



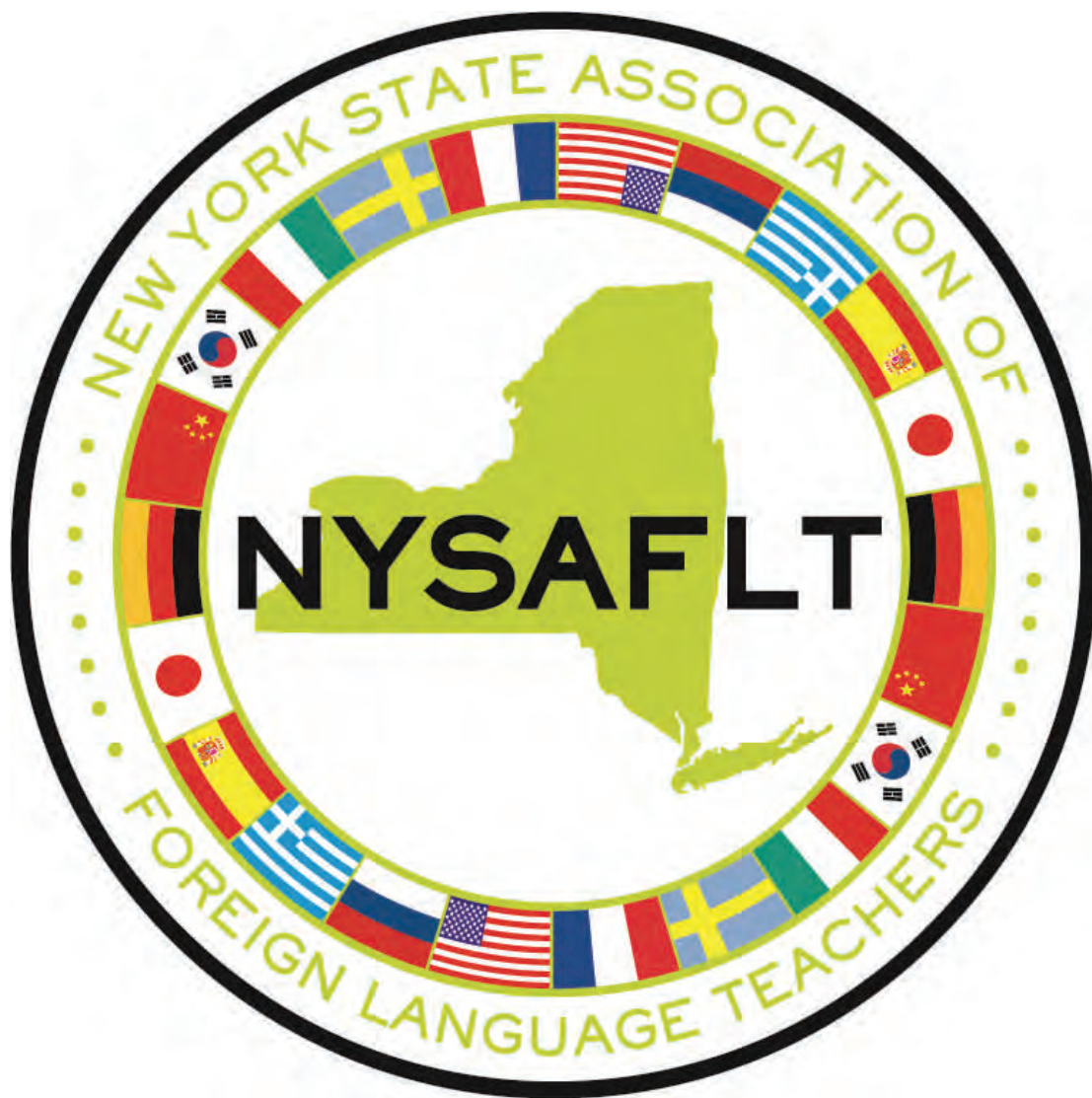
Language Association Journal

New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers

VOL. 64

2013

No. 2





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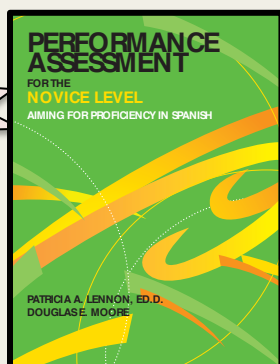
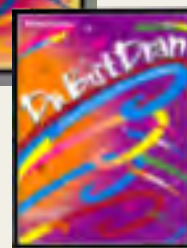
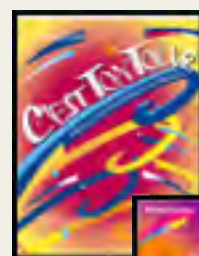
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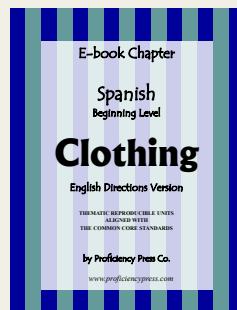
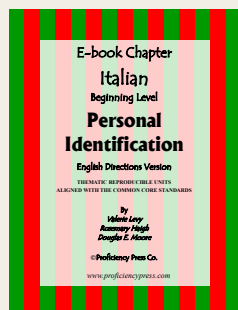
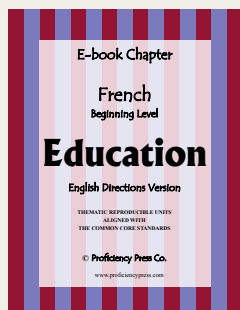


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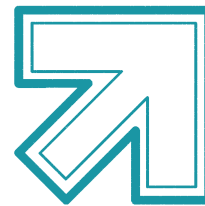
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Professional Webinars for Educators



Harry Tuttle

October 22 -- 4:00pm (1 hour) Available ON DEMAND

"Mobile Learning for Improved Modern Language Communication"

Learn how your students can engage in authentic culture through mobile activities. Learn what mobile learning is and why it is a growing trend in education. Learn the present status of mobile learning in modern language. Find out about many mobile learning activities that promote students' modern language communication skills, particularly their speaking skill. If you have a smartphone or tablet, you can participate in some activities. Discover how easy it is to implement in your classroom!



Robert Dennis

November 12 -- 4:00pm (1 hour) Available ON DEMAND

"Fiction & Nonfiction Reading Strategies in the Checkpoint C Classroom"

This webinar will explore a variety of different activities for teaching fiction and nonfiction text with emphasis on the checkpoint C classroom. The examples will be used from my experience with Italian and Spanish levels 4&5 AP and IB. The examples and strategies are in alignment with the six shifts of the Common Core in ELA.



Noah Geisel

December 10 -- 7:00pm (1 hour) Available ON DEMAND

"Engaging Students in Culture Study with Authentic Resources"

Second language speakers are a motivated bunch. While language study is key to gaining fluency, most of us were motivated to learn by our love of the culture: the sights, sounds, tastes and sites. In this webinar, we will examine ways in which we can engage language learners in culture study that is aimed at finding a connection between their individual interests and the culture studied. We will also consider one model to allow students to self-select their area of culture study. Dozens of concrete examples (mostly in Spanish) will be shared.



Joshua Cabral

January 16 -- 4:00pm (1 hour) Available ON DEMAND

"Interpersonal Communication: Refresh Your Teacher Toolbox"

Are you looking for fresh ideas to help students progress in their language proficiency and gain more confidence? This workshop will demonstrate innovative and concrete examples of activities that foster increased proficiency and confidence in communicating interpersonally. You will learn about new teaching possibilities as well as discover ways to extend the activities that you already use in the classroom. The techniques are applicable to all languages at any level.



Mary Holmes

February 11 -- 4:00pm (1 hour)

"Adapting ELA Activities for All Levels in the LOTE Classroom"

In this workshop the presenter will discuss adapting ELA activities to help meet the reading needs of LOTE learners. She will highlight current ELA literacy research and discuss how it can have a positive effect on LOTE classroom practice. The presenter will also review materials available to us for classroom use, which may include: material written for native speakers, but used in a LOTE classroom, material originally written for English readers, but translated into another language, and novels written for novice learners. [REGISTER](#)



Tara Tassani

April 15 -- 4:00pm (1 hour)

"FLES Success in the 21st Century"

This webinar will showcase the best practices of building and maintaining a sequential FLES Program for our 21st century learners. Participants will be provided with examples of innovative activities for FLES class that connect to the Common Core Standards. Learn how to instill passion and excitement for FLES through ePals, Skype, iPads, Voki Classroom and more! Examples will be provided for grade levels 2-6 Spanish, but may be adapted to any grade level or language. [REGISTER](#)

The NYSAFLT webinar series offers professional development throughout the 2013-2014 school year that addresses multiple facets of world language education. You are encouraged to register at your earliest convenience for any of the webinars above or for past webinars, which are available "on demand" at <http://www.nysaflt.org>. Group rates are available for department professional development!



Announcing the 2014 NYSAFLT Spring Colloquium Co-sponsored by COLT

Best Western Sovereign, Albany, NY *** May 3, 2014

col·lo·qui·um (k-lkw-m)

n. _pl._ COL·LO·QUI·UMS or COL·LO·QUI·A (-kw-)

- 1. An informal meeting for the exchange of views.*
- 2. An academic seminar on a broad field of study, usually led by a different lecturer at each meeting.*

[Latin, _conversation_, from colloqu_, to talk together_ : com-, _com-_ + loqu_, to speak_; see talk^w- in Indo-European roots.

The NYSAFLT Colloquium is a forum in which LOTE colleagues share perspectives, exchange ideas, and develop responses to issues of importance to the LOTE education community. At the 2014 Colloquium, participants will focus on the timely and important topic of "Bringing the Common Core to Life: Building Communication through Literacy."

Because continued professional growth is important for the success of all teachers, please join us on May 3 for the 2014 NYSAFLT Colloquium. We value your input!

Click [here](#) for more information and to register!

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Language Association Journal

A publication of the

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Articles submitted for publication must follow APA guidelines, use Times New Roman font size 12, with 5-space indents, and be double-spaced throughout. Manuscripts that are not clearly formatted following the guidelines of the 6th edition of the [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association](#) will not be reviewed. There are numerous online sources to help with this formatting; e.g., <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> Electronic submission is required. Please e-mail manuscripts as .doc or .docx file attachments to the editor at nysafltjournal@nysaflt.org. Photographs, graphics and/or other artwork should be submitted as separate files.

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Planned Giving

Several years ago, NYSAFLT learned that we were to be the beneficiary of a very generous contribution from a former member who recently passed away. Sally G. Hahn felt so strongly about the benefits of early language instruction that she made it possible for NYSAFLT to make annual awards of up to \$3000 to support outstanding FLES programs and teachers in New York State. All award money comes from interest earned on the Hahn bequest, which has been carefully invested by our Financial Management Committee.

If you would like more information about how you can make a planned gift to NYSAFLT and impact a cause near to your heart, please contact John Carlino, Executive Director, at NYSAFLT headquarters.

From the Editor:

Brrrr! It's cold outside—but it's hot in our LOTE classrooms! The articles in this issue provide ideas, suggestions and examples for how to keep our lessons sizzlin' throughout the cold winter months, and every day of the entire school year. The theme for this issue was designed to focus on lighting that spark with our Checkpoint A students, but these ideas will keep that spark glowing through Checkpoints B and C, too. Okay, so enough with the temperature metaphors, but I hope it caught your attention so you'll continue reading this issue and being inspired by the good work of our colleagues whose articles are included.

The issue opens with words from our Annual Conference keynote speaker, Lori Langer de Ramirez. If you were at the conference, I'm sure you're still remembering how inspirational and exciting she was. How could anyone not be enthusiastic about her plea for "play in the language classroom?" When we have those bad days of teaching, she urges us to play. Erin Kearney then addresses the major challenges of addressing culture in early levels of foreign language learning and offers some possible solutions. In the Teacher to Teacher section, French teacher Janis Labroo shares her Top 10 tried and true activities for Checkpoint A. There's something for everyone in this issue.

Our next issue will revisit the Common Core. If you've had some successes, please consider submitting an article about them. The deadline for manuscript submissions for the summer issue is March 1st. The submission guidelines can always be found on the NYSAFLT website under Publications.

Now, read, enjoy, and *go play*! If you're having fun in your LOTE classes, so are your students, and when we're having fun, we learn better.

Keep up the good work!

Carol S. Dean, Ed.D.
Editor, *Language Association Journal*

CALL FOR PAPERS
NYSAFLT Language Association Journal

2014 Vol. 65, No. 1
Common Core State Standards and LOTE
Deadline for Submission: March 1, 2014

2014 Vol. 65, No. 2
Collaborative Colleagues Promoting the Profession
Deadline for Submissions: October 1, 2014

How do we support each other to keep up-to-date on best practices for teaching LOTE? Whether you are part of a large department or you're the only LOTE teacher in your school, where do you go for opportunities to challenge your oral proficiency in the language you teach? Are you a cooperating teacher or supervisor? What do you do to welcome new teachers into the profession?

The Language Association Journal is the official peer-reviewed journal of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT) and is published two times per year. It has a thematic approach and welcomes a spectrum of submissions ranging from scholarly articles to teacher-to-teacher exchanges regarding language learning and acquisition, instruction, curriculum, assessment, policy, advocacy, teacher education, and other areas of professional interest to language educators.

Submission Guidelines:

- the manuscript must not be previously published or considered for publication elsewhere
- the manuscript must be written in English (examples within the manuscript may be written in other languages and must be italicized and accompanied by translations)
- the manuscript should not exceed 8,000 words
- for a blind review, omit all references that would reveal the author's identity in the manuscript
- follow the guidelines, as outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition (2009) (APA style resource: <http://www.apastyle.org>)
- use Times New Roman font size 12 double-spaced
- proof-read the manuscript to ensure that it is as error-free as possible
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- submit photographs, graphics and/or other artwork as separate files
- in the e-mail, provide a brief biographical information, which would appear at the end of your article and should also include:
 - your name, title, affiliation, and contact information
 - your educational background
 - what languages, ages/grades, and language proficiency levels you have taught in your teaching career
 - professional affiliations or involvement in language education

All properly submitted manuscripts receive an e-mail acknowledgement from the Editor. Submission of a manuscript does not guarantee its publication. After an initial review by the Editor, those manuscripts that meet specifications are sent to one or two members of the Editorial Board for anonymous evaluation. Each of the reviewers is asked to make one of three recommendations regarding each submission: (1) publish as is, (2) publish after revising/rewriting, or (3) do not publish. When all reviews are received, the Editor makes the final decision regarding the manuscript's publication and notifies the author about the submission's status. All manuscripts accepted for publication are subject to editing.

Dr. Carol S. Dean
Editor, Language Association Journal
Assistant Professor, Foreign Language Education
Secondary Education Department

The State University of New York College at Oneonta

All Work and No Play? - The Imperative of Play in the Language Classroom

Lori Langer de Ramírez, The Dalton School, NY

Our Problem

Have you ever experienced a bad day of teaching? I don't mean that typical bad day when your lesson goes wrong, or a student cries in class, or you forgot to make copies of a test for next period... I mean a day in which you question whether or not you are in the right profession. I hope you haven't had many of these days, but if you say to yourself at times that your profession has changed, you're probably not alone.

Recently there has been a string of initiatives – many of them state or federal mandates – that can make a teacher ask those existential questions: “What am I doing here?” and “What is the point of all this?” Whether you agree with the Common Core, or believe in APPR, these initiatives can be felt as stressors in the classroom and – if taken too seriously – can put a damper on creativity and fun, but they don't have to be. There is a way to incorporate all the good points of these mandates that is both subversive and pedagogically sound: PLAY!

Language teachers have been long criticized for having “too much fun” in school (as if this were a bad thing). We tend to be the ones singing, eating, dancing, watching TV or movies, and playing games. If you are like me, you have spent at least several free periods explaining yourself and your classroom methods to a non-language teaching colleague. You have given your rationale for the incredible potential a target language song has for teaching vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural themes to students. You argue that food is the culminating project from a thematic unit or that a soap opera in the target language serves to underscore a particular cultural point. Some of your colleagues believe you. Some don't. It just doesn't seem “rigorous” (read “boring”) enough to be “real learning.”

Some Quotes about the Importance of Play

“You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.” -- Plato

“Humanity has advanced, when it has advanced, not because it has been sober, responsible, and cautious, but because it has been playful, rebellious, and immature.” --Tom Robbins

“This is the real secret of life - to be completely engaged with what you are doing in the here and now. And instead of calling it work, realize it is play.” -- Alan Wilson Watts

“Men do not quit playing because they grow old; they grow old because they quit playing.”

-- Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

“Combinatory play seems to be the essential feature in productive thought.” -- Albert Einstein

“The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect, but by the play instinct.” -- Carl Jung

Why Play in the Classroom?

Play is crucial in the language learning process – as much for the teacher as for the students. Games help students feel excited on the affective level, while also connecting on the cognitive and developmental level. In his book *A Whole New Mind*, author and theorist Daniel Pink posits six human abilities that are essentials for success in the 21st Century. Among them is play, with games, humor and joyfulness being key elements. When we play we feel joyful and relaxed, and we often are more open to creative thoughts. We ask students to create in the target language all the time – either in writing or speaking. In fact one sign of a strong language learner is the ability to play with language and understand humor in that language. And for teachers, creativity is an essential part of designing and developing lessons. When we prepare thematic units that involve playful elements, we are both engaging our students’ need for play and creating a fun and interesting teaching environment for ourselves.

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2011) includes Learning and Innovation Skills as important for our students to master in this century with “a focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration.” These skills include:

- Creativity and Innovation (think creatively, work creatively with others, implement innovations);
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving (reason effectively, use systems thinking, make judgments and decisions, solve problems);
- Communication and Collaboration (communicate clearly, collaborate with others).

Play and games tap in to these skills in very natural and specific ways. In game play, students often work in teams and look for creative and innovative ways to address challenges inherent to every game. They must problem-solve and communicate their ideas to their teammates. They have to collaborate on solutions and negotiate roles during the game. All of these skills are integral parts of play and, when practiced in the target language, provide students authentic communicative tasks that further their acquisition of grammar, vocabulary and even cultural concepts.

Play in the school setting can establish a safe and enjoyable environment, thus facilitating positive feelings and, researchers say, more effective learning in the classroom. Stephen Krashen’s (1983) Affective Filter Hypothesis refers to the learner’s receptiveness to new language input. Students need to feel comfortable – and even motivated – in order to learn well. Play and fun can lower our students’ affective filters in ways that help them to

feel engaged and positive about learning a new language. In her recent book, *Reality is Broken*, game designer Jane McGonigal (2011) also argues for the use of games and play in school as a means of engaging students on the affective level. McGonigal claims that the most salient elements of games (goals, rules and obstacles, feedback systems, and voluntary participation) are the same ones that motivate users to continue playing and, potentially, could inspire students in the school setting. She underscores the importance of the emotional hook of games: “From zero to peak experience in thirty seconds flat – no wonder video games caught on. Never before in human history could this kind of optimal, emotional activation be accessed so cheaply, so reliably, so quickly.” McGonigal also stresses the importance of the control that students feel over their gaming experience: “Games challenge us with voluntary obstacles and help us put our personal strengths to better use.”

Games can also connect to different developmental stages, such as those posited by Kieran Egan (1997) in his book *The Educated Mind: How Cognitive Tools Shape Our Understanding*. He refers to developmental layers of understanding in learners as: somatic, mythic, romantic, philosophic and ironic. With “quest” related games, mythic, romantic and philosophic themes form key elements of the story or plot. Many MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games) involve quests as the driving task of the game and so include elements of all of these layers in engaging and entertaining contexts. Whether you agree with videogames or not, the arguments for leveraging games and play in the classroom are strong – just ask your students!

What Does Play Look Like in the Language Classroom?

Play can take on many different forms in the language classroom. The first thing we often think of when envisioning play is videogames, and the World Wide Web is a literal (and virtual!) playground. One excellent resource for online gaming information for teaching language is *Games 2 Teach*, a project funded through the Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language, and Literacy (CERCLL) at the University of Arizona. This project is meant to “...aid language educators in evaluating and implementing digital games in the K-16 foreign language classroom. Resources include sample activities, activity design frameworks, and game evaluations in addition to papers and annual workshops for educators.”

Other Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs, wikis, and podcasts, can also provide a forum for play in the language classroom. Here are a few examples:

- Avatars on Voki (<http://www.voki.com>): Students can play digital dress-up by creating their own avatar and then recording their voice in the target language. Avatars are particularly well suited for short autobiographical statements, expressing likes and dislikes, or giving a brief opinion on a specific topic.
- Picture description with Pinterest (<http://www.pinterest.com>): Teachers can create “boards” filled with funny or strange pictures, memes (an image with brief text that spreads on social media) in the target language, and images of cultural realia. These images can be used for description (orally or in writing) or as debate starters.

- Scavenger hunts with VoiceThread (<http://www.voicethread.com>): Students can create digital scavenger hunts using images, voice and text. One student hides an object in school and others can post clues and hints via the comment function to help find the prize.

While our students are all digital natives, this doesn't mean that they don't enjoy traditional "old school" forms of play. Here are some off-line games for the language classroom:

- Color vocabulary through paper chromatography: Students can practice color vocabulary and learn science concepts by doing science experiments with markers, filter paper, and rubbing alcohol.
- Comic strip creation: While there are many online tools for creating comics (e.g., <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/>), having students create their own, hand-drawn comic strips in the target language can be fun and provide beginning proficiency students with an outlet for creative story ideas that might be too difficult to tell in short story form.
- Food festivals: There's nothing that gets students more excited than the idea of eating in the classroom, but the best food activities also involve some food making as well, allowing students to role play as chefs and *gourmands*. For example, French students can make their own cheeses and then have a festival where they try a variety of cheese from around the Francophone world. Then take a survey (*en français*, of course) as to the students' favorites.
- Role-plays and skits: Any opportunity for dress-up can change an ordinary lesson into a fun and interesting one. Don't limit dress up to elementary classes, either. Depending on your group of students, even seniors can have fun with costumes, props or puppets!
- Simulations: Have students take on the roles of famous artists, politicians, actors or musicians and set up a "meet-and-greet" where everyone has to talk (in the target language) while staying in character.
- Board games: Scrabble and any other word games can be excellent practice for students – and astoundingly challenging! More physical games like Twister can be useful for kinesthetic learners as they involve students moving while practicing important vocabulary and commands in the target language.

One of my all-time favorite ways to play in the language classroom is by taking a Fantasy Trip. This activity gleaned from *Languages and Children: Making the Match* (Curtain and Dahlberg, 2011), combines simulation, food, music, and culture in an engaging and delightful way. Teachers can take a fantasy trip to anywhere: a country, a region, a neighborhood or even a specific market or street. Students can pack a suitcase (I use a center-tab file folder and have students draw or cut out and label pictures of the clothing they "pack" inside), apply for a passport, and look at a map to plan the trip. Then they hop on a bus or plane (set up in my classroom). If air travel is required, students get a boarding pass (make your own at: Ticket-o-Matic – <http://omatic.musicairport.com>) and bring it with them on the day of the "trip." On one particularly delightful trip to Colombia, my students and I have tasted tropical fruit shakes on the beach in Cartagena, danced and sang *vallenato* in Santa Marta, and

looked at *molas* and other crafts in Barranquilla. Through this simulation, my students used Spanish to express opinions, discuss cultural norms, while playing with the language in context.

Conclusion: Be Subversive!

When mandates get you down, play! When you question your role in the language classroom, play! When you are in need of inspiration and joy, play! There are many ways to accomplish our educational goals, whether they be Common Core, APPR, or your own school-based initiatives. Playing in the language classroom helps lower your students' affective filter while giving you the boost you need to enjoy your work. Yes, it is important for students to have fun, but if you are tired, stressed, or just plain bored, your students know it – and they respond accordingly. We need to play in order to remember why we chose to do this work: to inspire our students to love our languages, to use language to meet new people, learn about other cultures, and to develop into positive global citizens. What more reason do you need?

Some PLAY resources online

- Games 2 Teach: <http://games2teach.wordpress.com/>
- Institute of Play: <http://www.instituteofplay.com>
- Fantasy trips materials and descriptions: <http://miscositas.com/fantasytrips.html>
- Pinterest collection of speaking and writing prompt photos: <http://www.pinterest.com/miscositaspix/speaking-writing-prompts/>
- For a collection of online games in many languages, visit my Delicious page: <https://delicious.com/miscositas/search/game>.

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Lori Langer de Ramirez began her career as a teacher of Spanish, French and ESL. She holds a Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics and a Doctorate in Curriculum and Teaching from Teachers College, Columbia University. She is currently the Director of World Languages and Global Language Initiatives at the Dalton School in New York City.

Addressing Culture in Introductory Levels of World Language Teaching: Insights from Research in Pre-K to Post-Secondary Classrooms

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Abstract

Addressing culture in the world language classroom is a challenge that most teachers grapple with, as it is a complex dimension of our work. Especially at introductory levels, deep and meaningful engagement with culture can be difficult to conceptualize and execute. In this article, I first review national and state standards with regard to cultural learning in world language classrooms. After looking to these professional standards, I discuss the classroom-based research studies I have conducted in post-secondary, pre-school and now middle and high school French, Spanish, Korean and Chinese classes. This description of my research trajectory explains how my insights about culture teaching in introductory level world language classrooms have developed over time and serves as a springboard for offering practical suggestions to those who seek to enhance their approach to culture-in-language-teaching.

Introduction

Our profession has for some time accorded considerable attention to the cultural dimensions of language teaching and learning. In the New York State (NYS) and National Standards, culture figures prominently (see Figure 1).

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| <p>ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2013)</p> | <p>Cultures:</p> <p>Interact with cultural competence and understanding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied. 2. Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied. <p>Comparisons:</p> <p>Develop insight into the nature of language and culture in order to interact with cultural competence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own. |
| <p>NYS Learning Standards for Languages Other Than English (1996)</p> | <p>Students will develop cross-cultural skills and understandings.</p> |

Figure 1. National and NYS Standards related to cultures.

The ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages and NYS Standards for LOTE overlap in important ways when it comes to cultural dimensions of

language teaching. They both explicitly emphasize development of learners' understandings and more implicitly suggest that learners should gain cultural competence that can be used in actual communicative situations (as suggested by the ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages' use of "interact" and the NYS Standards' use of "skills"). This suggests that in both sets of Standards development of a more internal, cognitive and perhaps socio-affective understanding (a mindset, we might say) is a desired outcome of language education, as is an informed and practical competence that can be called into action in communication when using the target language. There is nothing in the way the Standards are stated that suggests the goals of understanding and interactional cultural competence are to be seen as separate; in fact, we might argue that they are mutually dependent. Notably, both ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages and NYS LOTE Standards stress that cultural learning is evident in (and is likely developed through) target language use, not through conversation in English. As ACTFL's second Comparisons Standard makes clear, explorations of cultures in world language classrooms, through use of the target-language, are intended not only to foster understandings of specific cultures, their products, practices and perspectives, but also to generate deeper consideration of the nature of culture itself.

Despite many similarities, whereas the National Standards offer a broad conception of what learners should know and be able to do through what is sometimes called the "3 Ps Paradigm" (products, practices and perspectives), the NYS Standards give further indication of how culture translates at different levels of language education. (It should be noted that performance indicators by level are currently being drafted to correspond to the refreshed ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning

Languages.) Specifically, at the most introductory of levels, Checkpoint A, NYS Standards articulate the following goals for foreign languages and provide examples of what types of student performances and use of language might indicate progress toward these goals (see Figure 2):

1. Effective communication involves meanings that go beyond words and require an understanding of perceptions, gestures, folklore, and family and community dynamics.

All of these elements can affect whether and how well a message is received.

Students can:

- use some key cultural traits of the societies in which the target language is spoken.

This is evident, for example, when students:

- recognize cultural patterns and traditions of the target cultures in the target language;
- understand the cultural implications of the spoken language and of the dynamics of social interaction; and
- correctly use and interpret cultural manifestations, such as gestures accompanying greeting and leave taking and the appropriate distance to maintain.

Figure 2: Learning Standards for Languages Other Than English (1996), p. 14

These precisions offer teachers further guidance, but as is the case with all Standards documents, the NYS Standards offer guidelines and goals rather than specific recommendations about how instruction might target those goals.

As important as it is for the profession to acknowledge the natural connection between languages and cultures and to articulate cogent standards surrounding culture in language teaching, the question of classroom practice remains a major challenge, especially at introductory levels of instruction like Checkpoint A. How can practices and perspectives or products and perspectives be meaningfully related in the introductory classroom? How can cross-cultural skills and understandings be developed? And how can all of this happen by using the target language predominantly? In what follows, I draw on my work as a researcher and as a teacher educator to outline what some of the major challenges are when it comes to addressing culture in early levels of foreign language learning and in offering some possible solutions to those challenges.

Classroom-based research on culture-in-language-education

My research on culture-in-language-education (Kearney, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012) arose from my own teaching experience as an instructor of university-level French. I taught French for eight years, and in that time, instructed students from first semester introductory French all the way up to fifth semester, which was the first course beyond the language requirement sequence and which was a content-based class. In my years teaching French, I was struck by the way culture was sidelined in introductory courses since the focus was on getting students to use the language as quickly and as much as possible. When culture was taken up, it was in short installments and often in English. These were brief departures from the main business of the class, which was to develop a basic functional proficiency in French. The belief seemed to be that students in beginning courses did not have enough proficiency in the target language to engage in any deep cultural learning through the medium of French. In the more advanced courses

I taught, this assumption was confirmed, since in those classes, curriculum was structured so that students experienced a much more substantive engagement with culture, and this occurred entirely through use of the target language. I started to wonder about why this division existed and to question whether it needed to exist. I wondered too how cultural learning in language education might look different across the introductory to more advanced proficiencies.

This teaching experience became the basis of my research pursuits, and I set out to first understand what successful cultural learning looked like in a classroom in which, by all accounts, good things were happening when it came to cultural learning. What I found in reviewing the theoretical and research literature was essentially that the considerable amount of theorizing that had occurred with regard to cultural learning in world language classrooms (e.g. Kramsch, 1993; Moran, 2000) was not at all matched with classroom-based, empirical studies of teaching and learning interactions. The class I identified in which effective cultural teaching was reported to be occurring happened to be a fifth semester course, so students were relatively advanced in their language proficiency. My documentation and analysis of effective instruction leading to cultural learning would start there, although I always intended to come back to my questions about cultural learning in introductory classes. I thought that if I could closely study the interactions in this classroom, examine the kinds of materials and texts that were used and the kinds of assignments and activities that were given, and analyze the kinds of instructional discourse the teacher employed, then I might be able to gain an understanding of the curricular and pedagogical conditions as well as some of the day-to-day interactional processes that supported cultural learning.

Indeed, my analysis of the video-recorded and transcribed classroom interactions, the overall curricular environment established by the teacher, and students' written work showed that culture was not treated simply as the content of the course (although it was a content-based course on French experiences of World War II, a kind of history course in French). In more complex fashion, culture was systematically and coherently taken up as a meaning-making system, deeply connected to language forms. All of the class activities engaged students in exploring the meaning potentials of the language they were studying, first by identifying culturally meaningful symbols (words, phrases, images, etc.), then by hypothesizing about their meanings and exercising skills of interpretation in analyzing a range of written, oral and visual texts in which symbols appeared, and finally by entextualizing symbolic forms as students were engaged in an extended writing project that helped them understand French experiences of World War II as they penned first-person fictional memoirs of a character they created.



Figure 3: Teacher and students analyzing and interpreting from multiple perspectives a World War II propaganda poster produced by the Vichy government

Coordination of pedagogical activity in the class was complex, grounded in an approach called global simulation (see Péron, 2010, for more information), but certain principles and interactional processes framed and brought coherence to the class' work. These principles included an extended engagement with the material (six weeks), a focus on the complexity of culture and diversity of perspectives within French culture, and consistent examination of cultural meaning in context through analysis of multiple texts having to do with the same topic (the same phase or event in the war, in this case). These organizing principles shaped interactions and activities in class and emphasized culture as meaning-making. Meaning-making processes were always grounded in raising students' awareness, first of what meaningful forms were and then providing opportunities for them to interpret cultural representations from many points of view--what I call perspective-taking. The students' extended writing project is an instance of perspective-taking par excellence, as students had to inhabit a perspective and create a lived experience that was distinct from their own familiar viewpoint and experience.

Though my initial research clearly pointed to interactional processes in the classroom that facilitated engagement with cultural meaning, and therefore seemed to have very practical applications for language teachers, I was invariably questioned at academic conferences, in professional development settings and in the teacher education courses I taught about how this research could possibly apply to classrooms in which students had more basic proficiency (my study was of a fifth semester French course at the university level, after all) and at younger ages, in classrooms where students may not have had the life experience or developmental readiness to discuss such weighty topics as perspectives on war. I appreciated these questions and challenges and knew that I had to

broaden my research mission. Even upon completing the first study, I knew that the findings couldn't possibly be generalizable to all other language classrooms, because I only studied one class and because language classrooms vary so widely in so many ways. My new priority became investigation of cultural learning in a range of classroom settings (pre-K to 16) in order to begin illustrating the various forms cultural teaching and learning in language education could take across grade levels, proficiencies and instructional contexts. My strong feeling was that even though cultural learning would not look as it did in the first classroom I studied, it would still be possible to foster deep and meaningful cultural learning at all levels since cultural learning through language learning is something that we all do from very young ages in our own native cultures and languages. It would be important to document and analyze how cultural learning unfolded across levels and proficiencies so that I could make more valid and convincing data-grounded claims for the general kinds of interactions and instructional discourse that would likely facilitate cultural learning. I was also aware that the series of studies I envisioned should provide detailed, illustrative examples of effective teaching practices, windows of sorts into good practice when it comes to culture-in-language-education that teachers could peer into. Ultimately, I believed that there would not be a one-size-fits-all set of practices that teachers could simply apply in their classrooms to encourage meaningful cultural learning; however, I did believe that generating a set of principles and processes from empirical data that were flexible enough to apply across diverse contexts of language learning was possible and quite necessary for the profession.

With the idea in mind that it is the work of researchers to illuminate exactly how successful cultural learning happens in real language classrooms of all kinds, I moved to

the other end of the educational spectrum entirely and began to study a pre-school foreign language program that brought Chinese, Korean or Spanish to classes of 3- and 4-year olds twice a week. In this setting, functional proficiency with the language could not really be a realistic goal, as the children experienced such infrequent contact with the language. But as is often the case for foreign language in the elementary school (FLES) programs, the pre-school program I studied articulated goals in terms of cultural learning and cultivation of positive attitudes toward languages, language learning, and speakers of the languages that were being studied. My research in this program (Kearney & Ahn, 2013a, 2013b), which is still ongoing, has shown that cultural learning at the earliest of ages and most basic of proficiencies can involve language learners more or less meaningfully depending on instructional discourse and the shape of teaching and learning interactions that ensue. It also shows that awareness-raising is the foundation of cultural learning, the first building block toward the much more intricate and complex meaning-making activity that older learners with more substantial language proficiency can display. As students encounter a new language for the first time, the most effective language teachers in the pre-school program facilitate awareness-raising by preparing activities that invite learner questions about language and culture, by modeling stances of openness and curiosity toward linguistic and cultural difference, and advancing gentle challenges to the children's normative or value-laden statements about linguistic or cultural difference. For example, in an interaction where a Korean language teacher and a 4-year-old girl sat down at a table to write their names on paper, a quite interesting negotiation unfolded about what "normal" writing is, with the Korean script initially being positioned as not normal and the English alphabet as normal. Through the course

of the interaction, the language teacher was able to position both writing systems as equally valid options for writing names, and the little girl appeared to accept and indeed celebrate this possibility.



Figure 4: Korean language teacher and a 4 year-old negotiating whether Korean script of the English alphabet are the “normal” way of writing one’s name

This may seem like a basic realization, and it is. But for a 4 year-old, the discovery that there are other options for writing language beyond the one they are personally familiar with is quite revolutionary. It lays foundational awareness that there are many ways of making meaning out there in the world and that one can expand his or her meaning-making repertoire through the learning of a new language. The rich discussion that occurred between a language teacher and a child about writing systems occurred in a one-on-one interaction, but many other episodes in the data set from the pre-school study involve a language teacher working with a whole class of children during circle time. These whole-group interactions were just as pivotal in raising childrens’ awareness of linguistic and cultural difference.

Another language teacher, who brought Spanish to a class of 4 year-olds, made a paper bag puppet of Dora the Explorer, with whom the children were only to use Spanish. This decision brought a great deal of coherence to the teacher's visits since the children saw their engagement with Spanish as an ongoing conversation with Dora. It also gave the teacher the ability to contextualize her references to culture (e.g. where Dora was from, what kinds of fruit and vegetables grew there) in a meaningful way. The pre-school program does not follow an immersion model and children only see their language teachers twice a week, so substantially building L2 proficiency is not a primary goal. As a result, there is much more English use in these settings than in the French class I studied and in most other foreign language classrooms. Nonetheless, there is much in the data set that highlights how rich the awareness-raising was as the children worked with their language teachers. A focus on awareness-raising seems a particularly appropriate way of thinking about cultural learning among very young learners and in introductory language classes but also appears to be the basis of cultural learning at more advanced proficiencies and older ages as well.

My research continues in the pre-school setting but has also expanded to 7th to 12th grade LOTE classrooms. Preliminary analyses of interactions show support for the findings of my previous studies in a university-level classroom and in a pre-school setting, namely that for learners of all ages and proficiencies, cultural learning must be anchored in awareness-raising, awareness which can then be the foundation upon which perspective-taking and complex meaning-making can occur.

It is important to do classroom-based studies of culture-in-language-education and to identify a range of pedagogical options that support cultural learning for a variety of

reasons. First, most foreign language education in the United States happens at the secondary level (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2010), and as a result, a focus on what works in beginning levels and at early proficiencies is crucial. Furthermore, students often come to study certain languages because they are interested in cultures. That is, students choose to study French, Japanese, Spanish or German often because they are drawn to some aspect of these target-language cultures. Because of this, our research and instruction could capitalize more productively on this student interest. An emphasis on analyzing effective practice is essential because ineffective instruction or lack of attention to culture-in-language-teaching can actually create or reinforce stereotypical or reductionist views of cultures, which is counter to our profession's standards and our goals as language teachers.

Alongside research efforts aimed at studying and generating insights from effective classroom practice, a major shift in our thinking about culture-in-language-teaching needs to occur. Where we have in the past viewed culture as the content of our language classes or the contextual frame in which the new language is understandable, we can opt to view language instead as a symbolic and culturally meaningful system and culture, therefore, as a meaning-making system, an active process. In this vein, Kramsch (2006) calls for symbolic competence as a new aim for language education, in contrast with the communicative competence we have taken up as a goal in the past. Her argument is that we do not just want students to be able to communicate in the sense of transacting information; we want them to be able to interpret and make meaning and to understand the process of meaning-making itself. What this meaning-making looks like will vary from level to level, from age group to age group and from classroom to

classroom, but theory and research on real classrooms can help us clarify the shape cultural teaching and learning can take when symbolic competence is the goal.

Some challenges in addressing culture in introductory language classes and strategies to address them

In the classrooms I've researched (described above and in more detail in the other articles I've cited on these studies) and in the many that I observe as part of my work in a teacher education program for foreign language teachers, I have come to recognize several challenges of addressing culture in introductory language classes. I outline them here in question form since I so often hear them posed in this way. For each question, I also provide some strategies to address challenges based on my previous and ongoing research as well as my extensive observation in LOTE classrooms and work with novice and more experienced LOTE teachers.

Where do I start?

On the first night of my graduate course entitled "Teaching and Understanding Second Language Cultures" I always ask what students hope to gain from the class. In many cases, they say that they really just want to know where to start. Many new teachers have not had any specific education when it comes to culture pedagogy in the language classroom environment and cannot identify particular goals for enhancing their approach to cultural teaching in the same way that they can articulate how they want to become more adept in language teaching. Similarly, more experienced teachers state that though they feel quite comfortable in teaching language, they are often less at ease with teaching culture. Often this is because culture teaching was not directly addressed in their own teacher education programs, and in some cases, teachers feel that they do not

have enough knowledge about or experience with target language cultures to adequately address it in the classroom.

I generally address questions about where to start with cultural pedagogy by focusing on articulating cultural learning objectives. There are innumerable possibilities when it comes to cultural learning, so it is important to narrow one's focus. Our students will have many language teachers in their educational careers, so it is important to keep in mind that our individual approach to cultural teaching need not do it all. We can focus on particular goals that complement our own abilities and interests and that cater best to the needs and interests of the particular students we teach.

As with all other objective-writing, cultural learning goals should be clearly-stated, focused on observable student behaviors and of some meaningful significance. Of course, they should be age- and level-appropriate as well. When we think of beginning-level classes, such as those at Checkpoint A, cultural learning objectives could productively be articulated around cultural knowledge, skills of inquiry, skills of hypothesizing, skills of interpreting meaning, and skills of interacting cross-culturally. Using the example of the Michelin guide unit, some example objectives for cultural learning for particular lessons might be:

1. Students will be able to recall culturally-relevant vocabulary (e.g. le guide Michelin, inspecteur, étoile, classification) after watching a short video about the Guide Michelin and while completing a fill-in-the-blank text based on the video
2. Students will be able to read a menu from a restaurant reviewed by the Michelin guide, examine photos of this restaurant and then hypothesize about how many stars the restaurant is awarded in the guide and why

3. Students will be able to review a restaurant menu, examine several photos of the restaurant and collaboratively write a short script for ordering a meal at the restaurant, with one student assuming the role of a Michelin inspector and other assuming the roles of restaurant workers
4. Students will be able to assign a rating for the restaurant they've visited through the role-play and will be able to provide, verbally and in writing, a classification for the restaurant in terms of décor, ambiance, quality of service and taste of the food, just as the guide does
5. Students will be able to compare and contrast their own classification for the restaurant they visited through the role play with the guide's actual classification of the restaurant

In order to meet these objectives, it would be very important for the teacher to provide a rich textual environment so that students had the linguistic resources they needed to be able to meaningfully explore a cultural product and related perspectives. This does not mean that the texts are linguistically complex, but rather that they are leveraged in such a way that they are accessible and meaningful to students who have beginning-level proficiencies. A teacher's scaffolding of interactions in class would also be crucial for students to be able to meet the learning objectives I've outlined.

In addition to having clear objectives, it is important to contextualize cultural learning in the same way that we think about contextualizing language learning. That is to say that a lesson on a cultural product and perspective, let's say the French Michelin Guide and its connection to perspectives on dining in France, is even more meaningful when embedded in a larger context of activity. For example, this product and related

perspectives could be rooted in a thematic unit in which students study select French restaurants, their menus and the process Michelin inspectors follow for rating restaurants all in service of writing simple reviews of each restaurant. These parameters for a class activity during several weeks' time span provide a meaningful structure in which culture can be explored and the authentic texts that make up the unit materials (pictures of real restaurants, their actual menus, authentic descriptions of the way Michelin inspectors are trained to rate restaurants) all provide the linguistic and cultural reference points that students need to create their own restaurant reviews with relative ease. At all levels of proficiency, providing plenty of texts that include relevant language and cultural reference in authentic context is key. The language in these materials need not be terribly complex, and reliance on visuals can be particularly powerful in introductory-level classes. Most importantly, the tasks students are asked to perform in relation to the class materials need not be overly-complex either. In the example of writing Michelin guide reviews, for example, a model or frame can assist students considerably in producing the written document. Or, they can collaborate to perform the task, pooling their linguistic resources to create a class review of just one or two restaurants.

Clear objectives and attention to meaningful contextualization of cultural teaching and learning are essential starting points; however there are other challenges that arise as teachers begin to address culture in their language classrooms.

How can I address culture and use the L2 primarily rather than switching to English? Especially if I teach in the L2 90% of the time, how can I avoid generalization or reductionist views of cultures?

There is currently growing support behind ACFTL's recommendation that foreign language teachers use the target language in class approximately 90% of the time. However, when teachers begin to consider culture pedagogy, they often wonder how they can do justice to culture and its complexity while also teaching primarily in the L2. Put another way, they wonder how they can avoid over-generalizing or reducing the complexity of cultures when their learners' language is still quite basic.

Providing narrow views of cultures is something we should be concerned about whether we teach mostly in the L2 or if we switch to English. This is because reliance on any one source of information (the teacher, the textbook, one video clip, one text) provides just one version of a cultural product, practice, phenomenon or event. A remedy to this is to focus on always providing multiple representations of culture and to think about representing in multiple modes (speaking, writing, visuals of all kinds). Take for example a thematic unit on an open-air market in a Mexican city. Perhaps the teacher studied abroad in this city. In this case, the teacher can draw on her own experiences and stories of attending the market and may even have her own photos to share with students. To expand the representation of this cultural practice beyond just the teacher's perspective on it, however, she could search for other images of the same market. Photographs necessarily present a range of perspectives as we all capture a different viewpoint and focus our cameras on different elements when we enter a cultural scene. There are likely descriptions of the market online that represent different perspectives, such as the perspective of those who work in the market or those who frequent it. If the teacher is familiar with the market because of her study abroad experience, it would also be wise to reach out to those she met while in Mexico to see if they might provide

descriptions of a few sentences about the market or very short stories about an experience they had in the market. It is possible for the teacher to ask students to draft questions to ask these Mexican acquaintances during a Skype call, for example, as well. These are all ways to distribute the weight of representation such that a teacher does not need to be the sole perspective through which students' cultural knowledge and experience is filtered. Often, teachers feel uncomfortable when students look to them as embodiments of the target culture or at least as authoritative resources on cultural matters. No one teacher, native or not, could possibly serve as the single representative of all of the richness, complexity and diversity that make up cultures, so it is entirely appropriate to diffuse that responsibility by inviting many perspectives into the language classroom, through texts that represent diverse voices and perspectives and through guest speakers.

Once a teacher has decided to plan in ways that bring multiple representation of culture into the classroom, fears of generalization or reducing culture in essentialist ways are somewhat allayed. How to maintain target language use while addressing culture in a Checkpoint A classroom in meaningful ways is still a relevant question, however. This will be facilitated in one of two ways. First, in engaging students with an array of representations that are linguistically challenging, it is important that the task students are asked to perform be designed so that they can accord most of their attention to processing the texts themselves. For example, if a teacher presents three short texts she collects from friends in Mexico about interesting events that happened to them while visiting the open air market, she can ask students to circle words or phrases that appear across all three texts. In this way, they can focus in on potentially shared meanings while not needing to produce any new language themselves. The second option is to form a

collection of representations that are not linguistically challenging, such as a selection of photos. In this case, the task that students perform can be more complex. For example, students can receive one photo each and write a title for the image. Students can then pin their photos to a bulletin board along with the title and begin to compare and contrast their interpretations of the open-air market. Students are able to carry out what are cognitively demanding tasks and culturally meaningful learning and they can do it in the target language, as long as care is taken to balance text complexity and task complexity.

Conclusion

Addressing culture in early levels of foreign language education is not without challenges. Yet, it is crucial that culture be addressed in meaningful ways so that it can establish foundational awareness and form as the basis for ongoing cultural learning. As teachers begin to examine and enhance their approach to culture pedagogy, attention to both awareness-raising and providing opportunities for perspective-taking is arguably the most central concern. Students will need assistance in recognizing which cultural forms (words, phrases, visual symbols, products and practices) are culturally relevant, and then they will need to exercise that burgeoning awareness through interpretive activities that are embedded in meaningful units and lessons. Attention to perspective-taking is equally important and equally as attainable in early levels of instruction. We sometimes address cultural products and practices but face difficulty in figuring out how to also integrate consideration of cultural perspectives. The strategies outlined above that have to do with bringing many voices and perspectives into the language classroom through a range of cultural texts and representations is one way to begin broaching the complex array of perspectives that make up target language cultures.

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Teacher to Teacher

Top 10 Tried and True Activities for Checkpoint A

Janis Labroo

As you know, if our students are engaged in the target language (TL), they are acquiring skills. At the Checkpoint A level, I try to keep the lesson about THEM or keep THEM moving as much as possible. Here are my students' top 10 tried and true activities that keep them using the language. I have used these activities to support French language and culture but they can be altered to fit any language.

Activity Calendar

1. **Calendar Bulletin Board:** One of the bulletin boards in our classroom is dedicated to monthly activities and happenings. I make a large paper calendar so students can refer to it anywhere in the room. It is decorated with a theme: Back to school, fall/Canadian Thanksgiving, festivals of light, snow, etc. The month is written across the top in the TL as are days of the week. Finally dates are entered into each square. I use the typical French calendar starting with Monday. There are also detachable signs in a different color that say "this week" and "this weekend" in the TL which are moved as the weeks go by. In each square (which is about 5" x 6") I enter birthdays, holidays, vacations and special school events. If students want to add an event, they can do so with prior approval. Students consistently check it for what is happening this week at school. The calendar makes for a nice reference point for large group discussion in the TL and singing happy birthday to students.

Salutations

2. **Getting to know you:** Have students form two lines facing each other. They can stand or set up desks to form one long table. Like speed dating, students will have 3 minutes to introduce one another and get to know each other in the TL. This activity is more enjoyable if students choose a famous identity, which can be prepared ahead of time. They must say hello, ask how their partner is, and present themselves with some background information. (*Hello, my name is Jacques Cousteau. How are you? I'm from Paris.*) Finally they find out what their partner likes to do. When 3 minutes are up, the bell rings and everyone moves to the right (staying on the same side of the table). Now they have a new partner and they repeat the activity. Each time they engage in a new conversation it becomes smoother. After about 4 to 5 conversations, using the full class discussion format, the teacher can ask a few students to share what famous people they met and what they like to do.

Health and Wellness Unit

3. **Yoga Class:** Students welcome a class dedicated to relaxation. With a stretch class they hear the body parts pronounced correctly in a relaxed state and coordinate movement along with it. If students do not want to be on the floor, they can have a standing stretch class. Students should be reminded a few times prior to this event to wear appropriate clothing. Play relaxing music and stretch from head to toe, looking left, right, up, down, rolling wrists and ankles, even doing eye yoga. A simple sun salutation covers it all. Don't forget to breathe deep – and have a box of Kleenex available. Most students enjoy the session and ask to do it again. The first time you can

expect a lot of laughter but with each session they mature and feel good about their growth. If you lack confidence leading the activity, there are good videos available like this one in French (Fitness Master Class from Doctissimo): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h34yygx0MmQ>. The video can also be assigned as a listening homework prior to the yoga class so students know what to expect.

4. **Exercise Routines:** Have groups of students (3-4) make up an exercise routine about 3 minutes long where they lead the class. It should be simple but require students to use at least 7 different prepositions and 7 different verbs. This makes for good practice and assessment of the usage of the imperative mode and prepositions. The song they choose should be in the target language. I keep a selection of music and artists on my web-page to help them find an appropriate song. The song must be pre-approved to avoid playing songs with explicit lyrics or any repeats.

Family Unit

5. **The Game of 7 Families/Le jeu de sept familles:** A Go-fish like card game, without the fishing. There are seven families in each deck of cards. Each family has a grandpa, grandma, mom, dad, son and daughter. In groups of 5 to 6, the dealer distributes all of the cards. The youngest student starts and asks a specific student for a card that s/he needs to complete a family. For example, “**Do you have** the DAD of the COOKING family?” or the MOM of the GARDENING family? Family members get passed around the group in fun frustration. The goal is to get a full family. Once attained, the student can then lay down that completed family and keep it. The play then continues. The student with the most families at the end of the game wins. Students love it, and practice asking yes/no questions in an engaging format. This is often where they realize that the word DO is built into the verb in French. I personally like the version of the family names using different activities for checkpoint A. This game is more easily found in Europe than Quebec. However, you can create your own using clip art and printing on thick paper. I made a version for the house and home unit substituting rooms for the families, and furniture for family members. For this format, it was necessary to have a guide sheet to know what furniture was being used because it is different in every room. Students were able to do the house and home version because they knew how the family version worked.
6. **Bring your pet to school day via Voice Thread:** Students can introduce their family pets to the class using the website www.voicethread.com which shows a picture of the pet and uses a voice recording for descriptions. Other students can comment on the pets using a written message, a voice or a video recording. For students who do not have a pet, they can present a pet rock, the neighborhood squirrel or an imaginary pet.
7. **My Famous Family slide show:** Students love to create families to present to the class in slide show format. For each family member, students must include the person’s name, a school-appropriate picture of that person, their relationship to that person, the person’s interests, a pet peeve, a physical description and personality traits. For example: This is my mom. Her name is Beyoncé. She likes to sing and dance. She doesn’t like negative people. She has a lot of expensive shoes. She is beautiful but also nice. To ensure students are using different verb conjugations and adjective agreements, they are required to do slides with different subjects; i.e., first person singular, first person plural, third person singular and third person plural. At least one slide must be feminine and one must be masculine so that students demonstrate their usage of

adjective agreement. Students have to show that they can appropriately use the verbs TO BE, TO HAVE, TO LIKE, possessive pronouns, the negative construction and adjective agreement. To keep audience members listening, they are each required to ask 2 questions overall to two different presenters about something that wasn't mentioned, for example: "Do you have any pets? What is your heritage?"

Nature and the Environment Unit

8. **A Nature Scavenger Hunt:** If the structure of your TL requires placement of adjectives either before or after the noun, then this is an enjoyable activity for your students. We are lucky to have woods on our campus. I take students into the woods (with Epi-pens and a whistle) to look for specific vocabulary to describe: a flower, a tree, the sky, a creek, a cloud, the sun, a rock, a mushroom, an animal, etc. Their worksheet has a noun, either singular or plural, with a blank in front of the word and another after the word as seen below:

Il y a unciel
(There is a sky.)

Il y a des feuilles
(There are some leaves.)


When students find a given object, they have to describe it using an adjective that precedes the noun and another adjective that follows it. Their answers may look something like this:

Il y a un grand ciel bleu. (There is a big blue sky.)

Il y a une petite fleur morte. (There is a little dead flower.)

Il y a des belles feuilles rouges. (There are some beautiful red leaves.)

If you do not have a campus with a natural setting but your administration is supportive, you can do this activity indoors with color photos hidden around the school. Without approval you can place or hide pictures in your classroom and make the worksheet with the blanks around the same picture that they are trying to find as in the following example.

.....  → *des petites araignées noires*

Shopping Unit

9. **Market Day:** Have students break up into groups of four. Each group will become a booth selling something that is from their vocabulary lists or a cognate. They have to bring in items or print pictures of items to sell. It is actually good if two groups are selling some of the same things. Clothes and food work well. One time a group sold art and antiques. Students had fun selling items such as the Mona Lisa or an old telephone. Each group receives paper Euros and a credit card with a limit. They have to write down their purchases. Two people stay to manage the stall and two others go out to shop. They have to practice greeting, asking how much things cost, what the object is made of or the quality, where it comes from, what type of payments are accepted and to haggle for a price. The teacher's job is to make sure students stay in the TL and note grammatical successes and failures for reviewing

afterwards. At the end of the class the teacher can ask students to show a few of their favorite purchases and how much they paid for it.

10. Tic Tac Boum! This is a fun review game that works against the clock. You can create your own version to fit the topics your students have studied. In groups of four to five, students choose something they can use as a speaker's staff—a pencil or ruler works just fine. The teacher creates a topic that is revealed on the board such as, a day at the beach, after school gets out, the week before midterms, etc. Teachers should prepare at least 15 topics and be ready with a timer that has a buzzer signifying when time is up. There are several online stopwatches to choose from with fun sounds. Each group needs a paper and pencil to keep score. Once the topic is revealed the timer starts but the teacher must conceal the countdown from the students. One by one students brainstorm words or phrases pertinent to that topic. If the topic is *A day at the beach*, then answers might be words such as: sand, sun, picnic, sunglasses, hat, or phrases like, It's hot, I swim, I need a hat, I am red, I like to surf, etc. Only the person with the speaker's staff can speak. Once a student speaks, s/he passes the staff to the left and that next person says something to go along with the topic without repeating. The play continues to go around the group until the timer stops. The person holding the staff when the sound rings gets a point. S/he starts the next round. The person with the lowest number of points after all topics have been presented wins. It is important to vary the duration of each round. Make a few 30-second rounds, some 2-minute rounds and everything in between to keep student suspense going. This game is particularly effective before midterm and final exams.

Janis Labroo has taught French, Spanish and English as a Foreign Language at the middle school, high school and undergraduate levels for 20 years. She currently teaches at Oneonta High School in Oneonta, New York. For additional information she can be contacted at jlabbroo@oneontacsd.org

Planned Giving

Several years ago, NYSAFLT learned that we were to be the beneficiary of a very generous contribution from a former member who recently passed away. Sally G. Hahn felt so strongly about the benefits of early language instruction that she made it possible for NYSAFLT to make annual awards of up to \$3000 to support outstanding FLES programs and teachers in New York State. All award money comes from interest earned on the Hahn bequest, which has been carefully invested by our Financial Management Committee.

More recently, NYSAFLT learned that past president and former executive director Robert J. Ludwig had also left NYSAFLT a significant bequest to fund certain annual awards.

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