President’s Message

Dear Colleagues,

With the 2016-2017 school year behind us, it’s now time to relax, rejuvenate, and reflect on the year that was. Now, more than ever, we must continue to advocate for language programs across all levels, from pre-K - 16. A greater emphasis must be placed on the various skills, abilities and attitudes that come with opening one’s mind to a new language. By advocating for languages at the local level, we will begin to build a network of language champions across the State of Connecticut, who will support the work we do each and every day in our classrooms.

This past school year has given us much to be excited about as in late May we became the 26th state to pass legislation creating a Seal of Biliteracy in our state. While the State Board of Education still has to approve the formal guidelines for the seal, which is expected by September, we look forward to awarding the first Seals of Biliteracy at the conclusion of the 2017-2018 school year. This legislation and the guidelines that will be set forth will provide opportunities for students to have a credential on their diploma and/or transcript attesting to their abilities to communicate in English and at least one other language.

The last week of June also provided us with an opportunity to collaborate with our neighbors to the east, RIFLA. CT COLT and RIFLA co-sponsored the Teach for Proficiency Summer Institute, which saw more than 80 teachers from across New England join Thomas Sauer for a two day workshop in Stonington, CT. Educators explored ways of helping to increase student proficiency in their classrooms. CT COLT is committed to helping to bring training and educational supports to all teachers, as it relates to proficiency and the Seal of Biliteracy. We have already secured our 2018 Summer Institute venue and presenter. We will return to Stonington, June 20 and 21, 2018 and will welcome Greg Duncan. More information will be available on our website later this fall.

The 2017-2018 school year also offers a new opportunity for a certificate that is sponsored by the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers, Connecticut Council for the Social Studies, and the World Affairs Council. The Global Competencies Certificate will be offered to students who complete the study of world languages and cultures, extracurricular activities and a service learning project. The certificate will be presented to the State Board of Education during the upcoming year, for their approval. For more information about this certificate or to participate in the pilot, contact Steve Armstrong, State Social Studies Consultant, at Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov.

As we begin to think about the upcoming school year, I encourage you to begin thinking about how you may make a small change in what you are doing in your classroom to give your students more authentic opportunities to use language in the classroom setting for communicative purposes. Start small, begin with one class, using one activity and build from there. Set attainable goals, which you can then continue to adjust, making more and more progress with each successive change. Think about your Student Learning Outcomes for next school year and think about how you can really affect change in your students. Consider joining us on October 23, 2017, for the annual CT COLT Fall Conference, which will have a wide range of topics and workshop sessions that will focus on student learning and the move to teach for proficiency. As always, I encourage you to friend us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CT_COLT.

Wishing you a relaxing and rejuvenating summer,

Jimmy

Advocacy

Supporting our Elementary Foreign Language Programs

By Kate Krotzer

In many districts across the state, our schools are dealing with budget concerns and program cuts. As language teachers, we are always working tirelessly as advocates for our programs, especially those for our youngest learners. Too often, these are the programs that get cut, and they are the programs that we need to be trying our hardest to grow and develop in Connecticut.

Connecticut is hosting the 26th annual CT COLT Rhyme Celebration on April 5th in Glastonbury with the theme “Me and My Global Community.” At this event, 196 students from grades k through sixth, 37 teachers, from 29 schools in 12 districts. What a celebration for these early language learners! We are fortunate to have these programs and teachers that provide opportunities for these young students to practice,
The mission of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL) is to provide leadership to advocate for and support successful early language learning and teaching. Founded in 1987, NNELL provides valuable resources for educators, parents, and policy makers.

NNELL, as a national organization that promotes early language learning, fully supports elementary foreign language programs across the country. NNELL strongly encourages programs to develop and to remain in place as they benefit students in providing them the opportunity to become educated, global citizens in our 21st century society.

Elementary foreign language teachers support and strengthen the curriculum in other subject areas including social studies, mathematics, language arts, music, and art.

- Reading comprehension and writing skills such as those assessed on the CMTs are also reinforced during Spanish lessons.
  - In a study done on state tests for third and fourth graders in Iowa and Louisiana, “students significantly outperformed their non-FL peers on every test (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies)” (Taylor, & Lafayette, 2010)

- The ACTFL World Readiness Standards of Foreign Language Learning – Communication, Comparison, Communities, Connections, Culture - develop skills that contribute to lifelong learning.

- The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed a Common Core Crosswalk that aligns the CCSS with the National Standards for Learning Languages incorporating the strands for reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language.

- The Smarter Balanced assessments include performance tasks aligned with the CCSS that include listening and speaking skills. These skills are practiced and developed daily in the foreign language classroom.

Research in support of daily foreign language instruction at the elementary level:

- Consistent daily contact-hearing, seeing, speaking, and experiencing the language and culture, are necessary for developing proficiency.
• “Foreign language instruction should be scheduled daily for no less than 30 minutes” (Met, & Rhodes, 1990)
• “Curtain and Pesola discussed the challenges related to sporadic scheduling, “programs that do not meet daily will be required to devote a significant proportion of class time to review activity to compensate for the long periods of time between language classes.”” (Hendry, 2008)

More information can also be found on the NNELL website at www.nnell.org as well as on the CT COLT website for advocacy. It is becoming increasingly important to support these programs and we must make it our goal to constantly promote their benefits for all of our students.

References:


Students Say...

Senior Project Inspires a Student to Become a Teacher

By Alaina Small, Stonington High School

For my Senior Project I knew that I wanted to do something with French because it is something about which I am very passionate. I was just unsure of how I could work it into a project. I finally decided on teaching because I had always had an interest in teaching, but never pursued it – this was my opportunity to try it out. I was able to set up a group of four young students and got started. They were so enthusiastic and always ready to learn, which is really what made this project such a positive experience. I talked to many other seniors who dreaded doing their project, but this was a feeling to which I could not relate - there was never a time that I didn't enjoy what I was doing.

I went into this project very uncertain of my career path, but came out with a clear idea of what my future held. I quickly became inspired by my students’ attitude towards learning, especially towards learning a foreign language. It was the student determination and willingness to take on a challenge that continued to motivate me. As I became more invested in the project, I knew that this was something I wanted to keep doing. I fully credit this project with being the reason why I want to pursue a career in the field of education. Specifically, I want to teach elementary-aged students in a language-immersion program. I think that it is of the utmost importance to introduce a foreign language to children as early as possible. I want to be someone who can provide students with the opportunities that accompany being bilingual.
As I neared the end of my project, the students’ parents asked me if I wanted to continue teaching as a part-time job. This was not something I expected, and was thrilled to keep teaching my class. I got the opportunity to prolong my time with the students, and also to teach songs and things that just wouldn’t fit into a ten-week session. We were also able to work cultural aspects into what we learned. Ava, one of my students said, “Ever since the first day that I started French lessons with Alaina, I LOVE everything about French... songs, art, and especially Pâtisseries!” As her teacher, this is one of the best things I could hear. It makes me so happy to interest them not only in the language, but also the rich culture. This project blossomed into more than I could have ever imagined, and for that, I am so thankful.

Overall, this project was widely successful because of the people made the project possible. I was able to form new relationships, not only with my students, but with other educators as well. Each student was completely unique, but their goals were the same, they all wanted to learn as much as possible. This was so impressive to me, and is something I will always remember. In addition to the students, it was the other language teachers who were with me every step of the way. They invested so much interest into my project, and helped me with everything, from planning lessons to exploring career options. It is their devotion for which I am so deeply grateful.

This project, and everyone involved, has made a lasting impact that will carry through with me for the rest of my life.

**Teacher Spotlight**

**CT COLT Teacher Spotlight**

**Betty Chang**

**Who are you? What and where do you teach?**

- My name is Betty Chang for my English-speaking friends, 張沁蓮 for my family and Chinese-speaking friends, and 張老師 for my students.

- I currently teach in Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School. It is one of Capitol Region Education Council’s magnet schools located in Glastonbury, Connecticut. I teach Chinese Mandarin with grades 2 to 5 students, twice per week. A total of 80 minutes per week.

**How long have you been teaching?**

- This is my 12th year of teaching. I started out as a Health Occupations teacher in high school, then I taught elementary regular education in 6th grade before I started in language teaching. I have been teaching Chinese language for 7 years now.

**What has inspired you in this profession? What is a belief that you hold near and dear?**

- Students inspire me. They never cease to amaze me with their brain power, curiosity, sense of humor, and their love for learning. Students also keep me honest as a teacher and drive me to refine my teaching pedagogy. I believe the relationship between students and their teacher or teaching and learning is a symbiotic relationship; We learn from each other, and we teach each other valuable lessons.

**Favorite place ever traveled and why?**

- Pinning down a favorite place I ever traveled to is impossible, because how can standing in the midst of a rain storm in El Yunque Rainforest not be the most amazing experience? How can climbing up the Great Wall of China after a 19-mile run not be unforgettable? How can chatting with a street vendor on top of Sagovia’s Roman aqueduct not be a favorite? I think sometimes, it is not the place which makes a favorite, but it is the experience and the people you are with that makes it a favorite.

**Favorite cultural dish?**

- Being Taiwanese, the Taiwanese Beef Noodle Soup 牛肉面 is my most sought after dish whenever I am in Chinatown or whenever my parents want to make some. It reminds me of home and of childhood.
Personal Perspectives

Connecticut Tamil Schools
by Jaya Vijayasekar, CT COLT Past President
jvijayasekar@gmail.com

I can still remember Sunday afternoons almost 13 years ago at the basement of our temple in Middletown. A few of us in the Tamil community would bring our children there after religious services to have them learn our mother tongue – Thamizh (Tamil). Parents would patiently wait with the children for the hour long lesson. Though not as regularly scheduled as we would have liked, these lessons helped us at least connect with others and create a sense of community and belonging, and parents were grateful for this brief interaction with the language. These lessons were conducted under the auspices of our community organization, the Connecticut Tamil Sangam (CTTS). Over the years, the urgency for maintaining our culture and heritage grew stronger and parents and volunteers remained steadfast in their passion and hard work.

Today, under the continued support and guidance of CTTS, our children of Tamil heritage attend one of five well-established Tamil language schools throughout our state with an enrollment of 330 students, 76 teachers and 57 volunteers. In South Windsor, we have the Bharathi Tamil School, in Rocky Hill, the Siragu Tamil School, in Cheshire, the Agaram Tamil School, in Avon the Agaram Tamil School and in Trumbull, the Kalvi Tamil School.

Since 2013, a small group of teachers and volunteers have participated in conference calls to discuss the procurement of high school credit for our students. During the 2016-2017 school year, this group formed a committee to explore the unification of all five schools and accreditation for our programs and to continue in the quest for high school credit for the students. Through conference calls, quarterly face to face meetings, and research of language teaching and learning standards, this group decided that our schools needed to have a common mission, goals, standards and curriculum. Our collaborative efforts resulted in a statewide Annual Day on Sunday, May 21st at Mixville Park in Cheshire, CT.

The day started with a lunch for all our 500 guests; parents and students from all schools mingled and met new friends over lunch before convening at the Pavilion to sing the Thamizh Thai Vazhthu (song in praise of the language) viewing a PowerPoint presentation on the mission and goals of our schools and a presentation by our honored guest, Dr. Vasu Renganathan from UPENN. Dr. Renganathan urged parents and students to make language teaching and learning purposeful, grounded in the cultural nuances of Tamil and focus on real-life situations and communicative competency. Student teams from each school presented a Tamil Tank proposal (a la the popular show, Shark Tank) whereby they provided teachers and parents practical ideas to improve language teaching and learning in our schools. Ideas included creative apps, technology, skits, and games. We congratulate the Bharathi school team from South Windsor for winning this competition for their creativity, the knowledge of their topics, their preparation and presentation skills. Students and dignitaries were also recognized for their participation and course completion.

After breaking for afternoon tea, community members gathered again to watch several games organized for our students by the teachers and volunteers. Games included tongue twisters, vocabulary bee, and idiomatic phraseology.

We thank CT COLT which was one of several sponsors who supported the event with a donation. We thank our students, teachers, principals, parents, volunteers and other dignitaries who graced our event. Among the attendees were the President, Mr. Natarajan Kuppuraj and other office bearers.
from CTTS, Professor Dr. Renganathan from UPENN and State Representative, Dr. Prasad Srinivasan from Glastonbury. We are proud to note that Dr. S. as he is popularly known, is the first Tamil American to hold office and run for the 2018 gubernatorial race. His message to our young students was powerful and certainly inspire them to get involved in our community, state, and the nation.

Takeaways from ACTFL-LILL 2017
by Matthew Mangino, Wethersfield High School

Greetings from Skokie, IL. I just finished participating in ACTFL’s Leadership Initiative for Language Learning that took place outside of Chicago. I am so happy to have been chosen—it was an amazing experience. I am grateful to Lea Graner-Kennedy and to Jimmy Wildman and the members of the CT COLT Executive Committee for their nomination. I would also like to acknowledge with gratitude the support of John Carlino from NECTFL.

We spent three days connecting and collaborating with a group of 40 emerging leaders from the profession of world language teaching from around the country. All of the participants from #LILL17 were sent with a unique set of circumstances, but we all have something in common. We are tasked with creating an action plan that, in the broadest sense, will move our profession forward by meeting the needs of our sending organizations. In Connecticut, we are in a great place because we already have an ongoing conversation regarding core practices that was started when Lea Graner-Kennedy returned with her action plan from LILL 2015. Please see http://www.ctcolt.org/pages/CTLILL.asp for the collaborative resources that have been developed by people in our profession.

While the specifics of my action plan are still a work in progress, I wanted to share with the CT COLT members some of my thoughts on the LILL17 action plan, and some of my main takeaways from the experience. First, I would like to capitalize on the collaborative spirit that was built in June between the Rhode Island Foreign Language Association (RIFLA) and CT COLT in their Summer Proficiency Institute. Teachers from Connecticut and Rhode Island benefitted from this outstanding event. So, why not continue this great relationship? Sarah Steverman, RIFLA President, and I have started to collaborate on our action plan that will ensure that the momentum built by Lea through CT-LILL will continue. Essentially, we want to communicate each of the core practices from theory into practice. In other words, we will focus on what do teachers need (tools and techniques) in order to enact each core practice for the benefit of their students. This will be an exciting, practical conversation that will benefit our students’ proficiency as we learn to enact these core practices.

I chose three main leadership takeaways at the end of my time in Skokie to share with Connecticut’s World Language Educators. The first is that leadership has less to do with your title than with with who you are and what you do. In Connecticut, we are working to develop a body of leaders who lead by example and wisdom. Certainly, each of us has several spheres of influence that we can use to demonstrate best teaching practices, whether that is in our departments, in our schools, in our state, or in our region and country. We are not experts on every single topic, but we all have something to share with the profession. Sometimes we are really talented at a certain skill. But the alternative is another leadership circumstance that applies here as well. I am always impressed by teachers who show leadership through vulnerability in the sense of professional exploration. Even if you’re not an expert, you can influence others by joining them on an exploratory path. Leadership has less to do with our titles, and more to do with what we do as leaders.

My second takeaway: Let's invest in the strengths of one another, rather than focusing on weaknesses. If you haven’t completed StrengthsFinder 2.0 (www.strengthsfinder.com), I hope that you will take the time to do so. It’s worth the cost to gain a better understanding of what your strengths are, and to see them as strengths, rather than "just who you are". I found my strengths really described me in a personal and professional way. If you had your team complete the inventory, it would benefit the team to lead by a model that embraces and develop strengths in others. It also might give you some insight as to who is your go-to person in a certain situation. So let’s develop the strengths of one another, and move forward with our collective strengths.

My third takeaway is a reminder that we are all unique individuals in different places on the journey, and there are many ways to get the same place on a map. There’s a lot of work to be done, but it will start with small steps, and there are others on the journey in their own place. This pertains directly to the Seal of Biliteracy in Connecticut. We must not undervalue the contributions of our colleagues who have had so many years of success, at the risk of alienating them, just because there’s a new publication that claims to have a better way. I need to remember that we are stronger together, and a title or experience doesn’t necessarily make a better leader. As we step towards biliteracy in Connecticut, we may find inspiration in unexpected locations. But it’s up to us to continue towards that goal of student achievement.
There are so many takeaways from ACTFL’s LILL 2017. I am excited that LILL started this week in Skokie, but it will continue in Wethersfield, Westerly, Lexington, New York City, Salt Lake City, Miami, and all over the country for years to come!

**Methods, Materials, Resources**

**Feedback**

By Lea Graner Kennedy
lgraner@stoningtonschools.org

As educators, we know how crucial feedback is for students to make proficiency gains because feedback is both motivating and an important tool to promote learning. For this reason, one of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Core Practices is “Provide feedback in speech and in writing on various learning tasks.”

Questions often arise regarding the types and the frequency of feedback that students need to gain proficiency. This article focuses on providing insights and strategies that answer both questions, because feedback is an area where we can all work smarter – not harder – to deliver improved learner performance.

- **The first and most important aspect of feedback is to focus on the student’s zone of proximal development (ZPD).**

Channeling the work of the famous developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky has been one of the most important lessons that I have learned with regards to feedback. In a nutshell, Vygotsky’s ZPD tells teachers only to give learner feedback that will bring students up to the next level. Challenge the learner to promote growth, but not be too difficult for the learner to absorb.

As language teachers, we often forget the small steps we took on our own proficiency journeys and feel the need to give more feedback in speech and in writing than the learners can possibly utilize. This tendency gives us more work, with little or no student gains. In fact, overloading the learner with feedback that is too far beyond their actual level, not within their zone of potential growth or ZPD, is demotivating for students. Limiting our feedback to that which is in their zone is a double win; less work for the teacher and more comprehensible input for the student.

When teachers hear errors in speech, it is important resist the temptation to give students more feedback than they can process. Errors are a critical part of creating with language and moving through the intermediate level of proficiency.

For language teachers, perhaps it is better to think of an area where we ourselves are trying to learn a new skill, such as athletics or music. It is only when we think about an area where we view ourselves as a novice or intermediate that we become clear on the strategies we need as learners to progress.

There are several documents and rubrics that make providing feedback easier to deliver to students because they provide a common language to use in discussions about how to move up the proficiency scale, such as the Can-Do Statements, AAPPL rubrics or Feedback Rubrics from Level Up Language. These tools help students and teachers to become mindful of their actual proficiency level and set goals based on their potential growth level.

Once we begin to internalize the lessons of Vygotsky, we give only the feedback that will help students improve their output. The ACTFL’s Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) and Level Up Language rubrics are particularly helpful in giving efficient ways to provide feedback to students because the strategies are clear and specific to promote growth. Students can use the rubrics for self-assessment and for peer-assessment as well, because they provide an easy way to highlight measurable strategies needed for growth.

- **When considering feedback, we must consider both the variety of feedback we give to our students and the role the teacher plays in giving feedback within the classroom setting.**

When the teacher is a facilitator, students have more opportunities to use the language for authentic purposes in all three modes – presentational, interpretive and the interpersonal. In “Enacting the Work of Language Instruction: High Leverage Teaching Practices” by Eileen Glisan and Rick Donato, the research behind each of the current Core Practices is explained clearly for teachers. They share the importance of teachers creating a “discourse community,” which is an interactional space where students have opportunities to negotiate meaning in authentic ways.

In this interactional space, teachers will need to consider how to vary their oral feedback to improve performance. There are six types of corrective feedback that we need to have in our toolbox: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and Repetition.
Knowing that we have a choice of options to provide our students is extremely powerful. This is a brief description of the types:

### 6 Types of Corrective FEEDBACK: A Rainbow of Opportunities

- **Explicit correction** - teacher says the student was incorrect and then provides correction.
- **Recast** - teacher does not say that the student was incorrect, but rather restates the student’s statement without error.
- **Clarification request** - teacher says “I don’t understand,” to let learner that he was not understood.
- **Metalinguistic Clues** - teacher asks a question about how the learner should construct a statement without giving correct answer.
- **Ellicitation** - teacher directly elicits correct answer from the student by restoring just up to the point of the error.
- **Repetition** - teacher repeats the student’s error to draw their attention to it.

(Adapted from Tedick and Gortari)

All corrective feedback is used to prompt the learner to notice the error and try to fix it. The research about how to vary the use of these types of feedback is important if we are looking at uptake, the ability for the student to process the learning and self-correct.

In the book by Glisan and Donato, research shows that teachers use recast 55 percent of the time — more than the other types of feedback — however, it is the least effective. By contrast, the most effective corrective feedback leading to student uptake is elicitation. This research prompts teachers to become cognizant of the types of feedback they are providing to students.

Their book illustrates the importance of teachers tapping the wide range of opportunities to promote uptake and being mindful about varying our types of feedback. For students to internalize the feedback we provide for them, they need to receive varied feedback that is within their potential learning area.

Our goal as language teachers is to motivate students to make gains in proficiency. To that end, we should remember errors are critical to their growth and that our focus on perfectionism can stunt their progress. We want the students to commit to risk-taking and be open to elaborating in the target language, while also encouraging reflection on feedback received.

As Elon Musk said in an interview with Mashable, “It’s very important to have a feedback loop, where you’re constantly thinking about what you’ve done and how you could be doing it better. I think that’s the single best piece of advice: constantly think about how you could be doing things better and questioning yourself.”

Building a discourse community, with ample opportunities for input and timely feedback on output, is crucial to creating the feedback loop.

We are the experts in the language arena. But when we step into a different arena, such as learning a new instrument or a sport, we then become much more empathetic to the needs of giving feedback within the zone of proximal development and of providing plenty of opportunities for students to receive comprehensible input before asking them to provide output. It would be like us taking voice lessons with Beyoncé and getting feedback on how to win a Grammy when we are mere novice high students.

As we step back in the language arena this year, we can move our novice students forward by providing appropriate feedback and establishing a discourse community. By guiding our learners to reach the desired learning targets with timely and varied feedback, based on their current proficiency level, we can help them to advance on their path to proficiency.

**MORE INFO …**

For more research on providing oral feedback, read: “Enacting the Work of Language Instruction: High-Leverage Teaching Practices” by Eileen Glisan and Richard Donato (Appendix A, page 157)

For a webinar with more specific strategies to improve learner performance, watch this [Connecticut Leadership Initiative for Language Learning video with Frank Troyan](https://example.com).

For more webinars about core practices from the Connecticut Leadership Initiative for Language Learning, visit the initiative’s website.
Staying in the Target Language Part 3 - Interpersonal Speaking Activities

Jessica Haxhi, Supervisor of World Languages, New Haven Public Schools

ACTFL recommends using the target language 90% or more of the time during classroom instruction (https://www.actfl.org/news/position-statements/use-the-target-language-the-classroom). In Part 1 of this series, we discussed the use of a "Target Language Sign" as a way to prompt ourselves to stay in the target language. In Part 2, we looked at the Interpretive mode. This issue, we will focus on the Interpersonal Mode.

The key to the Interpersonal mode is getting students to speak (or write) in interactive, two-way spontaneous communication situations. We want them to develop the ability to "think on their feet" without written support and create with language, as they gain proficiency. First, we will discuss key methods in the Interpersonal mode, then teacher-driven activities for early interpersonal interactions, and finally student-student interpersonal activities.

Key Methods for Interpersonal

Pace

The proper use of pace keeps students in the target language, especially during Interpersonal activities. Have all of your materials ready-to-go and find a good pace that moves students fairly quickly from activity to activity; we want to surround them with language and give them very little time to be off-task. In terms of speaking pace, students often listen better if you speak at a more native-like speed, slightly emphasizing words you want them to hear the most. Use the activities below, such as pointing to visual choices, repeating, and giving hints to assist students in comprehension. Avoid speaking very slowly – it sends students the message that we think they are babies or aren't "smart" enough to handle the language.

Visuals and the Written Word – Should we label everything from the beginning?

In the real world, students will be required to use interpersonal skills without any written labels next to objects or conversations. Students must learn to associate the name of an object directly with that object and be able to participate in a conversation without a written dialogue. Sometimes, when we always give students the written words, we are adding a step that impairs students’ ability to learn the correct pronunciation (from you) and internalize how to say the word or phrase or question. Written words certainly assist students in the learning process, are necessary for communication, and should be introduced within the unit; however, just for the first few instances that students interact with a word or conversation, consider introducing it with visuals-only so that students can build an oral/aural relationship with that word, phrase, or conversation.

Point to Visual Choices

Students can produce the target language from the first day if you show visuals and POINT to the choices as you say them. For example, show a PPT slide with the weather items pictured on it – no written words. Point outside and ask students the weather. Then, POINT to each picture as you say the word for it at normal speed. They will be able to tell you the weather. If you ask a different student the question, repeat the choices again. Don't worry if you are repeating the choices over and over. Students hear them and see you pointing. This works with visuals of anything: foods, school subjects, the weather. This can also be used with gestures, for example thumbs up/thumbs down for "Yes or No?" or "do you like it/don't like it" with facial gestures.

Note: Do NOT say the choices too slowly or make students repeat after you. They will tire of that quickly. Say the choices quickly and have 2-4 students answer. It is better to repeat this activity again the next day, versus spending 10 minutes making students repeat the choices or answer.

Give One-Syllable Hints

Students who appear not to know a word/phrase can often recall it when you give them just a one syllable hint or the first sound. For example, if they need a pencil and don’t seem to know what to say in Spanish, say “la...” and often they can recall it (lápiz). The key is for students to feel success by being able to answer your questions, not to catch them at not knowing something.
Teacher-Student: Early Interpersonal Activities

DAILY Vocabulary Review

We often assume that students should “know” vocabulary once we have introduced it; however, all students benefit from a 1-minute vocabulary review every day during a unit. Use flashcards with pictures, plastic objects, or real objects to review the unit vocabulary every day. Do not write the words on these cards; we want them to associate the word with the object without written support. Early in the unit, ask students to quickly repeat the name of each item after you; after a few days, ask them to name each object, whole group. Once students know the words, put the vocabulary flashcards inside a folder, bag, or envelope that reminds them of the unit theme (ex. a backpack for the School Unit). Show students one of the cards/objects from the bag. Prompt students to raise their hands to name other objects in the bag. Take each object out as they name it. Do not take objects out until they name it. Give hints if necessary, without showing the objects. Students of all ages love this activity.

Daily Question Practice

Each unit, at all levels, has a set of questions you absolutely want students to answer with automaticity: How many people are in your family? What is your favorite subject? What did you do last weekend? Who is your hero? Why? etc. Choose one or two questions to focus on each day during your opening routine and support answer choices with visuals (see above). Consider having a class check-list on a clipboard so you can keep track of which students might need more practice. In order to make teacher-student practice of these questions more fun, throw a ball/stuffed animal, etc. to a student and ask the question. Point to answer choices if necessary. When you are first doing this, have students throw the ball back to you each time. Later, you can allow them to throw the ball to another student and ask a question. If students throw the ball violently or otherwise misbehave at all during this, put the ball away quickly. Try again next class.

Student-Student: Interpersonal Activities

Note: All of these activities MUST be preceded by whole group practice that mirrors what you will expect students to do on their own. For each, the “pre-work” is listed.

Picture Conversations Around the Room

PRE-WORK: Students must have some comfort with the vocabulary and expressions in your unit (ex. if it is a food unit, they must be able to express likes/dislikes about the foods. If it is a unit on Visual Arts, they must have practiced some whole-group discussions of art).

Preparation: Print out a number of interesting pictures related to your unit that students have not seen before and post them around the room. You may want to put each picture inside a folder so students have to lift it up to view it. Students will travel in pairs. So if you have 20 students, you need 10 pictures. Number the pictures so that students can see what order they should travel around the room. You also need a noisemaker to signal when students should move.

Modeling: As the class watches, you and a volunteer go to one of the pictures and model talking about it. (Novice-mid level students might just name things and talk about likes/dislikes. Novice-high students might ask some memorized questions or start to create a few questions for each other. Intermediate-level students might have longer conversations that take place in the pictured scene.) Do your noisemaker and model walking with your student partner to the next number up. Repeat. You might want to give two quick directions in English: (1) do not move until you hear the noisemaker (2) if you are at the last number, go to number 1 next (ex. from #10, go to #1).

Activity: Put students into pairs and send them to a number to start. As students begin, walk around and listen for when they run out of things to say; as soon as they do, use your noisemaker to send everyone to the next picture – pace is important to maintain the target language and behavior. Also, have a clipboard with a class list so that you can record simple scores on how students are doing with this activity as you walk around.

Inside-outside “Circles” Conversations Around the Room

PRE-WORK: Students need to know some conversation starters and maintainers such as “What do you like to eat? What are you doing this weekend? Where do you want to travel?” and “Really? Me too! I agree, I disagree, I think that…, I prefer…” etc.

Preparation: Use post-its to set up numbers around your room- half as many as you have students. If you have 20 students, you need 10 numbers. You will need a noisemaker.

Modeling: Set up half of the class, one student per number, around the room, and tell those students that they “live” at those numbers and should not move (you might have to clarify in English the first time you do it). As the class watches, model as if you are part of a second group of students and “travel” to the first student, prompting him/her to start a conversation. MODEL maintaining the conversations until the noisemaker rings, asking follow up questions or saying expressions such as “Really? Me too!” Do the noisemaker, say goodbye, and move to the student at the next number up. Do this a few times. Turn your sign to English and explain to students that they
must MAINTAIN the conversation until the noisemaker is heard.

Activity: Send the second half of the class to a partner at a number to begin. Like the previous activity, keep an eye on pace and score students with a checklist on a clipboard.

Limited interviews

PRE-WORK: In-class practice in which the teacher asks students the same questions they will need in the interviews, with visual support in many classes prior to the interview day. Modeling on the interview day is also necessary.

Two choices:

One Thing Interview: Students are responsible for interviewing their classmates about just one thing (student choice or teacher choice). For example, one student asks each student in the class “Do you like baseball?” Another student asks “Do you like swimming?” As they interview, they keep track of classmate responses on a chart. Afterward, they create a bar graph or determine percentages to be summarized for the class in a presentational activity.

Five people Interview: Each student has a series of questions, but they only have to interview 5 people. Their handout can have a spot for writing each interviewee name, or they could have 5 answer sheets to fill out. Afterward, they can write a short summary of what they found, using words they have learned to describe results, such as “all of them, some of them, many, etc.”

Musical Partner Interviews

PRE-WORK: In class practice in which the teacher asks students the same questions they will need in the interviews, with visual support in many classes prior to the interview day. Modeling on the interview day is also necessary.

Preparation: Prepare large visuals that you can hold in your hand. They should have on them either words with topics for students to discuss (“age” “birthday” “foods”), or single pictures of items that they can talk about (different sports, foods, countries, artwork, etc.) This can be used for any level if you make the pictures or topics more complicated.

Activity: Bring 3 students up to the front and model: play music and dance around with the students (they may just stand there and laugh, but that’s okay). Stop the music and show a picture or PPT slide. Model finding a partner quickly and talking about the picture, then saying goodbye. Play the music again and repeat. RULE: When the music stops, you must find a NEW partner.” Then, play whole-group. Stay within the group of students so you can gauge the pace and start the music as soon as they run out of things to say.

Situation Cards

PRE-WORK: Students must practice how to do situation cards with you, whole group. This would be an instance when you can use English. Create cards with English situations described on them. Show one and ask the students (in English), “What would we say in this situation?” Elicit their responses and help build the dialogue orally (no writing). Have one student come to the front and act it out with you. Some situation card examples:

Easy:

- You and your partner are walking toward each other. You accidentally bump into each other. Act this out, all in the target language.
- You need a pencil. Your partner is the teacher. Act this out, all in the target language.

Difficult:

- You and your partner are from different countries. You just met on an airplane. Have a conversation. Possible topics might include names, ages, where you are from, likes/dislikes, etc.
- You and your partner are at a restaurant. Your food just came. Have a conversation about the food. Make it interesting. Possible topics might include how it tastes, the temperature, the size, the price, likes/dislikes, etc.

On the day of your activity, hand out different situations to pairs of students. Give them 5-10 minutes to prepare – no written scripts - and then everyone watches while groups act out in front of the class. You can score with a rubric; peers can also score with one criteria of the rubric, to keep them engaged in watching.

Fake-Self Introductions

PRE-WORK: In-class practice in which the teacher asks students the questions with visual support many times prior to the interview day. Modeling on the interview day is also necessary.

Preparation: We often ask students to interview each other, but they already know each other’s age, interests, schedule, etc. Interviews are more authentic if students take on a different personality. They could be assigned a famous person, or a comic character, or a fake character of their choosing/design. Have students to some planning about who they “are” and their potential answers to the unit questions on a paper. Students should NOT reveal their answers to others. Encourage students to memorize their “new personality.”
Activity: Let students take one last look at their personality papers, and then collect. For the interviews, use the “musical interviews” or “inside-outside circles” methods in this article. Tell students to talk to as many others as possible, using the questions they have learned, and to try to remember as much as they can about each person.

Post-Activity: You have the papers with the planned personality information. Divide students into two teams. Read about a particular personality in the target language and give students three guesses as to who it “was” during the interviews. Tell students they cannot reveal their own character. Teams get points for guessing correctly. If no one guesses, the teacher reveals and gets a point for his/herself!

Assessing Interpersonal Mode

Aside from tracking student progress formatively during these types of activities, you can also conduct your own interpersonal interviews as assessments at the mid-point or end of each year. Use something similar to the ACTFL OPI format – start with questions they know well, push toward some questions they may or may not know, keep them conversing as much as possible, and end with questions that help them feel successful. Brainstorm questions for yourself before the interviews, but resist the urge to give students a list of questions to memorize or to limit yourself only to questions they definitely know. This type of interview can give you excellent data on where your students really are with interpersonal skills and how you may need to adjust instruction. Students usually enjoy it as well and appreciate the one-on-one time with you in the target language.

To access Part 1 of this article, please visit www.ctcolt.org/pdfs/NLFallWinter2016.pdf#UsingTargetLanguageSign.

To access Part 2 of this article, please visit www.ctcolt.org/pdfs/NLSpring2017.pdf#TargetLanguage.

Closing the Feedback Loop: An Action Plan

By Lisa Shepard

The following post was taken, with the author’s permission, from: http://madameshepard.com/?p=1327 Please continue the conversation about the post online, on her blog, or via Twitter, with #langchat or @mmeshep.

As my understanding about how languages are acquired continues to evolve, so does my vision of my role in the classroom. When I began teaching, I considered my prime responsibility to be that of providing vocabulary lists and explanations of grammatical rules followed by opportunities to practice them. A lot has changed over the past few years! I now see my primary role as that of creating contexts for my students to communicate using language suitable to their proficiency level and then providing feedback on their use of that language. Specifically, I provide language input via culturally-rich authentic resources (as well as my own language use) and create activities that require the students to interpret this language and use the vocabulary and structures they acquire to communicate with others. Of course, my work isn’t finished when these learning opportunities have been created! These students need feedback on their language use. They need to know whether their interpretation of a text is accurate and whether their own oral and written communication is comprehensible. More importantly, they need to know what they can do to increase their proficiency in the language.

In an ideal world, this means that the students would engage in communicative activities, I would provide immediate

Job Posting

for ARC

The Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) program seeks several, part-time World Language Methods Teachers for our weekend program. We particularly need teachers with Spanish background but others language teachers may also apply.

Our program is held Friday evenings and all day Saturday.

Since World Languages is a shortage area, it is important for our program to support a growing number of candidates.

Anyone interested should contact Ed O’Connell, Dean, at eoconnell@ctohe.org.

Info about our program can be found at http://www.ctohe.org/ARC/

Closing the Feedback Loop: An Action Plan

By Lisa Shepard

The following post was taken, with the author’s permission, from: http://madameshepard.com/?p=1327 Please continue the conversation about the post online, on her blog, or via Twitter, with #langchat or @mmeshep.

As my understanding about how languages are acquired continues to evolve, so does my vision of my role in the classroom. When I began teaching, I considered my prime responsibility to be that of providing vocabulary lists and explanations of grammatical rules followed by opportunities to practice them. A lot has changed over the past few years! I now see my primary role as that of creating contexts for my students to communicate using language suitable to their proficiency level and then providing feedback on their use of that language. Specifically, I provide language input via culturally-rich authentic resources (as well as my own language use) and create activities that require the students to interpret this language and use the vocabulary and structures they acquire to communicate with others. Of course, my work isn’t finished when these learning opportunities have been created! These students need feedback on their language use. They need to know whether their interpretation of a text is accurate and whether their own oral and written communication is comprehensible. More importantly, they need to know what they can do to increase their proficiency in the language.

In an ideal world, this means that the students would engage in communicative activities, I would provide immediate

Job Posting

for ARC

The Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) program seeks several, part-time World Language Methods Teachers for our weekend program. We particularly need teachers with Spanish background but others language teachers may also apply.

Our program is held Friday evenings and all day Saturday.

Since World Languages is a shortage area, it is important for our program to support a growing number of candidates.

Anyone interested should contact Ed O’Connell, Dean, at eoconnell@ctohe.org.

Info about our program can be found at http://www.ctohe.org/ARC/

Closing the Feedback Loop: An Action Plan

By Lisa Shepard

The following post was taken, with the author’s permission, from: http://madameshepard.com/?p=1327 Please continue the conversation about the post online, on her blog, or via Twitter, with #langchat or @mmeshep.

As my understanding about how languages are acquired continues to evolve, so does my vision of my role in the classroom. When I began teaching, I considered my prime responsibility to be that of providing vocabulary lists and explanations of grammatical rules followed by opportunities to practice them. A lot has changed over the past few years! I now see my primary role as that of creating contexts for my students to communicate using language suitable to their proficiency level and then providing feedback on their use of that language. Specifically, I provide language input via culturally-rich authentic resources (as well as my own language use) and create activities that require the students to interpret this language and use the vocabulary and structures they acquire to communicate with others. Of course, my work isn’t finished when these learning opportunities have been created! These students need feedback on their language use. They need to know whether their interpretation of a text is accurate and whether their own oral and written communication is comprehensible. More importantly, they need to know what they can do to increase their proficiency in the language.

In an ideal world, this means that the students would engage in communicative activities, I would provide immediate
After careful reflection, I’ve come up with the following action plan for the upcoming school year.

**Interpretive Communication**

My students read a lot of authentic materials in class, but I often fail to provide timely feedback on the accuracy of their interpretation for several reasons. First of all, I’ve been using the ACTFL IPA template to create comprehension guides for many of these texts. While I think it’s important that instruction mirror assessment, the use of English for these formative assessments (which I support) would impede my ability to stay in the target language. Furthermore, I worried that my students will be less likely to focus on interpretive tasks if they know that I would be providing the answers at the end of the class. As a result, I collected way too many papers, spent way too much time grading and recording them (and cajoling absent students to complete them) and wasted valuable class time passing them back to students who looked at the grade and threw them away. I plan to address these obstacles this year by 1) creating formative comprehension tasks that don’t require English, 2) letting go of the idea that grades can be used to control student behavior and 3) providing whole-class feedback directly after the formative interpretive task. As a result of these changes, I will spend less time grading and my students will receive immediate feedback on their interpretive communication.

**Interpersonal and Presentational Communication**

While whole-class feedback can be effective on interpretive tasks that often have right or wrong answers, students need specific, individualized feedback to improve their performance on this mode. While I am able to provide some feedback as I circulate among the students during these activities, I think I could provide more global feedback if each student had an opportunity to receive feedback on the entirety of their performance. Therefore, my plan is to provide each student an opportunity to be formatively assessed on the same prompt they will have on the IPA, although with a different partner in order to maintain spontaneity on the summative task. I will then use this document to provide feedback, an opportunity for goal-setting and a means of self-reflection for the students. As the document shows, the students will check the level of proficiency that their formative performance demonstrated (see note below). They will then check which steps they need to take to improve on their performance on the IPA, based on the feedback given on the rubric on the back of the page. In cases where I have suggested additional practice on vocabulary and grammatical structures, this document provides opportunities for individualized interactive practice. I
will then assess their performance on the IPA using the rubric on the second (identical) rubric. After the IPA, the students will complete the reflection portion of the document which I will then file until the next round of IPA’s. (I might end up making the process digital, rather than paper and pencil.) I am hoping that the requiring the students to choose action steps, simplifying the rubrics and providing an opportunity for reflection will help close the feedback loop on interpersonal assessments.

I will follow this same process for the presentational task of the IPA. Using either the presentational speaking or presentational writing feedback form, the students will again record their formative proficiency level, create an action plan and then reflect on whether they were able to achieve their proficiency goal.

Note about the rubrics

One of my favorite aspects of the Ohio Department of Education rubrics that I had been using is the fact that they break down each proficiency level into 3 different sublevels. This has allowed me to track small changes, which helps my students see their progress and me to use proficiency-based grading. However, this specificity makes the rubrics very wordy. While this would not be especially problematic if I were using them as they were intended—to document proficiency growth from the beginning to the end of an academic year—I found that my students did not have the patience to read through the lengthily descriptors. Therefore, I created the simplified versions I have included in the documents. However, in order to document smaller increments of growth, I will add the following sublevels to their proficiency level.

- Sublevel 1: Meets all relevant criteria for previous level and at least 70% of the relevant criteria for the targeted level.
- Sublevel 2: Meets all relevant criteria for the targeted level.
- Sublevel 3: Meets all relevant criteria for the targeted level and at least 30% of the relevant criteria for the targeted level.

While I may adjust the percentages, I think these sublevels will enable the students to see growth and allow me to continue to assign grades based on proficiency levels.

I’d love to hear suggestions on what procedures you’ve developed to create a successful feedback loop!

Beyond Meaning Making – Establishing Language Ownership (Part 1)

by Thomas Sauer

The following post was taken, with the author’s permission, from: http://www.path2proficiency.com/beyond-meaning-making-establishing-language-ownership-part-1/ Please continue the conversation about the post online, on his blog, or via Twitter, with #langchat or @tmsauer1.

As our field grapples with the difference between performance and proficiency, translation and meaning making, fluency and errors, grammar and functional language use, I’ve been thinking a lot about my own language learning experiences. Born and raised in Germany, I was fortunate to be exposed a second language in elementary school by learning Russian starting in 5th grade. It probably was everything we would label a traditional language class, but when I had the chance to go to Russia at the age of 14, about three and a half years into my Russian studies, I jumped on the opportunity and was indeed able to use some of my fairly novice Russian to communicate with my peers in then Leningrad. My second second-language learning experience was English and began in 7th grade. Once again, it was a fairly traditional experience: we following the book (“English for you”), watch the matching video series on TV, and spend most of our time trying to convince our teacher to let us leave class early so that we could beat the line at the newly opened soft-serve ice cream stand close to the school. Remarkably, it worked rather frequently, but of course, I learned very, very little English. Fast forward a couple of years and I found myself as an exchange student living in Southern Kentucky, attending an American high school and learning English all over again. Of course this time it stuck. While I wish that all of our students could have the experience of living and learning abroad, I also know that’s not realistic, but I did want to share a few language learning experiences that might provide some insight into what language teachers are trying to do every day.

As a non-native speaker of English, there isn’t a day that goes by where I don’t run across a word that I haven’t heard before. I pretty much get used to it and know how to deal with it. But what’s more fascinating is the breath of the vocabulary and language functions that I use in my own speech, both in my personal as well as my professional life. I’ve been trying to pay extra close attention to the frequency of words that I use (we
all have our favorite words) as well as how I first encountered the word. Here are three stories of three words that I found incredibly interesting once I noticed them.

One of my favorite English words: is delicious. You could say I find that word delicious. I love hearing other people use it and I just love the way it sounds. To my ears, the sound of the word matches the meaning so perfectly. Every time I use it though, and I use it a lot, I also have an emotional connection to the word that is based on how I first encountered the word. During my first year in the United States, remember I was novice English learner exchange student, I frequently found myself spending time hanging out with a then 3-year-old little girl that was the daughter of a family friend of my host family. Delicious was her favorite word and given the natural food limitations and preferences that young children will express, that word came up a lot and meant a lot to that little girl. The level of excitement, when used the word and tried to express the meaning of the word to its fullest, is something I’ll never forget. I developed an emotional connection that has aided my ownership of the word.

My second story is this word: supposed to. Of course in Kentucky, that gets contracted quite a bit until it sounds more like “sposedtwo”. Being a young teenager in a high school setting there were a lot of things I was “sposedtwo” do. From teachers, host parents and siblings, I heard the expression so frequently, that I remember one day finally asking my host mother what the word meant because I didn’t really understand it. I can still remember sitting on the front porch with her trying to explain to me not only the literal meaning of the word but providing examples for the many possible uses. I developed an intellectual connection to the word that has aided my ownership of the word.

The final word to share is delectable. It’s a rather random word and I could use hundreds of others, but it came up in a conversation recently that made me stop and think. Sure, I know the word but providing examples for the many possible uses. I developed ownership of the words and they are just as much a part of me as the words: “these level 3 kids don’t even know what ___ means”, then you also know that you are working with learners that did not develop ownership in the language and likely will never be able to use is outside and beyond their time in the classroom.

Of course, there are many more factors that impact ownership, but it’s pretty clear to me that providing emotional or intellectual connections to learners will help them become owners and most importantly users of language. It’s been well over 20 years since my first interactions with “delicious” and “supposed to” and I use them both frequently without ever even thinking about the meaning of the words. I have developed ownership of the words and they are just as much a part of me as …… How do you provide opportunities for your students to develop emotional or intellectual connections so that they may build ownership in new language?

Technology

Theme by Meme

By Carrie Toth

The following post was taken, with the author’s permission, from: https://somewheretoshare.com/2017/02/04/theme-by-meme/ Please continue the conversation about the post online, on her blog, or via Twitter, with #langchat.

It’s no secret, I’m in a new school this year… and I miss my former students and coworkers so much… but the technology vacuum no longer exists for me. It was such a fun yet frightening start to the year! How was I (the one with no WiFi and no devices) going to adapt quickly and seamlessly to a school with smart-boards, 1:1 iPads… and my husband who is one of the two directors of tech even set me up with dual monitors on my computer so I could use both the PC and the smart board… Um… what?

My first thought was this smart board. I wanted it to be in use, every day… even when we weren’t directly using it. So I started
theme by meme. First order of business, secretly teaching Spanish 1 the days of the week... I put up a new meme every day... EVERY DAY... for 1 quarter. Each meme was specifically targeted to the day of the week. Not only was it great for Spanish 1, it was great review for Spanish 2-4. I didn’t have to waste valuable class time with a “calendar project”, I subliminally packed those days into their minds!

From there, the memes turned to comedy. I looked for some idiomatic expressions I’d like to share, cute pets, etc. Just anything that would get a laugh.

At Christmas time, we shifted to all holiday memes and after break, we came back to los 3 Reyes. Since then we have been in “love mode” with both sweet and sarcastic love memes every day.

My big moment is yet to come! After Valentine’s day, I am shifting to ALL travel memes. It is my subliminal message to them that America IS GREAT! but that it is just a corner or an amazing globe! I want them to love their country but long to see ALL the countries. My hope is that in the 9 weeks I spend with them messages about wanderlust, they’ll have this unexplainable desire to GO... and if they GO... they’ll never be the same again!

Tips for meme by theme:

- Google! Just type your theme in your TL plus the word meme and see what you find.
- PINTEREST! There are memes galore on Pinterest!
- Keep a folder within a folder. My folder is called “a desktop background for everything”. Inside the big folder I have “haven’t used yet”. This folder contains all the memes I collect when I have a few free minutes... It helps me NOT need to search every day!
- Change the meme before you shut down your computer. If it is already there in the morning, you don’t even have to remember to change it!
- Be prepared to be called the master of dank memes.

From The CT COLT Teacher of the Year
by Maureen Lamb

Language learning is about so much more than reciting grammar and charts. My own Latin teachers, Doug Ryan and Rebecca Chodes, created meaning and importance by bringing ancient Rome to life through giving me a deep appreciation for ancient Roman history and culture. Most adult former Latin students can rattle off charts they learned many years ago, but they have often lost the empathy for the human condition that can be understood through studying and analyzing a different cultural experience than our own. I often tell that I wanted to be a language teacher because it lets me play many roles: a linguist, a grammarian, an actor, an historian, a tour guide, and a human dictionary, to name a few. Of course, I get to teach students the nuts and bolts of Latin and ancient Greek, such as vocabulary and grammar in the context of the language, figures of speech, meter, etc. However, I also get to teach my students about the different cultures of the Greco-Roman world, to teach about the history of ancient Greece and Rome, and to better understand their own cultural history through their literary analysis of Greco-Roman language and culture. Students are often surprised when they can reflect on their own experiences through reading and discussing the ancient world. Students can relate to Aeneas’ feelings of powerlessness and despair in the Aeneid, understand Catullus’ feelings of betrayal and hurt when his girlfriend cheats on him in his poetry, and be thrilled by Caesar’s recount of his adventures in Gaul while understanding that, as a successful general and politician, Caesar is also trying to make himself look good. With my students, we do a variety of projects to make ancient Roman language and culture come to life, such as writing and illustrating Latin storybooks from mythology, making Facebook profiles for Roman gods, performing skits about quasi-historical events, coming up with grave stone inscriptions in the style of Romans, tours of campus and our homes in Latin, and finding modern songs that remind of Catullus’ breakup poems. We read, write, listen, and speak in Latin to better understand Roman culture and history, and we compare the Roman experience to our own. Our Classics program has also joined in the broader Classics community, having a branch of the Junior Classical League for the last eight years at Westminster, participating and getting awards on the National Latin Exam, winning top awards on the National Junior Classical League Creative Writing Contest and the Classical Association of New England Creative Writing Contest.

As a Language department head, I often discuss with my colleagues how we can make our languages relevant and meaningful for our students through teaching not just the language but also the culture of our different languages and providing an opportunity for our students to reflect on their experiences and the experiences of others. I have encouraged my Language teacher colleagues to seek out resources, such as the Connecticut Leadership Initiative for Language Learning to get more ideas about trends in language education and creating intercultural competence in their classes, which I have found very useful for my own courses. In language learning,
students develop crucial critical thinking and analysis skills through which they must demonstrate their understanding of the language. More than learning any other subject, I truly believe that learning and understanding another language and having the ability to experience that language through reading, listening, speaking, and writing can also be the best way to create a sense of empathy in students’ attitudes towards the ideas and beliefs of other cultures and societies. In our increasingly global society, student understanding and respect for other ideas, cultures, and societies will be important for their future pursuits, and they can learn and grow from their experiences as language learners. As Language teachers, we have more similarities than differences in our goals for our students. We should strive to inspire students that are able to work and learn effectively in a cross-cultural environment due to their critical thinking and analytical skills from language learning, their respect and empathy for other cultures and societies, and their reflection on their role in their own culture and society.

I am honored to be named Connecticut’s Language Teacher of the Year. My students are, of course, thrilled. I strive to share the importance of Language learning through posting articles and ideas on social media, through attending and presenting at conferences, and through instilling a lifelong love of language learning in my students.

**Announcement of the Winner of the 2017 Essay Contest**

This year CT COLT conducted the sixth (6th) annual WORLD LANGUAGE STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST. For 2017, students explored the current theme for ACTFL, which is World Languages: A Can-Do Mindset. In a written response, students had to explore the following subtopics:

1. How do the Can-Do Statements help students in their learning of the language? How do they help world language teachers in their instruction?

2. What recommendations would you make to both world language teachers and students in using these Can-Do Statements in the classroom and/or personally?

3. Do you think that these Can-Do Statements are beneficial and/or necessary for the teaching and learning of a world language?

Students were required to craft well-organized arguments, constructed from objective, fact-based information, in addition to drawing upon personal experience from their own learning of foreign languages. With this in mind, students reflected on their own experiences in their foreign language classrooms, illustrating how their teachers have used the Can-Do Statements to assess and monitor their progress in learning either Spanish or French.

A committee of three (3) CT COLT board members reviewed essays submitted by world language students from various high schools around Connecticut. Essays were read and scored according to a contest writing rubric which included the following criteria: citations and accuracy of facts cited, persuasiveness of arguments, conventions of writing and organization of essay. CT COLT and all board members would like to take the opportunity to congratulate and thank all student writers and their teachers for participating in this year’s contest. All students who submitted essays for this year’s contest will receive a **Certificate of Participation** from CT COLT.

This year’s committee is proud to announce that the winner of the 2017 CT COLT WORLD LANGUAGE STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST is Jessica Buslewicz of Newington High School. The committee applauds Ms. Buslewicz for her excellent essay which references both fact-based arguments and personal experiences. In a well-argued and organized essay, Ms. Buslewicz makes several excellent points about how Can-Do Statements can be used as a proficiency based system for teaching and learning, wherein students can show what they know and what they can do in a language. She continues to write how the very nature of the Statements focus more on what students are able to do functionally in a foreign language, as opposed to what they cannot do. In this manner, she explains, students are able to build self-confidence with their language learning and are less discouraged to take chances when it comes to writing and especially speaking. By utilizing the Can-Do Statements in her classroom, Jessica has experienced language learning with more of communicative purpose, as opposed to one that is evaluative and that focuses only on assessment. Finally, Jessica summarizes that there are benefits to both students and teachers in the learning and instructional processes, which also serves as her basis for recommending that they be used more wide-spread in foreign language classrooms.

We are pleased to present Jessica with a $50 award. In addition, we are happy to provide her teacher, Ms. Stephanie Sanzo, with a $50 Carlex voucher. Once again, we thank all student and teacher participants in this year’s contest and look forward to the eighth (8th) CT COLT Essay Contest in

James Wildman, John R. Rook and Christine Dombrowski, Co-Chairs for the 2017 CT COLT Essay Contest

**Organizational News**

**McFarland Memorial Book Awards**

*Alliance Française de Hartford*

The Alliance Française de Hartford honored 5 middle school students and 9 high school students with the McFarland Book Award on Thursday, May 25th at Central Connecticut State University. The students were presented with both a book and a certificate of merit. Each nominating teacher highlighted the academic achievements and accomplishments of their individual students and spoke of their passion for the language. Family, friends and teachers joined the students for a reception immediately following the ceremony.

These awards are given each year in honor of our AFH past president and longtime Simsbury resident Mr. Robert McFarland as an outreach to the academic community. Mr. McFarland had a passion for the French language and for teaching. Students who demonstrate this same passion for the language and commitment to its study are nominated by their teachers. The purchase of book prizes is funded through donations from the McFarland family and other donors. For information about the McFarland Award, please contact Linda Zabor, [zaborl@fpsct.org](mailto:zaborl@fpsct.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipients of the McFarland Book Award</th>
<th>Farmington High School</th>
<th>Sybille Stadtmueller</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Javiera Klenner</td>
<td>Glastonbury High School</td>
<td>Toussaint Olivetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michela Gerardin</td>
<td>Manchester High School</td>
<td>Isabella Jayawickrema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasnim Rahman</td>
<td>Manchester High School</td>
<td>Isabella Jayawickrema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiana Flordelis</td>
<td>Manchester High School</td>
<td>Isabella Jayawickrema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linus Johnson</td>
<td>Har-Bur Middle School</td>
<td>Narjess Bennour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evan Wilson</td>
<td>Henry James Middle School</td>
<td>Marie-Line Bruhl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orla Patterson</td>
<td>Simsbury High School</td>
<td>Kate Christolini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryan Biek</td>
<td>Rockville High School</td>
<td>Babacar Ndao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel Da Luz Moscardo De Souza</td>
<td>Conard High School</td>
<td>John Hegarty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Bugella</td>
<td>Wethersfield High School</td>
<td>Ann Trinkaus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ConnTESOL NEWS**

The ConnTESOL Conference Planning Committee has announced that the keynote speaker will be Gina Barreca, English professor at UCONN and humor columnist for the Hartford Courant. As previously noted in CTCOLT’s last newsletter, the conference will take place at the Sheraton South in Rocky Hill, CT. on Saturday, October 14th from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The theme is: Powers of Language.

The Essay Committee met in May and has selected the four scholarship winners. Winning essays will soon be published on line at: [www.conntesol.org](http://www.conntesol.org).

In other news, Christina Jaramillo has taken on the role of editor of the ConnTESOL Quarterly and has already produced her first issue, the Summer Issue, which is also on line. Christina is a recent university graduate and at press time was interviewing for ESOL positions.

The newsletter has added a new feature—The Tech Corner—written by Jennie Farnell of the University of Bridgeport and Webmaster for ConnTESOL.

The Board proudly announces that two Board members were selected as Hartford’s Teachers of the Year. Violeta Kovaci, Secondary Ed. Representative and Advocacy Representative, who graduated from the University of Tirana in Albania before coming to the U.S., and Billy Conroy, a graduate of UCONN’s NEAG School of Education are the recipients of the honors. Congratulations to both!
CT COLT Board of Directors 2016 – 2018
CT COLT Website: www.ctcolt.org

Officers/Executive Committee

President
JAMES WILDMAN (2018)
wildmanj@glastonburyus.org
Glastonbury High School

Vice-President/President-Elect
LEA GRANER KENNEDY (2018)
lkennedy@stoningtonschools.org
Stonington Public Schools

Treasurer
PAUL M. ST. LOUIS (2018)
275 Cedar Swamp Road, Monson, MA 01057-9303
pmsaint1946@comcast.net

Recording Secretary
JOHN ROOK (2018)
rookj@glastonburyus.org

Corresponding Secretary
CHRISTINE RAPP DOMBROWSKI (2018)
dombrowskic@ctcolt.org

Immediate Past President
ELIZABETH LAPMAN (2018)
lapmane@ctcolt.org

Ex-Officio Director/Director-At-Large

University Liaison
LINDA L. DALPE
Quinnipiac University
lindald001@aol.com

Social Media Specialist
STACEY CLARK
clarks@ctcolt.org

Ex-Officio Director/Director-At-Large

Advocacy (2018)
MAUREEN LAMB
Westminster School
latintechtools@gmail.com

Seal of Biliteracy (2018)
JESSICA HAXHI
New Haven Public Schools
haxhi@ctcolt.org

Membership (2018)
OPEN

CT LILL (2018)
LEA GRANER KENNEDY
Stonington Public Schools
lkennedy@stoningtonschools.org

Teacher of the Year (2018)
MATT MANGINO
Wethersfield Public Schools
mmangino@wethersfield.me

Summer Institute (2018)
AMANDA ROBUSTELLI-PRICE
Independent World Language Consultant
amandarobustelli@gmail.com

Community and Business Outreach (2018)
OPEN

Student Events (2018)
LISA URSO
John Winthrop Middle School (Deep River)
ursol@ctcolt.org

Hospitality (2018)
OPEN

Organizational Directors

ACTR
JOHN ROOK
Smith Middle School (rookj@glastonburyus.org)

Alliance Française
LINDA ZABOR
MmeZabor@aol.com

CAPELL
KAREN STOJ
kstoj@swindsor.k12.ct.us
South Windsor Public Schools

CITA
GIANCARLO DE STEFANIS
(gdestefanis@snet.net)

CLASS
CAROL CHEN-LIN
cchenlin@choate.edu
Choate Rosemary Hall, Wallingford

CLASSCONN
MAUREEN LAMB
latintechtools@gmail.com
Westminster School

CONNTESOL
DOROTHY MULFORD
dorothymulford@mailstation.com
Retired Teacher of Spanish/ELL

AATF-CT
OPEN

CT-AATG
CHRISTINE RAPP DOMBROWSKI
christinedombrow@aol.com
Southern CT State University

CT-AATSP
AILEEN DEVER, Ph.D.
Aileen.Dever@quinnipiac.edu
Quinnipiac University, College of Liberal Arts

NADSFL
LEA GRANER KENNEDY
lkennedy@stoningtonschools.org
Stonington Public Schools

NNELL
KATE KROTZER
krotzer@glastonburyus.org
Glastonbury Public Schools
Connecticut Council of Language Teachers

Serving Connecticut Teachers Since 1968

In This Issue

- President’s Message: Page 1
- Supporting our Elementary FL Pgs: Page 1
- Senior Project Inspires Student: Page 3
- Spotlight on Teachers: Page 4
- Connecticut Tamil Schools: Page 5
- Takeaways from ACTFL-LILL 2017: Page 6
- Feedback: Page 7
- Staying in the Target Language –Part 3: Page 9
- Closing the Feedback Loop: Page 12
- Beyond Meaning Making: Page 14
- Theme by Meme: Page 15
- From the CT COLT Teacher of the Year: Page 16
- Winner of the 2017 Essay Contest: Page 17
- McFarland Memorial Book Awards: Page 18
- ConnTESOL News: Page 18

Newsletter Submissions
Deadline for next newsletter: October 15, 2017

Help us keep our membership records updated!
If you have moved or had a name change, please fill out the Information update form at www.ctcolt.org/pages/information_update_form.asp.