

VIDEO 3

communication & **connections**



ABOUT COMMUNICATION & CONNECTIONS

Video 3 takes an in-depth look at the program goal of Connections. After a brief introduction and the eight-minute Communication Segment that is included in videos 2-5, this video features seven different classrooms and educators connecting to other subject areas and using the language to connect with target language resources.

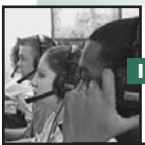
Teachers can implement the Connections program goal by providing students with opportunities to access information in the target language.

- In Video 3, students access information in French by reading and referencing a weather report from a French publication as they connect to the disciplines of math, geography, and science.
- A Spanish teacher helps her students to access information in Spanish by providing them with authentic, Spanish-language materials such as Mexican report cards, phone books, invitations, and more.
- Spanish students in another classroom use Spanish-language web sites to do research on Venezuela.

Teachers can also implement the Connections program goal by developing interdisciplinary lessons. This video features

- footage of the ultimate in interdisciplinary learning: the immersion classroom where the target language is used for instruction in all content areas;
- a Spanish IV class connecting to history, social studies, and the fine arts through the study of target culture visual arts and drama;
- a FLES teacher who uses Spanish with her young students to reinforce TAAS objectives by implementing a lesson on sentence structure that mirrors what the students have learned in English Language Arts; and
- a class of heritage language learners using Spanish to study art and history in a lesson that affords them opportunities to explore their own cultural heritage and reinforces and expands on the school's history curriculum.

Episode Breakdown



(8:13 – 15:04)
I Access to Information



(15:05 – 18:36)
II Content Immersion



(18:37 – end)
III Interdisciplinary Connections



Use Video 3: Communication & Connections to...

- Review the objectives of accessing target language information and connecting to other subject areas.
- Facilitate discussion about issues related to interdisciplinary language learning and target language resources.
- Show some innovative means of implementing the Connections program goal in the LOTE classroom.
- Deliver the message that connecting to other subject areas and using target language materials can make language learning more real and therefore more meaningful and motivating to students.

CONNECTIONS PROGRAM GOAL AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The student uses the language to make connections with other subject areas and to acquire information.

The novice level student is expected to:

- (A) use resources (that may include technology) in the language and cultures being studied to gain access to information; and
- (B) use the language to obtain, reinforce, or expand knowledge of other subject areas.

The intermediate (advanced) level student is expected to:

- (A) use resources (that may include technology) in the language and cultures being studied at the intermediate (advanced) proficiency level to gain access to information; and
- (B) use the language at the intermediate (advanced) proficiency level to obtain, reinforce, or expand knowledge of other subject areas.

Questions Addressed in Video 3: Communication & Connections

Learning LOTE is Interdisciplinary.

Students add to their educational experience by using LOTE to connect to other subject areas within the school curriculum.

What are some reasons for connecting students of LOTE to other disciplines? What subject areas have natural connections to LOTE? Which ones are more difficult to connect to? Do you have to be an expert in another subject area in order to make connections to it? Do you collaborate with colleagues from other disciplines in order to make interdisciplinary connections as meaningful as possible?

The Study of Languages Affords Students Access to New Information.

Students who have knowledge and skills in LOTE have expanded access to information that is not always available to those who know only English.

Why is it important for students to acquire information originally created in the target language (versus a translation)? What insight can target language sources lend to the study of cultural perspectives? What advantages do students of LOTE have over peers who are limited to English-only resources? What target language resources are available to your students inside the classroom? Do you provide information about linguistic resources outside of the classroom?

Making Connections Provides Insight and Motivation.

Reinforcing what students are learning in other classes makes subject matter increasingly relevant to them. Having access to original target language texts provides students with an insider's view of the target language and culture.

What are some of the abstract benefits of connecting to other subject areas? How does learning about another subject area or doing research using authentic materials expand a student's circle of experience? What evidence have you seen that students are more engaged when they recognize the target language's relevancy outside the LOTE classroom walls? How can you alter your Connections curriculum for different proficiency levels or age groups? What are some of the obstacles to developing meaningful connections?

Goals for Participants

- To review the Connections program goal in general and the notions of interdisciplinary connections and access to information in detail.
- To identify issues, concerns, or questions with regard to the implementation of the Connections program goal.
- To weigh the significance of learning from original, untranslated target language material and to develop new ideas on making meaningful interdisciplinary connections.

TO THE SESSION LEADER

Use a variety of grouping and processing strategies to lead participants through the activities associated with Video 3: Communication & Connections. Provide participants copies of the TEKS for LOTE and the worksheets referred to in the directions that follow, and gather any additional supplies needed to complete the activities.

PREPARATION

Refer to worksheet 3.1 for the following activity.

Before viewing the video, participants should reflect on the various disciplines that they incorporate into their teaching of LOTE.

- Allow time for participants to fill in the figures on the worksheet.
- Ask volunteers to share what and how they already “connect” in their LOTE classroom.
- Elicit specific target language resources and the strategies used with them.

OBSERVATION

Refer to worksheets 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 for the following activities.

I Access to Information (8:13 – 15:04)

Ask participants to share the target language resources they noted on the worksheet as they watched this segment of the video.

- Emphasize and reinforce positive characteristics of those materials (e.g., interesting to students, applicable to the lesson being taught, task-appropriate to the proficiency-level).
- Brainstorm with participants to add other resources to the list. Use a flip chart or transparency to record responses.

II Content Immersion (15:05 – 18:36)

In this activity, participants discuss how teaching language through content (as in the traditional foreign language classroom) is distinct from teaching content through language (as in the immersion classroom in the video).

- Have participants work in groups of three to make a mind-map illustrating key differences between and characteristics of the two instructional approaches.
- Ask each group to present and briefly explain their mind-map, or post maps around the room and let participants take a “gallery walk.”

III Interdisciplinary Connections (18:37 – end)

Participants will take notes on the knowledge and skills that are reinforced/expanded upon in this segment’s featured classrooms.

- As they complete their notes, post three pieces of chart paper around the room, one labeled *Knowledge Reinforced*, one labeled *Skills Reinforced*, and one labeled *Knowledge Expanded*.

- Provide one example under each heading:

Knowledge Reinforced: historical facts, sentence structure terminology
Skills Reinforced: identification of major artists, parsing sentences
Knowledge Expanded: segments of history not covered in regular LOTE curriculum, recognition of cultural symbolism in art

- Ask participants to move about freely, adding examples to each chart from the video and from their own experiences.
- After several minutes, reconvene the group and ask participants to elaborate on their examples and/or ask questions of others. Ask how they think the reinforcement/expansion of knowledge and skills affects students.

REFLECTION

Refer to worksheet 3.3 for the following activity.

Begin by reading together the paragraph that begins with “Lost in Translation.” Then ask participants to work in target language groups to respond to the questions on the worksheet related to accessing original vs. translated texts and target language vs. American texts on the same topic.

- Use a strategy such as *Insiders/Outsiders* (See Appendix D.) or one of your own to guide their discussion.
- Allow 15-20 minutes for small group work, then come back to the whole group to share.



For Investigating Further (follow-up) activities, remember to obtain copies of the suggested readings and distribute them to participants in advance of the workshop. Participants will need to have studied some or all of the chapters/articles in order to complete most of the Exploration and Expansion activities. Evaluation worksheets should be provided at the end of the workshop.

EXPLORATION

Refer to worksheets 3.4.1 to 3.4.3 for the following activities and readings for further study.

In these activities, participants consider what it really means to connect to another discipline and how technology and content-based instruction can facilitate those connections.

- Using the first chart on the worksheet, participants compare and add to two lists of tasks. (The activities in the left-hand column exemplify situations in which students are learning about language through a task related to another discipline. The activities in the right-hand column illustrate tasks in which students are using the target language to learn about the other subject area.) Ask participants to add pairs of tasks in each column and discuss the differences.
- Next, participants engage in a reflection on the (their) use of technology in LOTE instruction. Allow time for completing the first two columns of the chart, and then ask participants to offer suggestions for the disadvantages that are mentioned. Readings under For Further Study can help them prepare their answers for this activity and the one that follows.
- Finally, participants use the readings by Bragger and Rice and Met to develop definitions for a variety of terms used to describe programs that focus, to varying degrees, on content learning. Ask volunteers to share the definition of their preferred program type and to compare it with their current program.

EXPANSION

Refer to worksheets 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 for the following activities and recommended readings.

Guide participants to read the teaching scenario and to reflect on it using the activities and discussion questions on the worksheet.

- For the first task, place flip charts or giant post-it notes around the room, each with a heading or key words conveying one of the expressed concerns related to implementing interdisciplinary projects. Use the *Carousel* technique described in Appendix D to facilitate discussion. Groups move from chart to chart, adding new ideas as to how each concern can be addressed.
- For the second task, ask volunteers to share their positive experiences with collaborative projects and electronic discussion groups in which they have engaged.
- The third task provides an opportunity for participants to work in language groups to brainstorm ideas for a thematic, interdisciplinary unit based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for another discipline such as mathematics, history, geography, etc.

EVALUATION

In Appendix E, you will find a self-assessment tool for teachers to use in evaluating their strengths and identifying areas for growth with regard to helping their students meet the Connections program goal. Pass out photocopies of the *Teacher Competencies for Professional Development: Connections Strand*. Allow time for participants to complete it on their own at the end of the workshop, or encourage them to reflect on it and fill it in at home.



PARTICIPANT WORKSHEETS

Video Viewing Worksheet

Investigating Further



PREPARATION

Video 3 focuses on the teaching and learning of the Connections program goal. The program goal has two components: access to information and connecting to other subject areas.

Take a few minutes to reflect on the subject areas you might incorporate in your teaching of LOTE. Use the figures below to list three favorite subject areas, target language resources for each, and strategies for using them.

SUBJECT AREA	RESOURCES	STRATEGIES
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SUBJECT AREA	RESOURCES	STRATEGIES
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SUBJECT AREA	RESOURCES	STRATEGIES
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OBSERVATION**I Access to Information**

Teachers use a variety of target language resources to enrich their lessons. As you watch this section, note the types of target language resources used or mentioned by these teachers. What others can you think of?

- Robert Swope (French Teacher):

- Shari Harris (Spanish Teacher):

- Zenda Gutiérrez (Spanish Teacher):

II Content Immersion

In Joyce Ramos's immersion classroom, Spanish is the medium for learning the first grade curriculum. Assistant Principal Dan Bolen mentions that Joyce and the other immersion teachers at her school do "whatever it takes" to make sure that the curriculum is understood and mastered.

How is teaching language through content (as in the traditional foreign language classroom) distinct from teaching content through language (as in the immersion classroom)? How are the teaching skills different? What is most challenging about each? How does students' motivation/engagement figure in? (Recall the faces of the young children in the immersion classroom.)

Discuss these questions, and make a mind-map on a separate piece of paper to illustrate key differences between and characteristics of the two instructional approaches.

III Interdisciplinary Connections

In non-immersion classrooms, the target language is often used to reinforce or expand knowledge obtained in other disciplines. As you watch this section of video, think about the age and proficiency levels of the students you see and what knowledge is being reinforced.

For each teacher, list specific *knowledge* the teachers might be reinforcing. What *skills* are being reinforced? What *knowledge* is being expanded?

- Jane McCurdy (Spanish IV):

- Irma Minhares (FLES):

- Marian Newland (Spanish for Spanish Speakers):

REFLECTION

Jeremy Munday of the Linguistic and International Studies Program at the University of Surrey in England writes about the perils of translating the popular book *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (changed to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* for the American audience):

Lost in Translation: In some instances the translators have been unsure of the connotation of a name. The surname of the Minister of Magic, Cornelius Fudge, is interpreted by some translators as relating to fudge the sweet and by others probably more correctly as being linked to fudging the issue. Other names are so culturally bound that the translators often have to accept they can't translate the full connotation. Fawkes the Phoenix may suggest Guy Fawkes to the British audience, but in Slovak and Dutch he becomes Felix (to keep the alliteration) and in Norwegian he is Vulcan, which retains the fire link.

Munday, J. (2001, December 14). Harry Potter takes up baseball [Online]. Available: <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/news/releases/01-1214potter.html>

Certainly none of these translator changes are devastating to the storyline. Still, some cultural referents and connotations may be lost, and those who can “gain access to information” from the original text have a certain advantage over those who read in translation.

Besides connotation, why is it important for language learners to access original, untranslated material? (Contemplate how a translated poem often becomes a “new” poem.) What insights can students gain from accessing information in the target language? (Consider, for example, how reading or listening to the news from a target language source may differ from listening to a report on the same topic from an American source.)

Now think of three target language texts that you have used in your classes (literature, realia, video, songs, magazine articles, etc.). How would students’ learning have been affected if the texts had been read/heard in translation? What, if anything, was gained by having access to target language texts?

In the chart below, provide examples from personal experience that illustrate the variations, even discrepancies, that sometimes occur between a text and its translation or between a target language source and an American one on the same topic. Share your favorite example with the whole group.

Translation? Transformation?

TEXTS	TRANSFORMATION

EXPLORATION

- Since your students are studying a language and culture that is new to them, you probably feel they are always obtaining and expanding their knowledge of that language and culture in your classroom. But are they necessarily obtaining and expanding their knowledge of any other disciplines?

Think about the kinds of connections you usually make, then study the activities in the columns below. Put a check mark by any that you have done with your students, then discuss the questions that follow the chart.

Learning (in the target language)...

to say numbers	to convert Fahrenheit to Celsius
to read a target language weather report	how weather pressure is measured
terms for geographical features	the characteristics of those features
health vocabulary to describe symptoms and suggest remedies	how target culture researchers are working to prevent a disease
the names of the specialized shops found in the target culture	how the development of large American-style discount stores is changing the target culture's economy

How would you characterize the differences in the tasks set out in the two columns above? Which tasks do you feel best exemplify connecting with other disciplines? Can you add pairs of examples to the list?

- In addition to connecting to other disciplines and access to information, the Connections program goal also indicates that students are to “use resources (that may include technology) to gain access to information.”

Make a list of every type of technology that you have used in your language classroom, then circle those that you use regularly. How would you rate your efforts to incorporate technology into language instruction: exceptional, adequate, or needs improvement? What technology mentioned in the recommended readings would you be interested in incorporating in instruction?

Now brainstorm advantages and disadvantages of using technology in language instruction. Present your list of disadvantages to the group in an attempt to find someone who can help you address each obstacle. Share your suggestions with other participants.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	RECOMMENDATIONS

- There are several terms used for language programs that emphasize Connections: content-based instruction, content-enriched/related instruction, content-driven programs, languages across the curriculum, theme-based courses, interdisciplinary instruction, etc.

Study the chapters by Bragger and Rice and Met, below, then write a definition for each term that you find. Based on the definitions you wrote, discuss the type of program you would prefer.

Which terminology would you use to describe your classroom or your district’s current program? If none of those given seem to fit, what label would you invent to describe it?



For Further Study

Bond, N., Nicholson, S., & Peterson, C. (2002). *Using Technology in a Standards-Based LOTE Curriculum*. LOTE CED Communiqué (5). Austin, TX: SEDL. This issue brief discusses the benefits of using technological resources in LOTE instruction. It presents specific examples of standards-based activities incorporating technology and offers suggestions for those who have a single computer in their classroom.

Bragger, J. D., & Rice, D. B. (1998). Connections: The national standards and a new paradigm for content-oriented materials and instruction. In J. Harper, M. Lively, & M. Williams (Eds.), *The coming of age of the profession* (pp.191-217). Boston: Heinle & Heinle. The authors discuss the relationship between content-based instruction and the national standards, pointing out the paradigm shift to interdisciplinary instruction in education in general. They present a four-stage developmental model for implementing Connections that gradually expands the content orientation of the curriculum and offers specific examples of how content can be implemented at each stage.

Martínez, A., & Herren, D. (1998). Challenges and opportunities: Curriculum pressures in the technological present. In J. Harper, M. Lively, & M. Williams (Eds.), *The coming of age of the profession* (pp. 141-167). Boston: Heinle & Heinle. Martínez and Herren acknowledge that foreign language teachers have long used technology in their classrooms, but they quickly point out the advances that have been made recently and the empowerment afforded students through the use of the computer. Most of the chapter is devoted to descriptions of useful software and media; it provides a very good overview for LOTE educators who are in search of basic information about what technology is actually "out there" and how it is useful for language learners.

Met, M. (1999). Making connections. In J. K. Phillips (Ed.), *Foreign language standards: Linking research, theories, and practices* (pp. 137-164). (ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook. Met links Connections to a variety of topics such as Constructivist epistemology (connecting the known to the unknown), communicative language teaching (communicating about meaningful content), curriculum reform (interdisciplinary instruction), and content-based instruction. She addresses the standard related to access to information and discusses connections to other disciplines at length, providing examples of connections to mathematics and science, social studies, and the arts.

EXPANSION

In Video 3, several teachers mention using target language instruction to enrich what students are learning in other classes and/or to reinforce TAKS objectives. Do you feel that making interdisciplinary connections should be part of your responsibility as a language teacher? Why or why not?

Read the following teaching scenario and then reflect on the questions that follow and/or discuss your reactions with your group. The recommended readings should help you prepare your responses.

**Teaching Scenario**

As part of his personal professional development plan and because he enjoys learning from electronic discussion groups, Dr. Franklin has been following a thread from FL TEACH (<http://www.cortland.edu/flteach/>) in which other language teachers are talking about interdisciplinary projects with which they are involved at school. He is intrigued by the possibility of enriching the curriculum through collaborating with colleagues in other disciplines as well as with those who teach other languages and cultures.

Dr. Franklin is aware that the students in his Arabic class have been concerned about global tensions since the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center and that they appear particularly eager to learn as much as they can about the Arab world. He believes this is an ideal time to work with colleagues to help all the students in school do the same. He imagines the possibility of involving several disciplines in addition to foreign languages: Language Arts, World History, Geography, Fine Arts, Government, Economics, etc.

His idea is not received with a great deal of enthusiasm at first; every one is already heavily involved in their own projects/curriculum, state-mandated tests already take up a great deal of instructional time, and so forth. Dr. Franklin is determined to persevere, however; he is sure he can find a means of convincing at least a few of his colleagues to participate in developing a cross-disciplinary project focused on the Arab world.

- 1) How do you feel about the cross-disciplinary project that Dr. Franklin proposes? What do you think would be the contributions made by each of the disciplines listed? Can you think of other subject areas that could also contribute? How?

Imagine all of the concerns that could be raised by Dr. Franklin's colleagues. For each concern, try to think of a strategy for overcoming the difficulty.

- 2) Have you ever participated in a cross-disciplinary project in your school? What was the outcome? What do you see as the strengths of working with colleagues in this way? What are the benefits to the learners?

Have you ever participated in an electronic discussion group or at least followed a thread without contributing? If so, what was your reaction?

- 3) Choose a discipline with which you would like to make a connection in your LOTE classroom. Go to the related web site listed below and read about the TEKS for that discipline.

After examining the recommended readings, outline a thematic unit related to one of the goals for that discipline and which also incorporates one or more of the LOTE program goals.

Economics: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter118/>

Fine Arts: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/httoc.htm#ch117>

Health Sciences: <http://www.texashste.com/>

Home Economics: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/ch122toc.html>

Language Arts: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/>

Math: <http://www.tenet.edu/teks/math/teks/bu.html>

Science: <http://www.tenet.edu/teks/science/stacks/teks/teksmain.html>

Social Studies: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/resources/ssced/teks/tekshome.htm>

Technology Applications: <http://www.tcet.unt.edu/START/teks/>

Recommended Readings

Lorenz, E.G., & Verdaguer P. (1997). **Connections: A K-8/university collaboration to promote interdisciplinary teaching.** In J. K. Phillips (Ed.), *Collaborations: Meeting new goals, new realities* (pp. 141-170). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook. The chapter describes an NEH-funded project which developed objectives and activities for teaching culture in Spanish and French classes in grades K-8 in the Montgomery County Public Schools in Rockville, Maryland. Authors discuss the challenges of interdisciplinary teaching, implementation of the culture scope and sequence, and materials development.

Met, M. (1999). **Making connections.** In J. K. Phillips (Ed.), *Foreign language standards: Linking research, theories, and practices* (pp. 137-164). (ACTFL Series). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook. Met links Connections to a variety of topics such as Constructivist epistemology (connecting the known to the unknown), communicative language teaching (communicating about meaningful content), curriculum reform (interdisciplinary instruction), and content-based instruction. She addresses the standard related to access to information and discusses connections to other disciplines at length, providing examples of connections to mathematics and science, social studies, and the arts.

