Getting Ready for the 2018 Fall Conference!

MaFLA is thrilled to host its 51st annual conference. We will be back at the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel with some old favorites and some exciting new additions. Start planning now to attend!

Preparations for the conference are well underway. Starting as far back as last summer, the MaFLA team has been hard at work to make this year’s 51st Annual Conference another great event.

Here is what we’ve been up to:
- Create conference theme and logo – done.
- Secure talented, well-known workshop presenters – done.
- Select a Keynote Speaker – done. See page 5 for the big announcement!
- Send out the call for proposals for 75-minute sessions – done. The link can be found on the website.

The deadline is April 30 so please submit your idea for a session now!

What can you expect at the MaFLA 2018 Fall Conference?

As always, we’ll have exceptional presenters representing the various strands of Pedagogy, Spanish, French, Latin, Chinese, German, and Italian.

Our 2018 workshop presenters include:

- **Greg Duncan**
  Greg Duncan, our proficiency guru, began his career as a high school Spanish teacher in Georgia. A highly respected leader, Greg is in high demand among educational institutions both in the United States and abroad. He provides professional development opportunities for hundreds of language teachers annually and serves as a principal consultant for numerous school districts and independent schools as they establish and work toward long-term program improvement.

- **Laura Terrill**
  Laura Terrill is a renowned national consultant who taught French at all levels for 21 years before becoming a Coordinator of Foreign Language and English as a Second Language and then, Director of Curriculum. She presents at the local, state, regional and national levels. Laura has served on the Board of Directors for Central States and ACTFL. She is the co-author, along with Donna Clementi, of the ACTFL publication, *The Keys to Planning for Learning: Effective Curriculum, Unit and Lesson Design.*

- **Greta Lungaard**
  A former German teacher and World Languages Curriculum Coordinator for the Plano Independent School District in Texas, Greta now works with schools and school districts as a world language consultant. She has served as the president of the Texas Association for Language Supervision (TALS), the Southwest Conference on Language Teaching (SWCOLT) and the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL).

Learn a New Language
Expand Your Mind
Expand Your Heart
Expand Your World

Greg will be presenting a 6-hour and a 3-hour workshop.
Laura will be presenting a 6-hour and a 3-hour workshop.
Greta will be presenting two 3-hour workshops.
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**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

**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**

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

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

Taking advantage of your MaFLA membership this year, you have enjoyed outstanding professional development events: the Core Practices Seminars, Diversity Day, Proficiency Academy, the Summer Institute and the Jubilee Conference! Listen to our members who tell us “This 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!
Nicole Sherf and Tim Eagan

Nicole Sherf is Professor and Secondary Education Coordinator in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at Salem State University. She has 29 years experience in teaching Spanish and in program coordination, first in K-12 and now to undergraduate and graduate students of Spanish and Spanish teachers in training. Nicole is on the Steering Committee of the Language Opportunity Coalition co-leading the Seal of Biliteracy Workgroup and Pilot. She writes articles at the state and national level and presents sessions, workshops and professional development on a variety of topics related to foreign language teaching, assessment and programming at the district, state, regional and national level.

Tim Eagan has been teaching for 28 years, and has been a department leader for the past 12 years at Wellesley Public Schools. Tim has a strong interest in effective instructional practices and in second language acquisition theory and its implications for instruction. Both Nicole and Tim have dedicated themselves to advancing world language pedagogy through their extensive work in advocacy and by their numerous contributions to the field by presenting workshops and publishing articles.

Darcy Rogers

Darcy is the Founder of Organic World Language (OWL), and began developing the methodology in 2003. Her work is based on second language acquisition research, student motivation, and best teaching practices. Focusing on creating a space for second language to be naturally acquired, she believes in placing emphasis on students developing language through movement, social interaction, play and 100% immersion. The key element is the importance of creating community in the classroom while putting the student in the center as the curriculum. She has 14 years teaching experience and for the past several years has been presenting at national conferences and working with schools to implement OWL internationally.

Amanda Robustelli-Price

Amanda is a French Teacher at Enfield High School in Enfield, CT. She is a favorite presenter among Massachusetts world language educators. Amanda is a 2018 NECTFL Mead Fellow.

Joshua Cabral

Joshua is currently a French teacher at Brookwood School in Manchester, MA. He has been teaching World Language (French, Spanish) at the elementary, middle and high school levels for many years. A MaFLA favorite, Joshua regularly presents foreign language teaching methodology and cultural enrichment workshops at state (MA, NY, NH, NJ), regional (NECTFL) and national (NNEFL, ACTFL) conferences and in university teacher preparation programs. Joshua also works with and in schools in Nicaragua and Haiti.

Katia Marticorena and Christina Toro

Katia and Christina are teachers at Arlington High School. They received great reviews for their session last year and are coming back to present a 6-hour workshop in Spanish.

Ashley Uyaguari

Ashley was voted Best of MaFLA from her presentation at the 2017 conference. She currently teaches middle school Spanish at Innovation Charter School in Tyngsboro, MA. Ashley taught English as a foreign language in Gualaquiza, Ecuador for a year.
Getting Ready for the 2018 Fall Conference!

Kara Jacobs and Arianne Dowd
Kara has been teaching Spanish for over 20 years. She teaches at Kingswood Regional High School in Wolfeboro, NH. Her interests are currently focused on comprehending and extending authentic resources to engage students and increase their proficiency. Arianne Dowd is a Spanish Teacher at South Brunswick High School. She is passionate about making the switch in her classroom to using TPRS and Comprehensible Input in order to engage all learners. Collaborating with colleagues through social media to create compelling and comprehensible units comprised of cultural knowledge is her favorite hobby, and she has begun documenting these activities on her blog. https://discoveringci.wordpress.com/.

Kara and Arianne will be presenting a 3-hour workshop in Spanish together. Kara and Arianne will also each present a 75-minute session separately.

Ying Jin
Ying has more than 15 years experience teaching Chinese language and culture in diverse settings, including middle schools, high schools, and colleges in both the U.S. and China. She is currently a teacher of all levels of Mandarin Chinese at the Fremont Union High School District in Cupertino, California. Ying is a board member of CLASS (Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools) and serves as the chair of National Chinese Honor Society. Ying attended the Sorbonne in Paris, and Smith College in the U.S.

Ying will present a 3-hour workshop in Chinese and a 75-minute session.

Abbi Holt
Abbi is a self-professed Professional Latin Nerd. She teaches Latin at Arlington Middle School where she strives to foster a great fondness for Latin and Romans among her students. Through her instruction, Abbi encourages spontaneous creativity, imagination, and unembarrassed enthusiasm in her students.

Abbi will present a 3-hour workshop in Latin.

Emily Scheinberg and Nicole Claris
New this year! Emily, Head of School Programs and Teacher Resources at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts, and her colleague Nicole will be presenting two 3-hour workshops on art in the world language classroom. We are excited to be forming this collaborative relationship with the Museum of Fine Arts as they continue to reach out to the teachers of Massachusetts.

Emily and Nicole will be presenting 2 3-hour workshops.

Mariette Monpierre

Mariette will present a 3-hour workshop in French.

What will be different this year?
We take your feedback from evaluations very seriously. In response to your comments, we have made some exciting changes. Here are a few changes we have made or are currently working on:

1. Later start time on Friday: Last year’s Friday schedule had workshops and sessions starting at 8:00 AM. This year they will start at 9:00 AM to allow for more commuting and parking time.
2. We’re adding a 1st Time Attendees/New Teacher Breakfast on Friday morning as we continue to reach out to and support new attendees and new teachers.
3. More information at registration counter: This year the conference bags will include a printout of the sessions with locations and times. Maps showing room locations will also be included.
4. App updates: Last year was the first year with a new App. This year we will make it easier for attendees to utilize the app.

The MaFLA team will continue to review feedback from last year’s conference and we anticipate even more improvements.

Stay tuned for more exciting updates on the conference. We will post news on the website and Facebook as well as in future newsletters. I have enjoyed reading the session proposals that have been submitted thus far and I look forward to reading yours! Submit your session proposal today and help contribute to another excellent Fall Conference. Please email me with any suggestions or questions at conference2018@mafla.org.

See you in October! Jeanne O’Hearn, 2018 Conference Chair
Conference News Flash!

It’s official! We have a Keynote Speaker for the Fall Conference and you won’t want to miss him.

Richard Blanco

Selected by President Obama as the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history, Richard Blanco is the youngest and the first Latino, immigrant, and gay person to serve in such a role. Born in Madrid to Cuban exile parents and raised in Miami, the negotiation of cultural identity can be found in much of his poetry. Richard has received several literary awards and honorary doctorates. He has taught at Georgetown University, American University, Wesleyan University and most recently as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Florida International University where he developed courses on the intersections of poetry, community, and current events. Richard’s work has a way of bringing all of us together by having us ponder those universal questions we all ask ourselves on our own journeys: Where am I from? Where do I belong? Who am I in this world? MaFLA is honored to have Richard Blanco as our Keynote Speaker. Richard will also be available at a book signing event and a Question & Answer session. Don’t miss this amazing opportunity!

MaFLA Needs Your Talents!

Are you an advocate for language studies?

Have you considered giving back to our teaching profession?

Would you like to work with a group of dedicated language professionals?

Nominate yourself or a colleague for the MaFLA Board.

Please fill out and submit the online application form by June 1, 2018

Persons elected to the Board of Directors of MaFLA serve as volunteers, without compensation for a period of four years, and must be willing to participate actively in the business of the Association. The Board formally meets six times per year and conducts much of its business through committees which meet outside of the formal meetings via electronic means (e.g. email, Go To Meeting, etc.).

MaFLA values the diversity of our students across the state. Therefore we are committed to the recruitment of exemplary language educators representing a broad range of backgrounds, including people of color and various ethnic groups.

If you have any questions please contact Jorge Allen at jallen@mafla.org
Happy Spring everyone! What a tough and long (at least it seemed long) winter we had. Many times I was thinking about my colleagues in eastern Massachusetts as I heard of the record snowfalls, winds and powerful storms that were hitting them. I was very lucky as our Pioneer Valley frequently was spared some of the highest snowfalls and worst storms. As the warmer weather approaches, it is nice to see lawns again and note the buds appearing on some of the trees.

This edition of the MaFLA Newsletter opens with some exciting news and updates about our 51st Annual Conference whose chair is Jeanne O’Hearn. The theme is Learn a Language. Expand Your Mind. Expand Your Heart. Expand Your World, and it looks to be shaping up nicely. Be sure to check out the great workshop presenters already on the agenda and the Keynote Speaker, Richard Blanco, the 5th inaugural poet in U.S. history. I am looking forward to hearing his message.

We also have a new feature in this edition. Each issue will feature one of our MaFLA members and in this issue we are featuring our first member. I am sure you will enjoy the interview with MaFLA member Timothy Chavez who also is a former student of mine. I feel like a proud mama here.

Our theme for this issue was Assessing and Evaluating Students with a Focus on the World Readiness Standards. MaFLA member and frequent presenter at MaFLA PD events, Joshua Cabral, has a great article on offering feedback to our students. Also included is an article about Intercultural Learning Through Interdisciplinary Instruction in which we can see how two teachers from different disciplines worked together to engage and teach their students. MaFLA Board member Beckie Bray Rankin has submitted an insightful article entitled Behind the Scenes: Clips To Interpret And Practice Intercultural Competencies. These articles have some great ideas on how to incorporate intercultural learning and assessment into your classrooms.

We also have a Seal Update which shows the impact that the Seal is having in our classrooms. Teachers are referring more than ever to those World Readiness Standards, the Can-Do statements, and they are more likely to be implementing performance assessments.

Two other articles deal with the state of the teaching of languages in our schools. The first shares data that was collected about which languages are taught in Massachusetts High Schools. The second of these article deals with Teaching L2 In America: An Arduous Task.

Remember, we are all advocates, as MaFLA Advocacy Chair and 2017 MaFLA Keynote speaker, Ted Zarrow, says. Be sure to read his article on JNCL-NCLIS and current legislation so that you can be knowledgeable and better engage students, parents, administrators and others.

As I close this final Newsletter of the 2017-18 academic year, I want to wish you all a wonderful, fulfilling and relaxing summer. I hope to see you at the MaFLA PD this spring (Diversity Day) and our two offerings this summer (Proficiency Academy and Summer Institute). Take a minute and say hi! I look forward to these opportunities to share insights, to learn together collaboratively and to spend time with colleagues.

The deadline for the Back-to-School issue is August 5. Our theme is Incorporating Fine Arts into the Language Classroom.

Here are just some of the topics you could write about.

- Poetry in Motion – How can we utilize poetry in our classrooms? How do you use poetry?
- How are you using art in your classrooms? How does art support student proficiency?
- How are we using music, and/or dance? How does music/dance advance student proficiency?

Please share your experiences and ideas with your colleagues. That is how we all grow professionally!

Ronie R. Webster
MaFLA’s Educator In The Spotlight

Hearts! Flamingos! Imagination And Creativity In The World Language Classroom!

An interview with Timothy Chávez, Spanish teacher

MaFLA’s first featured Educator, Timothy Chávez, teaches 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Spanish at West Middle School in Andover, MA. Now in his third year of teaching, he is a graduate of Worcester State University and has just been accepted to Middlebury College for his Master’s Degree. Growing up in Monson, MA, of course he had Ronie Webster as one of his teachers. His paternal family is from Cuba, and his mom’s side is from the United States. He currently lives in Revere, MA. Recently, we caught up with him for a chat about his thoughts on language teaching, proficiency, and MaFLA.

MaFLA: Tell us, please, a bit about your “philosophy of World Language teaching.”

Timothy: I am a huge believer in a communicative approach to language teaching because I think that it is extremely important for the students to be communicating about real things in their lives. This year, I have learned how important it is for me to be doing the same. Usually, when I am giving the students input, it is about my life—my family, my friends, my roommates, etc. Since I have started teaching communicatively, I have seen huge growth in my students’ proficiency, an improvement in behavior and attentiveness, and more language use than I ever thought possible. I also have to remind myself to focus on listening to the students’ message and not on the grammar that they are using to communicate the message. It’s difficult at times, but I really believe that it is important because I don’t want my students to develop a fear of speaking for fear of not speaking “perfectly.”

I also strive for the students to focus on their growth as opposed to their percentage. Using the ACTFL proficiency guidelines has helped me give students information on how they can move up in proficiency, which is something a percentage grade just cannot do. As the students have been evaluating their own work and seeing my evaluation of their work, we are constantly discussing ways to move up to the next level. When I was not focusing much on growth, I think my students tended to stay at the novice level because I was not always giving them valuable feedback on how to improve.

MaFLA: Since the proficiency movement is so new, how do you think language teaching will evolve over the next few decades?

Timothy: I think the future is bright in world language teaching. More and more people are getting on board with communicative language teaching, and I think that we are going to see a huge increase in what students are able to do with the language in the coming years. Hopefully, the improvement in our students will get more colleges and universities on board too!

MaFLA: What are some of the fun things you like to do in class? How have they affected your teaching and students’ learning?

Timothy: Something I learned this year is that the 90% or more language use does not only refer to the teacher, but to the students as well. I did not want to be a teacher who complains about his students not speaking enough Spanish in class, but does nothing to try to improve it. So, this year, I went to the MaFLA conference with a mission: to find new ways to get my students speaking, and I found it! One of the best things I ever started in my classroom was the implementation of our language hearts. At the beginning of every class, every student grabs a heart. If I hear English from a student who has not first requested permission, I take the heart away. However, if the student later on in the class period speaks a lot of Spanish (beyond what’s required for the task), he/she/they can earn the heart back. If, at the end of the class period, every student in the class has a heart, the whole class gets a point. At the end of each term, the class with the most points out of all my six classes receives a pizza party. At first, I was concerned about discouraging students, but I have found the total opposite. I cannot keep up with the amount of Spanish that is being spoken in my classes this year. I was most concerned about my sixth graders since their language ability is so limited, but one of my sixth grade classes is actually in
MaFLA’s Educator In The Spotlight

the lead in the competition at the moment! It is absolutely inspiring to see how creative the students can be in finding ways to communicate. We just have to have faith in them so that they have faith in themselves. Since my students do not always have the ability to communicate everything they may want, I have a wall of circumlocution that the students created to help them describe things better, and I also have a special place on my white board for drawings. The idea is not that we never speak English, but it creates a classroom culture in which Spanish, gestures and drawings come first.

MaFLA: That’s an amazing technique that we could all adopt. What else do you do to motivate students?

Timothy: I also have a family of stuffed flamingos (my favorite animal) that keeps growing and growing in my classroom. These flamingos are used as a reward for students who are going above and beyond in their speech during the class period. If a student communicates something with me or with classmates that is beyond what is asked, the student will get a flamingo. If that student has the flamingo at the end of the period (because they sometimes move around), then the student earns group points for their group. This has been another way for me to get students speaking more without forcing it upon them. The look on a student’s face when receiving one of the flamingos will never get old.

MaFLA: Outside of the classroom, what activities do you pursue that inform your teaching?

Timothy: I have developed a huge passion for language acquisition research, which has been so helpful in my teaching. However, aside from that, I think that being a musician has helped me a lot. I really like using music in the classroom whenever possible. Music seems to be very engaging for the students, and I really love hearing them sing songs from class outside of the classroom. Also, like I said before, I am a firm believer in real communication in the classroom, so a lot of the things that happen to me (both good and bad) outside of school get brought back to the classroom.

MaFLA: You have been an active member of MaFLA, having been chosen to present at the Proficiency Academy on “Proficiency in Your District.” How does MaFLA figure in your world?

Timothy: My MaFLA membership has a lot to do with who I am as a teacher today, and I mean that so sincerely. As a teacher, it is easy to get stuck in our ways and our routines, but MaFLA always reminds me that there’s more to do and much more to learn. Attending the proficiency academy the last few years has been one of the biggest assets to my career as a Spanish teacher. I have learned so much from those summers, and it really inspired me to start doing my own research on language acquisition. I have also gotten to know some of the top teachers in MA who have taught me so much thanks to MaFLA. I really cannot say enough how much I value those relationships and my MaFLA membership. As I mentioned earlier, this most recent conference changed my teaching drastically with the language hearts. I truly believe that I am a better teacher now because of that experience, and I think that the amount of language the students are using will continue to inspire me for years to come. Thank you, MaFLA, from the bottom of my heart.

MaFLA: Thank you so much for talking with us today! Your fresh and vibrant outlook will energize us all! Good luck with your Master’s program at Middlebury, and keep in touch with your MaFLA family!

Interviewed by Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, Membership and Marketing Coordinator
Feedback in the Foreign Language Classroom

by Joshua Cabral

Joshua Cabral is one of our MaFLA colleagues who provides world language teachers with tips, tools and resources for teaching language so their students rise in proficiency and communicate with confidence in his blog at WLclassroom.com. He is a former director of MaFLA who has presented numerous workshops and sessions at MaFLA PD events. He always receives rave reviews as he has so much to share that is easily applicable to our classrooms. He also has livestream videos on Facebook and Periscope in which talks about important topics for world language teachers. On Periscope you can follow him @WLCclassroom and you can find him on Facebook at World Language Classroom. He has graciously allowed us to use this post of providing feedback to students to help them advance in proficiency.

Posted on November 24, 2017

Feedback is information that teachers provide to students regarding where they are, how they are performing, and what they need to work on to progress in their language proficiency. We tend to think about feedback as only corrective in nature, but we also provide supportive and encouraging feedback.

Feedback in the foreign language classroom can be looked at in three ways. These three types of feedback are not given in isolation, but should be used together to provide information for language students who are working toward increased proficiency.

Appreciation

This involves encouragement and indication that the efforts on the part of the learner are paying off and helping them progress in language proficiency. Motivation is an important part of language learning. We as teachers need to find the progress (big and small) and point this out to our students. If they see no progress in language learning they are likely to lose motivation.

Coaching

Along with the appreciation and building motivation and confidence in our students, we also need to coach them in the process. Just like an athletic coach who suggests different approaches and shows the path to the objective, we as language teachers should approach our language coaching in the same way. This is not so much about correcting the language, but more a question of creating learner experiences in which learners can use the language they have and grow in proficiency. We should guide their path to the goal, but they are responsible for making the goal on their own, just as a soccer player would do.

Evaluation

Our evaluation of language learners is feedback on where they are regarding their present proficiency level. This is not about pointing out what is incorrect or inaccurate, but more a matter of concretely showing students where they are on their language learning journey. This will also provide information about where to go and what to work on so that students can continue to grow in proficiency.

Teachers are often wondering what to do when they encounter learner language that is inaccurate. Is this an opportunity for correction? Is it useful? Will it stick? The answers to these questions depend on whether or not the learner has had sufficient input with the inaccurate structure or if it is an attempt at language creation. It is important to distinguish between an error and a mistake in learner language.

- Mistakes are performance errors, where the learner has acquired the accurate form, but in a particular moment produces inaccurate languages.
- Errors occur in the learner's interlanguage because a learner has not yet acquired the accurate form, and they are making a guess, often based on their native language and their current knowledge of the target language.

Check out the Classroom Feedback Tip Sheet on page 11

When students create with language and hypothesize a form or word in the moment and make an error we should use this information as an indication that students are “ready” for (i.e. need) this structure in their language learning journey and we should then begin using the structure more often and providing comprehensible input. In this situation we as teachers are getting the feedback that we need to adjust our instruction.

As teachers, we should focus language feedback on mistakes because this is what our students should be able to do in the target language. If a student has had sufficient input and exposure to the structure and there is inaccuracy in the student language we then take on the role of coach. This means that we create situations in which we guide the student toward the accurate structure. Here are some suggestions for how to coach students in this situation.

Clarification requests: If there is a mistake in the vocabulary or verb form a question about the inaccurate wording brings attention to the error.

“I go to the store yesterday.”

Yesterday?

Elicitation: If you hear a mistake in the student language, repeat the sentence and pause at the place where the mistake was made. This provides the learner with
Intercultural Learning Through Interdisciplinary Instruction

By Zoé Cabaret-Salameh and Tamar Driscoll

My main goal as a middle school French teacher is, of course, to teach my students French, but I also want my students to develop a desire to learn about language, culture, and history. That is a lot to tackle, especially in the early years of language instruction while we are hoping students can learn the difference between regular and irregular verb conjugations and the importance of adjective agreement. However, vocabulary and important grammar rules should not be the only driving forces in our instruction. I am always looking for new ways to keep my students motivated and most of the time I do that by experimenting with new projects and activities to keep things fresh and exciting. Last year I decided to plan a trip to Québec and Montréal for my 8th graders. I asked an 8th grade colleague, Tamar Driscoll, who teaches English and Social Studies to chaperone the trip with me. As we reviewed the proposed itinerary, Tamar noticed that some of the planned site visits would align to her 8th grade Social Studies curriculum. Specifically, that students should “apply knowledge of the history of the Revolutionary period to determine the experiences and events that led the colonists to declare independence” including the ability to “describe the impact of events on the course and outcome of the American Revolution” (From Grade 8 and US 1 State Standards). At that point, we decided to develop an interdisciplinary project linking French and Social Studies with our trip to Canada.

In class, the project is mostly research-based. In Social Studies, students read about and researched the political and economic factors that contributed to the American Revolution. By the end of their unit they were able to explain the historical influences on the American Revolution and the framework of the American government. This includes the impact that France had in assisting and aiding in the Americans gaining independence. They were also able to see how much of the Revolutionary War took place in Canada, specifically Québec and Montréal and the impacts that the area had on the war. In French, students learned about the francophone region of Québec and researched the relationship between France and Canada during the war. They also made cultural comparisons and looked at French influences on Québec’s culture and traditions. In April 2018, we will travel to Québec with our 8th graders where we will be able to circle back to this initial work through debriefing discussions and journal entries. For example, we will be visiting the Musée du Fort where we will see a reenactment of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. We will also visit a traditional Huron village. After each day of sightseeing, students will debrief their experiences and write journal entries based on prompts such as:

- Write a journal entry as a soldier in the war based on what you saw and experienced today as well as what you have previously studied in SS class.
- What takeaways do you have about Canada’s indigenous people? What comparisons can you make with America’s indigenous people?
- Reflect on this trip as a whole and make connections to the research you have done at school. What are your impressions, what have you learned, how has what you’ve learned changed or been validated?

Tamar and I found an organic way to link our two subject areas, and asked our students to learn in what was inevitably bilingual instruction. Not only did they have the opportunity to reinforce their learning and understanding of the topics studied in Social Studies and in French, but through our visit to Québec, they will be able to experience a more hands-on approach to truly bring together everything they have been studying. Tamar and I teach two very different subjects, but this project is proof that even one small connection or overlap is enough to connect two or more classes and create an interdisciplinary learning environment where our students will be encouraged to make connections and be motivated to learn.

Zoé Cabaret-Salameh and Tamar Driscoll are teachers at the Wood Hill Middle School in Andover, MA. Zoé teaches French to grades 6-8 and Tamar teaches 8th Grade English and Social Studies.

Feedback (conc.)

an opportunity to correct his own mistake by concentrating only on that word or structure.

“I go to the store yesterday.”

Yesterday, I….

Repetition: When there is a mistake repeat exactly what the learner said. Emphasize the mistake. This will indicate where the mistake is located, and gives the learner an opportunity to focus on that particular part of the output and, upon reflection, produce accurate language.

“I go to the store yesterday.”

I GO to the store yesterday?”

Providing effective feedback is one of the ACTFL Core Practices for effective language learning and instruction. Use this post and the information to provide feedback to your students that will guide them toward a higher level of language proficiency.

If video is better for you, take a look at the livestream videos that I did on the topic of effective feedback on Periscope and Facebook Live.
Effective Feedback in the Foreign Language Classroom

Feedback provides information to our students that shows them where they are, how they are performing, and what they need to work on to progress in their language proficiency.

Three types of feedback

**Appreciation:** This involves encouragement and indication that the efforts on the part of the learner are paying off and helping them progress in language proficiency.

**Coaching:** Along with appreciation, motivation and building confidence in our students, we need to also coach them in the process. We should guide their path to the goal, but they are responsible for making the goal on their own.

**Evaluation:** Our evaluation of language learners is feedback on where they are regarding their present proficiency level. This will provide information about where to go and what to work on so that they can continue to grow in proficiency.

Mistakes and Errors

**Mistakes:** Performance inaccuracies. The learner has acquired the accurate form, but in a particular moment produces inaccurate language.

**Errors:** Learners have not yet acquired the correct form, and they make guesses, often based on their native language and their current knowledge of the target language.

Feedback on mistakes

**Clarification requests:** If there is an error in the vocabulary or verb tense a question about the inaccurate wording brings attention to the error.

**Elicitation:** If the teacher hears a mistake in student language, he repeats the sentence and pauses at the place where an error was made. This provides the learner with an opportunity to correct his own mistake by focusing only on that word or structure.

**Repetition:** When there is a mistake the teacher repeats exactly what the learner has uttered and emphasizes the mistake. This will indicate where the mistake is located, and gives the learner an opportunity to focus on that particular part of the output and, upon reflection, produce the accurate form.
**Behind The Scenes: Clips To Interpret And Practice Intercultural Competencies**

by Beckie Bray Rankin

*In the staff room:*

“Taylor, what unit are you starting after December break?”

“We’re jumping into the subjunctive so we can test before winter break. What about you, Adrien?”

“We’re looking at *Houra* grocery store delivery ads to talk about needs in a busy lifestyle.”

Whose class would you rather be in? Even if both sets of students end up with more practice creating subjunctive sentences, watching *Houra.fr* ads poking fun at people who take time to go to the grocery store appeals more because it’s more engaging, and like real life. Real life for Generation Z, according to Forbes statistics posted after South by Southwest (SXSW film conference), looks like this:

- Gen Z watches youtube on average twice more than TV
- Gen Z decides to tune in or out after eight seconds
- Gen Z prioritizes experience over material item

In an age where our students are highly mobile connected, capitalize on these statistics and use youtube to spark their interest by picking an appropriate clip (in terms of class, level, and theme) to anchor a thematic unit. Curtain, Clementi, and Sandrock recommend that when we develop a standards-based unit, we plan a theme that is cognitively engaging, culturally connected, intrinsically interesting, and communicatively purposeful. Ron Ritchhart proposes that engagement begins with authentic questions without predetermined answers. Therefore, the clip chosen should not simply portray or describe a cultural tradition to be followed by closed interpretive questions, but be rich in culture, promoting investigation and interaction: the two intercultural communicative competence (ICC) benchmarks in ACTFL’s 2017 Can-Do statements. According to Alvino Fantini, ICC is the complex of abilities that allows people of one culture to interact with others “effectively and appropriately”. These abilities include awareness, attitudes, skills, and knowledge (A+ASK). In my experience, when a theme is steeped in culture and your lessons are full of rich communication, students opt to tune in and build their competence.

One of the funniest *Houra* grocery delivery ads is 15 seconds long and less than 50 words; the accompanying visual is of a man running along the grocery aisle’s toilet paper display, grabbing a package without stopping on his way to check out:

*A vous, les Blemmophobes, qui avez peur d'être vus quand vous achetez du papier toilette, tout va bien, il y a houra. La livraison de toutes vos courses à domicile en 24h et... en toute discrétion !* [To you, the 'blemmophobes', who are scared to be seen buying toilet paper, everything’s alright, there’s Houra. Delivery of all your groceries to your home in 24 hours … with full discretion].

Another ad shows a gentleman weighing his fruit on the scale in the produce section, awkwardly unable to find the icon for “bananas”. A third illustrates the struggle of a woman with several heavy grocery bags trying to make it up several flights of stairs. The announcer ends the ad: "*Houra.fr: Les courses, sans aller les faire.*" [Groceries, without going shopping].

Each *Houra* ad has products and practices to identify and allow students to develop the skills from Fantini’s A+ASK framework. For example, the idea that grocery stores are set up in aisles big enough to run through could easily be contrasted with what we think of as a traditional French outdoor market (knowledge). Here, a teacher’s repertoire of cultural knowledge is essential in guiding the students so that they do not assume that one clip describes reality - students may incorrectly identify a practice that every French person runs through their grocery store to grab toilet paper! The tasks would model for students how to identify products and practices without passing judgment on the culture (attitudes). As students learn to be attentive to cultural differences, they begin to pick up details, for example, that the woman climbing the stairs carried four reusable bags (awareness). Upon understanding the concept these ads relay - that busy people need grocery delivery - per-
Behind The Scenes: Clips To Interpret And Practice Intercultural Competencies

by Beckie Bray Rankin

haps students can practice searching houra.fr for their family's groceries (skills). Each of these pieces of ICC can be started in the interpretive tasks, then expanded in the interpersonal tasks, presentational tasks, and learning checks.

According to Hyland's Cone of Learning, students remember 50% of what they see, 70% of what they say and 90% of what they both say and do. In this way, culturally-based communicative activities after comprehension are key to their ability to retain intercultural competence. To reflect upon their own culture as they begin to compare the two, students could form groups for a TALK to address questions such as: Does your family opt for a delivery service? In today's busy world, should grocery delivery be free? Have you or has a family member ever …? Students could also do a think-pair-share where they discuss their family's schedule and a possible transition to shopping for groceries online. Or, a debate could center around the pros and cons of houra.fr, for example the ability of Houra's staff to pick the correct ripeness of fruit (a banana for eating that day or for baking with later). A class poll shared with your sister school could compare how many French versus Americans use online delivery: Do they appreciate it? Or is it the lesser of two evils? Depending on the level of student, they could create a radio or TV ad for ex-pat French living in the US for Peapod or Amazon pantry that uses some of the culture you've uncovered through rich communicative tasks. For ideas on how to measure your students' abilities, Fantini's Assessing Intercultural Competencies (AIC) in YOGA format lists phrases in each of the A+ASK sections for students to self-assess, which in turn can inform unit design. For younger students, the European Wergeland Centre's "Recognising intercultural competence" provides a more visual checklist.

For students farther along the Path to Proficiency, news clips are a wonderful tool in identifying how products and practices help shape and are shaped by perspectives. The Generation Z population values experience, and one piece of commonly known French culture is the "sport" of the café debate. Preparing students for the real world means creating a classroom setting that mirrors the real world. Separate the class into two: half of them watch a conservative news clip on a topic, let's say the burkini-bikini debate in Algeria, and the others watch a liberal clip about the same topic. During a unit according to Byram's Model of ICC, students can start by identifying the groups involved, their identities, and their goals (savoirs). Sometimes targeting particular aspects of the news anchors and channel (the ethnicity, gender, clothes, and speech of reports, the use of data and interviews, the music, the colors, the assumptions about viewers) can lead to a rich conversation comparing US news channels. Separate groups can discuss if the controversy reminds them of anything in their life. Or, if the Facebook event page that spurred action had been posted in the US, what would the reaction have been here (savoir comprendre). It is important to remind students that their attitude and word choice is important - the discussions are not to judge groups of people, but to investigate the beliefs and values, which becomes challenging as we work to compare our beliefs to those of another (savoir être). The groups should then jigsaw so that students can hear the bias of a different media channel. Reworking through the investigation of the truth rather than blindly believing media, students can work together to ask if there is a way to get involved (savoir s'engager). In this particular case of the bathing suit debate, students may jump to tell one group or the other that they are wrong. However, in bringing in other resources, teachers can expand student knowledge. For example, the mayor of Carouge, Geneva banned burkinis at the public pool, but for sanitary -- not religious -- reasons. Ideally, students would be able to interact with people of the target culture in order to engage with the material learned (savoir apprendre). Perhaps they could write a letter (or a tweet!) to the mayor of Carouge, call into a biased TV station, post a note on the Facebook event page. As Wagner, Perugini, and Byram illustrate in their latest book, listening to or reading the students' reactions help show the progression from knowledge towards interpreting, relating, and beyond.

The ability to sit in the grey space between cultures - to be comfortable in knowing that your culture isn't the only way - is a skill to be developed. What better place to teach acceptance and peace than in a world language class? With the American Academy of Arts and Sciences’ 2017 report suggesting that engaging in culture leads to more language output, it seems natural to use culturally rich media as a way to catalyze these deep discussions. In Enacting the Work of Language Instructors, Glison and Donato argue that culturally relevant resources undergird meaningful communication. And while turning cultural knowledge into cultural competence may feel new in many contexts, teachers at all levels have paved the way by writing blogs, monitoring facebook pages, producing webinars, and publishing books about their experience helping students understand that different cultures are different. We must remember that intercultural communicative competencies start with knowing one's own communities, one's own identity, the cultures in which one feels at "home", before we can begin to recognize how our cultures compare.

And, we must convey that comparing is not the end-game of learning culture - we learn language and culture to build friendships: to interact. The chosen themes, clips, and activities work together to move students forward on the Path to Proficiency, helping their language and behavior to be effective and appropriate; more than language skills, ICC is life skills.

The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one.

Elbert Hubbard
Massachusetts Foreign Language Teacher of the Year

The award for the Massachusetts Foreign Language Teacher of the Year (TOY) is intended to elevate the status of our profession and to create opportunities to recognize our most accomplished world language teachers and language advocates. The Teacher of the Year Program has created and sustained opportunities for world language advocacy in Massachusetts and beyond. Moreover, it is intended to create as many opportunities as possible to increase the visibility of the importance of learning languages and cultures to the general public.

Successful candidates must be full-time language educators who spend at least fifty percent (50%) of their time in direct teaching during the year of application with an expectation of teaching during the next two (2) years. All candidates must be a MaFLA member to be eligible for the award.

The following items (submitted electronically in one email) must be included in the portfolio to be considered by the TOY committee:

- Letter of recommendation from a professional colleague
- Letter of recommendation from a supervisor / principal
- Letter of recommendation from a current or former parent or student
- Curriculum Vitae of no more than five (5) pages.
- First-person statement on the value of learning language and culture (not to exceed 500 words).
- A personal statement related to your teaching. Topics for consideration: What are you most proud of about your teaching? What's an experience that made you think differently about your approach to teaching? What would your ideal classroom look like? (not to exceed 500 words)
- One sample of student work (from within the past year) that you are proud of. This sample should be accompanied with a brief 250-word reflection describing how the sample reflects the ACTFL World Readiness Standards.

The winning candidate must:

- Make a commitment to attend the NECTFL regional conference for a personal interview if selected as a regional finalist. MaFLA will provide up to $750 in reimbursement for registration, transportation, and hotel expenses to the selected candidate.
- Commit to making one or more presentations at MaFLA PD events during their “year of service.”
- Be willing to serve as a spokesperson for the profession, based on availability and to mentor future candidates.

Evaluation of Candidates:

- The MA Foreign Language Teacher of the Year will be selected based on his/her ability to communicate ideas clearly, commitment to the profession, and professional growth as evidenced by the portfolio.
- Finalists will attend a brief interview at the MaFLA conference in Springfield, MA.

The selected candidate will receive the $500 Gonnerman-Torchin Prize awarded in recognition of a Massachusetts world language teacher for outstanding performance in the classroom, enthusiasm and passion for the teaching and learning of languages, and enthusiasm and love of children.

Submissions should be made electronically in one email to Jorge Allen, Awards Chair at jallen@mafla.org by September 15, 2018.
The Seal of Biliteracy is law in Massachusetts! After five years of collaborating on its passage and three years of coordinating and overseeing a comprehensive Seal Pilot, MaFLA, MABE and MATSOL under the umbrella of the Language Opportunity Coalition (LOC) have successfully advocated for this official program to reward students of world language, dual language and English language learning programs for functional biliteracy through the Seal. This spring, the leaders of the Language Opportunity Coalition (LOC) Seal Workgroup (Phyllis Hardy of MABE, Kim Talbot of MaFLA and myself, also of MaFLA) are completing the bid for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in collaboration with the Office of English Language Learners and Academic Achievement (OELAAA) to create the Web resources for district implementation of the Seal of Biliteracy based on the Pilot work that is still being completed by the LOC Seal Workgroup. The LOC Pilot will continue through this school year and DESE will take over administration of the Seal in the fall of 2018.

More than 90 districts of all types (world language, dual language, immersion and English language learning), levels (elementary, middle, high school and university) and languages (Spanish, French, Latin, Italian, Mandarin, Portuguese, German, Arabic, American Sign Language, Japanese, Cantonese, Korean, Vietnamese and Russian), and more districts are joining every week. In a recent survey of participating Pilot districts, this variety of participants is reflected in the first three years of Seal implementation in Massachusetts. Additionally, while the Seal Award criteria are not flexible, the implementation experiences in the Pilot are demonstrating the varying ways that districts, schools or programs made the Seal work for them; determining how to inform students and parents of the Seal Awards, how and when to test the partner language, and how and where to celebrate the student accomplishments of demonstrated biliteracy through the Pathway Awards. Our hope is that in the near future, the Seal will spread to every district in the state.

In the survey of Pilot districts, time to oversee the testing and money to pay for it are the concerns that appear most commonly, but the positive effects are strong and numerous. The Seal is pushing districts to focus on proficiency development and teachers are collaborating to create a learning environment that focuses on the communicative needs of the target proficiency level of the awards. Pilot districts report increased use of the ACTFL resources such as the ACTFL Standards, Proficiency Guidelines and Can-Do-Statements, and report their teaching including more target language use, student interaction, authentic resources and performance assessments among other positive results of implementation. This supports programs and teachers as they 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, 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,” look forward to the near future where our world language graduates are spreading the joy of their language use as a critical college and career readiness skill.

As an incredible additional benefit of the Seal, DESE is in discussions with MaFLA about a needs assessment in overseeing the Seal from the World Language perspective. They are also talking about creating a World Language Coordinator position in DESE. There has not been a dedicated position for world languages in several decades leaving teachers and administrators without the necessary resources, guidance and professional development related to best practices in teaching, assessing and programming for the subject. To that end, the document “Needs Assessment for World Language Oversight in the State” was created to document the concerns and suggestions related to nomenclature, vision, licensure, and district, program and teacher support.

Seal Update: Proficiency Development Is the Best Evidence of Student Learnings
by Nicole Sherf, Salem State University

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TO FIND OUT MORE OR TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SEAL IN YOUR DISTRICT:
• Watch our Fall, 2017, Webinar on www.languageopportunity.org
• Join the Seal Workgroup Google Group on the Pilot Page link
• Come to our electronic GoToMeetings the fourth Monday of the month at 7PM

Seal Update: Proficiency Development Is the Best Evidence of Student Learnings
by Nicole Sherf, Salem State University

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Needs Assessment for World Language (WL) Oversight in the State
Prepared by Nicole Sherf, MaFLA and Salem State University
sherf.nicole@gmail.com

Biggest Concerns

- As a critical need subject area, a good number of new teachers start teaching under their Preliminary license.
- Many teacher preparation programs don't offer language specific methods courses which perpetuates the grammar focused teaching of languages.
- WL are the only discipline not routinely taught in the elementary level. Only about 20% of districts offer some type of elementary programming and many times it is “exploratory” or an add-on rather than part of the K-12 program that has proficiency development as its goal.
- Many district administrators do not have a good understanding of best practices of WL teaching and programming.
- K-12 proficiency goal setting and departmental meeting time is not encouraged or supported in districts.

Suggestion: Nomenclature

- Following the national trend, name the profession World Languages instead of Foreign Languages.

Suggestions: Vision

- Endorse ACTFL’s National Standards and all the supporting resources for proficiency teaching, assessment and programming.
- Create a state World Language requirement for high school graduation.
- Encourage and support districts to develop elementary WL programs that set proficiency goals K-12.
- Reach out to colleges and universities to push that college credit be given for the Pathway Seal awards to create a K-20 vision and pipeline for new language teachers.

Suggestions: Licensure

- Create an Elementary language license that expands from Pre-K to 8. This would encourage more teachers to get the elementary license. Currently the Elementary license is Pre-K-6, which is too limiting, and the Secondary is 5-12.
- Use ACTFL’s Oral Proficiency Interview or Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer (OPI or OPIc) in place of the MTEL Language Content test.

District and Program Support

- Create a WL Coordinator position at DESE.
- Collect and analyze and post data related to WL programming (languages, grades of programming, number of teachers, etc.)
- Collect and analyze state Seal Data.
- Provide Web information to administration and teachers related to best practices in WL programming and instruction and resources for implementation.
- Recognize exemplary world language programs in the state that could serve as models and mentors for other districts.

Teacher Support

- Provide WL specific professional development through DESE.
- Encourage study abroad to maintain proficiency.
- Recognize exemplary world language teachers in the state who could serve as models and mentors for other teachers.
How many public high schools in Massachusetts require all students to study a foreign language, and which languages do schools offer? These questions came up recently when we were talking to some German friends who have a son in a public high school (Gymnasium) in Bavaria. In the Bavarian system, each student must study at least 2 foreign languages throughout middle and high school. Our friends’ son, a native German speaker, started learning English in school at age 8, then added French at age 11 and Italian at age 12. In a few years he will complete high school being fluent (or at least strongly proficient) in 4 languages. This expectation of multilingualism for all students is common in many countries. The public school system in the state of Massachusetts is often considered one of the best in the United States, and we wondered how foreign language instruction in Massachusetts public high schools might compare.

To start with, Massachusetts has no requirement at the state level that public schools even teach a foreign language. All graduation requirements and curriculum decisions are made at the local level. To determine the range of foreign language options across the state, we compiled the information publicly available for 351 public high schools in Massachusetts. Our goal was to answer three key questions: 1) which languages are offered, 2) how many languages are offered by each school, and 3) which schools require foreign language study for graduation?

Which languages are offered in Massachusetts public high schools?

328 of the 351 Massachusetts public high schools (93.4%) that we looked at offer at least one foreign language, and there are 16 different languages offered across the state. In decreasing order of popularity, they are Spanish (offered by 325 of 351 schools overall, or 92.6%), French (236 of 351 schools, 67.2%), Latin (134, 38.2%), Mandarin (81, 23.1%), Italian (39, 11.1%), German (26, 7.4%), American Sign Language (22, 6.3%), Portuguese (18, 5.1%), Greek (9, 2.6%), Arabic (5), Japanese (3), Turkish (3), Russian (2), Khmer (1), Irish (1), and Armenian (1).

How many different languages does each Massachusetts public high school offer?

The number of different foreign languages offered in Massachusetts public high schools ranges from 0 to 7, with 23 of 351 schools (6.6%) offering no foreign language option. 76% of all high schools offer at least 2 different languages. The most common offerings are 2 languages (88 schools) and 3 languages (92 schools). 2 public high schools in Massachusetts offer 7 different languages, and 9 schools offer 6 languages.
How many public high schools in Massachusetts require all students to study a foreign language in order to graduate?

Among the 351 public high schools in Massachusetts, the graduation requirement ranges from 0 years (no requirement) to 8 years of study of one or more foreign language during grades 9-12. Only a little more than half of public high schools in Massachusetts require foreign language study for graduation. Of the 351 schools, 198 (56.4%) require each student to study a foreign language for at least 1 year in order to graduate, while 153 schools (43.6%) have no foreign language requirement for graduation. The percentage of schools requiring foreign language study appears to be growing: a 2001 Mass DoE survey found that 35.8% had a requirement at that time. The most common requirement is 2 years, required by 160 of the 198 schools with a graduation requirement; this aligns with the MassCore recommendation and the admissions standards of the Massachusetts public universities. Only 4% of all public high schools in the state (14 of 351) require 4 or more years of foreign language study, and only 4 schools require students to study 2 different languages.

In addition to compiling overall results for the 351 public high schools, we also looked at the languages offered and graduation requirements for 4 types of public high schools: traditional schools, charter schools, vocational schools, and non-traditional schools. The full results can be found on the Lexplorers MassLang Survey Page, which also includes a searchable database of MA schools and languages.

About the author: David D. Palmer, PhD, is a researcher in computational linguistics and language learning. He writes about language learning and linguistics for Lexplorers at http://lexplorers.com.
Teaching L2 In America: An Arduous Task

by Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

Do you consider yourself successful as a foreign language teacher? I'm sure that you are in the confines of your own classroom, but what about in the context of the United States? Do you sometimes feel that you are butting your head against a wall because, in spite of your best efforts, Americans have little desire to learn a foreign language?

Stein-Smith (1) offers the following statistics that paint a rather dismal picture of the status of foreign languages in the United States:

1. According to a Gallup poll, only 25% of Americans possess the ability to conduct a conversation in a language other than English. If you remove the number of immigrants from this list, the number falls to 10%.
2. According to the Modern Language Association (MLA), only 8.1% of U.S. college and university students are enrolled in a course in a language other than English.
3. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) reports that only 18.5% of K-12 students study a foreign language.

There have been a number of blue-ribbon panels over the years that have emphasized the importance of having a populace conversant in more than one language:

3. A Nation at Risk. The National Commission on Excellence in Education. 1983
4. Foreign Language Study and SAT-Verbal Score. College Board. 1983
5. What we can't say can hurt us: A call for foreign language competence by the year 2000. The American Council on Education Commission on International Education. 1989
7. The American Association of School Administrators. 1996

In spite of the support of various presidents, i.e., Eisenhower, Reagan, Clinton, George W. Bush, there has not been any improvement in the change of attitude of Americans in favor of learning a foreign language. This article will list some of the reasons that the following joke is somewhat accurate:

What do you call someone who speaks two languages?
Bilingual.

What do you call someone who speaks three languages?
Trilingual.

What do you call someone who can only speak one language?
An American.

Obstacles to Teaching L2

1. The size and linguistic isolation of America: America is a very large country with no immediate need to speak any language other than English. It shares most of its northern border with mainly English-speaking Canada and a small portion with French-speaking Quebec. Its southern border touches Spanish-speaking Mexico. Between lies a vast territory in which English is the lingua franca, contrary to Europe which is composed of many small linguistically different countries wherein multilingualism is seen as an asset and a necessity. For example, if Texas were in Europe, its size would comprise of 10 countries and 9 different languages: French, Italian, German, Dutch, Luxembourgish, Czech, Polish, Romansh, and Flemish.

2. The global scope of English. As of 2003, about a quarter of the world’s population speaks English, though only 6% are native speakers. (2) Because English is studied by so many people, in so many countries, for most Americans who travel there is no need to learn any other language because one can always find someone who speaks English in the tourist sections of the globe. I recently returned from a 10-day trip to Spain and I had no difficulty finding someone who could speak English at the hotel, in restaurants, in stores, or in museums and cathedrals. I had the same experience in Italy, France, Greece, Russia, Estonia, Turkey, Denmark, and Sweden.

3. The English-only Movement. Though English is not, in fact, legally an official language of the United States, “English-only” sentiments are widespread in the American population. In fact, 77% of Americans (and 81% of white Americans) believe that speaking English is “crucial” for immigrants, while only 19% consider it essential for native English speakers to know a second language. (2) The attitude
4. The Anti-Immigrant Movement.
Including the vast numbers of indigenous languages spoken by a small number of people and including the main languages of the world, there are more than 500 languages spoken in the United States. (4) In fact, the numerous immigrants from Latin America make this the 5th largest Spanish-speaking country of the world. (5) This fact causes many monolingual English-speaking Americans to fear for the loss of their culture and to demand stricter immigration rules as a matter of survival. Many Americans complain that the salespeople in large department stores, the landscapers, and the house-cleaners who are mostly immigrants don't speak English. According to Msn.com an Ohio middle school teacher told a student to "go back to your country" and a second grade teacher in Mississippi posted on Facebook that black people should "move back to Africa." (3)

5. Xenophobia: It is the fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign. Xenophobic Americans develop a fear of losing their identity, become suspicious of foreigners and their activities, become aggressive towards them, and work to eliminate them from our borders. An obvious by-product of xenophobia is the refusal to learn the language of those you fear and the elimination of those languages within American borders.

6. The America First Movement: It was founded to protest America’s entry into World War II and it was dissolved on December 10, 1941, three days after the attack on Pearl Harbor had brought the war to America. Under President Donald Trump, it has been revived as an isolationist, anti-interventionist, anti-Semitic, anti-Islamic, and xenophobic movement that advocates conservative principles including strong borders, English as the dominant language, and recognizing Judeo-Christian values and shrinking government.

7. The Melting Pot Theory: This theory is a metaphor for describing the assimilation of immigrants into American culture. It relies on the image of people from different cultures and backgrounds mixing and melting together into one big cultural pot. It is expected that immigrants fully assimilate themselves into the American way of life by fully adopting its language (English), traditions, and values to the complete extinction of their own. (6)

8. The Salad Bowl Theory: Different cultures are brought together — like salad ingredients — but do not form together into a single homogeneous culture. Each culture keeps its own distinct qualities. This idea proposes a society of many individual, “pure” cultures in addition to the mixed culture that is modern American culture. (7)

9. Language Learning Difficulty: The Foreign Service Institute has determined the approximate time needed to earn a general proficiency rating for various languages for English-speakers: (8)
   a. Category 1: 23-24 weeks (575-600 hours) French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish
   b. Category 2: 30 weeks (750 hours) German
   c. Category 4: 44 weeks (1100 hours) Russian
d. Category 5: 88 weeks (2200 hours) Mandarin, Japanese, Arabic

There are no language programs in our K-12 system that come anywhere close to those numbers of hours for any of the more common languages that are taught in our schools. Consequently, students and their parents develop a sense of a lot of time spent for so little learning. The few total immersion programs and two-way bilingual programs that exist still do not reach the required number of hours to achieve advanced proficiency.

10. Inadequate Sequence of Foreign Language Study: In 2002, the Center for Applied Linguistics completed a survey examining the successes of other countries when it comes to foreign language skills. (9) The United States lags in international comparisons partly because other countries begin language education at a much younger age. Twenty-one of the top 25 industrialized countries begin the study of world languages in grades K-5, whereas in the United States most students don’t begin until middle school or high school. It has long been admitted that the two-year foreign language high school graduation requirement that many school systems adhere to is not adequate for developing any kind of proficiency in a foreign language.

Implications: What Now?
Although the Foreign Language Teaching profession has excelled in improving foreign language teaching methodology, it is perhaps time to concentrate not on the how but on the why Americans need to become bilingual. Notwithstanding the movements and forces listed above, is it possible to change the monolingual culture of America? How do we overcome the fact that English the language of commerce, business, and diplomacy has become a sort of global lingua franca? American culture permeates every corner of the globe: our music, movies and television programs are
Teaching L2 In America: An Arduous Task

by Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

everywhere. In fact, in my recent trip to Spain, American music played in every café and restaurant that we went into. In our hotel rooms, Spanish TV showed old and recent American TV programs and movies dubbed in Spanish. Although Thanksgiving was not celebrated, Black Friday week was definitely in full swing.

It seems that the United Kingdom is facing the same problem that we are facing and has commissioned a report listing the various reasons why the British need more than just the English language. (10) It has decided that its citizens do indeed need to know other languages. It would be helpful to read the British Council’s “Languages for the future: Which languages the UK needs most and why.” John Worne Director of strategy, British Council states the following in the foreword of the report:

There can be no doubt that the UK needs more of its people to speak foreign languages – for employability, for trade and the economy, and for our cultural life. But, let’s be honest, there are big barriers to this. So many people worldwide do speak English, and learning foreign languages in the UK has often been seen as an academic pursuit rather than a vital skill. Much of this revolves around the difference between being ‘fluent’ or ‘functional’ in a language.

According to Stein-Smith, (1) it is estimated that 75% of the world’s population does not speak English and that many of those who do have various levels of proficiency. How do we use that statistic in our attempt to convince Americans that learning a foreign language can be beneficial or maybe even necessary to them? Stein-Smith offers the following suggestions:

1. We need to convince our government to adopt a language policy similar to many other countries which would encourage funding for initiatives at all levels.

2. We need to encourage our institutions of higher learning to offer Languages for a Specific Purpose (LSP) as another curricular option, beside literature, cultural studies, and linguistics for those students who demand it, thus providing the students who are motivated to enter these fields with valuable applied skills in both language and cultural understanding. In January 2012, The Modern Language Journal published a special issue for Specific Purposes in the U.S. in a Global Context. (11) But the reality is that as I write this article, the Boston Globe (January 19, 2018) has stated that the University of New Hampshire has decided not to renew the contracts for lecturers in English as a Second Language, French, Spanish, and Arabic languages. (12)

3. We need to engage the help of business and industry to provide opportunities to bilingual Americans for employment both here and abroad. Business can certainly support foreign language learning among employees through on-site classes or through partnerships with local educational institutions to support other international ventures or business within local multilingual and multicultural communities. Compensation and/or other rewards should be offered to those who develop the desired foreign language skills.

4. In order to increase the desire among Americans to learn other languages, government, education, and business will need to work together to develop the language-learning mindset among Americans through language policy, increased and varied foreign language course offerings, and compensation and career opportunities respectively.

How do we convince those in power not to defund K-5 programs when budgets are tight, but rather to allocate the monies necessary for K-12 programs, recognizing that foreign languages need more than two years time in the curriculum if students are to hope to become proficient? If more Americans were proficient in another language, we would not have to depend on translations to understand or read what other countries are saying or writing.

The task is difficult but not impossible. The fact that Massachusetts has joined other states officially in recognizing the merit of foreign languages by attaching the Seal of Biliteracy to the high school diploma is proof that dedication and hard work can create miracles.

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head.

If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.

Nelson Mandela

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MaFLA, Language Advocacy, And 2018 Federal Legislation

by Edward M. Zarrow

The field of education is filled with acronyms, many of which I have trouble recalling in a timely fashion; however, one that every world language teacher should know is JNCL-NCLIS: the Joint National Committee for Languages—National Council for Languages and International Studies. JNCL-NCLIS advocates for the interests of the language community at large by lobbying the US Congress and Executive Branch agencies and by raising public awareness on a variety of language-related issues (i.e. making arguments for the importance of supporting languages as they pertain to national security, economic development, social justice, etc.). The mission of JNCL-NCLIS is to ensure that Americans have the opportunity to learn multiple languages, to advance the language profession in the US, and to promote the importance of studying languages and international education. Simply put, the JNCL-NCLIS staff regularly meet with policy-makers and legislators to advance policy priorities that benefit anyone to whom languages matter.

MaFLA has participated in initiatives with JNCL-NCLIS since its inception in 1988, and each spring, JNCL-NCLIS hosts a Language Advocacy Day in which members are afforded the opportunity to visit congressional offices. This past February, I attended Language Advocacy Day for the third time, and it has been my honor to build upon the work of my colleagues and to begin to develop long standing relationships with the offices of our representatives.

This year, MaFLA members visited the offices of Representatives Moulton, Lynch, and Clark as well as the offices of both Senators Warren and Markey. When we visit these offices, it comes as no surprise that languages and the outcomes of studying them are taken seriously – the legislative aide from Rep. Moulton’s office with whom I met is fluent in German and the aide from Rep. Lynch’s office grew up in a bilingual household speaking Portuguese. Two years ago, when I was able to meet with Senator Warren in person, she seemed excited to rattle off some Latin noun declensions for me, and Senator Markey quoted some Caesar and shared some hilarious stories about studying Latin at Malden Catholic. We don’t have to work hard to convince our legislators about the value of studying languages—some of our colleagues from other states, as I am reminded each year, are not so fortunate.

In addition to the appropriations priorities from Title VI of the Higher Education Act, Titles III & IV.A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Educational and Cultural Exchanges from the Department of State and Defense, these are the key pieces of language and culture legislation as well as appropriations priorities for 2018:

**The World Language Advancement and Readiness Act – H.R. 1239**

The bill was introduced in the House in February, 2017, and would establish a competitive grant program (3-year grants to districts) to support and expand world language education in K-12 schools. Rep. Moulton immediately signed on as a co-sponsor in support.

**The Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act – S. 254 / H.R. 1169**

The goal of the bill is to preserve Native American languages and in the process prevent the loss of heritage and culture. The Bill was passed in the Senate in November, 2017.

**The Advancing International and Foreign Language Education Act – S.2255 / H.R. 4491**

There are a number of Language Resource Centers, American Overseas Research Centers, Centers for International Business and Research, and others that receive federal funding. This bill extends funding and supplies monies to currently unfunded programs that support world language education and travel.

We work in a profession that is largely misunderstood and underfunded. We also find ourselves at a time in history when the study of languages and the humanities is being attacked (elsewhere I have written that it is being “savaged”) by individuals who challenge its value and treat those who speak a language other than English at home as people to be feared or mistrusted. Even legislators and policy makers that are receptive to our message likely did not have the same experience in a language classroom as the one that we are trying to give our students every day. This is why the work that we do in the classroom, and the work that organizations like MaFLA, NECTFL, ACTFL, and JNCL-NCLIS do, is so very important for our students’ success. The more MaFLA members know about state and federal language initiatives and legislation, the better we will be able to engage and make partners out of parents, guidance counselors, school committee members, and community stakeholders. We are all advocates.

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If you don't make mistakes, you don't make anything. If you're not making mistakes, then you're not doing anything. I'm positive that a doer makes mistakes.

John Wooden
Helen G. Agbay New Teacher Graduate Study Scholarship

PURPOSE:

The Massachusetts Foreign Language Association has established a $500.00 scholarship to honor the memory of Helen G. Agbay who was a founding member of MaFLA and served on the board for many years in numerous capacities. During her career as a foreign language educator and interpreter, Helen taught French and Spanish at the K-12 levels as well as at the post-secondary level. She was not only a foreign language educator, but also an advanced degree language student of Italian and Portuguese. To honor Helen and her passion and dedication for the teaching and learning of languages, this scholarship has been created to financially assist a current foreign language teacher who is in the process of earning a Master's degree in foreign language education.

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION:

For consideration the applicant is required to be:

• a member in good standing of MaFLA
• a full-time foreign language teacher (K-12) in a public or private school from 1-10 years
• matriculated in a graduate studies program in foreign language education

The application form (below) must be accompanied by:

☐ a copy of academic transcripts
☐ proof of matriculation in a graduate program
☐ two letters of recommendation from:
  (1) current school principal or department chair
  (2) additional administrator or fellow foreign language teacher
☐ personal statement of intent for use of scholarship (maximum one page)

2018 Helen G. Agbay New Teacher Graduate Study Scholarship Application Form

Name: _______________________________________________ Email: __________________________
Home Address: ________________________________________ Phone: __________________________
School Name: _________________________________________ Phone: __________________________
School Address: ______________________________________________________________________
Classes taught in 2017-2018 ______________________________________________________________
Years and languages taught: Full-time ___________________ Part-time ____________________
I am a full time teacher. Signature _______________________________________________________

This form and complete supporting materials must be submitted by June 1, 2018 to:

Julie Caldarone Email: caladaj1523@gmail.com
499 Lebanon Street
Melrose, MA 02176

The successful applicant will be notified by June 15, 2018.
The MaFLA Board of Directors has established an awards program for students of foreign languages in public and private schools in Massachusetts. Awards categories are:

1. One award for excellence for each language per school. This certificate is conferred upon the student who has demonstrated excellence (highest achievement) in the most advanced course of each language taught in each school.
2. One award per high school to a student who has distinguished him/herself for leadership in foreign language activities.

Any public or private school in Massachusetts wishing to recognize academic excellence and leadership in foreign language activities by awarding the MaFLA award certificates should complete the form provided and return it to the address on the form. Individual certificates, signed by a member of the Board of Directors of MaFLA, will be sent for presentation to students. Each school is eligible to make one award for excellence in each language taught (no ties, please). Each high school is eligible to make one award per school for leadership (no ties, please) in foreign language activities.

The Board of Directors has established the following criteria which each award recipient’s school must meet:

- Nominees must be public or private school students in Massachusetts.
- Recipients of the Award for Excellence must be enrolled in the most advanced course offered in their school of the language for which they have been selected to receive the award.
- Recipients of the Award for Leadership for foreign language activities may be enrolled in any high school foreign language course but must demonstrate leadership in foreign language activities. No more than one award per high school per year will be granted for leadership.
- Recipients are to be selected by the foreign language faculty of their respective schools. Criteria for determining highest achievement shall be determined by the local school’s foreign language department.
- Schools participating in the awards program must have at least one current MaFLA member on their foreign language staffs. Application for awards must be made through this member.
- The deadline for request for 2017-2018 certificates is May 15, 2018.

MaFLA Student Award Certificates

As a current member of MaFLA and the person representing my school’s foreign language department, I nominate the students named below for MaFLA awards. I certify that the criteria outlined by the MaFLA Board of Directors have been met by the nominees and by their school.

MUST BE TYPED! (or submit online via mafla.org)

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Nominator’s Name:_________________________ Membership Expires:_________________________
School:_________________________ Phone:_________________________
School Address:_________________________ Email:_________________________
Signature:_________________________

Mail to: Anna Tirone  
Email: abtirone@comcast.net  
120 Winchester Road  
Arlington, MA 024740

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF NOMINATIONS: May 15, 2018
Save the Dates!

MaFLA Diversity Day, May 5
Lasell College

MaFLA Proficiency Academy, July 23 -26
Westfield State University

MaFLA Summer Institute, August 17-19
Lasell College

MaFLA Fall Conference, October 24-26
Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place