

LOTE CED *Lowdown*

March 2001

www.sedl.org/loteced

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Languages Other Than English Center for Educator Development

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GOOD NEWS FOR TEACHERS OF LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES!

The *Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition* (CARLA) offers many **opportunities and resources** for teachers of Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL).

- The project offers **mini-grants** (up to \$1000) for the development of LCTL teaching materials to be shared with others. The deadline is **March 15, 2001**. For applications, see <http://carla.acad.umn.edu/lctl/minigrant.html>.
- CARLA offers a special **summer institute** for LCTL teachers (see p. 4, this volume), and, according to its electronic newsletter, "any participant who submits sharable LCTL materials up to six months after the institute will receive a refund of \$125."
- The European Studies Consortium and Institute for Global Studies, also at the University of Minnesota, offers **stipends of \$650** to attend *any* of CARLA's summer institutes. Applications are available on the web at: <http://esc.cl.umn.edu/stipends.html>.
- To help LCTL teachers in developing instructional resources, CARLA offers access to their royalty-free **Virtual Photo Album** (<http://carla.acad.umn.edu/VPA/vpa.html>) and **Virtual Audio/Video Archives** (<http://carla.acad.umn.edu/VAVA/vava.html>) for non-commercial use. These resources include pictures and digitized sound segments of authentic speech from a variety of countries.
- CARLA maintains **databases** of North American institutions teaching LCTL and eight Internet **mailing lists** to help teachers of LCTL keep in contact (<http://carla.acad.umn.edu/LCTL/listservs.html>).

The LCTL project coordinator is Louis Janus, lctl@tc.umn.edu.

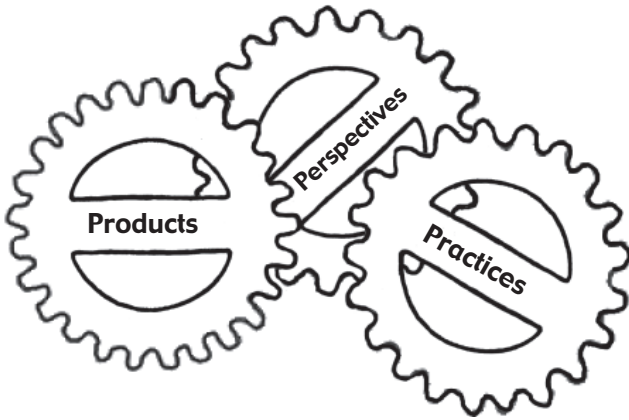
Summer Institutes in Spain 2001

The Summer Institutes in Spain offer a unique professional development opportunity for both teachers of Spanish as a second language and bilingual teachers to participate in summer courses at various universities in Spain. The institutes take place in July and last three to four weeks. The total cost of the program includes tuition, lodging, meals, materials, excursions, and cultural activities that vary from university to university; *partial scholarships that cover approximately half of the program costs are awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture*. Participants are responsible for the balance of the program costs after the scholarship and for travel arrangements and the cost of travel.

For an application form and information on institutes available this summer, please visit <http://www.sedl.org/loteced/texspain.html>. If you do not have Internet access and would like more information about the programs, please contact **Mary Roche**, representative of the Embassy of Spain at the Texas Education Agency at (512) 936-2444. THE DEADLINE FOR APPLYING IS MARCH 30, 2001.

**DEADLINE
APPROACHING**

Focus On Guiding Principle 8: Increased Cultural Understanding



Learning about and experiencing other cultures is an integral part of studying languages other than English. In addition to the traditional ways of studying culture, i.e., studying the facts, events, famous people, and monuments of the culture, culture in language instruction is now generally understood to include the perspectives (how people perceive things), the practices (what people do), and the products (what people create, both tangible and intangible) of a society. In other words, the LOTE discipline has grown to value and encompass a fuller, more comprehensive understanding of culture. One resulting goal for the language classroom is using traditional aspects of cultures to better understand their products, practices, and perspectives. The diagram above illustrates how the products, practices, and perspectives of a culture are interrelated. The components, or “gears,” of a culture (products, practices, and perspectives) are mechanisms that perform specific functions within the complete “machine” that is culture. The gears are interlinked and dependent upon one another to make culture “function,” and therefore exist, as we know it.

Using products, practices, and perspectives to frame the study of culture represents a relatively new way of thinking about culture for most language teachers. Perspectives, in particular, may be a difficult concept to grasp. In fact, not all teachers of LOTE will know all of the perspectives of a given culture, e.g., their values and attitudes. The goal is to teach about observing and analyzing cultural information in order to determine what the perspectives of individuals and groups in the culture are. Studying the cultural perspectives behind the behavioral patterns of people in that culture (practices) and behind the tangible and intangible creations of art; literature; dance; music; and social, economic, and political institutions (products) creates a balanced approach to understanding a culture.

A great deal of information about other cultures can be gained through the study of disciplines such as the social sciences and the arts. Language study is unique, however, as it empowers learners to engage in meaningful, direct interaction, both orally and in writing, with members of other cultures and to experience culture through language. The perspectives, practices, and products of a culture, whether historical or contemporary, can be discussed and shared with members of the actual culture from which they originate. The “insider’s view” that is cultivated by interacting with a culture is a true catalyst for cross-cultural understanding.

As students observe and analyze the interdependence of perspectives, practices, and products of a culture, they become more aware of similarities and differences among cultures. Students explore their own cultures in the context of exploring others, thus becoming reflective learners adept at using their newly acquired, cross-cultural vision.

For more information on how to develop the intercultural communicative competence of LOTE students, write for the catalog of *Intercultural Press, Inc.*, a U.S. publisher of books and training materials on cross- and intercultural communication. Each edition contains scores of titles and reviews guaranteed to peak the interest of foreign language teachers and learners, from the pioneering work of E. T. Hall in *The Silent Language* (1959) to voices from the new millennium such as Greg Nees’ *Germany: Unraveling an Enigma*. Some books focus on specific cultures such as *From Nyet to Da* (Yale Richmond) and *Understanding Arabs* (Margaret K. Omar Nydell). Others focus on pedagogical issues or general cross-cultural understanding such as *The Art of Crossing Cultures* (Craig Storti) and *Experiential Activities for Intercultural Learning* (H. Ned Seelye, ed.).

You can request a catalog by calling (800) 370-2665 or by writing *Intercultural Press, Inc.*, PO Box 700, Yarmouth, ME 04096-0700 or www.interculturalpress.com.

Facilitators Spotlight



Close to one hundred Texas LOTE educators have been trained by the LOTE CED as TEKS for LOTE and/or Peer Coaching and Mentoring training facilitators. They serve as consultants to provide in-service through Independent School Districts and regional Education Service Centers. **Mary Diehl** and **Nathan Bond** have worked as a team to provide over 20 workshops to date.

Nathan Bond, Ph.D.

Nathan, a former Russian teacher at Bowie and LBJ High Schools and Bailey Middle School in Austin, was selected as Texas Russian Teacher of the Year in 1994. He was also Teacher of the Year at Bailey MS in 1998. His current position is Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos. Nathan is a past Vice President of the Texas Foreign Language Association and is currently its President-Elect.

Mary Diehl

Mary spent 24 years teaching Spanish (all levels) in the Round Rock ISD, 19 of those at Westwood High School. She now works at The University of Texas at Austin as Project Coordinator and Master Teacher for UTeach - Liberal Arts. (This innovative program seeks to attract liberal arts students to teaching, providing them with the necessary training to make them effective, dedicated teachers: early field experience with hands-on practice, close mentoring from university faculty and mentor teachers, cohort support, discipline-specific pedagogy training, etc.) Mary also does AP presentations and is a Table Leader for tapes for the AP examination. She has served as both Vice President and President of the Texas Foreign Language Association.

Upcoming Conferences

French in Texas Symposium: History, Migration, and Culture

March 8–10 • Austin, TX

http://www.utexas.edu/world/frenchintexas/annonce_anglais.htm

Southwest Conference on Language Teaching

March 15–17 • San Francisco, CA

<http://www.learnalanguage.org/SWCOLT/>

Texas Foreign Language Education Conference Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in the Language Classroom

March 23–24 • Austin, TX

<http://www.utexas.edu/students/flesa/texflec/tex2001.htm>

Texas Foreign Language Association

March 29–April 1 • Laredo, TX

<http://www.baylor.edu/~TFLA/>

Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

March 29–April 1 • New York, NY

<http://www.dickinson.edu/nectfl>

Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

April 26–28 • Indianapolis, IN

<http://www.ualr.edu/~centralstate/>

American Classical League Annual Institute

June 28–30 • San Antonio, TX

<http://www.aclclassics.org/Institute/index.shtml>

American Association of Teachers of French

July 5–8 • Denver, CO

<http://aatf.utsa.edu/convention/>

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese

July 5–9 • San Francisco, CA

<http://www.aatsp.org/meeting.htm>

National Junior Classical League

July 17–22 • New Orleans, LA

<http://www.njcl.org>

Check out **What's Hot** on the LOTE CED Web site for a regularly updated list of conferences and other activities.

<http://www.sedl.org/loteced/hot.html>

National Foreign Language Resource Centers SUMMER INSTITUTES FOR 2001

The nine Language Resource Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education offer summer institutes and workshops for foreign language educators each year. The following list gives the topics and dates of the institutes scheduled for Summer 2001. Details can be found at the Web site of the sponsoring Center.

Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA)

University of Minnesota

<http://carla.acad.umn.edu/summerinst.html>

- Meeting the Challenges of Immersion Education (June 18–22)
- Improving Language Learning: A Practical Course in Strategies-Based Instruction (June 18–22)
- An Advanced Course in Strategies-Based Instruction (June 25–27)
- Developing Classroom Materials for Less Commonly Taught Languages (June 25–29)
- Culture as the Core in the Second Language Classroom (July 9–13)
- Developing Assessments for the Second Language Classroom (July 16–20)
- Proficiency-Oriented Language Instruction & Assessment (July 23–27)
- Using Technology in the Second Language Classroom (August 6–10)
- Immersion 101: An Introduction to Immersion Teaching (August 13–17)

The Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR)

Michigan State University

<http://clear.msu.edu/institutes/01institutes/>

- Using Communicative Activities in a Grammar-Based Curriculum (June 20–23)
- Putting Your Course Online (June 26–30)
- Making a Language-Learning CD-ROM: Introductory Techniques (July 10–14)
- Making a Language-Learning CD-ROM: Advanced Techniques (July 17–21)
- Promoting Student Motivation and Interest in Foreign Languages (July 22–24)
- Using Authentic Materials in the Foreign Language Classroom (July 25–28)

The Language Acquisition Resource Center (LARC)

San Diego State University

<http://larcnet.sdsu.edu>

(Information on 2001 summer institutes not available at press time, please visit the Web site for updates.)

National African Language Resource Center (NALRC)

The University of Wisconsin-Madison

<http://african.lss.wisc.edu/nalrc/prog-serv/upcoming/-alta2001.html>

- The 5th annual ALTA conference (April 26–28) includes two workshops:
 - African Language Classroom Management
 - Learner Styles and Strategies for Language Teachers

National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC)

Georgetown University, The George Washington University, and the Center for Applied Linguistics

<http://www.cal.org/nclrc/Suinfo.htm>

- Workshop on Coherent Language Curriculum Development (May 31–June 1)
- Teaching with Technology in the Foreign Language Classroom - Introductory Level (June 22–23)
- Teaching Learning Strategies in the Foreign Language Classroom (June 25–26)
- Implementing Portfolio Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom (June 27–28)
- Teaching with Technology in the Foreign Language Classroom - Advanced Level (June 29–30)

Slavic and East European Language Resource Center (SEELRC)

Duke University, University of North Carolina

<http://www.seelrc.org>

- Slavic and East European Languages: Acquisition, Techniques, and Technologies (August 1–10)

The National East Asian Language Resource Center (NEALRC)

The Ohio State University

<http://deall.ohio-state.edu/SPEAC/>

- Learning Japanese Language (June 18–August 24)
- Learning Chinese Language (June 18–August 24)
- Teaching Japanese (June 18–August 3)
- Teaching Chinese (June 18–August 3)

National Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC)

University of Hawaii at Manoa

<http://www.LLL.hawaii.edu/nflrc/institutes.html>

- Developing Web-Based Foreign Language Learning Environments (June 11–22)
- Web-Based Workshops for Advanced Reading & Writing Development & Maintenance (July 2–13)
- Korean Pedagogy Workshop: Task-Based Language Teaching (July 30–August 1)

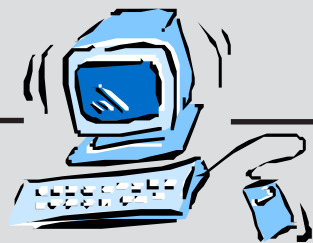
National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center

Iowa State University

<http://www.educ.iastate.edu/nflrc/snew.htm>

- K–8 Foreign Language Institute: Leading the Way with Teacher Preparation (July 16–26)
- New Technologies in the Foreign Language Classroom for Methods Professors (August 8–16)

LOTE



LINKS

GERMAN

<http://www.goethe.de/oe/mos/odyssee/>

Odyssee is an e-mail game developed by Ronald Grätz of the Goethe Institute whose aim is to provide students an opportunity to acquire up-to-date intercultural information as they use the German language for communicative purposes. Students of German of any age, from any country, and at any level can participate in this search game. After registering on-line, 3-4 classes participate together through open correspondence via the Internet for a five-week period. Each group composes a weekly e-mail describing its city, holidays, dishes, cultural norms, etc. without revealing its identify. Students work together to compose the messages and to discuss the information received from the other groups with the goal of guessing where the other groups are from. The web site offers a registration form; a teacher's "manual" containing information on timing, teaching aims, evaluation, etc.; a pupil's "manual" with plans suggesting the writing and discussion topics for the five weeks; and links to a variety of maps.

<http://www.assk.com/lieder/deutsch.htm>

Click on "Kategorien" and you'll discover over thirty categories of songs (wanderlieder, aus der Schweiz, etc.), each of which contains numerous song titles. Choose a title and see the text of the song—or listen to the sound file! Students will surely enjoy discovering some of the music of the German-speaking world.

GENERAL

<http://www.iecc.org/>

"IECC (Intercultural E-Mail Classroom Connections) is a free service to help teachers link with partners in other countries and cultures for e-mail classroom pen-pal and project exchanges. Since its creation in 1992, IECC has distributed over 28,000 requests for e-mail partnerships. At last count, more than 7650 teachers in 82 countries were participating in one or more of the IECC lists..." Find out how to subscribe, submit a request, or get more information from this home page.

A CLASS ACT: CULTURES

A CLASS ACT features learning scenarios tied to the five Cs: Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities. The following scenario is reprinted from a link on the Mount Holyoke College web site (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppe5/>). It offers a look at a thematic unit of study developed by German teachers who participated in a 1998 summer seminar entitled *Post-Wall Germany: Integrating Post-Unification German Culture into the High School Classroom*. The seminar was sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

MUSIK GEGEN HAß (Music Against Hate)

by Evelyn Ayres, Bobby Cranston, Wendy Ellingsen, Ken Kratt, Mickey Miller, Brynell Spence

*Hier findet man tolle Musik über
Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Freundlichkeit!*

Many rock groups have embraced the fight against *Fremdenhaß* [xenophobia] as a theme in their songs. *Fremdenhaß* in Germany is a manifestation of a general intolerance for all foreigners or those who appear to be "foreign." Appearance, language, and citizenship are three of the most common characteristics on which this hate is based.

There are few "civil rights" or anti-hate-crime laws to protect "foreigners." Many of these "foreigners" have families who have lived in Germany for several generations, speak German, or are even German citizens. The largest group subject to hate crimes is the Turks. Other groups subject to *Fremdenhaß* are Jews, Egyptians, Italians, Black-Germans and anyone who appears "foreign."

The activities on this web site are intended to introduce students to the topic of *Fremdenhaß* and expose them to the music of rock bands who are actively engaged in producing songs and/or videos against hate. They are mini-lessons for different levels that can stand alone, become part of a larger unit, or be used over several days to supplement regular classroom instruction.

Targeted Standards*

- 1.2 Interpretive Communication
- 2.1 Practices of Culture
- 2.2 Products of Culture
- 3.1 Making Connections
- 4.2 Cultural Comparisons
- 5.1 Language Beyond School
- 5.2 Lifelong Learning

**Please note that the "Targeted Standards" and "Reflections on Meeting the Standards" refer to the National Standards for Foreign Language Learners, which are closely aligned with the Texas standards, the TEKS for LOTE.*



Mit was Ausländischem woll'n mir nix zu tun ham

Loosely translated:

So which foreigners do we want to avoid?

This cartoon can be used to introduce the theme of "foreignness" in Germany. On the literal level, fruit in Germany comes from many different places. More figuratively, the fruit represents the many ethnic groups in Germany. The caption reiterates the fact that Germans need foreigners and foreign products, but don't always associate those needs with the people behind the labels.

Reflections on Meeting the Standards*

1.2 (Interpretive Communication) Students interpret lyrics and video.

2.1 (Practices of Culture) Through engaging in the discussion of *Freundlichkeit und Fremdenfeindlichkeit*, students demonstrate understanding of the relationship between *Fremden* (foreigners) and *Deutschen* (Germans).

2.2 (Products of Culture) Through the observation and discussion of the voicing of discontent via media focused especially toward young people, the students observe and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the media products and perspectives of the *Fremden* and *Deutschen*.

3.1 (Making Connections) Students reinforce geography and map reading skills.

4.2 (Cultural Comparisons) Students compare the use of rap music by minorities in Germany and the U.S. to convey discontent with the status quo.

5.1,5.2 (Language Beyond School, Lifelong Learning) Through exposure to web sites and youth music of German-speaking countries, students are prepared to continue searching available means for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Bands/Links

On this page [<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppe5/bands.htm>] we have included links to sites with the lyrics of several songs by various German bands. A number of activities including vocabulary lists, a *Lückentext* [cloze text], and questions accompany pertinent songs.

Die Toten Hosen

<http://www.dietotenhosen.de/homepage.htm>

Vokabeln und Fragen zu Fünf vor Zwölf
[Vocabulary and Questions on *Fünf vor Zwölf*]
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppe5/tote1.html>

Udo Lindenberg

<http://www.uni-giessen.de/~ga52/lied.html>

Advanced Chemistry

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppen.html>

Vokabeln und Fragen [Vocabulary and Questions]
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppe5/fragwort.html>

Lückentext [Cloze Text]
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppe5/lucken.html>

Other Informative Sites

Statistiken [Statistics]

<http://www.statistik-bund.de/basis/d/bevoe/bevoetab1.htm>

German-Turkish Relations

<http://www.serve.com/sheagerks.htm>

Black German Cultural Society of America

<http://www.angelfire.com/ct/blackgerman/>

Oskar's Ebony and Ivory

http://www.oskars.de/archiv/15e_11.html



PILOS PUNTOS

<http://www.pilospuntos.de/start.htm>

Deutsch ist international [Lyrics]

<http://www.pilospuntos.de/texte/deutsch.htm>

Vokabeln und Fragen

[Vocabulary and Questions]
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/germ/neh/gruppe5/wortfragen.html>

Sites for Ordering Music

German Music Imports, Inc.

<http://www.germancorner.com/>

German Music Express

<http://www.musicexpress.com/>

Although we have associated this learning scenario with *Cultures* in the article's title, it is obvious that the activities described could meet several of the *TEKS for LOTE* Program Goals. The scenario's authors even list several Cs they intended to address. It might be particularly interesting to high school students to consider

(continued on page 11)

LOTE CED Bulletin Board

TFLA SPRING CONFERENCE

The Texas Foreign Language Association's spring conference is just around the corner. Each year, the spring conference is held in a location outside of the major metropolitan areas in an attempt to reach teachers who may not always be able to travel to the fall conference. This year it will be held in Laredo, March 30-31. The LOTE CED is again sponsoring a number of workshops. **Renée Wooten** and **Kathy Gilbert** present "Active Learners, Active Learning" which focuses on the development of standards-based learning scenarios. **Bobette Dunn** and **Dorothy Cox** repeat their popular session on performance-based assessment: "Make Assessment Your Best Asset." If you're tired of "sit 'n git" in-service sessions, take advantage of this opportunity to engage in lively, interactive professional development!

FLES INFORMATION SOUGHT

The LOTE CED has been receiving inquiries regarding **foreign language programs in elementary schools** in Texas. Some inquiries have come from ISDs who are considering implementing FLES or FLEX programs; some have come from parents who are interested in encouraging early language learning programs in their districts. In order to better answer the questions we receive and to encourage the development of elementary school foreign language programs, we would like to hear from you about those that already exist around the state and about initiatives being taken to implement such programs. If you have information you would like to share on your district's programs or plans, or if you have explored the possibility of such a program, please contact Elaine Phillips at ephillip@sedl.org or call (800) 476-6861 X290. We are interested in *all* types of elementary foreign language programs including FLES, FLEX, and full- or partial-immersion.

TEKS FOR LOTE ON-LINE

You can find the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Languages Other Than English (TEKS for LOTE) at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/114toc.htm>

LOTE CED "COMMUNIQUE" DEBUTS

The first edition of the LOTE CED's *Communiqué*, an occasional paper on topics of interest to LOTE educators, was mailed out in December to district foreign language coordinators, TEKS for LOTE liaisons at regional Education Service Centers and over 2500 elementary, middle and high schools in Texas. Issue 1, **Enough Dissing Already! Fostering Connections Between Foreign Language Teachers at the Primary and Secondary Levels and Higher Education**, by Sheila Carel, discusses what the author refers to as the "culture clash between various subcultures of the larger FLE culture." After reflecting on the dissimilarities in the work cultures of the different groups, she offers examples of successful articulation initiatives and suggestions for facilitating interaction between practicing teachers in primary/secondary institutions and in colleges/universities. Carel recommends both systemic and individual change as a way to promote cooperation between these two groups of educators whose constituents are, after all, the same: students. The second issue of the *Communiqué* is due out in March. It will examine the influences that second language acquisition theory and classroom practice have on each other.

REMINDER !

The LOTE CED's video series, **Learning Languages Other Than English: A Texas Adventure**, is being aired on TEA's T-STAR network this spring. The first episode aired at the end of January and was an overview of LOTE instruction in Texas and the TEKS for LOTE. The second episode focused on Communication and Connections. Remaining episodes focus on Communication and Comparisons, Communication and Communities, and Communication and Cultures. Set your VCR so you don't miss the last three episodes:

March 26 (4:15-4:45pm)
April 26 (4:15-4:45pm)
May 8 (4:15-4:45pm)

Professional Journals and You: Die Unterrichtspraxis

Teachers of LOTE do not lack for a variety of professional journals from which to choose as resources for ideas and information on classroom instruction and strategies and for reports on research findings in the field of language education and second language acquisition. This edition of the LOTE CED Lowdown highlights one of those journals.

Die Unterrichtspraxis is devoted to the improvement and expansion of German teaching in the United States. It is published semi-annually by the American Association of Teachers of German. According to its web page, *Die Unterrichtspraxis* provides a forum for the presentation, elaboration, and discussion of “the recent advances in scholarship on language teaching and learning, practical suggestions for implementing this scholarship in German classrooms, information concerning relevant teaching and source materials, information about the linguistic, social, political, and cultural landscape of German-speaking countries, and assessments or suggestions regarding the betterment of the German teaching profession...” This journal includes “pedagogical articles, reports, teaching tips, news, discussions, book reviews, software and video reviews, current advertisements and other material of interest to teachers of German at all levels of instruction.” Sample articles from last year’s issues include the following:



Volume 33 (Spring 2000)

“Made in Germany”: *Das Wirtschaftsmagazin der Deutschen Welle*-tv im Unterricht für Fortgeschrittene

Im Restaurant: Simulationen im Anfängerunterricht

Teaching German Literature through the Web: Processes and Outcomes

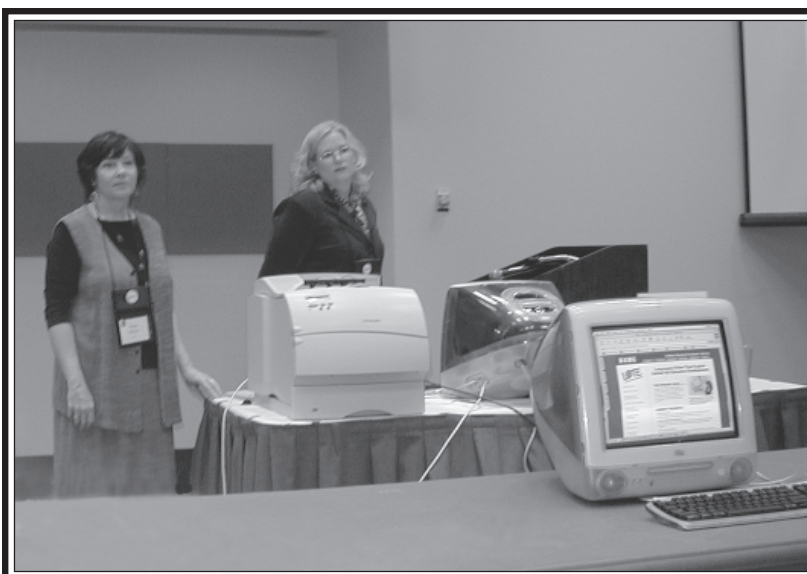
The Web and Berlin as *Baustellen*: Reflecting on Cultural Construction in the German Studies Classroom

Volume 33 (Fall 2000)

Germany’s other ‘Others’: Teaching about Kurds, Roma and Sinti in an Upper-Division Culture Class

Teaching German Grammar Through Communicative Tasks: Some Suggestions

Using Group Role-Play to Test Speaking: Setting Up a *Wohngemeinschaft*



LOTE CED Director, **Lillian King Meidlinger**, and Field Specialist, **Elaine Phillips**, attended the 21st Annual Convention and Exposition of the Texas Computer Education Association in Austin on February 8th. TCEA is an organization dedicated to the improvement of teaching and learning through the use of computer technology. Phillips and King Meidlinger participated in an afternoon session entitled “TEA Web Resources: Enrichment Curriculum,” engaging participants in an Internet jigsaw-type activity. Attendees were paired and asked to research one of the links on the LOTE CED web page and to report back to the others on the kinds of information available there. The goal was that administrators and teachers from other subject areas in attendance learn enough about the web site to share information with LOTE teachers in their districts.

The Magic Circle: Why Peer Coaching/Mentoring Works

by Renée Wooten



Some time ago, a language teacher of students whose first language was not English decided to create a forum so that all of his students would be able to express themselves without fear of recrimination and judgment. This, he felt, would offer to his students a unique opportunity to communicate with one another in an authentic manner. He called this extraordinary tool The Magic Circle. And, it was special indeed.

The method of the circle is simple and effective. First everyone arranges himself or herself into a circle, including the facilitator of the group. After this step, the facilitator introduces the topic to be discussed. During the Magic Circle discussion, each participant, including the facilitator, takes a turn if desired to relate feelings and thoughts about the proposed topic of the circle. While individual participants share ideas with the other members of the group, each person listens without speaking. Sometimes, due to a lack of command of the second language being learned, there are moments of frustration and silence while the participant searches for words to verbalize special thoughts and feelings. These moments, group facilitators often find uncomfortable because they have little control. However, this is the most important phase of the circle. It is in this time that authentic communication happens.

I use this method in my own classroom to incite open communication among my students. It always works. Although the name of the circle implies that there is magic that causes the amazing outcome of authentic communication, The Magic Circle works because each member is able to express him or herself openly while really being heard.

Peer Coaching/Mentoring works the same way as The Magic Circle. While usually there is no group, rather two participants in the Peer Coaching/Mentoring cycle, the rules of authentic communication are applied. There is no hierarchy of power. Each participant is an equal part of the equation able to express thoughts and feelings, reflect, and learn from the other in a safe environment that does not evaluate or recriminate. In fact, the processes of Peer Coaching/Mentoring, when applied with the original intent of the program, offer a shared sense of empowerment that allows each member to come away from the experience feeling validated. Though the participants are speaking their first language, they do, in a sense, learn the new language of authentic communication.

As with The Magic Circle, I use Peer Coaching/Mentoring in my own LOTE department. Each process works in the department because there is a very real sense of trust that emerges among the participants. This climate permeates each classroom affected, with very positive results. Teaching is improved, which, by proxy, improves the learning of our students. An additional bonus is that teachers, who once might have felt overwhelmed and alone, generally feel a part of a greater whole. So, I suppose, there really is magic.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Renée Wooten".

Renée is a Spanish teacher at Rider High School in Wichita Falls and a training facilitator for the LOTE CED. Contact the LOTE CED for more information on obtaining peer coaching/mentoring training for your school or district.

Hate Music

(continued from page 7)

the *Comparisons* Program Goal in addition to that of Cultures. There is, unfortunately, no shortage of hate music in English (or any other language for that matter), and it seems the most avid audience of this music is teenagers. By initiating a discussion on the origins of and perspectives behind such music in both cultures, students may not only increase their understanding of their own culture and that of Germany, they may better comprehend the potential harm inherent in hate mongering. Xenophobia is associated with fear of the unknown; therefore, it seems logical that providing education on the unknown—another culture—may assist in decreasing that fear and thus diminishing the hate. Some discussion questions to consider:

- In Germany, much of the hate music that is produced centers around racism and hate of foreigners. What are the prevalent themes in American music that condone hate?
- What is being done in English-speaking cultures to protest the proliferation of hate music?
- Are there English-speaking rock groups, such as the ones in Germany, that protest hate through song?
- How do you feel about music that condones hate? Should it be censored and/or should its distribution be controlled?

Please note: LOTE educators will need to consider whether or not the content of this learning scenario is appropriate for their community and/or school climate. In addition, teachers of LOTE will need to reflect on the age and/or maturity level of their students before implementing a scenario such as this one.

LOTE Teachers Receive UT “Tradition in Excellence” Awards

Maria García Rameau of Scarborough High School in Houston ISD and **Johnnie Eng** of Alamo Heights High School in Alamo Heights ISD were honored by The University of Texas at Austin’s Department of Education and the Ex-Students’ Association with the “Tradition in Excellence” Award for Outstanding High School Teachers. Both teachers received not only the honor of being selected, but also were celebrated with ceremonies and presented with laptop computers and cash awards.

In addition, Eng was honored with a resolution in his name offered by Texas Representative Elizabeth Ames Jones. (Ms. Jones is a former student of Eng.) The presentation took place at the Texas State Capitol Complex in the Gallery of the House of Representatives on February 15, 2001.

NFLC Initiative to Develop “Heritage Language” Resources

*This article is excerpted from a page on The Center for Applied Linguistics web site.
The original text and additional information may be found at <http://www.cal.org/heritage/>.*

Though the United States has a long history of educational programs designed to help language minority students improve their command of English, relatively few educational programs have considered the value of these students’ native languages. As part of a larger effort to educate citizens who can function professionally in English as well as other languages, The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) have launched an initiative to help the U.S. education system recognize and develop such “heritage language” resources.

To achieve this goal, the Heritage Language Initiative seeks to increase dialogue and promote collaboration among a broad range of stakeholders in the community and education system. The initiative also seeks to design and implement programs, develop instructional materials and other resources, and encourage and support research. Ongoing work will focus on recruitment and articulation across programs, teacher preparation, materials development, instructional strategies, assessment, language policy, public advocacy, and research. This work will be carried forward through publications, an issue-oriented web site, an electronic listserv, and national conferences such as one held in Fall 1999.

To be added to the Initiative’s listserv, contact Scott McGinnis at smcginnis@nflc.org. For information on scheduled conferences, visit the web site listed above or contact any of the following people:

Joy Kreeft Peyton
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street NW
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LOTE CED Training Modules and Publications

LOTE CED Training Modules

Contact the TEKS liaison at your ESC or the language coordinator in your ISD to find out about workshops in your area. For more information on the content of the training, contact the LOTE CED.

- **Module I - TEKS for LOTE: Overview**
- **Module II - TEKS for LOTE: Classroom Implementation**
- **Module III-A - TEKS for LOTE: Addressing Assessment**
- **Module III-B - TEKS for LOTE: Developing Curriculum**
- **Peer Coaching and Mentoring for Teachers of LOTE**

Project ExCELL Publications

Publications produced by Project ExCELL (Excellence and Challenge: Expectations for Language Learners) include:

- **A Texas Framework for Languages Other Than English**
- **Professional Development for Language Teachers: Implementing the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Languages Other Than English**
- **Preparing Language Teachers to Implement the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Languages Other Than English**

All three Project ExCELL documents include a copy of the *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Languages Other Than English* and may be downloaded from the LOTE CED web site. Photocopied versions are available from the Texas Foreign Language Association (TFLA) for the cost of duplicating and mailing. The cost to TFLA members is \$2.50/each or \$6.00 for all three; the cost to non-members is \$3.50/each or \$9.00 for all three. Send checks payable to TFLA to: Phyllis B. Thompson, Houston Baptist University, 7502 Fondren, Houston, TX 77074

An original version of *A Texas Framework for Languages Other Than English* can be obtained from TEA. The cost to tax-exempt organizations is \$8.00/each; the cost for all others is \$10.00/each. To order, contact: Publications Distribution and Sales, Skip Baylor, Texas Education Agency, 1701 North Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701, (512) 463-9744

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