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## Texas LOTE Educators Participate in Action Research Initiative

On September 26-28, eleven LOTE educators from around Texas gathered at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Austin to participate in a professional development opportunity sponsored by the LOTE Center for Educator Development, Texas's first Action Research Initiative (ARI) designed for foreign language professionals. Although the activity of teaching language is a highly personal endeavor, most educators have encountered at least some challenges in implementing standards-based instruction. Understanding how teachers go about implementing standards in the classroom, how students learn, and how educators can best help them attain the standards in their local teaching context was the purpose of this Action Research Initiative.

### What is Action Research?

Action research (AR) involves systematic inquiry by teachers to investigate how they teach and how their students learn with the goal of effecting positive changes in instruction and learning. It requires a willingness to critically examine one's teaching through regular reflection on classroom practice. The AR process includes identifying a focus area, collecting data, analyzing and interpreting data, and developing a plan of action. It provides a process for examining common assumptions and empowers educators to make informed decisions, to systematically ask questions and search for answers, and to learn from experience.

### Texas ARI

Collaborators in the Action Research Institute include: **Linda Allen** (Holmes Middle School, Dallas ISD), **Gigi Austin** (Spence Middle

School, Dallas ISD), **Cesiah Boryczka** (Warren High School, Northside ISD, San Antonio), **Monica Daucourt** (Hillcrest High School, Dallas ISD), **Greg Foulds** (Winston Churchill High School, North East ISD, San Antonio), **Pat Kahn** (Grisham Middle School, Round Rock ISD), **Phyllis Santiago** (Liberty Hill Middle School, Killeen ISD), **Leah Sequeira** (Memorial High School, Spring Branch ISD), **Miriam Thompson** (Westwood High School, Round Rock ISD), **María Treviño** (Texas Education Agency), and **Renée Wooten** (Rider High School, Wichita Falls ISD). **Rick Donato** of the University of Pittsburgh (see photo, left) and **Elaine Phillips**, Director of the LOTE CED, facilitated the event. Dr. Donato is a nationally-known consultant and a strong advocate of teacher research. He currently serves as chair of ACTFL's New Visions Research Task Force. (See also page 11 for related photos.)

During the September gathering, participants reflected on the challenges of implementing the TEKS for LOTE in classroom instruction, identified their own critical issues in implementing standards-based instruction, and explored together how they can plan for instructional innovation and intervention. Facilitator Rick Donato lead the group in understanding the nature of action research and common tools of inquiry. Through an interactive process, each participant developed an action plan for a classroom research project and identified appropriate data collection instruments. They are conducting their action research projects during the remainder of this fall semester. (For a personal reflection on the ARI by participant Gigi Austin, see *Letters from the Field*, page 10.)

*(Continued on page 7)*



## German Teacher Named Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year



**Denise Tanner**, a German teacher from the Fort Bend Independent School District has been named the Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year for 2003. Denise, who teaches at Hightower High School, was chosen from a field

of six finalists interviewed by a panel of judges chaired by State Board of Education member Cynthia Thornton. In addition to being named Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year, Denise was selected to be the Texas nominee for the National Teacher of the Year Award. The outcome of the national program will be decided in April, and each candidate will have an opportunity to visit with President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush while attending the announcement of the National Teacher of the Year in Washington, DC.

Commenting on the state awards, Commissioner of Education Felipe Alanis remarked, "The privilege of announcing the Texas Teachers of the Year is one of the highlights of being the commissioner of education. Educators like Mrs. McCuin (Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year) and Mrs. Tanner are wonderful examples of the human spirit who instill an intellectual curiosity in the students whose lives they touch. Mrs. McCuin and Mrs. Tanner are personal inspirations to me. I commend them both for the compassionate and enthusiastic service they bring to their classrooms and the marked difference they have made in the lives of so many children. Mrs. McCuin and Mrs. Tanner are representative of thousands of first-class Texas educators whose hard work and dedication make a tremendous difference in this state, and they have my profound appreciation."

Denise, who had always wanted to become a teacher, received the encouragement she had yearned for in the 11th grade. "My English teacher was from England," she recalls, "had lived in Greece for 10 years, spoke fluent Greek and, more importantly to me, had graduated eighth in her high school class. She showed

me that one could have an interesting and varied life, be extremely intelligent, and therefore make an exemplary teacher." Now Denise understands that "following your heart and realizing your dreams are more important than taking the path others expect you to follow."

A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, Denise has been teaching German for four years. "My students even know that I speak German to my parakeet," she said. "I begin each school year by telling my students that I do not know everything, but that I can guide them through the material because I know how to learn... I believe this openness shows my students that learning can continue outside of the classroom and past the 12th grade." Citing uniqueness of expression as the "hallmark of our younger society," Denise says her goal as a teacher is to reach out to the students who seem to be slipping away due to social ostracism or disinterest in school. "In an attempt to make every student successful, we (educators) have lost sight of the two most important facts of all: each person is different and there are many types of success... It is the feeling of success which feeds productivity and satisfaction, not some predetermined, universal standard."

Denise has been active professionally since she began teaching. She is the German Club and German National Honor Society sponsor for her school and has helped to write the Fort Bend ISD German I curriculum. Beyond her district, Denise participated in the LOTE CED's Learning Scenarios Development Workshop and co-authored three standards-based thematic units included in the publication, *Great TEKSpectations: Innovative Learning Scenarios for the LOTE Classroom*. She is a member of the Texas Foreign Language Association (where she has presented) and the American Association of Teachers of German.

Along with her district and school, the LOTE CED wishes Denise hearty congratulations. We are thrilled that a foreign language teacher can represent us as Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year.

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*Adapted from a press release issued by the Texas Education Agency.*

## Print Publications



### **Action Research: A Guide for the Teacher Researcher (2nd ed.)**

*Geoffrey E. Mills, Merrill/Prentice Hall, 2003*

Mills's book is useful for educators who wish to learn about the process of doing action research. The first chapter provides an overview and introduction. Subsequent chapters follow the action research process through such topics as area of focus, data collection and considerations, analysis and interpretation, and sharing the results of action research. Each chapter begins with an action research "vignette" illustrating chapter content and also includes chapter objectives and easy to read figures and boxes containing Key Concepts and Research in Action checklists. Chapter summaries and follow-up questions provide opportunities for reader reflection.

### **Teachers Doing Research: The Power of Action Through Inquiry (2nd ed.)**

*Gail Burnaford, Joseph Fischer, & David Hobson, Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 2000*

The three major sections of the book focus on ways of doing teacher research, teacher researchers as part of a professional community, and the influence that teacher research can have on the larger educational community. Of primary interest, however, may be the 11 examples of teacher research projects found in sections called *Teachers Doing Research*. These reports by teachers and administrators focus on action research on a variety of topics including teachers and students as co-researchers in designing curriculum, leading a school-based study group, and developing curriculum for students with disabilities. One research report deals with "paradigm paralysis" in the LOTE classroom.

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## Upcoming Conferences

- **Chinese Language Teachers Association**  
Nov 21-24 • Salt Lake City, UT  
(in conjunction with ACTFL)  
<http://deall.ohio-state.edu/clta/>
- **National Council of Japanese Language Teachers**  
Nov 21-24 • Salt Lake City, UT  
(in conjunction with ACTFL)  
<http://www.actfl.org/>
- **American Association of Teachers of German**  
Nov 22-24 • Salt Lake City, UT  
(in conjunction with ACTFL)  
<http://www.aatg.org>
- **American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**  
Nov 22-24 • Salt Lake City, UT  
<http://www.actfl.org/>
- **Modern Language Association**  
Dec 27-30 • New York, NY  
<http://www.mla.org/>
- **Southwest Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**  
March 13-15 • Denver, CO  
<http://www.learnalanguage.org/swcolt/>
- **Texas Foreign Language Association**  
March 27-29 • Corpus Christi, TX  
<http://www3.baylor.edu/TFLA/>
- **Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**  
April 10-13 • Washington, DC  
<http://www.dickinson.edu/nectfl/>
- **Texas Association for Language Supervision/  
Texas Conference on Coordinating Languages**  
April 27-29 • Austin TX
- **American Association of Teachers of French**  
July 4-7 (tentative) • La Pointe du Bout, Martinique  
<http://www.frenchteachers.org/>
- **American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese**  
August 2-4 • Chicago, IL  
<http://www.aatsp.org/members/index.htm>



# TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

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Felipe T. Alanis  
Commissioner of Education

Your input is very valuable. I hope that you will take a few minutes to complete this survey. In doing so you will be able to help Texas LOTE teachers and yourself in meeting the needs and demands of special needs students in your classrooms.

Dear Colleagues,

I hope that all of you are having a great year and that you are enjoying your classes. Each year new students take LOTE classes trying to learn a second language for their own benefit or to fulfill a graduation requirement for the Recommended or Distinguished diplomas. As we promote languages for *all*, each year teachers encounter students with different learning disabilities in the LOTE classroom.

Every teacher tries to make language learning an exciting experience for each student. Teachers work with IEPs to modify and accommodate instruction so that students can be successful. Yet, we see that in this particular area there is much to be done to assist teachers in delivering instruction to special needs students, as well as to find ways to help special needs students be successful in the LOTE classroom.

I am currently working on an Action Research Project regarding Inclusion in the LOTE classroom. I see this as a high priority in today's educational setting. Special education teachers and supervisors are not specialists in LOTE, and LOTE teachers are not specialists in Special Education. The focus of this project is to obtain information as to what LOTE teachers are encountering as they teach special needs students. How are teachers coping? What modifications and accommodations are provided for students? How successful are LOTE teachers in teaching special needs students? How successful are special needs students in the LOTE classroom?

There are three parts to this project. The first part is to gather basic information as proposed by the survey on the next page. This survey will also appear in the TFLA Newsletter and will be sent to random districts in the state. Information will be gathered, analyzed, and recorded. There will be a written summary which will appear in a future *Lowdown* and/or in the TLFA *Newsletter* or *Bulletin*. The long-term goal is to gather enough information to pinpoint areas of need and develop specific training for LOTE teachers. You are aware that in 2004-2005, the Recommended program will be the default program for all Texas high school students. With this legislation, the number of LOTE students may triple or quadruple in school districts, which means more IEPs for teachers. The final objective of this project is to write and print a booklet for distribution with specific information for teachers to use in the LOTE classroom to assist them in teaching learning disabled students.

Your input is very valuable. I hope that you will take a few minutes to complete this survey. In doing so you will be able to help Texas LOTE teachers and yourself in meeting the needs and demands of special needs students in your classrooms. You may include your name if you wish. Return to María Treviño (see bottom of survey) by **Friday, January 17, 2003**.

Sincerely,

María J. Fierro-Treviño  
Assistant Director for Languages Other Than English

Texas Education Agency

# Inclusion and LOTE Survey

School District: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) taught: \_\_\_\_\_ Level(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Years in teaching LOTE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you taught students with learning disabilities (such as hearing impaired, speech impaired, emotionally disturbed, dyslexic, etc.) in a LOTE classroom?    YES                      NO
2. Have you had formal special education training?    YES                      NO
3. Have you had staff development specific to inclusion in the LOTE classroom?    YES                      NO
4. Have you participated in an Admission, Review, and Dismissal committee?    YES                      NO
5. In general, how many Individual Educational Plans do you work with in one day?    \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your approximate total student count for the day?    \_\_\_\_\_
7. List 2-3 learning disabilities you have worked with in the LOTE classroom. (Do not write students' names.)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

8. What specific *modifications* (change in content) did you make to help the students in a, b, and/or c above?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In your opinion, how effective were your modifications? (not effective)    1    2    3    4    5    (very effective)

9. What specific *accommodations* (learning strategies, assistive devices, etc.-no change to content) did you use to help the students in a, b, and/or c above?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In your opinion, how effective were your accommodations? (not effective)    1    2    3    4    5    (very effective)

# Sample Grade Level Activities for three proficiency levels



These sample activities are reprinted from *A Texas Framework for Languages Other Than English* (online at [http://www.sedl.org/loteced/TEKS\\_framework.html](http://www.sedl.org/loteced/TEKS_framework.html)).

In designing standards-based activities for the LOTE classroom, teachers must have a thorough understanding of the expectations for novice-, intermediate-, and advanced-level learners, and they must also be able to devise activities appropriate to the learners' grade-level. Elementary, middle, and high school students of LOTE can all be at the novice progress checkpoint, but they will demonstrate this proficiency in different ways that are age-appropriate and matched to their cognitive development.

The following examples illustrate age- and level-appropriate standards-based activities that could be applied to any of the 5 Cs, integrating the development of communication skills with learning cultural perspectives, seeking interdisciplinary connections, making comparisons, and interacting in community settings.

## **Novice learners use words, phrases, and expressions they have learned on basic, everyday topics.**

### *Elementary*

Here are some examples of how novice learners in elementary school use the language. These learners may:

- introduce themselves and answer questions about their age, where they live, and the people in their families
- talk about favorite toys, pets, and activities
- listen to and comprehend simple story books
- play games on the playground
- put on puppet shows
- use learned words and phrases to list and write short sentences
- label articles in the classroom, colors on the spectrum, and places where the language is used on maps

- sing songs and perform dances from the culture

### *Middle School and High School*

Here are some examples of how novice learners in middle school and high school use the language. These learners may:

- communicate about topics appropriate to their age, such as school schedules
- communicate while engaging in an organized sport
- conduct a survey on students' favorite entertainers
- exchange information about self, family, and school life with students from the culture via simple notes, e-mail, or audio and video tapes
- dramatize a typical shopping experience using culturally appropriate behavior
- read (or scan) the employment section of a newspaper in the language being studied and then list job opportunities where knowledge of more than one language is useful
- collect and display newspaper clippings concerning political, economic, and/or cultural topics and give the main idea



**Intermediate learners create sentences to ask and answer questions, to communicate about personal history or leisure activities, and to meet basic survival needs.**

### *Middle School and High School*

Here are some examples of how intermediate learners in middle school and high school use the language. These learners may:

- demonstrate and narrate a simple scientific experiment, such as the use of magnets
- use mathematical skills to indicate the cost of preparing a dinner in the culture or cultures being studied
- write and present a skit about a shopping expedition in the culture being studied
- read descriptions of several jobs and then create mock résumés to include with applications for a job
- write a summary putting narrative events in sequence after viewing a familiar video or film
- develop and present a plan for a real or imaginary trip to

a place where the language studied is used, including an itinerary, hotel accommodations, and tours

- research opportunities in higher education in countries outside the U.S. where the language is used

**Advanced learners satisfy the requirements of school and work situations and narrate and describe in paragraph-length discourse.**

### *Middle School and High School*

Here are some examples of how advanced learners in middle school and high school use the language. These learners may:

- initiate, sustain, and close conversations
- read a novel, summarize its plot, and analyze characters' motivations and conflicts
- view or listen to a news report from a country about an event of international importance and compare and contrast coverage of the same event in the local media
- research and give a presentation about leading environmental concerns in a country where the language is spoken

*(Continued from page 1)*

## **Research Topics**

Each participant was to develop a plan for an action research project that would fall within the purview of challenges to implementing standards-based instruction. Within that broad category, they were asked to reflect on an issue that was important to them personally. Some research topics illustrate the uniqueness of an individual participant's teaching context such as providing for "authentic" learning while helping students prepare for the AP test or investigating how students' performance and attitudes are affected by an integrative lesson team-taught with a teacher from another discipline. One participant is looking at designing assessments showing what students can do, rather than what they can't do, and another is looking at using innovations in the language lab to create interest. Maintaining interest and providing meaningful lessons in classes with both heritage and non-heritage language learners is the subject of another participant's research. Two topics common to several action research projects illustrate the universality of certain challenges to implementing standards:

correlating lessons to students' interests and finding ways to increase interpersonal (meaningful) communication in the classroom. Participant María Treviño, Assistant Director for LOTE at the Texas Education Agency, chose to develop an action research plan focused on inclusion in the LOTE classroom, a challenge faced by many foreign language teachers who have little or no training in this area. María is conducting a survey in which you are encouraged to participate by photocopying and completing the form on page 5 of this issue.

## **Follow-Up**

ARI collaborators keep in monthly contact through an e-mail listserv, reporting on progress, sharing data collection instruments, and providing feedback. They will return to Austin in February, 2003, to report on the results of their studies. Additionally, they have agreed to present at a local, regional, or state conference on the results of their projects and the experience of doing action research. Next spring, the LOTE CED will prepare an issue in its occasional papers series, the *Communiqué*, which focuses on teacher action research in general and these participants' experiences in particular.

# EXPERIENCING LIFE in the Middle Ages

a class  
act



Dorothy Cox and  
Leah Sequeira

This work appears in *Great  
TEKSpectations: Innovative  
Learning Scenarios for the  
LOTE Classroom*. It was  
created as part of a learning  
scenarios development work-  
shop sponsored by the LOTE  
CED in the spring/summer  
of 2001.

In this unit, groups of students research topics from the Middle Ages. Each group presents its findings to the class. Students learn new vocabulary and historical information. They review and practice vocabulary related to families, preferences, houses, occupations, and hobbies.

## **ACTIVITY SET 1: Researching the Middle Ages**

Working in groups, students choose one of the following topics for research and presentation to the class:

- les rois du Moyen Age (e.g., Clovis, 481-511; include French royal traditions)
- La Chanson de Roland (era of Charlemagne, 800)
- La Tapisserie de Bayeux (era of William the Conqueror, 1066)
- 100 Years War (era of Joan of Arc, 1337-1453)

Groups gather information from library sources and the Internet in order to prepare a class presentation providing a general historical background of their topic including traditions and specific details about the relevant historical character(s). Given the proficiency level, students may use some English in their presentations. Each group selects a presentational format such as a puppet show, video, visual aid presentation, or PowerPoint slide show to tell its “story.” They prepare a handout listing topics to be covered so that classmates can take notes. The handout includes key French vocabulary words and phrases used in the presentations. Presentations are in chronological order and each is followed by a related class activity facilitated by the teacher (see Activity Sets 2-5, below). The purpose of these activities is to reinforce the material that has been presented by the groups.

## **ACTIVITY SET 2: Royalty of the Middle Ages**

After the first group has made its presentation on a king, such as Clovis, and before the next group’s presentation, students play vocabulary games (e.g., Bingo, the fly swatter game) and/or

Tic-Tac-Toe based on information from their presentations. Next, using pictures of the Cathedral at Reims where Clovis was baptized and crowned, students create their own stained glass window using black poster board and small pieces of tissue paper. (The cathedral is famous for its beautiful stained glass windows and is the site of all French royal coronations.)

## **ACTIVITY SET 3: La Chanson de Roland**

After the second group has made its presentation on *La Chanson de Roland* and before the next group’s presentation, the class as a whole retells the story of Roland and Charlemagne in simple French. With the teacher’s guidance, a volunteer writes the sentences dictated by the class on the board using the past tenses, practicing the *passé composé* and *imparfait*. Then, students working in pairs choose a musical style (rap, country, blues, pop, etc.) and retell the story of Roland and Charlemagne using the story text created by the class or using their own version of the story. Teams perform their musical rendition in class using props.

Next, students make swords using a cardboard tube (such as an empty wrapping paper roll) and aluminum foil—not exactly Roland’s famous Durendal, but suitable for a fencing demonstration held to teach basic moves. Community resources such as a local university can be helpful in finding a qualified fencing instructor. The teacher meets with the fencing instructor in advance to prepare a list of related French vocabulary that students are to learn and use as they practice their moves. A single elimination fencing tournament is held, and invitations are extended to school administrators to judge the contest and to local media to cover the event.



#### ACTIVITY SET 4: La Tapisserie de Bayeux

After the third group has made its presentation on La Tapisserie de Bayeux and before the last group's presentation, students retell the story of William the Conqueror in French, again using the past tenses. This time, however, the technique used is cartoon storytelling. Tape a long piece of butcher paper across a wall and write simple, narrative sentences for each key event across the bottom of the length of paper. Students pick the segment of the story that they want to illustrate and do so using markers, paper cut outs, magazine clippings, paint, etc. Creativity is key! When the complete story has been illustrated, each student tells his or her part of the story while being videotaped. After videotaping the story, cut up the butcher paper by scenes. Each class tries to put the story from another class back into the correct sequence and then watches the videotape to confirm their guesses.

#### ACTIVITY SET 5: The 100 Years War and Joan of Arc

Once the fourth group has made its presentation on the Hundred Years War and Joan of Arc, students begin their final project. During the fourth presentation, students learn about the coat of arms accorded to Joan by Charles VII and the symbolism found on it. Their project for this Activity Set is to develop a personal coat of arms, decorating it with images and phrases in French that they choose to represent themselves. First, they review vocabulary including terms for family, likes, dislikes, occupations, adjectives, colors, cities, and hobbies. Students are provided a handout of possible shapes for coat of arms and then begin their project using poster board and other art supplies. Finally, students write in French an explanation of their coat of arms, memorize it, and present the explanation to the class.

#### ACTIVITY SET 6: Comparing the Middle and Modern Ages

As a synthesizing activity, the students work in groups to create a comparison chart of life in the Middle Ages and modern life in the United States. The groups share their ideas with the rest of the class. Each student then writes a personal reflection based on the findings. Suggested topics are:

*"I wish I could have lived during the Middle Ages because...."*

*"I'm glad I did not live in the Middle Ages because..."*

*"Being in the army during the Middle Ages was different from being in the army today ...."*

*"The modern equivalent of story-telling tapestries/coats of arms/middle ages royalty is..." (choose one)*

The compositions may be in English or French depending on the students' proficiency level.

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Expansion ideas and information about the standards addressed in this scenario may be found on the LOTE CED Web site along with other scenarios written by teachers of Arabic, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish.

<http://www.sedl.org/loteced/scenarios/>

# This is Staff Development



Gigi Austin is working on her Master's in Spanish. She taught ESL in Quito, Ecuador on three occasions.

The day the invitation to participate in the LOTE CED's Action Research Initiative appeared in my box, I gave it a glance, thought "interesting," and tossed it in the don't-know-what-to-do-with-it paper tray. It sat there for days. I picked it up again, looked it over in more detail, and had a jumble of thoughts go through my head: stipend...payoff new kayak... problem with my native speakers...need help...confused about the standards...need help...not sure about what I'm supposed to be teaching...need help. After concluding that it might be worth the effort, the question that plagues all teachers surfaced: "Do I have time for this? Do I really want to take on one more thing?" From somewhere in the depths of me a voice answered "yes," and I am so glad it did.

If you are a teacher, I'm sure you have experienced "recipe" staff developments where an "expert" lectures on good practices in the classroom, and you keep asking yourself, "What does this have to do with me?" At the end of the day you leave with two pounds of good ideas that never leave your shelf. The frustration of these professional meetings for me has always been that after a few hours of hearing how teachers should ideally teach and how students should ideally learn, I want to poke a pin in the bubble. I've raised my hand to point out the differences between my students and the textbook ones we've been talking about. I've asked for help with a *real* problem in my *real* classroom and have gotten, in response, another prescription for good practices and the hint that we needed to move along with the program.

For all these reasons I so much appreciated what the ARI had to offer us at our weekend retreat. The material for the workshop did not come from the ranks of the should-be, but rather from us. We were asked to bring to the table a question or challenge that we deal with daily in our profession, something that we genuinely wanted to dig into. Then we threw them out into the safe space that was between us to collectively mull them over. There were no judgments made about the reason behind our challenges, no assumptions about our ability or inability to have handled what was bugging us. No one questioned the validity of our problem. For the person who brought it, it was important, and our job as co-participants was to listen and offer suggestions for focus and clarity about how to successfully research a solution.

What a breath of fresh air this was for me! Administrative red tape had me doubting not only the importance of my challenge, but my call to the profession. I had come to this weekend in need of reassurance that I wasn't just crying wolf and wondering if I really have what it takes to be a teacher. I left feeling inspired, hopeful and affirmed. I wasn't crazy after all, and I had fifteen witnesses to prove it!

I liken our weekend to bread making. The dough we mixed together is now being kneaded in our classrooms. We have three months to let it rise and bake it. All of us have committed to reconvening in February to bring our loaves to the table and share. I for one can't wait to see what will come out of the oven. Surely, it will feed multitudes.



BULLET BOARD

**Action Research Initiative  
Participants (top to bottom)**

- María Treviño & Cesiah Boryczka*
- Leah Sequeira*
- Greg Foulds & Gigi Austin*
- Monica Daucourt & Pat Kahn*
- Phyllis Santiago & Linda Allen*
- Renée Wooten & Miriam Thompson*

**New Training from the LOTE CED**

*TEKS para LOTE: Español para el hispanohablante* is a newly-released training workshop designed to help Spanish teachers adapt standards-based instruction to the special needs of heritage language learners. Whether your district offers Spanish for Spanish Speakers courses or integrates native speakers into regular classes, this training is invaluable for learning how to help students expand their existing proficiencies while developing a full range of literacy skills. A list of facilitators for this Spanish-language training is available from the LOTE CED and may also be viewed on-line at:  
<http://www.sedl.org/loteced/facilitators/spanishtrainers.html>

**Developing Rubrics for Performance-Based Assessment**

Many educators find developing performance-based tasks much easier than assessing them, and fear of subjectivity often keeps teachers from engaging learners in this important evaluation process. This workshop module, currently being developed by the LOTE CED, illustrates that rubrics are easy to use, make teacher expectations clear, and provide learners feedback on what they can do and where they need improvement. Participants will examine numerous assessment rubrics and get ample hands-on practice in developing them for their own classroom assignments. The training will be available in the spring of 2003.

**Online Standards-Based Training Courses**

The LOTE CED has begun development of a series of self-paced, online courses based on material from LOTE CED training manuals. These mini-courses are intended to serve a variety of constituents and purposes such as, but not limited to:

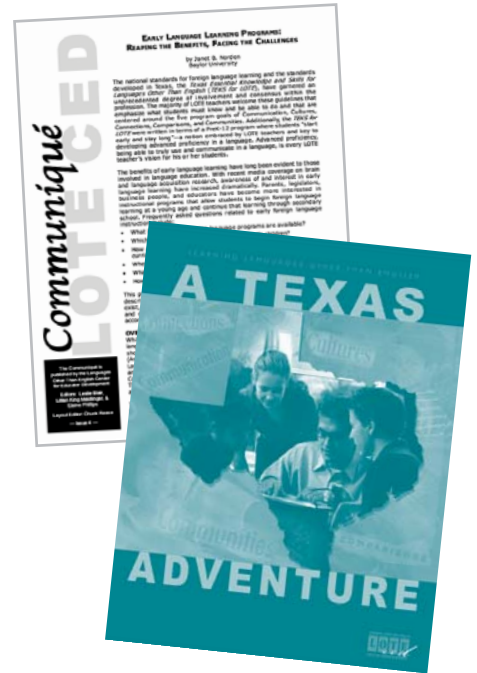
- Teachers new to LOTE who want to learn more about the standards, their implementation, assessment, curriculum development, etc.
- Teachers familiar with the TEKS for LOTE who would like to review certain elements or who have questions about such things as terminology or application.
- Teachers who have attended training sessions who would like to work more closely with and/or have more time to process the information and concepts.
- Teachers who may not have LOTE-specific professional development opportunities available through their district.
- Teachers who live in remote areas of the state or are the only LOTE teacher in their district or campus and who are developing individually-guided professional development plans.
- Teachers who must accrue Continuing Professional Education credits. (Districts may decide to award CPE credit for the completion of these courses.)
- Teachers who are working on a required growth plan.

### New Issue Brief Published

Issue 7 of the LOTE CED Communiqué, *Language Learning in Other Countries: Success Abroad, Success in Texas* was published in August of this year. Written by Lillian King Meidlinger, former director of the LOTE CED, this brief provides an interesting look at characteristics of successful language learning programs in 19 countries around the world. It examines those features with regard to language programs and policy in Texas and offers suggestions on how to best capitalize on the advantages Texas already enjoys.

### Video Manual Study Guide Now Available in Print-Format

The video manual/study guide that accompanies the video series *Learning Languages Other Than English: A Texas Adventure*, is now available in print format. To order, call the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory at (800) 476-6861 x 201, or visit the on-line catalog at <http://www.sedl.org/pubs>. Cost of the set (5 videos and study guide) is \$33. Study guides may be ordered individually for \$10. (Additional shipping and handling charges apply.)



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