kilian</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
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<td>Rachel Pepin</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Central Tree Middle School</td>
<td>Teacher: Matthew Ruppert</td>
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<td>Abby Forcier</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
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<td>Julia Lin</td>
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<td>Sharon Middle School</td>
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<td>June DiCicco</td>
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<td>Teacher: Kathleen Shockro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna Kuzmicheva</td>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>North Attleboro High School</td>
<td>Teacher: Kathleen Shockro</td>
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Thank you very much for your enthusiastic participation in the 2017 Poster Contest! MaFLA looks forward to the display of posters from our divisional winners and honorable mentions at our 50th Jubilee Conference at the Springfield Sheraton in October!

Sincerely,

Teresa Benedetti, Poster Contest Chair
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Deadline for the End of Year Issue is Nov.  5

See you in Springfield
for the
MaFLA Jubilee 50th Fall Conference