



UC Language Consortium's Colloquium on World Languages Proficiency in the California Context

by Lorraine D'Ambruoso, Executive Director CLTA

On Feb 6th and 7th, the UC Consortium on Language Learning and Teaching sponsored a colloquium that looked at language teaching and learning from K-12 through post-secondary and included the business perspectives. It was a fascinating mix of language and other educators, one that really opened my eyes in some respects.

The colloquium opened with a welcome by George Breslauer, Executive Vice-Chancellor and Provost of UC Berkeley, who offered that "Language diversity is one of the great charms of humanity." He believes that your first language influences your identity, while your second has a profound influence on your level of empathy. We live in a multi-cultural society. But the challenge is to determine how to make these cultures flourish, and empathy is an important influence in this challenge. The participants were welcomed on the second day, by Dan Greenstein of the UC Office of the president, who quoted Thomas Friedman with the statement that "Our world is now hot, flat and crowded."

Among the comments from the many panelists, here are some of the highlights:

- Rose-Mary Feal, Executive Director of the MLA, noted that the "Less commonly taught languages are, ironically, the most widely spoken in the world."
- Marjorie Perloff, Professor of English at Stanford and UCLA, believes "If we had the will to become a culture where languages are regarded as necessary, we would!" She believes that "If you learn another language, you become another person. If you don't know another language, you are not a complete person."

- Claire Kramersch of UC Berkeley took her cue from Senator Daniel Akaka, who said that "We need to be able to see the world through the eyes of others." Kramersch stated that "Culture and society are created in language. Language is learned as content and content is learned as language." And she contends that, since the America of '09 is not the America of Jimmy Carter in '78, we have to understand the goal of producing trans-lingual and trans-cultural students.

- Our very own Duarte Silva, sharing CFLP's upcoming publication, entitled *World Languages and Cultures as a Stimulus for California's Academic and Economic Success: Speechless No More*, argued that "higher education begins in Kindergarten." He then provided an overview of the policy brief, intended primarily for policy makers, but I believe that we will all find it an effective advocacy tool for making the case for language and international education. Among other things, the brief argues that the teaching of all world languages is essential in order for Californians to successfully interact in the world marketplace. Silva added that, "despite the proliferation of new programs in the Less Commonly Taught Languages, France and Germany remain the biggest importers of American products, strengthening the need to continue French and German language programs in our schools and colleges."

- Harold Levine, the Dean of the School of Education at UC Davis, offered that foreign language education is slated to become a

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part of the National Association of Progress in Education (NAPE), sometimes referred to as the “nation’s report card,” battery of assessments by 2012. He ended with a sobering thought: while California needs to desperately upgrade its educational system to make it a “world class” education and include more language education, it currently ranks 47th in per pupil spending, and if the projected budget cuts prevail, it will be at the very bottom!”

• Carmen Sigler, Provost of San Jose State University, announced that global awareness is one of the CSU’s eight primary commitments. She spoke about how “the US is a world power that provides a parochial education for most of its students.” But she is working to change that, as evidenced by her efforts to offer a more global education at San Jose State University.

• Francisca Sanchez from San Francisco Unified School District and Harry Haskell from Los Angeles Unified School District both offered new initiatives that their districts are attempting in order to teach more languages and cultures to students in their respective districts, while Yvonne Chan, Principal of Vaughn Next Century Learning Center in San Fernando Valley and State Board of Education member, provided vivid examples of how education flourishes in a school when you pay attention to issues of language and culture.

Robert Blake provided an array of speakers, all aware of the need for languages and cultures as an integral part of our educational system. It was a validation of and provided support for CLTA’s advocacy efforts. Many thanks, Robert.

From chalk boards to smart boards, technology in the classroom

By Antonio Isern, High School Spanish Teacher

Smear fingerprints on a pair of charcoal grey pants. A navy blue v-neck sweater over a white collar shirt and the slightest trail of gray dust on his long black hair, which some thought was a sign of stress and old age. This was the mere image of Don Guillermo: a fifth grade teacher from Seville, Spain. Behind him, a sea of green, filled by an array of sophisticated letters, symbols and more... Complete silence, broken first by the sound of chalk slipping on an old cracked board; the type of sound which makes your bones cringe and your stomach curl, followed by the continuous scratching of led on paper. This is one of many memories of my early years of education in *Tabladilla*; a private catholic all boys school in Seville, Spain.

Times have now changed, and as the world spins forward and we travel further into the 21st century, technology has become a dependable tool for the growth and development of education. The use of technology in the classroom has undergone an amazing transformation within the past two decades. Now more than ever, and thanks to the introduction of newer *Smart Technology* in the classrooms, education is becoming engaging and interactive for both students and educators, allowing for effective learning to take place. Even with the positive results technology is having in education, many people warn of the possible harmful effects of using it in the classroom. Will children lose their ability to relate to other human beings? Will they become dependent on technology to learn? Will they find inappropriate materials? However, when appropriately used, interactively and with guidance, technology has become a tool

for the development of higher order thinking skills via a variety of learning styles.

A growing number of researchers have published recent studies that provide substantial evidence that technology can play a positive role in academic achievement. Several organizations like Edutopia, the North Central Educational Lab (NCREL) and the Center for Applied Research in Educational Technology (CARET) are documenting research studies that link technology to increases in academic achievement. The introduction of specific tools in the classroom such as Smart Boards, LCD projectors and the World Wide Web has allowed educators to use and operate multimedia and smart technology to create and deliver more colorful, meaningful, entertaining and stimulating lectures and lessons, which students enjoy, appreciate and relate to, allowing them to better understand and learn the subject matter.

A teacher of Spanish in Oroville, California tells us how he uses a class website to maintain communication between parents and students. Lessons, homework assignments and study tips are posted on the website for students to tap into at any given time, specifically students who have been absent. A unit and weekly agenda are also posted on the website along with a conversation blog where students can converse in Spanish with friends from other classes. He indicates that about 50 to 60 percent of students and parents make use of the website. If accessible, a class website can allow for parent involvement as well as provide support for student learning.

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CLTA Awards

By Lewie Johnson, Awards Chair

The highlight of the conference is always the recognition of CLTA members as outstanding educators and the presentation of study grants. The conference in Sacramento was no exception. The 2009 awards and grants were presented to the following:

Hal Wingard Lifetime Achievement Award

Norman Masuda (FLASCC)

Glencoe/McGrawHill Outstanding Teacher Leader

Dr. Mercedes Thompson (MCLASC)

Outstanding Teachers -

Diane Metzger (FLASH)

Donna Cavaille (MBFLP)

Kerstin Helbing (AATG)

Dr. Anne Fountain (FLASCC)

Government Grant Winners who will be traveling this summer to various parts of the world include:

Tom Beeman - Cuernavaca Study Grant

Renee Tyler - Quebec Government Grant

Toni Drewry - French Government Grant - Los Angeles

Melissa Olvera - French Government Grant - S.F.

Helen Lee - Spanish Embassy Grant

Sumaiyah Vedder - Goethe Institut Grant

Aaron Rossi - Italian Government Grant

Aned Muniz- Italian Government Grant

Margaret Tsubakiyama - Japan Foundation Grant

CLTA Grants:

Elizabeth Vitanza - LangAbroad Grant

Evelynne Berman - Memorial Scholarship

Sidney Gorman Scholarships (for teachers with fewer than 5 years of teaching experience)

Delia Santamaria

Ida Lanza

Lawrence Basoco

Laurel Orduña

Christine Remedios

Thank you for a great Conference, California!

By Tanya Zaccone

CLTA and FLAGS are overwhelmed at the wonderful response to our Conference this year. In this year of budget cutbacks, you came by the (literally) hundreds to find out about the new Standards, to network with old and new friends, and to interact with colleagues in the varied professional workshops and interest sessions that were offered.

Outstanding speakers informed and enlightened, including Eileen Glisan, President-elect of ACTFL; State Senator Gloria Romero; Toni Theisen, ACTFL 2009 National Language Teacher of the Year; and the new Education

Secretary for California, Glen Thomas. The commitment and passion of these speakers informed and inspired the membership. As always, CLTA awarded grants and presented awards to deserving teachers, and three teachers won trips to Europe, courtesy of ACIS.

For those of you who were not able to attend, we certainly hope to see you next year, (twice!) in San Diego: November 20-22, 2009 for the ACTFL Conference at the San Diego Convention Center and Marriott San Diego Hotel & Marina, and March 10-14, 2010 at the Town and Country Hotel for the CLTA Conference.

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The use of technology gives educators the ability to bring the outside world into the classroom and create life-like experiences and situations to stimulate student learning. I am currently working on a weekly online live chat between a native speaker from Spain and my Spanish 1 classes. Thanks to SKYPE web-cam communication services, my Spanish 1 classes are able to make contact across the world and engage in a real life conversation with my brother who lives in Seville, Spain. With the access of a Smart Board, I can display a large live image of my brother to the class, listen to him via loud speakers, and speak with him through a microphone on the web-cam, making it possible for all students to be involved in the conversation. Students can then ask questions using the target language. It is experiences such as this one that make learning more meaningful, fun, and appealing for students, something they will remember.

Along with Smart Boards, LCD projectors have also become very popular in the classroom as a teaching tool, especially since the cost is far less expensive than that of the new Smart Boards. LCD projectors are a great tool to display information from the World Wide Web. Visual graphics such as pictures, drawings and photographs can easily be viewed and discussed. Documentaries, movies and interactive lessons including animation and

sound can be presented via slide shows. An Advanced Placement Spanish Teacher from Chico, California uses her LCD projector and the World Wide Web to show daily *Current Events* in Spanish to her class via a Mexican internet news station. The students listen and write notes pertaining to the current event, which they will later share and discuss with the rest of the class. Being able to bring live news into the classroom in the target language is a gift; it not only gives students a true sense of reality, but also allows them to perceive the language as it is.

Limitations in technology do exist, especially during times like these when economic struggles beat down every educator's door. However, whether the available technology is as simple as a VHS player, or as complex as a Smart Board, making use of it ultimately benefits our students. As educators, it is essential that we continually reevaluate and expand the techniques and styles in which we teach. The reality lies in the fact that times change, and newer generations are exposed to technology in their everyday lives more than ever before. As technology rapidly becomes a part of our educational world, it is important that if available, it is incorporated in our students' learning environment to promote academic success and enrichment.

The logo for CLTA News features the text "CLTA News" in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. The text is set against a dark purple background. To the left of the text is a vertical orange bar. To the right of the text are three small squares: an orange square, a green square, and a yellow square, arranged vertically.

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