

# The Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association

## [www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org)

The mission of the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association is to enhance world language education throughout the state by promoting the study of world languages, by providing educators opportunities for professional growth and networking, by recognizing excellence in the field, and by collaborating with local, state, regional, and national organizations.

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In addition to the printed articles noted in this issue of the Forum, we have the following three articles published for our readers available only online at [psmla.org](http://psmla.org):

Project: School-Wide Chinese New Year Celebration  
 Invisible Betty: Using Latin American “Telenovelas” to Blend Culture, Form, and Advanced  
 Language Functions in the Spanish Classroom  
 Learn Spanish Where it’s Spoken

(Full-size, original, color version of the Forum is available to PSMLA members in the Members Only section at [psmla.org](http://psmla.org))



*Jan Hostler Stewart,  
President*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Chers collègues,

As we move forward in the 21st century, one thing is for certain: world languages and all that comes with learning one are integral to professional and personal success! Preparing today's students to be able to interact on a global level has become increasingly vital on an individual as well as a national level. Learning a world language encompasses not only communicating effectively but developing an understanding of perspectives and practices of other cultures, learning about the history, geography, art, music, cuisine, etc. of the target cultures, all while reinforcing skills in the first language. World language learning truly partners with every other discipline.

Nationally, there is a shortage of certified teachers of world languages though the need is growing for students to develop global competency. Furthermore, programs are being developed in multiple states to increase world language study in schools, activities that focus on global interests, and international experiences. Our profession is ever more necessary for our students' success.

PSMLA brings you professional development to keep your knowledge and skills current, postings of jobs, and opportunities to honor students, colleagues, and programs. In addition, PSMLA interacts with other organizations in Pennsylvania and other states to expand upon these possibilities. Please enjoy this issue of the PSMLA Forum, which is being produced in a "hybrid" version, featuring some articles in print and others online for easy access no matter where you are at [psmla.org](http://psmla.org).

I continue to be impressed with the dedication, ingenuity, and expertise of PSMLA Executive Council members and of you, the PSMLA members. Always know that the PSMLA Executive Council members are interested in hearing from you so that we will know what your interests and needs are and how we can provide support for you, your students, and your programs. Our contact information is on the PSMLA website and we invite you to use it to contact us.

The 2015 PSMLA fall conference, "Forging a Future: A Language (R)evolution", will held be October 16-17 in King of Prussia. There is an unprecedented number of sessions from which you will be able to choose, many in a target language. Join us and colleagues from across the state to expand and refresh skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm to better engage your students.

Enjoy returning to your classrooms this fall with confidence that your work is truly essential to your students' journey toward becoming college-, career-, and world-ready!

Jan Hostler Stewart, President



*Donna Spangler,  
Forum Editor*

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2015 edition of the Pennsylvania Language Forum.

This past year, the PSMLA Forum was so fortunate to receive many quality submissions in consideration for publication in this year's issue. This year we have a hybrid publication for you. You will find some articles selected for publication in this hard copy edition of the Forum, and some of the articles selected for publication are available instead on our website at [psmla.org](http://psmla.org).

One of several blessings of my work with PSMLA is the opportunity to read about some of the wonderful ways in which our PSMLA members are working to help our students to become more linguistically and culturally adept to navigate the increasingly interdependent global world. In this hard copy issue, we have articles about the PSMLA Global Scholars Program, top tech tools, mindfulness in the classroom, storytelling, the 2014 NECTFL Sans Inc. / MEAD Fellowship recipient, service learning, SLOs, and the experiences of one of the Cemanahuac Scholarship recipients. The hard copy issue also includes lesson plans on a travel review website, a CBI lesson plan, and pronunciation using the method of iCPRs. Additional online articles PSMLA has featured are: a Chinese new year celebration, experiences from the second Cemanahuac scholarship recipient, and using telenovelas to blend culture, form, and advanced functions in the classroom.

Enjoy the beginning of the school year. I sincerely hope that it is your best year yet!

Kind regards,  
Donna Spangler, Forum Editor

**PSMLA GLOBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM:  
A Program to Honor Global Competency in PA  
Students**

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Every world language teacher knows them - students who are passionate about learning a new language and everything that it encompasses: communicating in a new way; learning about cultures, practices, and perspectives; giving new meaning to words and expressions used in social studies, art, math, English, and other classes; comparing life in the target culture with their own; and actually using this new language with others. These students may or may not excel in this class or others but they are intrigued and want to learn more. These are the students we need to keep enrolled in world language study, help develop global and linguistic competence, and honor for their efforts.

Fortunately, PSMLA is on the ground level of a movement gaining momentum nationally that recognizes and honors students who not only commit to learning a foreign language but extend this experience into other classes and their community: the **PSMLA Global Scholars Program**. Other global scholars programs and certificates exist in a handful of states and cities in the United States. PSMLA is launching the second statewide Global Scholars Programs (the first being in Wisconsin) with a few more in development (for instance, North Carolina and Illinois) as well as Seals of Biliteracy in some states (California, Virginia, Washington, DC, and others).

The **PSMLA Global Scholars Program** is an interdisciplinary program being piloted during the 2014-2015 school year by high schools across the state. Several Pennsylvania schools have already registered to offer this opportunity to their students. It is not too late for your school to join these others so that you, too, can give your students the opportunity to set a defined goal toward academic, personal, and professional success in the global community!

**What is the PSMLA Global Scholars Program?**

The PSMLA Global Scholars Programs affords the opportunity for high school students to meaningfully select interdisciplinary studies and activities that will lead them to develop global awareness or competency and better

prepare themselves for personal and professional success in an increasingly global society. Such a designation could have a positive effect on college admission or job offerings, as these students will stand out as ones who not only understand that the world is increasingly multicultural and interdependent but can communicate in a language other than their own.

Not only is the PSMLA Global Scholars Programs interdisciplinary, resulting in collaboration with other departments in schools, but it is designed to work in concert with STEM and IB programs as well as Seals of Biliteracy.

Without creating new courses, students and faculty focus on the global aspects of the existing curricula in the school, and, subsequently, honor students for their success in committing to and completing global studies. The proposed components of the program for schools are found below.

**Components of a PSMLA Global Scholars  
Program to be completed in grades 9-12**

*(all of a global nature and based on the Wisconsin model: [www.globalwisconsin.org](http://www.globalwisconsin.org))*

1. **Academic courses - successful completion of the following (average grade of B or better):**
  - a. **4 years of the same world language** (If a school offers only 3 years of a less commonly taught language, a student of that language may take 3 years of the less commonly taught language plus 1 year of another language to meet the 4 year language requirement.)
  - b. **4 additional credits toward graduation** that are already part of the school's course of study (therefore, each school would develop its own list that is unique and specific to its own curriculum) and for which a primary component is global in nature, for example:
    - i. A second world language
    - ii. World Literature
    - iii. AP English Literature
    - iv. World History
    - v. Great Civilizations
    - vi. Humanities
    - vii. World Religions
    - viii. International Business
    - ix. Anthropology
    - x. Macroeconomics
    - xi. Other courses in social studies, math, the arts, theater, science, etc. IF a **primary** focus is global



**2. Active participation as confirmed by a sponsor in a variety of extra-curricular activities with a global focus (minimum of 4) such as:**

- a. World Language Club
- b. World Language Honor Society
- c. School-sponsored field trips or activities that explore global aspects (international restaurant, involvement in a play or musical production that is international in nature, Pitt Nationality Rooms, foreign film, foreign travel, etc.)
- d. Other community activity that includes a global component, as verified by the adult in the community in charge, and accepted by the school's criteria including mission trips abroad, foreign travel, etc.

**3. Service Hours with a global focus (20 hours or an average of 5 hours per high school year, as approved by the school's Global Scholars advisor)**

- a. Tutoring in the target language
- b. Volunteering to teach a world language to elementary or middle school students
- c. Working with a middle school or elementary world language activity
- d. Creating and implementing an original project or volunteer activity approved by the Global Scholars advisor

**4. Review of literature/media with a global focus (minimum of 8, at least 4 of which are books)**

- a. The literature or media must be approved and reviewed by a school's Global Scholar mentor/designee.
- b. Review should be in a consistent format and include specified components that are standards-based and reflect higher-level thinking skills.
- c. Some of the works may have been studied in a course but must be reviewed using the Global Scholars format.

**How much does participation in the PSMLA Global Scholars Program cost?**

There is no participation fee or outside evaluation necessary therefore there is little or no cost to the school. Possible costs associated with the PSMLA Global Scholars Program may include the following:

1. The school's Global Scholars advisor must be a member of PSMLA.
2. In the student's senior year, upon successful completion of all components of the PSMLA Global Scholars Program, the school may

wish to recognize the student with the following that may be purchased from PSMLA at a nominal cost:

- a. Honor Cord to wear at graduation
- b. A Global Scholars Certificate (with the student's name inscribed which may be purchased and sent to the school or may be sent free of charge as a pdf. document that may be printed at the school)
- c. A Global Scholars seal that may be placed on the diploma

PSMLA has no interest in any financial gain through this program. If a school chooses to purchase any of the above, charges will be limited to the cost of the item plus shipping. There are no administrative costs as PSMLA is a non-profit professional organization composed of volunteers. Schools have the option of paying for the items or requiring the students to either pay individually or earn the cost through fundraising. All costs will be posted on the PSMLA website.

**What are advantages of a Global Scholars designation?**

The PSMLA Global Scholars program:

- Is achievable for all students.
- Is interdisciplinary, involves multiple departments, and facilitates communication and collaboration between departments.
- Encourages students, faculty, and the community to expand their perspectives to prepare high school students for 21st century skills and participation in the global community.
- Does not require the creation of new courses.
- Encourages students to continue the study of foreign language and enhance it with studies in other disciplines. (I have already been made aware of students who, because of the Global Scholars Program, chose to continue into the fourth year of their language or who actually enrolled in a language course over the summer in order to complete the 4<sup>th</sup> year while in high school. We world language educators know that seat time does not equate to proficiency but that there is a stronger probability of reaching proficiency with continued contact with the language.)
- Allows individual schools to "fine tune" the criteria for implementation in their existing

academic setting. From school to school, the course offerings and extracurricular activities vary. Each school therefore reviews and decides which existing courses and activities are global in nature and appropriate for inclusion in the Global Scholars Program.

- May encourage the addition of global components and perspectives to courses in various departments.
- Requires individual students to accept the responsibility to
  - Commit to participation in the program,
  - Make mindful selection of courses and activities,
  - Follow through on completing criteria, and
  - Submit documentation.
- Could result in recognition by colleges, universities, and employers, particularly if designed to parallel those implemented in other states. The PSMLA Global Scholars Program is designed after the program in Wisconsin which is also the model for the program being developed in Illinois.

#### **What is the deadline to apply for the PSMLA Global Scholars Program?**

There is no deadline and a school may enroll at any time. A suggested timeline may be to gather the information on the courses, discuss the program with colleagues and your principal, and request the appropriate approvals from the administration and/or school board in the fall or winter of a school year. Make sure to complete and submit the PSMLA Global Scholars Application (<http://www.psm्ला.net/global-scholars>) so that your school will be registered with PSMLA.

Decide who, in your school, will be the Global Scholars Advisor(s). Some schools may have only one advisor, others are choosing to share the responsibilities among several teachers. By late winter or spring, let your students know about the program so that they can plan their courses and activities. You may wish to distribute the PSMLA brochure or create a brochure or flier specific to your school. Develop a system within your school of tracking student progress.

By March of each school year, students should submit all documentation of completed components. Eight weeks prior to graduation, the Global Scholars Advisor will submit the names of graduating Global Scholars from each school and order, if desired, any honor cords, certificates,

and/or seals so that they will be received in time for graduation.

#### **How does a school apply for the PSMLA Global Scholars Program?**

Complete and submit a PSMLA Global Scholars Application which may be found at <http://www.psm्ला.net/global-scholars>. There is no fee or other obligation when a school applies and registers with PSMLA. There is no minimum number of students that need to enroll in the program. Submitting an application to PSMLA simply registers the school as a Global Scholars School and opens the door for students to begin their journey to recognition as a Global Scholar.

For more detailed information on the PSMLA Global Scholars program including the complete proposal, a brochure providing an overview, and an application, please go to <http://www.psm्ला.net/global-scholars> or contact Jan Stewart at [stewhos@gmail.com](mailto:stewhos@gmail.com).



Parrot (*loro*) – Artwork created by Sara Hamme (grade 11), a Kennard-Dale High School student – submitted by Karen Snyder, Spanish teacher



## OUR TOP TEN TECH TOOLS FOR THE WORLD LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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As language teachers we are all tasked with many jobs. We are expected to engage students, encourage collaboration, promote creativity and provide opportunities for students to take ownership of their learning while also advancing students' language proficiency. In our dual roles as Spanish teachers and Instructional Technology Coaches, we have discovered some tech tools that might help you in your quest to balance both classroom management and language instruction.

When planning for instruction, it is important to keep your specific goals in mind. As Apple Distinguished Educator and Google Certified Teacher Ross Cooper has stated numerous times, "You can be traditional with the latest technology, or you can be innovative with nothing at all" (n.d.). Don't just use technology for the sake of using technology! Determine the skills that you want students to practice or the tasks that you want them to accomplish, then decide if there are tech tools that can facilitate the process. It is the responsibility of 21st century educators to incorporate technology as part of what we do everyday. We cannot continue to view technology as an "add on," simply bells and whistles to liven up an otherwise dry lesson. Technology use must be integrated into our toolbox but this can be an overwhelming process.

Remember to keep a "growth mindset" (Dweck, 2006). Be open to failure but know that when you find the right tech tools to help you and your students, the payoff is great: increased student engagement, individual accountability, and access to authentic and relevant content. While this is just a small sampling of what is available, these are tools that we (as well as our colleagues) have found to be straightforward and rather uncomplicated to implement, whether you are a tech newbie or an expert. So here are our current top ten tech tools in no particular order:

1. **Kahoot!** Game-Based Digital Learning Platform  
- According to its website, Kahoot! is "a facilitator of awesome, highly engaging learning experiences." This student-

favorite tool is now played in more than 180 countries. Teachers create multiple choice questions and students compete using their own devices (phones, tablets or computers). Students are awarded points based on the speed and accuracy of their answers. We have used Kahoot! to create many types of questions - from vocabulary practice to artwork identification. One nice feature is that you don't always need to start from scratch. Teachers can search public Kahoots created by other teachers. You can then download and edit the original Kahoot to meet your specific needs. You can also share something that you have created with other teachers - great for collaboration between colleagues! But don't stop there, why not include your students in the creation process? Assign individual or groups of students to create questions and answer choices which you then collect and combine to create a class Kahoot game. After playing a Kahoot, teachers can view and download student results and use the data to adapt future lessons. This is a free tool but you will need to create your own account.

### Website:

-Website for creation and administration:

**getkahoot.com**

-Website for student participation: **kahoot.it**

### Platform:

-No app available; use web address

**Twitter Handle:** @GetKahoot

### Tech tool tip:

If you plan to use Kahoot! frequently, you may want students to save a shortcut to the website on the home screen of their mobile devices for easy access.

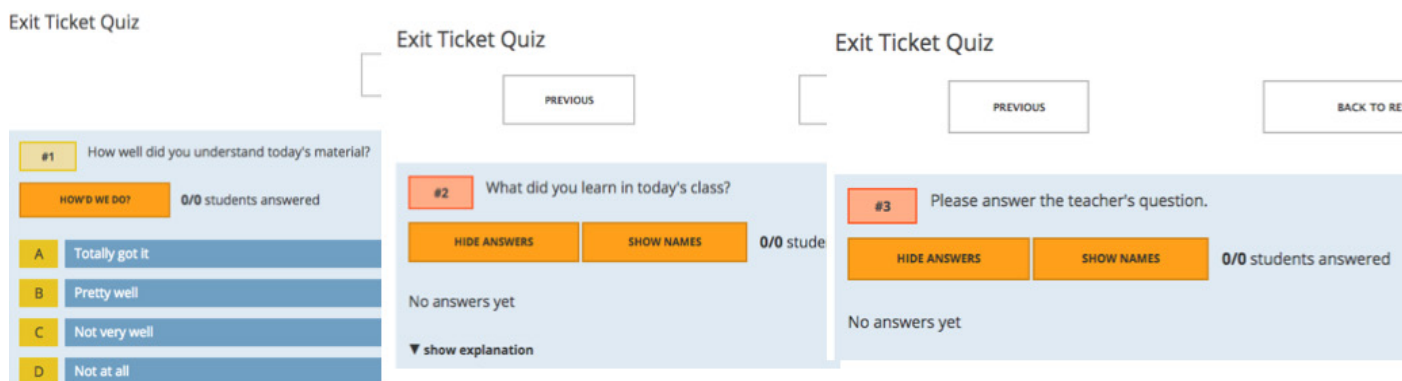
### Other tools to consider:

-Quizziz - **quizizz.com**

2. **Socrative** Digital student response system  
- This tech tool has multiple features to assess students instantly and with little to no preparation. Like Kahoot! teachers can create multiple choice formative assessments to use during class. However, unlike Kahoot!, these assessments do not have to be completed by all students at the same time. The teacher can choose to start the "quiz" and leave it open for students to finish on their own time. This is an attractive option for station work or for teachers who like to "flip" some of their lessons. Another difference between

Kahoot! and Socrative is that Socrative has the added option of creating true / false and short answer questions in addition to multiple choice questions. Teachers also have an Exit Ticket option. This template has three questions and requires very little preparation. Teachers only need to create one question and it can be done on the fly. (See Figure 1.) Socrative stores assessment reports that teachers can download at any time. This tool also allows teachers to share quizzes with other teachers. Socrative is a free tool. You will have to create your own account, which you will be able to access through the website or through the Socrative Teacher App. Students do not need their own account and can access your quizzes through the student app or the website.

3. **Verso** Cloud-based teaching platform - This cloud-based teaching platform allows teachers to share content (video, audio, print document, URL) with students challenging them to respond to a question and then interact anonymously with their classmates. After creating an account, the teacher sets up classes and gives the unique class code to students within the class. The students then create their own accounts adding the class code in order to group them together. Teachers design and assign "flips" which contain a set of instructions and some content. Students access the assigned flips via the Verso app on any mobile device connected to the Internet or through the website <http://versoapp.com/>. Verso requires a student to submit an authentic response to the



**Figure 1- Socrative Exit Ticket Option. Questions 2 and 3 are open ended**

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration:

**socrative.com**

-Website for student participation:

**socrative.com**

(separate student login)

**Platform:**

-App available for both iOS and Android. There is a separate app for students and teachers.

Teachers can access their dashboard through the app.

**Twitter Handle:** @Socrative

**Tech tool tip:**

You can upload images to include in your Socrative questions. To save time, make sure to choose and save your images to your computer before creating your quiz.

**Other tools to consider:**

-Go Formative- **goformative.com**

-The Answer Pad - **theanswerpad.com**

prompt before unlocking the ability to see the responses of other students and comment on them. A key feature of Verso is that all student responses and comments are anonymous so that students have an equal opportunity to share their ideas with their peers freely without feeling anxiety or pressure. However, students are accountable for their responses because the teacher always has the ability to see student names attached to their comments. We have found that Verso really does give all students a voice by providing a safe platform for the expression of ideas. By monitoring student discussion and viewing the in-app formative data, the teacher can identify and address individual learning needs.

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: **versoapp.com**

**Platform:**

-Apps are available for iOS and Android devices.

**Twitter Handle:** @VersoApp

**Tech tool tip:** Be sure to set up your class periods ahead of time so that when you ask students to register, they can include the class code and the app will group them automatically.

#### 4. Padlet Online bulletin board

- This tool allows teachers to create electronic “walls” or bulletin boards. Teachers can post a question, which students can answer with text, pictures, videos or a combination of all three. (Figure 2) Padlet gives you multiple options to share your walls, including embed codes for websites, QR codes for immediate class use and links that you can tweet out or put on Facebook. Padlet works well for individual or group collaboration. There is a free as well as a premium (paid) version. You do not need an account to create a wall, but you should create an account if you want to save your walls. Students do not need an account to write on your wall.

**Tech tool tip:**

Students double click anywhere on the wall to post. Since no student accounts are required, you will need to instruct students to include their names if you want to be able to identify their posts.

**Other tools to consider:**

-Lino - [en.linoit.com](http://en.linoit.com)

#### 5. ThingLink

- Interactive image and video tool - Turn any image into an interactive presentation with this powerful tool. As the ThingLink website states “Every image contains a story and ThingLink helps you tell your stories.” After creating a free account, teachers can upload any image and turn it into a presentation by adding links and placing them on the image. The links can lead to text, audio, video, or any website. By creating a ThingLink image, a teacher can provide flexible learning paths giving students access to basic background knowledge and opportunities



**Figure 2- Example of Padlet wall. Student names have been hidden.**

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: [padlet.com](http://padlet.com)

**Platform:**

-No app available for iOS/Android devices, however there is a Chrome extension and app as well as a Wordpress plugin.

**Twitter Handle:** @padlet

for enrichment all in the same place. The image below (Figure 3) was created as a review tool to help students prepare for their final exam. It includes several acronyms used throughout the year in our Spanish 3 classes to remember key grammar points. If you visit the actual ThingLink image, you can click on the buttons and see basic explanations as well as some links to practice activities on the web. Once created, ThingLink images can be shared easily to various social media platforms. They can also be sent as a link



via email or embedded on a website. After logging in to your free teacher account you can register your students by simply listing their names or student ID numbers in the registration box. ThingLink will generate student accounts linked to your account and students can begin to design their own interactive images.



**Figure 3- Screenshot of a ThingLink image (Actual ThingLink image -<https://goo.gl/nmAJ4n>)**

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: **thinglink.com**

**Platform:**

-Apps are available for iOS and Android devices

**Twitter Handle:** @ThingLink; @ThinkLink\_EDU

**Tech Tool Tip:** Click on the Explore button in your teacher account and use the search bar to check out some ThingLink images that other teachers have already created.

**6. Google tools Collaboration and information management tools**

- So, we are probably cheating by bundling all of the Google tools and listing them as one resource, but how can you choose just one? Most of us already know about the awesome collaborative capabilities of Google Drive, especially Google Docs and Google Presentations. With these tools we can collaborate with students and/or colleagues and then share the final product with an unlimited number of people. But, how many of us look beyond these two popular tools?

**6A. Google Forms** is probably one of the most adaptable tools that we've used this past year. We have helped teachers to

use this tool both in their classes and with clubs and other extracurricular activities. Teachers in the world language department have used Google Forms in stations and in collaborative settings. Many of you may have already used this tool for students to answer questions electronically. We have used Google Forms to have students work collaboratively to answer questions. You can embed YouTube videos and link to outside audio and video resources. You can then ask students to interpret what they have seen or heard. (Figure 4) Answers will feed into a spreadsheet which you can organize. Tech tool tip: if you create one form to use with multiple classes, make sure to include a "class period" question. You can then sort the spreadsheet answers by class.

**#1 Comerical Bodega Aurrera (mamá lucha)**



Escuchen el anuncio y escriban las palabras que faltan.

Hombre: Ella es Doña Lucha, una mamá como muchas que lucha por su \_\_\_\_\_. \*

Hombre: Pero tiene una identidad \_\_\_\_\_. ella es la mamá luchadora de Bodega Aurrera. \*

Mamá: Por todas las mamás luchonas, aquí llegó su mamá lucha. Y voy a bajar los \_\_\_\_\_ hasta que queden en la lona. \*

**Figure 4- Example of a Google Form assignment. YouTube videos can be embedded in Google Forms.**

**6B. Google Voice** is a "Home & Office" Google tool. Once you set up an account, you will be assigned a phone number. You can then set up an outgoing message for students.

They can call the number, listen to the message, and then leave you a message. For an interpretive mode assessment you may have them give you the main idea of what they heard or you may have them

list familiar vocabulary that they identified. Students can also text to the Google Voice number. One thing to consider - not all school Google accounts will have a Google Voice option. You may have to use a personal Google account to access this feature.

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: **google.com**

**Platform:**

-Apps and Firefox and Chrome extensions are available for Drive, Docs, etc.

**Twitter Handle:** @google; @googledocs; @googledrive; etc.

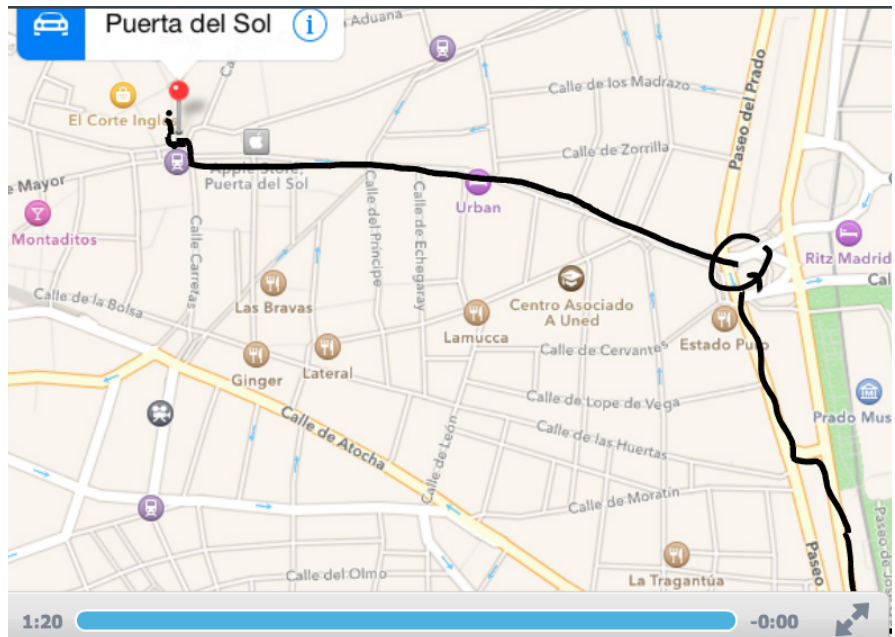
**Tech Tool Tip:**

*Google Forms* - Include a "class period" question if you intend to use the same form with multiple classes. You can then sort the answer spreadsheet by class.

*Google Voice* - Be sure to train students to identify who they are at the beginning of any voice or text message. Messages are otherwise identified by sending phone number only.

**7. EDpuzzle** Interactive video assessment tool

- This site allows teachers to upload a YouTube video, trim the video to the desired length and then embed multiple-choice or open ended questions to check for understanding. EDpuzzle also permits teachers to insert spoken hints or directions throughout the video. This free resource can organize participants by class and teachers can assign videos to specific classes. Analytic reports are available to teachers. These detailed reports not only show student answers, but also how many times students had to view a section of the video before they answered the question. (Figure 5) Teachers can create folders to store assignments by course, unit of study, etc. You can also do whole class practice with a prepared video without assigning it. While you won't have a detailed report, it is a great formative assessment tool. An EDpuzzle video example can be found at <http://bit.ly/EDpuzzleClouser>.



**Figure 5- Example of EDpuzzle analytic report. Teacher can see the number of times students watched each part of the video and if they answered the embedded questions correctly.**

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: **edpuzzle.com**

**Platform:**

-There is an iOS app and an Android app is under development. A Chrome app and YouTube extension are also available. Student feedback indicated that accessing EDpuzzle through the website was a much better experience.

**Twitter Handle:** @EDpuzzle

**Tech Tool Tip:**

Students will need to create an account if you intend to assign videos. Accounts can be created through Google or Edmodo. It is a good idea to have students create a uniform user name (i.e. first initial, last name). Teachers do have the ability to reset passwords, if needed.

**Other tools to consider:**

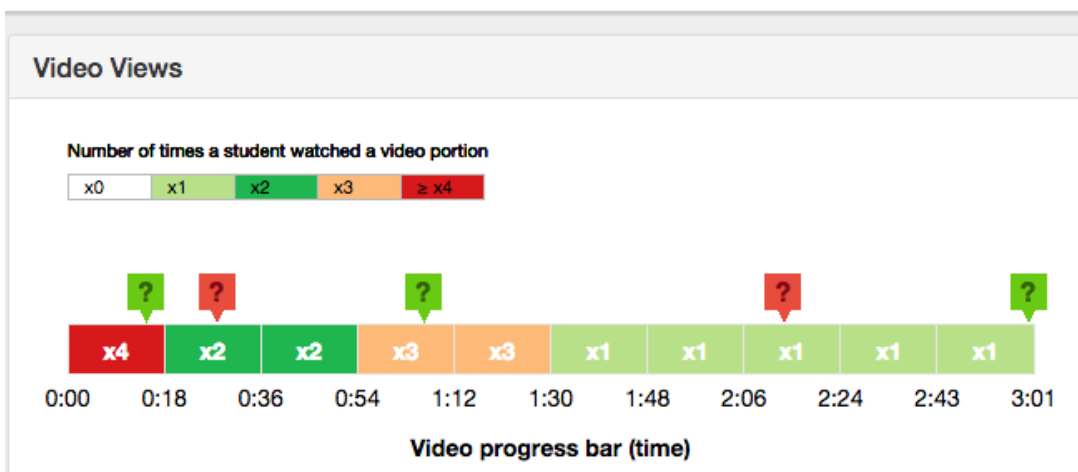
-eduCanon - **[www.educanon.com](http://www.educanon.com)**

-Zaption - **[www.zaption.com](http://www.zaption.com)**

**8. Educreations** - Individual interactive whiteboard

-This screencasting tool is extremely easy to use. Start with a blank screen or upload an image. Then press the record button and narrate, draw and annotate. It can be used by teachers to create video lessons and it can be used by students to record oral projects. Educreations can be accessed on

a computer but it is really designed to be used on an iPad. A free account must be created before you can record a screencast. Screencasts can be shared via a web link or an embed code. One way that we have used this tool in class is to pair students up and have one student narrating or giving instructions while the other student draws (tracing directions on a map, circling specific vocabulary items in a photograph, etc.).

[Back to Class Progress](#)
**DJ Progress**


**Figure 6- Example of a student screencast in which one partner gave directions and the other partner traced the route on the map.**

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: **edureations.com**

**Platform:**

-iPad app or website

**Twitter Handle:** @edureations

**Tech Tool Tip:** If you want to group your students together in a class, be sure to create your teacher account and classes first so that you can provide the class code to students when they register.

**Other tools to consider:**

AdobeVoice - [standout.adobe.com/voice/](http://standout.adobe.com/voice/)

-Website is for information only; videos must be created on an iPad 30Hands -

**30hands.net**

-This digital storytelling tool is for iOS devices only.

**9. Twitter** Online social media tool

- Twitter can be the perfect platform for authentic interaction with native speakers. Messages are limited to 140 characters and students can search for topics of high

interest. Students can also tweet messages at different people or organizations.

Additionally, teachers can create a class account to send messages to students. Some of our colleagues have had students tweet messages to the class account to show how they are interacting with the language outside of class. There are also chats for student participants. Rebecca Huls (@rhulshuls) and Kara McNeese (@kmcneese1) are Spanish teachers

from Nebraska who host a Twitter chat for students (#spanstuchat)<sup>4</sup> to practice their language skills outside of class. We have colleagues in the English department who have tweeted out story starters and students have responded with ideas to continue the story. You can also have students follow foreign news media accounts to get up to date

information in the target language. There are endless possibilities with this tool!

**Website:**

-Website for creation and administration and student participation: **twitter.com**

**Platform:**

-App available for both iOS and Android.

**Twitter Handle:** @Twitter; @TwitterSpain; @TwitterLatAm; @TwitterFrance; etc.

**Tech Tool Tip:**

You may want to have students create a Twitter account for school use. Many students do not want teachers to see what they are tweeting about their personal lives, nor do we teachers want access to that information. Also, be sensitive to students who may not have parental permission to be on social media. These students could email you their tweets or create a Google doc to share with you.

**Other tools to consider:**

--Today'sMeet - **today'smeet.com**: This backchanneling tool can be used for a more private Twitter-type chat. This is a good option for younger students or for those who do not have access to social media sites. Only those with the URL can access the chat so you have total control of who



enters the conversation. Teachers can also embed a TodaysMeet feed on a website.

--Pinterest - **pinterest.com**: This social media site is more for teacher inspiration and motivation. Some people may not consider it to be a credible educational tool, but you can find a wealth of amazing resources on Pinterest. There are various language teachers who have found and pinned authentic resources such as articles, video clips and infographics. (It's a great source of information!) We both have Pinterest accounts which we have started to organize by AP themes and course units. You can see some of our resources at <https://www.pinterest.com/barbclouser/> and <https://www.pinterest.com/lshirk0103/>.

- 10. PenPal Schools** - Global learning exchange - This program matches students with international pen pals for a 6-week exchange. Teachers register and then have their students create their own accounts using a unique class code. The PenPal Schools staff matches your students with students who speak your target language. Each week students view a brief video about some aspect of the target culture and they answer questions in the target language. The pen pals answer similar questions in English. Students read their pen pal's answers and respond to them with their own ideas and perspectives. This way both pen pals get practice reading and writing in their target language and their native language. Teachers can easily track their students' progress from the dashboard. The program is free but donations are accepted. Currently, the language program is available for students studying Spanish, French and Chinese.

**Website:**

-Website: **penpalschools.com**

**Platform:**

-Website and mobile app

**Twitter Handle:** @PenpalSchools

**Tech Tool Tip:** Because of the imbalanced ratio of American students to international students, sometimes two or three American students from different parts of the country are matched with one international student. It is helpful for students to know this up-front so that they are not confused when they see several responses in their account.

**Other tools to consider:**

-Epals - **epals.com**

So there you have it - our current Top Ten Picks! Just remember that technology is constantly changing and improving. By the time that this article is published, there could be various upgrades to the tools that we have mentioned as well the "next best thing" in educational technology.

As teachers and tech coaches, we have witnessed and lived through many successes and disasters using tech tools with students. Based on our experiences, we suggest that you consider the following questions.

- 1) When will students need to access the identified technology?** Is it something that they will use only in class with you present to guide them, or is it something that they will need to access outside of class without you? If students are accessing the tool outside of class, will they be comfortable using it without your guidance? Or, do your students have access to technology outside of school?
- 2) Is there more than one way for students to show what they know?** Allow students to have choices. This can be essential if you teach in a BYOD school. Not all tools work on iOS and Android devices. Make sure to have options for multiple platforms. Additionally students will create better products when they have more choices and you will be surprised by what you may learn from them.
- 3) What will you do if the technology doesn't cooperate?** This is guaranteed to happen at some point. You have created the most innovative lesson, the tech integration is seamless, the students are engaged and hanging on your every word, your principal is in to observe and is impressed by what is happening ...and then you lose your network connection. Or, the phenomenal website that you found is down for maintenance at the exact time of your lesson. Always be prepared with Plan B (and C and D).

One final piece of advice, don't go overboard. Keep it manageable. Pick one or two tools and learn to use and integrate them well before moving on to something new. Teachers and students need time with new tools in order to feel comfortable using them. This is an exciting time to be a teacher and a student. When chosen well, tech tools can help us to engage students, give them a voice and choice, and facilitate learning.

**Resources**

Cooper, R. (n.d.) Apple Distinguished Educator and Google Certified Teacher (Twitter handle- @RossCoops31)

Dweck, C. (2006). How can you change from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset? Retrieved from <http://mindsetonline.com/changeyourmindset/firststeps/>

Jansen, M. (2014, September 14) Seven things you need to know about interactive video assessment tools. A White Paper from Teaching and Learning with Technology at

Penn State. Retrieved from <http://tlt.psu.edu/2014/09/15/hot-team-interactive-video-assessment-tools/>

Huls, R., & McNeese, K. Moderators of #spanstuchat, a Twitter chat that meets the first and third Thursday of the month (August-May). For more information visit <http://spanstuchat.weebly.com/>.



For electronic access to this article's links and resources, please use the following link or QR Code:  
**Link:** <http://bit.ly/ArticleLinks>  
**ArticleLinks**

**QR Code**



Monkey (*mono*) – Artwork created by Lauren Berger (grade 11), a Kennard-Dale High School student – submitted by Karen Snyder, Spanish teacher

## A JOURNEY THROUGH MINDFULNESS IN THE WORLD LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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The bell rings.

Every one of my twenty-six Spanish I students has found his way to his desk. Each one has a pencil. Each is seated. The students are marvelously quiet as they work on the daily warm-up. Today, for these forty-two minutes, everyone has decided to abide by the district's technology policy, which means no one is tweeting or texting or otherwise engaged in some parallel universe. Devices are away. Nor has anyone asked to use the restroom, because they have all had the spectacular foresight to do this during lunch. When I ask for volunteers to review the answers, the students are so enthusiastic they practically stumble over each other for the privilege of being chosen. They are well-adjusted, well-rested, well-fed young adults whose only polite deviation from the lesson is to ask for clarification (in the target language, *of course*) on some of the finer grammar points.

Does this sound like your class? If so, I envy you, because it looks nothing like mine.

Each day, I am competing for my students' attention. And while some *will* arrive prepared and present, there will also be the teenaged girl who is reeling from a nasty break up or an unkind tweet; the student whose parents are navigating a divorce; someone who is hungry; and, someone who is petrified to speak in front of the class. The collective anxieties of any one group, on any given day, can overwhelm the actual task of teaching content, casting a long and distracting shadow over our lessons and making conjugation feel like an insignificant tool in the belt of teenage survival skills.

Enter mindfulness.

Having seen positive change in my own life after using mindfulness to manage stress and anxiety, I began to wonder if, perhaps, there was a way for this practice to benefit my students, as well. I wanted for them to feel calmer, present, and more focused in my language classroom. And as a second-year teacher, those were the same things I wished for myself.

In order to learn more, in March of 2014, I traveled to Washington, DC for one day of the Mindfulness in Education Network's annual conference. I arrived not knowing quite what to expect, but I was immediately impressed and encouraged by the engaging speakers, all of which touted mindfulness as a powerful tool for stress reduction in schools.

One of those speakers was Dr. Mark Greenburg of Penn State's Prevention Research Center, who shared about his work studying contemplative practices and social-emotional learning/development in today's student population. He spoke about how mindfulness helps kids build skills like attention, creativity and self-control. But he shared that this practice could be for teachers and administrators, too, giving them tools to reduce their own stress levels and to become more reflective, focused and productive.

We also heard from Mirabai Bush, co-founder for the Contemplative Mind in Society, and a consultant for Google. In addition, I attended a session specifically for High School teachers moderated by Richard Brady, a math teacher with 30+ year career at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, DC (where the Obama girls are students). He spoke of using mindfulness to alleviate anxieties in a high achieving, competitive culture.

Between workshops, I connected with fellow language educators, many of which had successfully been integrating mindfulness exercises into their teaching to encourage risk taking—so important in the world language classroom where, traditionally, anxiety abounds. This could be something as simple as asking the students to take three deep breaths, or have them journal briefly before an assessment, or to lead them through a visualization exercise, where they are asked to see themselves speaking the language comfortably. What does that look like? Where are they? How do they feel?

I returned from that conference excited to begin implementing what I'd learned. I was hesitant, of course, as were the students. I didn't have a Tibetan singing bowl. I had a bright orange antique bellhop bell, which students initially regarded with equal parts amusement and confusion. But when I explained that what we were doing was a simple breathing exercise designed to help them feel more calm and focused, they began to appreciate those few quiet

moments at the beginning of class. Indeed, they began to ask for ‘the bell’ (as it’s known in my classroom), and would sometimes remind me if I forgot.

It is important to note that I never force students to participate; however, *all* are asked to be respectful. Whenever they notice their focus has wandered away from the breath, I remind them to gently bring it back—whether this happens one time, or a thousand. Sometimes students will do a body scan, just taking a moment to notice their posture or to feel themselves supported by their chair. Often we will end with a moment of gratitude, when students are asked to visualize someone or something for which they are particularly grateful. It was empowering for them to learn that, with some practice, they have the ability to place their focus where they wish, and that they can allow thoughts and anxieties to be acknowledged without judging or inviting them to stay.

In a world where instructional time is already so precious, it’s natural to wonder how I can defend sacrificing this. How exactly does mindfulness help my students learn Spanish?

For me, there is no doubt that after a few moments of allowing students to ‘check-in’ and get focused, the remaining time we do have together is decidedly more productive. I can feel the energy in the room change. By participating in a little mindfulness, students are able to put distance between themselves and any distractions or concerns with which they may have arrived only minutes before. It’s refreshing. And by educating them about the way their minds work, we can help students develop grit, understanding that negative talk so common in the world language classroom—“I can’t do this!” or “I’m not good at language”—is a mindset, not a reality.

When asked to provide anonymous feedback, my Spanish I and III students were overwhelmingly positive about the practice of mindfulness. “School always seems to be about going and going from one thing to another,” one student wrote. “As students we always have to be moving from class to class and test to projects. Having the time in the first or last few minutes of class to really calm down for a minute helps me focus throughout the rest of the day.” Another wrote, “A moment of gratitude is a break in the day, really the only time in the day to think about

your well-being. How am I doing?” Many spoke about the benefit of breathing right before an assessment.

As an educator, I am passionate about language, culture and conversation. I strive to design rigorous and engaging lessons, to instill in my students the love that I have for the Spanish language. But if my legacy, ultimately, is that I helped even one student discover that they are capable of accessing calm in all of life’s moments of emotional turbulence, then that may be my greatest achievement of all.

For more information on mindfulness in education, you may visit the following resources:

- Mindfulness in Education Network (MIEN) at <http://www.mindfuled.org/> to learn about conferences and browse resources like articles and links to additional resources
- The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society at <http://www.contemplativemind.org/resources/k-12> with links to educator resources K-12
- Greater Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life at [http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/mindfulness\\_in\\_education\\_research\\_highlights](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/mindfulness_in_education_research_highlights) that provides a list of selected articles that shows an overview on the current research on mindfulness in education



## STORYTELLING IN THE WORLD LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: DIGITAL STORYTELLING & MOVIE TALK

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*--The universe is made of stories, not atoms."*  
*--Muriel Rukeyser*

Since the beginning of time, humans have told stories. In actuality, storytelling preceded formalized language. Approximately 35,000 years ago during prehistoric time in Asia and Europe, humans told stories in forms of cave paintings and shared stories about themselves, others, and animals. Later, long before paper and pencil were commonplace and affordable, information was passed down orally from generation to generation. Many anthropologists, psychologists, and scientists see stories as the core of what makes us human. Everyone has a story, and we use stories to make sense of not only history, but also of our daily experiences. Telling stories to each other orally endures today as one of our primary and most powerful forms of communication.

As a young child, you may remember your parents and elementary school teachers reading you stories. Reading aloud to your child not only is one of the best activities to stimulate language and cognitive skills, it also stimulates language development even before a child can talk (Bardrige, 2009). Storytelling also has a place in the world language classroom. When you read or tell stories to students, you immerse them in rich language in context, which can lead to increased levels of speech and literacy in the target world language. Stories also provide an engaging way for students to use vocabulary in a meaningful way.

Traditionally, world language teachers have used stories in their classrooms in a variety of ways. Some teachers use novels and short stories in their classrooms to supplement their curriculum. Others read stories to their students in the target language much like the days of kindergarten teachers reading one story book aloud to their students. Free voluntary reading is another way teachers are using stories in their rooms. Some teachers have students make children's storybooks in the target language to read and to share with others, or implement Reader's Theater into their classrooms. However, recently two more types of storytelling are

being used in the world language classrooms by teachers: Digital Storytelling and MovieTalk.

### DIGITAL STORYTELLING

#### What is Digital Storytelling?

Digital storytelling is simply the art of combining telling stories with multimedia. This multimedia could include any combination of text, audio, music, video, photos, apps, screenshots, other images, or digital media. Digital stories can either be produced by teachers, by students, or by both and shared with others. These stories can vary in length, but typically many of them are between two and ten minutes in length. The topics around which digital storytelling can be used are endless. The use of digital storytelling ranges from novice technology users to those with advanced skills of any age. Digital storytelling is basically the 21st century version of the ancient art of storytelling with a twist: digital tools make it possible for virtually anyone to create a story and to share it with the world.

#### Why use Digital Storytelling in the World Language Classroom?

Digital storytelling is a compelling activity for the language classroom. Easy to use for reading, writing, speaking and listening practice, digital storytelling can be a good way to motivate students to use the language both inside and outside the classroom. The different experiences students bring to the class are a great source for discussion and a good starting point for students to write about. Especially with lower-level learners, the language of pictures and music helps students to communicate when they do not yet have the necessary language to communicate exclusively in writing.

#### How do you do Digital Storytelling?

There are many ways you can incorporate Digital Storytelling into your world language classroom. This is an activity that teachers can use if only a few devices are available to your students through a school cart, or if every student has access through a computer lab. Also, if your school does not have much in the way of technology available to use, it is possible that you could have students bring their own devices from home (in the form of iPads, cell phones, and laptops) and you could have enough equipment to get started.

While it is possible for the teacher to create digital stories for his or her students to use, it becomes more meaningful when students (either

individually or in groups) create their own digital stories. Students have the opportunity to not only practice their working language skills, but they also get to practice 21st century information literacy and media skills. Digital stories allow students to become creators of language content, rather than just consumers.

There are a few things you want to do to prepare students for creating a digital story. First, you want to prepare your students for the activity. You may want to:

- Explain the activity and why students are doing it
- Explain what kind of text type you want students to write and to speak. Is a narrative? Is it a retell? Is it a persuasive presentation? Do they need to include a certain verb tense (like commands or subjunctive mood) or target vocabulary words?
- Ask yourself if there is anything you need to “pre-teach” for them to be able to do this assignment? (This could be language-based, or perhaps how to use the digital tool itself?)
- Do they need a framework or structure on what to include in their story? Or, perhaps you have an example that you want to share with them?
- Do they need to include visual text and / or audio speaking?
- Share with them how it is going to be assessed. Will it be assessed based only on content? Will fluency and / or accuracy of the target language be assessed? Will it be some of both? Is there an assessment rubric that you want to share with them?
- Be specific about what you want in the final product with regard to things like time limit, number of visuals, and amount of target language you expect to see and / or hear.

Next, pair or group students to work together to create the story. Typically, students will engage in the following steps to create a digital story:

- Come up with an idea
- Research, explore, and learn about their proposed idea
- Write a script
- Create a paper storyboard and plan the details of their story
- Create images, create video, and / or create audio of their story
- Put their presentation together

- Edit their presentation and receive feedback on the presentation from peers and / or the teacher
- Reflect on their presentation
- Share the digital story with a larger audience

### Where can I find some Digital Storytelling Tools and Resources?

You will need some tools to capture students’ digital stories and to make them available to others. Students who do not have school access to a lot of technology can use their cell phones to take pictures and to record video and / or audio. A voice recorder and a video recorder can also be used among the students. Other options might be the use of an MP3 player or students’ own iPods or iPads.

#### Desktop and Laptop Options

1. **Audacity** Audacity is a digital audio editing program available for Mac and PC that lets you record, edit and mix narration and music. It is available free.

**Website:** <http://sourceforge.net/projects/audacity/>

2. **Apple iMovie** iMovie is Apple’s alternative to Photo Story 3 and is a good choice for Mac users who want to create digital stories. This digital movie creation and editing program has most of the same features as Photo Story 3, however, it also supports the use of full-motion video clips. While it is not free, it often is already installed on many of the newer Apple computers.

**Website:** <http://www.apple.com/mac/imovie/>

3. **Microsoft Movie Maker** Windows Movie Maker is a freeware video editing software by Microsoft. It is a part of Windows Essentials software suite and offers the ability to create and edit videos as well as to publish them on OneDrive, Facebook, Vimeo, YouTube, and Flickr.

**Website:** <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/products/features/movie-maker>

#### Web 2.0 Tools

1. **Animoto** Animoto is a web based tool that allows users to bring motion to their presentations. With this resource, users can easily add music soundtracks, video and motion to create a presentation or a short digital story. Animoto for Education allows educators to apply for a free Animoto Plus account for use in the classroom.

**Website:** <https://animoto.com/business/education>



2. **Prezi** Prezi is an innovative and creative way to create and share presentations and digital stories. This tool also users to upload existing PowerPoint slides and customize them or create new screens by adding their own images, text, audio, video and animation.

**Website:** <https://prezi.com/>

3. **Story Bird** Story Bird website allows students and teachers to create short art inspired stories to read, share or print out. It is free.

**Website:** <http://storybird.com/>

4. **Slidestory** This is a free digital story telling tool that students can use to combine sharing pictures and narration to create awesome presentations and stories to share with others. It is a free tool.

**Website:** <http://www.slidestory.com/>

5. **ZooBurst** This is another great digital storytelling tool that lets anyone easily create his or her own 3D pop-up books. It has two plans one is basic and free and the other is paid and has more advanced features.

**Website:** <http://zooburst.com/>

6. **Capzles** This is where you and your students can create rich multimedia stories with videos, photos, music, blogs and documents.

**Website:** <http://www.capzles.com/>

### **Mobile Apps**

1. **Splice Video Editor** The application allows the user to put together photos, videos, music and narration. Photos, videos and music from the user's library can be used to create the movie. The narration can be recorded directly to the movie. The movie can be trimmed, effects can be added and transitions easily added, as well. A free version of the app is available, while a paid version includes more features and customization options.

**Website:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/splice-video-editor-free/id409838725?mt=8>

2. **Videolicious** Videolicious lets users edit raw video clips and photos into meaningful story components. Videolicious utilizes a quick 3-step process that includes videos/photos, story and music. The finished result is a documentary style story that can easily be uploaded to online video sharing sites.

**Website:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/videolicious/id400853498?mt=8>

3. **Com-Phone Story Maker** Com-Phone Story Maker is an app for Android smartphones that allows users to combine photos, audio, and text to create stories.

Moreover, it allows up to three different layers of audio, so voice narration and music can be added together, as well as an additional audio, if desired. Once a digital story is created, it can be saved or uploaded to YouTube.

**Website:** <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ac.robinson.mediaphone&hl=en>

4. **Apple iMovie** The popular video creation and editing software for Macintosh computers is also available for iPhones, iPads and iPod Touch. Although it is not free, the price is reasonable (@\$5.00) and the multi-touch interface is simple to learn.

Digital stories created in iMovie are produced in high definition format and are easily shared online using such sites as YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo and more.

**Website:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/imovie/id377298193>

### **MOVIETALK**

#### **What is MovieTalk?**

MovieTalk is a powerful, enjoyable technique that you can use to boost your students' second-language listening comprehension. All you need is a collection of suitable video/Internet clips, equipment for showing them to your class, and knowledge of the technique itself. This technique works well because the teacher has visuals to anchor the target language, and because the teacher limits his or her vocabulary while giving loads of repetitions to students by pausing the video and asking students questions in the target language. [The video/Internet clips do NOT need to be in the target language. In fact, most teachers turn off the sound to the clips if there is any language, so any suitable visual clips can be appropriate regardless of the language in the video.]

Although the name "MovieTalk" has only recently been applied to this technique and shared with world language teachers by Michele Whaley (a Russian teacher in Alaska), the technique itself has been in constant use in English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) programs for over twenty years. For years, MovieTalk was referred to simply as "The FOCAL SKILLS Movie Technique" and was used exclusively in FOCAL SKILLS programs. Dr. Ashley Hastings developed the Focal Skills Movie Technique to bring to bring ESL students from

novice to intermediate-mid ACTFL proficiency level as part of his curriculum to prepare students for university classes.

One of the many strengths of MovieTalk is that it works with novice learners, learners with relatively poor listening comprehension skills, and low intermediate students right from the start. It also works in classrooms with mixed proficiency levels, and there aren't many techniques that can do all of that.

### How do you do MovieTalk?

1. First, find a short video / Internet clip (animated film, commercial, public service ad, or a short segment of a longer film.) Ideally, you are looking for something shorter than eight minutes. You may want to choose a clip that fits with the target vocabulary and grammar that you have been concentrating on in class. Also, it should be visually interesting to the kids and easily understood when you are watching it without audio.
2. Then, turn the volume off.
3. Begin playing the clip, but pause at a good natural break between 5 and 10 seconds into the video.
4. Point to the video. You can make statements in the target language and ask the students questions and / or simply start asking students questions about the video clip in the target language. Ideally, use TPRS® techniques like circling, comprehension checks, and personalized questions and answers (PQA) with the students to get reps on the vocabulary and grammar structures.
5. Once you have gotten as many reps as you feel are needed, push play and watch another 5 to 10 seconds of the video. Then, continue your questions and answers in the target language with the students.
6. You MAY want to continue this process until the end of the video / Internet clip or you may want to stop the clip before the ending and then play it from the beginning without pausing.
7. After the MovieTalk, you can do:
  - reading comprehension assessments / activities
  - listening assessments / activities
  - writing assessments / activities
  - drawing storyboards with or without text
  - dictation assessments / activities

### Where can I View an Example of MovieTalk?

There are many examples of MovieTalk by teachers on YouTube. Here is one example from Eric Herman, a Spanish teacher from Massachusetts, called "The Force." You can access it on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhPQoVpVES4&list=PL8JqpkCp61R4zRltQHINdM-Mhl5b4gZhZ&index=7>

### Where can I find some MovieTalk Resources?

There are many types of video clips you can use for MovieTalk on the Internet, YouTube, and DVD's. Once you find one on YouTube, you will see other similar videos on the right side. While that is a great way to get started, please be sure that you view the video clips from start to end to be sure that they are appropriate for your students. (Just because it looks "kid-like" or "animated," does not always mean that it will be appropriate.)

Ideas to search for and to get started include video clip YouTube offerings, best TV commercials on Youtube, superbowl commercials, instructional videos on YouTube or WikiHow, cooking videos, movie trailers, and TV shows like Mr. Bean and I Love Lucy on YouTube.

Here are some specific examples to perhaps get you started:

1. *Plane* by Bird Box Studio at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cx2K0VBIQE4>
2. *iPad versus Paper* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR4mlLiyjYo>
3. *Boy's Best Friend - A Boy, A Dog, and a Puddle* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ta16hYqx7w>
4. *Happy Valentine's Day* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dy4euQFgOg>
5. *2015 Honda CR-V--Space for Dreams* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tu0RmNh3bGk>
6. *Alma* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irbFBgl0jhM>
7. *Mr. Bean--Food Shopping with Teddy* at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JF1FM-rh\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JF1FM-rh_s)
8. *"Ormie"* by Arc Productions at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xd63g3d8qOs>
9. *Frozen Movie Clip* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdC4DaYleQ&feature=youtu.be>
10. *Destiny* at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEKLEeY\\_WeQ&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEKLEeY_WeQ&feature=youtu.be)

Digital Storytelling and MovieTalk are two newer ways to incorporate storytelling into your world language classroom. These activities not

only generate interest, attention, and motivation for students, but they also incorporate 21st century technology skills and promote language acquisition. If the old adage that a “picture is worth a thousand words” is true, what is “Digital Storytelling” or “MovieTalk” worth in the world language classroom?

**For electronic access to the links in this article, please use the following link: <http://bit.ly/WLStorytelling>**

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Llama (*llama*) – Artwork created by Janie Seitz (grade 11), a Kennard-Dale High School student – submitted by Karen Snyder, Spanish teacher

**NECTFL SANS INC./MEAD  
LEADERSHIP FELLOW 2014**

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Last February 2014, I was honored to be awarded the SANS Inc./Mead Leadership Fellow in Boston, MA at the NECTFL Annual Conference. I had frequently read the emails and the signs at the PSMLA conferences about submitting a project for consideration, so I decided to go for it. My project, writing collaborative bilingual side-by-side books, has long been a dream of mine. I teach Spanish and teacher education at Kutztown University, and I also piloted our first course for Spanish for heritage learners. I have seen the results of teaching the heritage learners in a course for their own specialized needs as well as having mixed classes of both heritage learners and those learning Spanish as a second language. Watching them work together and sharing their gifts, strengths, and challenges gave me the idea for the project. In pairs, a heritage learner and a student learning Spanish work together to create a bilingual story in both English and Spanish. They may illustrate it themselves or they may ask a friend to help. After the hard copy is complete, each will narrate their language so that these books can be accessible online to the community.

I produced the prototype, *Fishes/Peces*, based on a poem I wrote when I was seven. One of my outstanding teacher candidates, Raquel Luis, who was born in Cuba and whose first language is Spanish, translated my poem. My husband, Cliff Clayton, illustrated it for me and we had a local print shop make the copies. Currently we are working on it so that it will have an ISBN number and can be accepted at libraries for circulation.

In addition, thirty copies were made for the Lebanon Rotary Club to be given out to young language learners at a literacy event. They are also planning to have more made up for a medical mission trip to the Dominican Republic in 2016. I could not be more excited about the trips my book has taken and will continue to take.

Meanwhile, my department chair, who also teaches a course in bilingualism, Dr. Christine Coleman Núñez, came up with the idea of our Spanish department adopting a first grade class in an area charter school with a predominance of Spanish-speakers. Each of these first graders

received a copy of the book when they came to visit the college students in this bilingualism class. Dr. Núñez also applied for a grant, and these bilingual books will again be shared with young learners in the community.

But my book was only the start of this project. There are currently three other books being created, and it is my hope that next semester we will have even more completed and also a few new books started by new pairs of language students. The project has even given me the idea of incorporating a service-learning element into the course on Children's Literature in Spanish that I am teaching in the fall.

It has not been easy getting the prototype to completion; my husband painted the illustrations based on a group effort of inspiration. The students working on their own bilingual books are quite resourceful. One of my former students, Lourdes Castillo, illustrated her book with lovely drawings. Another student is working with an art major who specializes in print making. And another student is a fantastic photographer. Sometimes the hardest part is getting an idea for the story, but once that is accomplished, I envision many more bilingual side-by-side books being completed for the community.

I am so grateful to PSMLA for believing in this project and for nominating me for the NECTFL SANS Inc./Mead Leadership Fellow. Being able to use the poem that I have carried inside my head for decades has been the thrill of a lifetime! However, completing this project, using our gifts collaboratively and creating with languages has definitely been one of the highlights of my career. These books not only inspire our college students to become lifelong learners and to use their creative gifts, but they transcend to all the children who are learning Spanish and/or English, and hopefully encourage them to love languages

and become future bilingual authors and artists!

#### **About the Award**

This scholarship is provided to support an individual in the development of a project that contributes to the foreign language teaching profession







and advances quality language instruction. The SANS, Inc./Mead program was created to develop future leaders for the profession at the state, regional, and national levels. It is sponsored by SANS, Inc., and we are grateful to

the company for its willingness to contribute so significantly to our profession and to NECTFL.

Educators of ALL LANGUAGES at ALL LEVELS are encouraged to apply to this program, designed to identify potential leaders in education and to support the development of their potential. Each scholarship recipient will be assigned a mentor with expertise in the area of that person's project, and NECTFL will facilitate virtual and, if possible, face-to-face meetings of the two. Applications must be submitted to NECTFL by a state association and must therefore be received by the state association's posted deadline.

#### 2014 Winners

Congratulations to Nathan Lutz, Kent Place School (NJ) and Nancy Zimmerman, Kutztown University (PA), on their selection as the 2014 SANS Inc./Mead Fellows.



NECTFL Chair Janel Lafond-Paquin (left) and past SANS Inc./Mead Committee Chair Amanda Seewald (right) congratulate Nathan Lutz and Nancy Zimmerman

**More Information on the Award is Available on the NECTFL Website** <http://www.nectfl.org/awards-sans-incmead-leadership-fellowships>

On the website, you will find an application overview, application forms and rubrics, examples of past Mead Fellows Projects, and a 51 minute informational webinar about the Mead Fellows Program.

## HOW AN ABSENT-MINDED TOAD CAN HELP LEARNERS TAKE LANGUAGE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING

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Have you ever gone to the supermarket and returned home without picking up the main items on your grocery list? Have you ever gone to a place where you feel overwhelmed, scared and excited all at the same time? That is what happened to a little toad in one of the favorite stories read by teacher candidates to the children at the SRU Child Care Center in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania.

*The Absent-Minded Toad* is a humorous tale written by Venezuelan author Javier Rondon. This rhythmic and colorful children's book is about a toad who goes to the market, spends all of his time mingling with vendors and customers, only to discover, when he comes home, that he didn't buy the items on his carefully organized list. He does, however, have a wonderful time hopping around town, which makes the journey absolutely worthwhile.

So, how does this absent-minded toad help learners take language beyond the classroom and into the community? By leaping out of a picture book onto a bright-colored rug right in the middle of a circle of preschoolers. This story of a trip to the market is a perfect metaphor for the initial teaching experience of these candidates jumping into a classroom full of children and coping with challenges like managing a class and teaching a foreign language for the very first time.

As educators who teach and mentor future Spanish teachers, we sometimes find it difficult to identify effective ways to extend the second language learning experience outside the walls of our classrooms. We know how tricky it is to teach "real language" in an environment where the communication and the language used is simulated and controlled. The Community Standard, the 5<sup>th</sup> C in ACTFL's Standards for Foreign Language Learning (ACTFL Standards, 2012) brings us an additional challenge of

connecting students with a community beyond the classroom in situations that also need to be controlled and initiated by the instructor.

As second language educators, we often see our creative juices run dry in our attempt to incorporate, into one semester, lessons or activities that take students' learning beyond the classroom, combining seemingly contradictory concepts such as life-long learning and personal enjoyment together. Though difficult, however, it is not totally impossible. One way to enable learners to experience aspects of community as they study the target language is through the concept of service learning.

Amidst the confusion new teachers and teacher candidates usually experience at the earlier stages of their careers, they can succeed just like the little toad in the story. Regardless of getting lost and forgetting the items on his list the little toad has a wonderful time at the public market, mingling with fellow customers and street vendors. Likewise, through well-structured service learning opportunities, teacher candidates are able to discern good methodology from faulty one, interact with children as well as discover the need for adaptability and flexibility all while keeping their jitters under control and having lots of fun. As one of the teacher candidates commented, "It was so scary at the beginning. I was so nervous because I didn't know what to expect. But it got definitely better as the days went by and I got more comfortable."

Simply stated, service learning is when students offer valuable services to a community organization which it would most likely not be able to enjoy otherwise. This relationship builds a bridge and a mutually beneficial alliance between academic departments at universities and the local institutions around them.

In the article, "Tales of Tutors: The Role of Narrative in Language Learning and Service-Learning," Susan Polansky et al. (2010) quote a definition of service learning from The Campus Compact that we have adopted in our program. This definition stresses the mutually beneficial aspects of service learning where students meet a need of the community organization while at the same time students' academic curriculum is enhanced through the practical application of their knowledge, the fostering of civic responsibility, and thorough reflection on the service experience.



In the example presented in this article, a lack of ethnic diversity and therefore a lack of local Hispanic community organizations led the Modern Languages and Cultures Department at Slippery Rock University in western Pennsylvania to contribute to the diversity of the area. This effort created a service learning opportunity in which teacher candidates pursuing a Secondary Education degree gave Spanish lessons to children at the local pre-school. The teacher candidates mostly used children's books originally written in Spanish or bilingual versions combined with other activities to teach their lessons.

For many of the children at the Slippery Rock Child Care Center, this experience was their first time exploring Spanish and its culture. Incorporating quality children's books with fun stories, colorful characters, and humorous twists into the lessons helped maintain the children's attention and engagement, and it was an effective way to experience the target language in context. The fantasy of the stories, the language, and the aesthetics shared in the books sparked curiosity in the young learners which may result in a future desire for more input and a newly-acquired interest and awareness of the foreign culture and language. Even the child care providers at the Center benefited from the lessons as a teacher candidate pointed out, "The teachers and aides really got into it. They learned the vocabulary and practiced with the kids when we were not there."

For the teacher candidates, the service learning experience provided an opportunity to practice their teaching skills and polish their language proficiency. Added to student teaching and observations, service learning is another opportunity to learn how to be a teacher in the field.

The name of this class with the service learning component is "Hispanic Children's Literature for the PK-6 Classroom." The experience is organized as follows.

The first 6 weeks of the semester:

- Teacher candidates read and learn different genres of children's literature such as legends, fables, theatre and poems that are written originally in Spanish by authors from diverse regions of the Spanish speaking world.
- Teacher candidates discuss ways in which Hispanic children's literature reflects Hispanic history and culture.

- Teacher candidates learn strategies and practice reading aloud.
- Teacher candidates design and test lesson plans and activities within the class.

The second 6 weeks of the semester:

- Teacher candidates prepare lesson plans in small groups (2 or 3 depending on size of class) according to the following structure:
  - One book per lesson;
  - Two activities before reading the book to introduce the topic of the book
  - Special reading instructions and comprehensive questions about the text and illustrations;
  - Two complementary activities to explore more the topic of the book or the objective of the lesson.
- As a class, all teacher candidates and professor visit the pre-school classroom for the teaching session. Each group of teacher candidates is in charge of two 40-minute teaching sessions to present their book and their lesson to the children.
- While teacher candidates in charge of the lesson are presenting to the children, the rest are observing the implementation of the lesson..
- After the teaching session is over, all teacher candidates and professor return to the classroom for the reflection session.
- At home, teacher candidates are required to enter their personal comments, opinions, and observations into a discussion board in D2L for further documentation of their reflections.

The reflection aspect of service learning is one of the most valuable parts of the entire experience. It is at this stage when students can look back, evaluate, and adjust - essential steps to learning. At the reflection stage of this particular service learning opportunity, student teachers were able to:

- evaluate their own limitations as teachers
- collaborate with peers/colleagues about best practices
- self-test their own skills in the target language as they presented lessons that required certain levels of proficiency.

- become aware of the many challenges of teaching Spanish.
- create strategies on how to overcome those challenges.

One of the tasks student teachers had to accomplish while teaching at the SRU Child Care Center was to incorporate culture in each lesson. At the reflection stage, student teachers expressed the difficulty of this task. One of the students commented, "It was so hard teaching culture, but it was so good that we had to do it because if we hadn't been stretched, I probably would have not done it."

In this case, student teachers had a chance to experience first-hand the challenge that every foreign language teacher encounters while trying to incorporate culture in their classrooms on a consistent basis. They also realize that when facing a difficult task the only way through is to push themselves to find creative alternatives.

Like the absent-minded toad from the story, at the end our teacher candidates were able to interact with children and educators to discover the real challenges of instruction. If only to see the learning involved in this initial teaching practice, service learning constitutes an absolutely valuable experience. Teacher candidates, like the little toad in the story, can now sit back and put their feet up to enjoy the satisfaction of a job well done and of learning while they served. Even if at first it was disorienting and a bit frightening, they, indeed, had a wonderful time, which made the journey absolutely worthwhile.

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**NEW TEACHER EVALUATION SYSTEM IN PA**

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This year I had to adapt to a new paradigm in World Language teaching: teaching to five tests. My students' scores on these Student Learning Objectives (SLO) determine 35% of my value as an educator in the state of Pennsylvania. This year, my state government views me as data teaching data to data. Previously my school district, without state involvement, valued me as a veteran teacher opening the door to life-long learning of another language. I was also valued for safely and lovingly nurturing children through the pitfalls of adolescence and through the maze of executive functions needed for high school success.

Of course I know that my math, science and language arts colleagues have been under pressure to teach to the tests. They have envied my class when they have heard my students singing songs and illustrating imaginary families and monsters with strange numbers of body parts. I just naively believed that art, music, family consumer science, physical education, and world language were the last, much needed hold-outs that could teach children first and curriculum second at the middle school level.

At a recent in-service, a smooth-talking-but-never-taught-school presenter assured us he had a feeling that the tide will turn.

I disagree.

In my opinion, once state governments mandate local school budgets to pay for software products mandated for evaluations, for tests, and for remedial-help for tests, it will be impossible for a politician to refuse the software companies' contributions. All elected officials will perpetuate the money-making scheme masquerading as education reform and fleecing the school districts of funds that could go to smaller class sizes and oh, things that actually help students to learn and think more creatively.

I shudder at the process of training students to score on a test so that we "earn" a good rating and turn a blind eye to the opportunity cost of what we could have been teaching them to communicate, to circumlocute, to think in another language, and to grasp another's perspective based on culture.

So where does this leave us? It depends. Maybe you are one of the lucky ones who created your own tests? Maybe your school district determined you only had to give only two tests? Maybe your administrator created a series of nightmares with no input from experienced classroom teachers? Maybe you met as a department, wrote the tests, and then the tests were changed while the administration heralds the tests as being teacher-created? Maybe your administration created good tests, but you still have to change your teaching to ensure student success.

If your tests were no big deal, count yourself lucky, thank your administration, and carry on.

For the rest of us, who just completed our first or second year of high stakes testing, or for those of us about to start the process this year, let me share what worked well for me and my Spanish One students.

- 1. Wisely plan your timing of the SLOs**
- 2. Work backwards and incorporate a little each day leading up to the SLO**
- 3. Use technology to practice for the SLO**

First look at your students' annual schedule and plan accordingly. In my school district, we have to give five uniform tests across all languages: a midterm, two speaking assessments, and two writing assessments. The natural assumption was to assign the remaining four one per quarter.

Some teachers did so, but I planned differently. Why? Because when our students take the PSSAs for two weeks in April, and then the Keystone in May, and five SLOs in four other classes, they suffer from test fatigue. I don't blame them, do you?

So I planned and gave the last SLO on the first day of the fourth marking period, the week before PSSAs.

Our level one students had to read the book, *Pobre Ana*, and write a total of fifteen sentences on the main character, on a summary of the book, on the lessons learned, and on the cultural differences between countries. In October, we started reading the book a paragraph a day as the pre-class. The students were given a weekly sheet with a column for unknown words and a column to illustrate the paragraph. I collected the sheets

on Fridays for a reading grade.

The students read and illustrated as I checked homework and took attendance. As we progressed, I scanned some of their illustrations on to pages of my Daily Tech Guide and started practicing describing the main character and the summary of the book. This took about five minutes from the rest of my instructional delivery. When I was out for a few days I left them the remaining two chapters to complete with a substitute teacher who speaks Spanish. My students found it too boring and told me that the paragraph a day worked better.

Once we were finished, I used our Google classroom and Textivate to help them practice writing. They wrote their practice essay and submitted it to our Google classroom, so I could more easily make corrections, sometimes even as they were writing! Then they used their student log-in to copy their corrected version into Textivate and practice writing. The Textivate sequence I find most helpful is:

1. Tiles of their sentences to put in order.
2. Fill in the blank words
3. Fill in the missing vowels
4. Fill in the missing letters

My students all agreed that Textivate sharpened their writing skills. They had two days of practicing with our computers and felt confident in their writing.

What about the first four SLOs? Quite frankly, my level one students didn't know enough the first quarter to complete the SLO on writing a letter of introduction and asking questions about favorite hobbies and pastimes so it was given during the second quarter. As we learned how to ask and answer questions about age, birthdays, hometowns, and personal likes and dislikes, a slide was added to my Daily Tech Guide so that their daily warm-up included the pieces of the SLO months before they actually did the SLO. Immediately before the first SLO, we used Google classroom to facilitate my correcting their practice essays and Textivate to practice writing accurately.

Once we finished the first SLO, I kept the slides that would help them with the mid-term as part of their daily warm-up. We started preparing for the second SLO, orally comparing our class

schedules with class schedules from different Spanish-speaking countries. Immediately before the speaking assessment, I signed up for our Chromebook cart and utilized the recording app so that the students could hear themselves compare and describe two schedules. If your computers do not have recording capabilities, some teachers let students use their phones to record themselves. At first they struggle to hear themselves, but it is a good habit for them to develop as I hope they will eventually take the AP exam and have to record themselves.

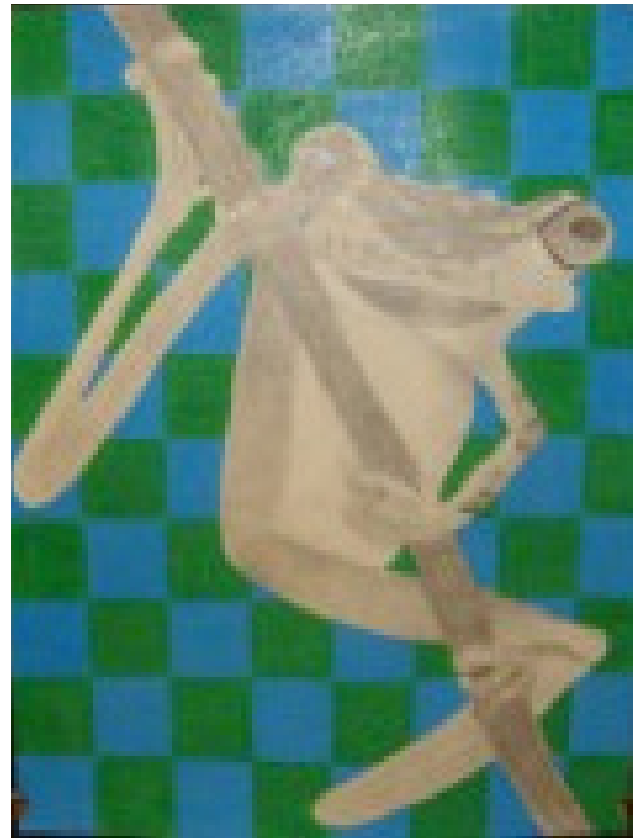
The third SLO, the midterm, was pretty much business as usual and I increased the daily warm-up to encompass most of the mid-term topics. My students had three SLOs in the second quarter, but they were still excited about learning and didn't appear to be test-fatigued until the mid-terms.

The fourth SLO was another speaking assessment identifying pictures of breakfast foods and beverages, the countries the foods are from, and whether the students think they would like the foods and beverages. For me, the dilemma was that I usually teach high-interest foods in May as the students begin to play more spring sports and stay out later with extended sunshine. Again, I taught one a day as our closure activity. I found twelve foods and beverages and put their pictures in a big grid. Each day we would identify the picture, write the name of the country it came from, and watch a three minute video found on the internet about how to prepare the item. As we progressed, I would include the previous items on slides and we would practice asking their partners to name the item, identify its origins, and ask if they would like it.

By the time we had finished the last one in February, they were ready for the SLO even though I had been teaching family members and conjugating for the bulk of the lesson. We spent one day using Quizlet, where students matched the picture of the breakfast item with its name in one game, and its country of origin in another game.

By having my prepared Daily Tech Guide directing us to quickly do a little bit each day, I entered PSSA season and the last quarter free to teach and test using my professional judgment and not just teaching to mandatory testing. With students beginning to wind down, I could motivate them with some of my best teaching.

With recent changes, there is a certain amount of absurdity in test scores that we teachers need to accommodate with performances so that we are then free to genuinely connect to and educate our students. It is not just our job, but our sacred obligation.



Frog (*rana*) – Artwork created by Abby Crosby (grade 10), a Kennard-Dale High School student – submitted by Karen Snyder, Spanish teacher



## EXPRESSING EMOTIONAL REACTIONS BASED ON A SPANISH TRAVEL REVIEW WEBSITE

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For a unit on traveling to Spain, level IV students “visit” the capital city through various photos, videos, and webquests. They also investigate other cities in Spain that are popular with tourists and produce an interactive poster with recommendations for the top attractions in those cities; this allows for review of the subjunctive with verbs of influence.

A grammar concept that is studied in this unit is the use of the present subjunctive with verbs of emotion. This is done by reviewing hotels in Madrid. In preparation, the teacher visits TripAdvisor España ([www.tripadvisor.es](http://www.tripadvisor.es)) and views the online reviews left by previous lodgers at various hotels. The site is authentic, easy to navigate, visually appealing, and allows for searches based on rating, price, services, and distance from main attractions. Make an effort to choose hotels that have very high rankings with many unique amenities as well as those that are rated poorly so that students view a range of quality.

After the teacher provides a sample response, students work in pairs or teams to review five hotels the teacher has chosen. So that students can see the responses in real time, we use our iPad cart and a shared Google Sheet which is projected. A table is created which has one hotel name and hyperlink per column and a team name in each row so that each space corresponds with one comment per team per hotel. All students can see all of the other groups’ responses; this allows stronger groups to avoid repeating what other groups have commented and weaker groups to use other responses as models. It also helps to keep students on task as they see how many comments other groups have posted in relation to their own.

This activity can also be done in a computer lab or with laptops with the same Google Sheet. If computers are not available, the teacher can print out the reviews and students can use sticky notes to leave their comments. If additional scaffolding is needed, the teacher can provide a list of potential emotional reaction starters for students to choose from.

Sample responses include:

- *Me sorprende que haya cucarachas en la habitación.*
- *No me gusta que el baño esté sucio.*
- *Me encanta que el hotel sea futurista y que tenga una piscina moderna.*

Following this portion of the lesson, the teacher already has the comments displayed and can point out exemplary opinions as well as note any common errors. I avoid correcting mistakes that are not related to the current vocabulary and grammar topic unless they interfere with comprehension. I do not grade this assignment, as I see it as a formative assessment as students will have graded opportunities to express their opinions on other travel situations on a formal test later in the unit. However, a rubric could certainly be developed to assess the use of hotel vocabulary, appropriate formation of emotional reactions with the subjunctive, and on-task behaviors during collaboration.

One downfall of this activity is that students often base their opinions primarily on the photo galleries and price rather than reading the actual comments written in Spanish. To avoid this, the teacher can have students cite specific comments they have read by writing a first sentence with “According to / *Según*” a certain commentator and then posting the reaction to that guest’s experience.

Students enjoy this activity as there are many unique hotels in Madrid that surprise them. Additionally, I attempt to find hotels that are near the famous sites we have studied so they make those connections. As a summarizing activity, we compare the hotels to those we have in our community as well as debate the amenities that are the most and least important to us when traveling.



## A CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION (CBI) LESSON PLAN FOR CHINESE LEVEL 2

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### I. Content:

**A. Lesson's Content-based Theme:** Biology -  
Animal Categories

**B. Functional objectives:**

SWBAT identify and describe animals.  
SWBAT categorize animals based on the Chinese characters.

**C. Performance objectives:**

SWBAT ask and answer questions about personal animal preferences.  
SWBAT talk about the features of a certain category of animals.

**D. Grammatical objectives**

SWBAT use interrogative sentences  
SWBAT express their personal animal preferences by using “喜欢(like)” and “不喜欢(dislike).”

**E. Vocabulary objectives:**

SWBAT recognize vocabulary of animals, including:

- 1) learned vocabulary: 狗(the dog), 猫(the cat), 鸡(the chicken), 鸽子(the pigeon), 蝴蝶(the butterfly), 金鱼(the goldfish)
- 2) new vocabulary: 熊猫(the panda), 狮子(the lion), 乌鸦(the crow), 老鹰(the eagle), 蚊子(the mosquito), 蜜蜂(the bee), 鲨鱼(the shark)

**F. Cultural objectives:**

SWBAT know that some Chinese characters evolved from pictures.

**G. Standards addressed:**

1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 2.1; 3.1; 4.1; 5.1; 5.2

### II. Learner Description

1. 4-6th grade (9-11 years old)
2. Novice and Intermediate Low
3. Students have learned some animals (狗(the dog), 猫(the cat), 鸡(the chicken), 鸽子(the pigeon), 蝴蝶(the butterfly), 金鱼(the goldfish)) and vocabulary of colors/ numbers/body parts previously.
4. Known Sentence Patterns: This/That is...; I have/don't have...; I can/can't...; I like/dislike...
5. Students can read all the Pinyin and some Chinese characters.

### III. Materials

**Technology tool:** a Smartboard that contains visuals of new vocabulary, Chinese characters and Pinyin; worksheets for activities.

### IV. Activities:

#### Day 1:

#### A. Warm-up

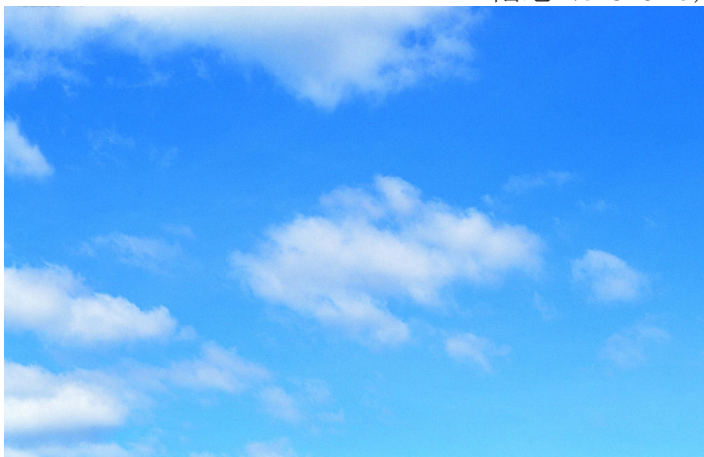
Review some animals that students have already known (i.e. 狗(the dog), 猫(the cat), 鸡(the chicken), 鸽子(the pigeon), 蝴蝶(the butterfly), 金鱼(the goldfish)) and facilitate students to help those animals “go home” based on their background knowledge by putting animals into the following four pictures of places.



陆地 (the land)



花丛 (flowering shrubs)



天空 (the sky)



水域 (the water)

The teacher can engage the learners and introduce the content theme by telling students that we are going to achieve an intriguing goal today: "Today, we are going to make friends with some animals, but they are getting lost. We are going to help the animals go back to their home." The students will know how to categorize animals by observing the common features between animals. In order to better guide students to categorize and build connections between the animals they are going to learn and the animals they have known, questions like "Does anyone remember what this animal is? We learned these animals in the last lesson." and "Does this animal live in the water?" are frequently asked. Additionally, the students can be asked to work in pairs to help these animals go home and share the results with the class. The vocabulary that the students have learned, such as animals, colors, and body parts are also reviewed by TPR and pictures to recall their memories.

### B. Incorporate Chinese Characters

Review all the Chinese characters of these animals and assist students to summarize the similarities

(see the examples below) in the Chinese characters of the animals in the same "home", and introduce the evolution of the Chinese characters in the meantime. The animals that the teacher is going to teach have some obvious similar characteristics compared to the animals that the students have learned.

猫 (the cat)、狗 (the dog) 犛



鸡 (the chicken)、鸽子 (the pigeon) 鸟



蝴蝶 (the butterfly) 虫



金鱼 (the goldfish) 鱼





### C. Language Input

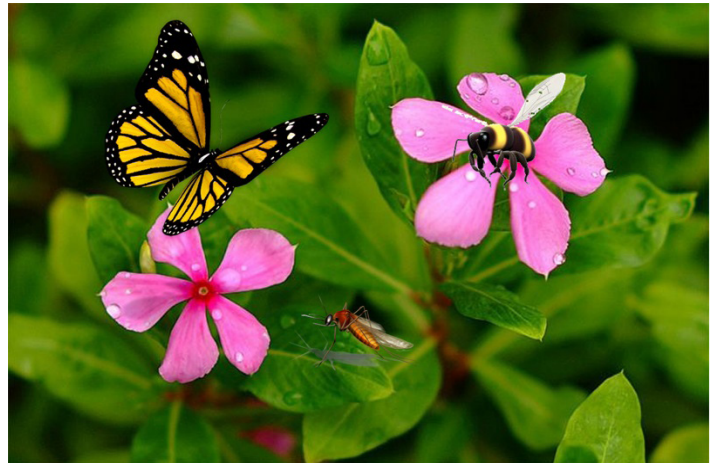
Teach new vocabulary of animals (i.e. 熊猫(the panda), 狮子(the lion), 乌鸦(the crow), 老鹰(the eagle), 蚊子(the mosquito), 蜜蜂(the bee), 鲨鱼(the shark)) as well as Chinese characters and categorize the animals at the same time. To make the input comprehensible, the teacher will present the vocabulary visually on the Smartboard and on the handout. Presenting pictures of the animals for the students to strengthen the connections between the pronunciations and images. When it comes to TPR, the teacher can imitate the animals' features to make the students memorize the certain animal's characteristic or movement or sound. More importantly, the teacher use the evolution and structures of Chinese characters to guide students involve into the academic content. The teacher should also constantly use comprehension checks such as yes/no questions and ask students to repeat or follow TPR commands.

### D. Content Input

Introduce the categories of animals living in the same "home" and guide students to summarize the similarities/features of each animal category by using following questions: Do they fly? Do they have fur/feather? Do they lay eggs? How many legs do they have? At the end of the class, students will be able to draw the conclusions. For example, mammals have fur and four legs, and they don't fly or lay eggs.



哺乳动物 (mammals)



昆虫 (insects)



鸟类 (birds)



鱼类 (fishes)

## Day 2

## A. Pre-IGA (Information Gap Activity)

The teacher can give students handouts (see the appendix Handout) and show them how to use the handout on the Smartboard. After all the materials are taught to the students, the teacher is going to state that the main goal of today, which is to find out, describe and categorize the animals that your classmates like/dislike. After modeling for the students, the teacher can ask two volunteer students to show how to do the activity with a partner in front of the class, and the teacher instructs them by their side. There are four questions presented on the handout. The students are assigned to ask one of the classmates for his/her favorite animal or the animal that he/she dislikes by using these four questions randomly to narrow down the range. They will record the results from the classmates in the following chart, which is designed to have four columns: Name, The animal that he/she likes/dislikes, Category, and Home.

## B. During IGA

The teacher can pair up the students and ask each pair to categorize what animal their partners like/dislike. In order to make the whole task more authentic, the teacher can have the students imagine that they are going to visit the zoo. In each pair, one could be a tour guide and the other one could be a visitor in the zoo. Before going to the zoo, the students who act as tour guides are asked to know their partner's animal preferences so that they are able to plan the best route in the zoo. For broadening the students' knowledge, they are going to know not only their partner's animal preferences but also what categories the animals belong to. Each student will have a handout with charts for recording information. The teacher can walk around the class to observe students' performance and provide appropriate assistance when they need help. The teacher should also ask some questions to have students compare, analyze, synthesize, summarize, or hypothesize with the information that they have gathered in the IGA by talking with their partner. For example, "what is your partner's favorite animal?", "which category does the animal belong to?" or "can you tell me the characteristics/features of your partner's favorite animal?"

名字 Name	喜欢的动物 The animal that he/she likes	类别 Category	动物园 Home
		<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物 mammals <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟类 birds <input type="checkbox"/> 鱼类 fishes <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫 insects	<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物区 mammals park <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟园 birds park <input type="checkbox"/> 水族馆 aquarium <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫馆 insectarium

## C. Post IGA Follow-up

名字 Name	最不喜欢的动物 The animal that he/she dislike	类别 Category	动物园 Home
		<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物 mammals <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟类 birds <input type="checkbox"/> 鱼类 fishes <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫 insects	<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物区 mammals park <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟园 birds park <input type="checkbox"/> 水族馆 aquarium <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫馆 insectarium



### C. Post IGA Follow-up

The teacher can clap hands to inform students that the activity is over. Then students will be asked one by one to present the information they have gathered to the class by saying “\_\_\_ likes/ dislikes \_\_\_. It flies/doesn’t fly. It has/doesn’t have fur/feather. It lays/doesn’t lay eggs. It has \_\_\_ legs. \_\_\_ belongs to \_\_\_ (mammals, fishes, birds, or insects), and its home is \_\_\_.” If there is more time, the teacher can mismatch the animals to the wrong categories deliberately to see whether the students are able to correct it or not. Stating the wrong description of the animals intentionally aims to see how well the students understand the animals. Other than that, students can be presented with pictures of animals that they do not know or some Chinese characters of animals (see the appendix Worksheet) to have them predict the category that these animals belong to.

### D. Evaluation

The teacher can give the students TALK (Target language, Accuracy, Listening, Kindness) scores when observing their performance during IGA by judging if they make an effort to talk in the target language, if they are accurate for their language proficiency level, if they listen to the teacher and their classmates, if they participate well in the activity and if they treat the teacher and classmates politely.

### V. Self-reflection:

This lesson plan that we have designed for teaching Chinese as a foreign language integrates the following key points in terms of the theory of foreign language teaching.

1. **Input:** Krashen describes input as the subconscious acquisition which occurs when the language learner is experiencing the “i+1.” The input hypothesis indicates that, as language teachers, the teacher should neither give too much new knowledge nor ask students do work which is too simple for them. And the teacher needs to create an interesting, low-anxiety atmosphere for the students if the teacher wants to input language effectively. In this lesson, the teacher uses visuals, gestures, familiar vocabulary, TPR to make the input comprehensible.
2. **Output:** Swain’s output hypothesis pays more attention on the learner’s performance. The teacher needs to encourage students to use the target language because the output

could be seen as the feedback of our teaching and the teacher could help students improve their target language according to their performance. In this lesson, students are given chance to ask and answer questions, talk with a partner, record information and present in the class.

3. **Interaction:** According to Long, the learners acquire language by interacting with other speakers to get mutual comprehension. Teachers providing comprehensive input would help students acquire more language knowledge especially when communicating. It requires active conversational participants and the learner intake by negotiation of meanings. In this lesson, the teacher uses comprehension checks such as yes/no questions, forced choice question, to help students negotiate meanings.
4. **Communicative competence:** According to Celce-Murcia et al., communicative competence develops in the learner’s brain. The way they depict it is like a pyramid which has the discourse competence in the middle as the core that interacts with sociocultural competence, linguistic competence and actional competence on each angle. And the pyramid is surrounded by strategic competence which helps people communicate smoothly and compensates for deficiencies in the other competencies. Hall describes interactional competence which develops within real communication. When people have meaningful, purposeful conversations they acquire the TL from the conversational exchanges. In the IGA, students need to figure out what animal the partner like/dislike the most by asking questions. That requires communicative competence.
5. **ZPD:** Vygotsky describes the learner’s ZPD as the gap between the actual developmental level and the potential developmental level where the learner could solve problem with others’ guidance or assistance. Mediation in the ZPD is the tools that the learners use to help their learning, understanding and defining the knowledge. In this lesson, the teacher scaffolds students to do the tasks by using the Smartboard and handout.

\*Please see a modeling lesson video on Youtube. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcteO9QYWbU&feature=youtu.be>

## VI. Appendix

## A. Handout

在去动物园之前，我们要用下面四个问题问出一个同学喜欢和不喜欢的动物，然后填上他们的名字还有他们喜欢/不喜欢的动物，想一下动物的类别还有动物们住的家，然后打勾。接着，我们就可以去看大家想看的动物啦！最后记得用总结里的句子说出同学喜欢/不喜欢的动物喔！

名字 Name	最喜欢的动物 The animal that he/she likes	类别 Category	动物园 Home
		<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物 mammals <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟类 birds <input type="checkbox"/> 鱼类 fishes <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫 insects	<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物区 mammals park <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟园 birds park <input type="checkbox"/> 水族馆 aquarium <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫 馆 insectarium

Before entering the zoo, everyone is required to ask one of the classmates about what animal he/she likes/dislikes by randomly using four questions below to narrow down the range, and then fill out the form with your results. Based on your records, you have to determine what class and home this animal belongs to by checking the box in front of the best choice. After gathering the completed sheets from you, we can plan the best route to visit the zoo for the purpose of saving time so that we will have enough time to move to the next spot. Remember to summarize the animal that your classmate likes/dislikes by using the sentence type presented on the bottom.

名字 Name	最不喜欢的动物 The animal that he/she dislike	类别 Category	动物园 Home
		<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物 mammals <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟类 birds <input type="checkbox"/> 鱼类 fishes <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫 insects	<input type="checkbox"/> 哺乳动物区 mammals park <input type="checkbox"/> 鸟园 birds park <input type="checkbox"/> 水族馆 aquarium <input type="checkbox"/> 昆虫 馆 insectarium

## 动物(Animals)

我们学过的动物(animals we know): 猫(cat), 狗(dog), 鸡(chicken), 鸽子(pigeon), 蝴蝶(butterfly), 金鱼(goldfish)

我们今天学的动物(animals we learned): 熊猫(panda), 狮子(lion), 鲨鱼(shark), 乌鸦(crow), 老鹰(eagle), 蚊子(mosquito), 蜜蜂(bee)

## 问题(Questions):

它(你喜欢/不喜欢的动物)会飞吗?

Does it (the animal that you like/dislike) fly?

它(你喜欢/不喜欢的动物)有毛(羽毛)吗?

Does it (the animal that you like/dislike) have fur (feather)?

它(你喜欢/不喜欢的动物)生蛋吗?

Does it (the animal that you like/dislike) lay eggs?

它(你喜欢/不喜欢的动物)有几只脚?

How many legs does it (the animal that you like/dislike) have?

## 总结(Conclusion):

\_\_\_\_喜欢/不喜欢的动物是\_\_\_\_, 它会/不会飞, 它有/没有毛(羽毛), 他生/不生蛋, 它有\_\_\_\_只脚, 它是\_\_\_\_类, 它住在\_\_\_\_。

\_\_\_\_ likes/dislikes \_\_\_\_ . It flies/doesn't fly. It has/doesn't have fur (feather). It lays/doesn't lay eggs. It has \_\_\_\_ legs. \_\_\_\_ belongs to \_\_\_\_ (mammals, fishes, birds, and insects), and its home is \_\_\_\_.

\*FYI- The original handout will be all in Chinese characters and Pinyin.

B. Worksheet

Animal Kingdom

Please take a look at the Chinese characters below, and fill in the charts according to your observation.

*FYI: The English meaning for each character is given in the parentheses.*

猫 (cat)   蜂 (bee)   鲨 (shark)   鸽 (pigeon)  
狼 (wolf)   鸭 (duck)   鲸 (whale)   狐 (fox)  
鲤 (carp)   猪 (pig)   狗 (dog)   鹰 (eagle)  
蚕 (silkworm)   蝶 (butterfly)   鸡 (chicken)

Task 1. How many times do the components “犹”, “鱼”, “虫” and “鸟” occur in the characters?

	Times	English meanings of the characters with this component
犹		
鱼		
虫		
鸟		

Task 2. According to the chart in task 1, can you conclude what the components “犹”, “鱼”, “虫” and “鸟” refer to respectively?

Component	Predictive meaning
犹	
鱼	
虫	
鸟	

**AN EASY WAY OF TEACHING  
PRONUNCIATION IN ELEMENTARY LEVEL  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES:  
THE METHOD OF iCPRs**

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### Introduction

Whenever we meet a nonnative speaker, a foreign accent is usually the first hint that we are not talking to a native speaker of the language. Flege (1984) found that, sometimes, short samples of only 30 milliseconds are enough for native speakers to detect nonnative speech. Moreover, pronunciation has been shown to play an important role in effective communication (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Duppenthaler, 1991). Yet, pronunciation training is frequently neglected in the foreign language classroom.

In this article, I will discuss reasons why pronunciation training is often not addressed in the classroom and suggest a solution to the problems behind these reasons. I then present a study conducted with beginner learners of German that shows the method of pronunciation training suggested in this paper is effective and that students enjoy the exercises. Finally, I will discuss how this method can easily be used in any foreign language classroom.

### Background

#### Why pronunciation training is important

In their textbook on pronunciation instruction, Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) write "there is a threshold level of pronunciation for nonnative speakers of English; if they fall below this threshold level, they will have oral communication problems no matter how excellent and extensive their control of English grammar and vocabulary might be" (p. 8). Moreover, Duppenthaler (1991) points to the fact that listeners often assume that L2 speakers with a marked accent have a very limited language ability and even an inferior mental ability, which is a clear disadvantage in situations such as political and business negotiations. Thus, it is not enough to teach our students foreign language grammar and vocabulary, but it is also important to give them the chance to improve their pronunciation of the foreign language through targeted practice. Previous research has further shown that if pronunciation errors are not addressed, learners' pronunciation does not improve on its own

(Botero, 2011; Roccamo, 2014), not even in immersion or study abroad contexts (Trofimovich & Baker, 2006). Therefore, to give our students the best chance to communicate in the foreign language, we need to include pronunciation training in the curriculum.

#### Why pronunciation training is often neglected in the classroom

Despite its importance for effective communication of meaning, pronunciation training is often neglected in foreign language classrooms. Several reasons for this phenomenon are named in the research (Derwing, 2013; Foote, Holtby, & Derwing, 2011; O'Brien, 2004):

1. Teachers do not want to single out their students in front of the entire class. Correcting someone's pronunciation mistakes can sometimes appear a little harsher than just reminding them of, for example, a correct verb conjugation. This in turn could make the student self-conscious about speaking in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, teachers might decide not to point out their students' pronunciation errors in front of the entire class.
2. Teachers often report that they do not feel prepared to teach pronunciation because they were not given the chance to take a phonology class or pronunciation pedagogy class during their teacher training. Thus, they sometimes are unsure about how to address their students' particular problems in pronunciation.
3. Sometimes, there is simply no time to focus on pronunciation practice in the classroom. In a full curriculum and system of standardized tests, it often seems more important to teach grammar and vocabulary in the classroom, leaving no time to address pronunciation.

#### Are there easy ways of teaching pronunciation despite these reasons?

Yes! The method of pronunciation training investigated in this study solves all three of the problems mentioned above. In applying the method of innovative Cued Pronunciation Readings (iCPRs, see also Tanner & Landon, 2009), learners receive pronunciation training in the form of Microsoft PowerPoint units that every student can access from a home or library computer (for details see Materials section below). Thus, this type of pronunciation training can be



assigned as homework and students work on it alone. This allows every student to work on their pronunciation without being singled out in front of the entire class and it does not take away valuable class time. The units are easy to prepare (see suggestions below) and they can easily be shared among colleagues so that teachers who do not feel comfortable teaching pronunciation can still provide their students with a great way to practice their foreign language pronunciation. An important feature of *iCPRs* is that the teacher does not have to give feedback to the students. The students improve their pronunciation simply by working through the units at their own pace and practicing with the recordings provided in each unit. Assigning this type of pronunciation practice as homework does not cause extra work for the teacher and it can be assigned by teachers who would not be comfortable giving specific feedback on the students' pronunciation skills.

### **Perception or production training?**

In the field of research on pronunciation training, it has been established that perception precedes production. This means that second language learners must first learn to correctly perceive a foreign sound before they can accurately produce it. Often when hearing a foreign sound, learners assimilate the sounds' features to a sound that is part of their native phonetic inventory and therefore cannot hear the difference. By training them to perceive the difference, however, we lay the groundwork to allow them to produce the sound more accurately (Flege, 1995; Thomson, 2011). Some studies have even shown that perception training alone is enough to improve learners' pronunciation (Bradlow et al., 1997; Lambacher et al., 2005). Pronunciation training in foreign language classrooms should therefore always start with exercises that train the perception of the target sound before the learners are encouraged to produce the new sound.

### **Comprehensibility and accentedness**

A number of previous studies have investigated whether second language learners can even attain a perfect native-like pronunciation in a foreign language. It has been shown that while this is occasionally possible, it is usually not the case (Bongaerts et al., 1997; Flege, Munro, & MacKay, 1995). Therefore, in pronunciation pedagogy, native-like attainment of the foreign language is no longer the goal (Levis, 2005). Instead, the goal is to improve

learners' comprehensibility and accentedness. Comprehensibility is defined as "a listener's perception of how difficult it is to understand an utterance" (Derwing & Munro, 2005, p. 385) and accentedness is defined as "a listener's perception of how different a speaker's accent is from that of the L1 community" (Derwing & Munro, 2005, p. 385). Improving a learner's comprehensibility makes communication with an interlocutor much easier and thereby generally more successful. Improving a learner's accentedness makes him or her stand out less as a foreigner and can impact the interlocutor's attitude towards the speaker (Munro, 2003). Thus, when investigating whether a method of pronunciation training is effective, we usually do not measure how native-like the learner's utterances are, but whether they improve on measures of comprehensibility and accentedness through the training.

The study presented below investigates whether the pronunciation of learners of foreign language German improves on measures of comprehensibility and accentedness through the method of *iCPR* units.

### **Methodology**

In this section, I summarize the method used for this study. This includes a description of the participants, materials, research procedure, and analyses.

***Participants:*** This study was conducted in two beginner German classes at Penn State University. All participants were undergraduate students and volunteered to participate in the study. 15 students were enrolled in the experimental group that received the pronunciation training (mean age: 20.75 years) and 7 students were enrolled in the control group that received no pronunciation training (mean age: 20.14 years). None of the students had prior knowledge of German before signing up for this course and all reported English to be their native language. Both classes were taught by a native speaker of German.

***Materials:*** The materials consisted of two *iCPR* units. The first unit trained the perception of the German vowels 'ü' and 'u' and the second unit trained the production of 'ü'. Both units came in the form of Microsoft PowerPoint presentations that the students could download and access at home or on library computers. Each unit was designed to take the students 10-15 minutes to complete as homework. In the perception unit, the students listened to native speaker recordings

of different words and had to say which words contained the vowels 'ü' or 'u'. They received automated feedback on the accuracy of their answers. In the production unit, the students first received explicit instructions on how to produce the front rounded vowel 'ü' and then had to practice repeating words containing 'ü', modeling their production after native speaker recordings provided in the unit. In the end, students had to record themselves for all the words they practiced throughout the unit and submit this recording to their teacher, but they did not receive corrective feedback on their recordings. Figure 1 shows the beginning of the production unit for the 'ü'-sound. Both units in their entirety can be accessed under the following link: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qsdpkvhvpdydhceo/AACFJev61SczOcRz6orQwh6Fa?dl=0>.

In addition to the iCPR units, a pretest, a posttest, and a feedback questionnaire were administered. For the pre- and posttest, students had to read a list of words and two short paragraphs. The tests were identical in content but the items were randomized. They were also designed as PowerPoint units and could be completed at home or on the university library computers. The feedback questionnaire contained questions to assess how much students enjoyed working with the iCPR units and whether they found them valuable.

**PART OF A SAMPLE iCPR UNIT ON <ü>**












1. 	2. 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yesterday, you trained your ear in distinguishing German ,ü' and ,i' as well as German ,ü' and ,u'.</li> <li>The better you can identify the German ,ü' when you hear it, the better you will be able to pronounce it yourself.</li> <li>That's why today, we'll practice your production of ,ü'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first important thing to know is that the sound Germans make when they say ,ü' has no equivalent in English.</li> <li>That means, it is a new sound that you have to learn from scratch.</li> <li>For your mouth this means that it's not used to producing this sound and you need to actively control what your lips and tongue are doing to arrive at the right sound.</li> </ul>
3. 	4. 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To produce this sound, pucker your lips as if to whistle, hold them in this position, and say ee.</li> <li>This should sound something like: </li> <li>Make sure you really round your lips a lot. You can even whistle a little first to make sure you really round your lips as much as you can.</li> <li>No, you do not look stupid! You are trying hard to get better at a foreign language. Two thumbs up for this from NPH: </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Here is what is happening in your mouth when you produce ,ü':               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your tongue is in the front of your mouth                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(go from saying ee to saying oo as in who. You will feel how your tongue retracts)</li> </ul> </li> <li>The tip of your tongue is high in your mouth                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(go from saying ee to saying oh as in bow. You will feel how the tip of your tongue goes down.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Your lips are really rounded.                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(When you say ee, your lips are spread. The only difference between saying ee and ü is rounding your lips.)                       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From English, you are not used to rounding your lips this much. But now you just have to practice doing it.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5. 	6. 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First, just say ,ü' together with the recording. </li> <li>Remember to pay attention to all your cues: tongue up and front, really rounded lips, think of saying ee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First, we'll practice saying the ,ü'-sound in the beginning of German words.</li> <li>The advantage of this is that you have time to bring your lips in the correct position before you have to start saying the words.</li> <li>Here we go! Listen to the recording and practice saying the word!</li> </ul>
7. 	8. 

Figure 1 – Illustration of a sample iCPR unit

**Procedure:** Students in both classes took the pretest in Week 11 of the semester (i.e., after ca. 33 hours of instruction) and the posttest in Week 14 of the semester (i.e., after ca. 43 hours of instruction). Both classes followed the same lesson plans and used the same materials. The only difference between the two groups was that the treatment group received the pronunciation training as homework assignments while the control group did not. The treatment group completed the two units as homework assignments in Week 13 of the semester. The students had all week to finish the two units and were expected to spend an average of 15 minutes on each unit. Thus, they spent a total of about 30 minutes practicing their pronunciation. Only the students in the treatment group took the feedback questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered right after the posttest.

**Analyses:** Words produced by the students containing the vowel 'ü' were extracted from the pretest and posttest recordings of both groups. These recordings were then randomized and played to a native speaker of German who has no contact with English learners of German and is therefore not used to their accent. This native speaker judged each word production separately for comprehensibility and for accentedness on a scale from 1 to 7 (1: very easy to understand/ not accented at all, 7 incomprehensible/ very accented). The ratings were then used to calculate mean comprehensibility and accentedness scores for both groups.

Moreover, mean scores for all Likert-scale type questions on the feedback questionnaire were calculated for the treatment group.

## Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the group that received the no-feedback pronunciation training would improve more in their pronunciation of German than the group that did not receive the training. Moreover, I wanted to see if the students enjoyed working with this type of pronunciation training.

Figures 2 and 3 below show the results for the mean ratings for comprehensibility and accentedness for the treatment and control group. The values on the y-axis in both figures are reversed since a better rating corresponded to a lower point value. A positive slope therefore now indicates improvement in both figures. Descriptive analyses show that on the measurement of

comprehensibility, the treatment group improved their mean ratings by .17 points while the mean rating for the control group declined from pretest to posttest by .14 points. On the measure of accentedness, both groups improved from pretest to posttest, but the treatment group improved more than the control group (treatment group: .30 points improvement; control group: .21 points improvement).

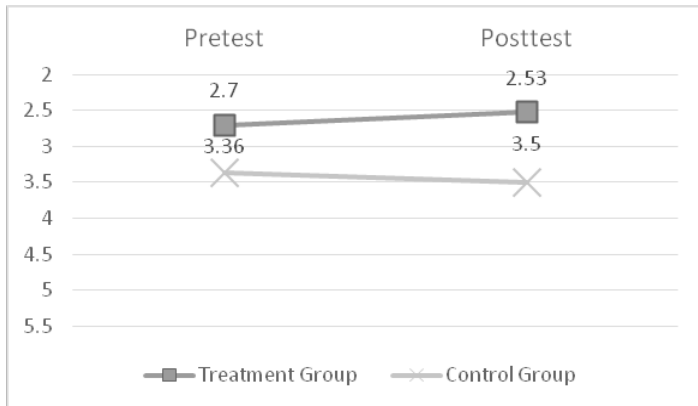


Figure 2 – Mean comprehensibility ratings

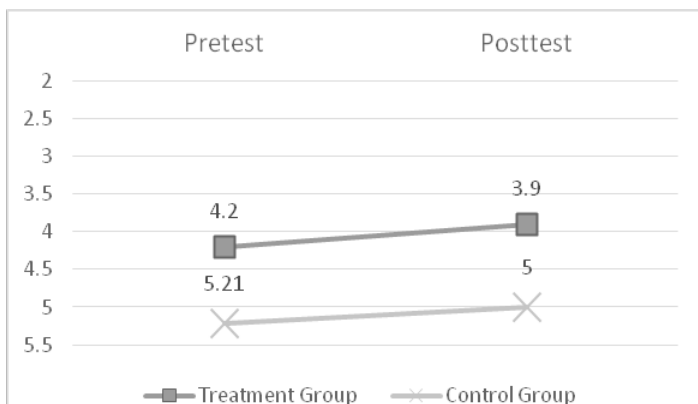


Figure 3 – Mean accentedness ratings

Figure 4 illustrates the results of the responses on the feedback questionnaire. The students rated the questions on a Likert scale from 1-5 with 5 being the highest possible agreement to the statement. The results show that the students enjoyed working on the iCPR units (4 out of 5), that they felt that they learned something, and that their pronunciation improved (4.6 and 4.5 out of 5). Importantly, the students conclude that the benefits of the training outweighed possible technical problems with the PowerPoint units (3.5 out of 5) and that in addition to practicing their pronunciation, they reviewed some vocabulary by working through the units (4.2 out of 5).

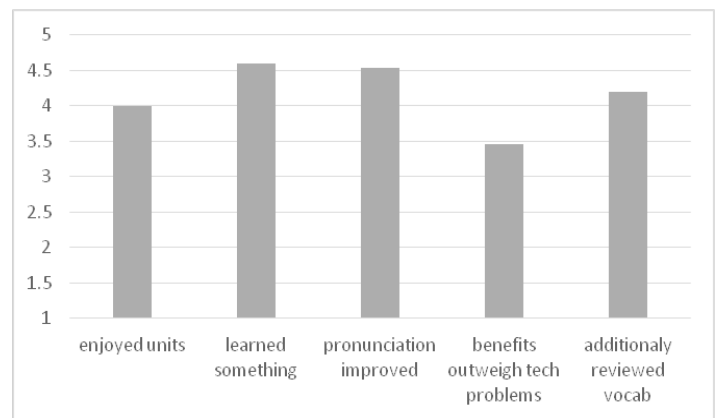


Figure 4 – Mean score of responses on feedback questionnaire

## Discussion

Based on the findings from this study, it can be concluded that the iCPR units were effective in improving the learners' pronunciation of the German vowel 'ü'. The treatment group improved both on comprehensibility and accentedness while the control group did not improve on comprehensibility and improved less than the treatment group on accentedness. Thus, despite the fact that the students did not receive individual feedback on their pronunciation, the iCPR units helped them to improve their pronunciation. The results showed that even a 30 minute training as homework split over two days within one week sufficed to impact learners' pronunciation. This finding is important because it suggests that even teachers that do not want to include pronunciation training in the classroom can use this method to help their students improve their pronunciation. Once the iCPR units are developed, they can be used again and again for different students and by different teachers and cause no extra work to teachers since no corrections or feedback are necessary for improvement to take place. Thus, this method is ideal for teachers that are not comfortable teaching pronunciation in class or simply have no time to address pronunciation during class time.

Furthermore, the results from the feedback questionnaire suggest that the students really enjoyed working with the iCPR units and felt that they personally benefited from this type of pronunciation exercise. This is important in order to keep up the students' motivation.

Further research will have to address the question whether iCPR units are effective for other foreign language sounds as well. Also,

running this study with larger groups would improve statistical power and, thus, findings might be statistically significant and could further corroborate the trend we saw in the descriptive analyses above.

### **Suggestions for Implementing iCPRs in any Foreign Language Classroom**

Designing an iCPR unit is not very difficult and can be done by any foreign language teacher. It requires a time commitment when starting a unit from scratch for the first time, but once created, units can be reused and shared among colleagues that teach the same foreign language. The only materials necessary are access to Microsoft PowerPoint and a headset or microphone to record utterances in the PowerPoint program.

The design of an iCPR unit should always start by making a list of words to use. These words should contain the targeted sound and are best taken from the students' course book. That way, students review relevant vocabulary while practicing pronunciation. Then, ideally, a unit targeting perception of the new sound should precede a unit that addresses production.

To design the perception unit, choose words that contain the target sound and find some minimal pairs to these words, that is, words that only differ by the sound you want to teach. An example from German when teaching 'ü' would be to contrast *Tür* 'door' with *Tier* 'animal'. If this is impossible, you can make up nonsense words to create contrastive sounds. Contrast the target sound with various other sounds, not just with one. Overall, 15-20 practice items suffice. You will have to record these words, so that the students can listen to them in the PowerPoint unit and can practice distinguishing between the sounds. I recommend using PowerPoint's built-in recording option since this keeps the file size small as compared to importing a sound file from an external source. (If you have access to a native speaker to record the words for you, that is great, but otherwise you can just record the words yourself!) Make sure to always include a solution slide that tells the student which of the two words they listened to actually contained the target sound.

To design the production unit, you would ideally want to start with a description of how to form the new sound in the mouth. This can be difficult for teachers that never learned to give these kind of instructions. For German,

I recommend Hall's (2003) *Modern German Pronunciation* for helpful tips on how to produce each sound. However, if you cannot include an explicit instruction of how to form a sound, you can skip this step and start right with the production training. For this part you will have to record yourself or a native speaker saying the target words out loud, so that the students can model their pronunciation after this recording. Including a progression in difficulty for the words can be helpful: that is, start with shorter words that have the new sound in the beginning of the word and then progress to longer words or words that have the new sound in a word-medial position. In the end, make one slide that lists all words that the students practiced in the unit and have them record themselves reading these words out aloud. For the student recordings, I recommend *Audacity* (<http://web.audacityteam.org>), which is a free recording software that is very easy to use. Having the students record their productions motivates them to practice beforehand and record their best possible pronunciation attempt. You can then have the students submit these recordings in class, simply to check for completion, but you do not have to give feedback to every student.

For sample iCPR units including recordings follow this link: <http://bit.ly/iCPRMartin> OR <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qsdpkvhvpydhceo/AACFJev61SczOcRz6orQwh6Fa?dl=0>

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## ETERNALLY GRATEFUL TO THE CITY OF ETERNAL SPRING

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The night I arrived in Mexico, I barely had time to place my belongings in my room before my host sister decided that it was time for us to go rent a movie. I was still exhausted after my flight from Pittsburgh and the bus ride from Mexico City, but I piled into the car along with her and three more students who also lived at the house. Squished into the back seat with people I had only just met, I was acutely aware of how small the car seemed in comparison to our vehicles at home. As my new host sister masterfully drove us up and down the many hills of Cuernavaca, I tried to simultaneously take in all the sights and keep up with the *Spanglish* that was the main form of communication in the car. We had the windows down, since Cuernavaca is considered the “city of eternal spring” with a moderate temperature of 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit year round. After a quick stop for our movie and some *cerveza*, we crammed back into the car to return home. Once we reached the avocado tree that marked our house, and were greeted by our two dogs, we watched the movie and ate potato chips covered in hot sauces and spices. As I drifted off to sleep that night, listening to the sounds of this new country through the open windows, I marveled at the welcoming ways of the world I had entered. This first introduction to my new family and housemates should have told me everything I needed to know about the openness and acceptance that pervades Mexican culture, but I would experience many more examples of Mexico’s amazing hospitality over the next two weeks.

The next morning, after a breakfast of eggs, fruit, and tortillas, my housemates tried to bring me up to speed on the city. Like me, my housemates were in Cuernavaca to study at the Cemanahuac language school. They were there through a partnership with their university in Minnesota, I was there through a scholarship from the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA). That day, they told me about our neighbor who loudly sang, “My Heart Will Go On” every day, and introduced me to Ricardo, the security guard who greeted us every morning on our walk to school. We went on a walking tour of the *zócalo*, and stopped by the cathedral and the local gardens. We did not have much time to explore everything, because our family had invited us to a party in the afternoon. Our host father was to be honored by many guests with a cookout and pool party to celebrate his birthday.

When we returned home after our outing, the party was underway. Some family members were already by the pool, others were sitting in the living room watching the World Cup matches of the day, but everyone was in a festive mood. As I was introduced, each person greeted me with *besos*, and immediate offers of food and drink. It was a true *fiesta*. The mounds of *costillas* and *rajas con crema* on the outdoor grill were steadily consumed alongside refreshing *Micheladas*. We ate and swam alongside the family members, and did our best to keep up with the conversations. Once the party tapered off that evening, a few family members and students remained around the table, drinking *palomas* and sharing stories. We were prompted to share in the conversation with questions about our hometowns. Not only had I been invited to the party, but I had been treated like family while I was there. Despite a little altitude sickness, some blisters, and a fresh sunburn, I considered it another successful day in Cuernavaca. I had been in Mexico for just over 24 hours, but I already felt at home.

In that first weekend, I was surprised and touched by how our host family had included us in their lives, and the next two weeks continued to be a demonstration of Mexican hospitality. I had learned so much already, and I was only just getting ready to start classes at the Cemanahuac language school. As part of the scholarship I received through PSMLA, I was able to attend classes for two weeks at Cemanahuac. I quickly found that the teachers and staff at the school were as welcoming as my family had been. The school itself rests along a side street on top of a hill in the *Las Palmas* neighborhood of



Cuernavaca. The classrooms, which all surround a lush courtyard, are mostly open air patio rooms with a table and chairs in the center. Just a short walk from the school, students can catch a glimpse of the famed volcano, Popocatepetl.

I was nervous about my classes at first, and afraid that I would make mistakes in Spanish. Of course, there was no real reason to worry. Cemanahuac is a true educational community, where everyone cooperates and grows together. There were people whose Spanish was better and faster than mine, and there were people who were just beginning their journey of language learning. There were students younger than me and older than me. The exceptional teachers went above and beyond to make sure that everyone was included and excelling. They made the experience rich in learning both culture and language content. My small classes, which consisted of three to five other language teachers, were conducted completely in Spanish and covered topics ranging from the complexities of the subjunctive to the legacy of Cortez in the mind of Mexicans today. Classes ran in two sessions, with a break in between for some homemade, traditional Mexican snacks. My experience with my classes was wonderful, but Cemanahuac's involvement did not stop when the school day was over.

My teachers at Cemanahuac arranged for us to go on field trips to two different local schools: one public and one private. During these visits, we were able to meet the students, tour the facilities, and converse with the teachers about many educational topics. Meeting these young Mexican students and their teachers was an experience I will never forget. The students welcomed us heartily. They applauded our arrival, wanted to take pictures with us, and asked and answered a myriad of questions during their recess time. That we, as foreign educators, were invited to visit in the first place was already truly generous, but one young student extended the hospitality even further. It was hot in the courtyard that day, and when one girl noticed that I was overheated, she bought me a guava juice box to help me cool down. Even though I had already witnessed many examples of the warmth of Mexican culture, her kindness still stunned me. This small interaction with a student is a kind act that I will always remember, and it is one of my favorite memories of Cuernavaca.

In addition to the local school field trips, Cemanahuac arranged other trips to help us experience as much of Mexico as possible. I was fortunate enough to attend three trips: one to

an old sugar hacienda, one to the silver city of Taxco, and one to the pyramids of Teotihuacan. With each adventure came new information and striking photo opportunities. At the *Hacienda de Cortes*, I saw some of the damage done during the Mexican Revolution. In Taxco, I tried on a necklace owned by Frida Kahlo. In Teotihuacan, I climbed all 248 steps to reach the top of the Pyramid of the Sun (Bell & Bell, 2014). Each trip left me with a greater understanding of Mexican history and culture than I could have gotten from just classroom learning alone. The Cemanahuac staff created such marvelous experiences for us, both in and out of the classroom. Through their efforts, I felt completely immersed in the Cuernavaca community.



Another highlight of my time in Cuernavaca was that my mother, who is my best friend and travel partner, was able to come visit me. Of course, the kindness and generosity that had been extended to me, was also extended to her as well. The Cemanahuac school owns a guesthouse, and my mother was invited to use it during her stay. Her lovely apartment consisted of a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and rooftop terrace. Harriet, the Cemanahuac owner, was a gracious host, and she invited my mother to participate alongside the students in all the activities. While I was in class, my mother was able to relax on the school grounds and partake in the daily snacks prepared for the students. During her stay, she had dinner and *margaritas* at the *Hacienda de Cortes*, and went along on the day long trip through Mexico City to climb the pyramids of Teotihuacan. When we were not busy taking trips with the school, my host family insisted that my mother eat with us at home, even asking for her menu requests. She accompanied us to the *zócalo* to watch Mexico defeat Croatia in the World Cup. My mother was only in Cuernavaca for a long weekend, but she



was treated as if she were a lifelong friend. We made many great memories, which was only possible because of the welcoming nature of the people of Cuernavaca.

These same people that treated my mother and I with such kindness have been struggling economically because of fears about the safety of traveling to Mexico. I too, shared these insecurities because of the travel warning issued by the United States Department of State, but I can honestly say that I never felt unsafe. In fact, many people went out of their way to make sure that we, as foreigners, were well taken care of. One night, a bartender walked my roommate and I to the taxi he had called for us, because we were not familiar with the area. On another occasion, I was escorted to a tourist site by a cab driver, who insisted that I should not go alone. In both of these instances, the locals never treated me like the outsider I obviously was, but rather like an honored guest in their hometown.

If you have any hesitations about this scholarship, take the chance and apply. The Mexico that I remember is not one of drug violence or kidnappings; it is the *sobremesa* with my family, the visits to the market, and the way my host mother called us all her kids. It is the kindness of strangers, the impromptu salsa lessons, and the invitations to parties. It is the conversation I had with a man at the bus stop who was waiting for his grandson, whom he had never met, to arrive on the bus from Texas. In addition to my fears about the travel warning, I was worried that my Spanish would not be good enough and that the other students would all be younger than me. I was nervous that I would miss my home, and that my host family would not be understanding of my vegetarianism. I quickly learned that all my hesitations were completely unfounded.

The people of Cuernavaca, and the Cemanahuac school, welcomed me with open arms. I felt accepted and loved by people I had only just met. Of travel, professor and author Miriam Adeney said in a class lecture I heard at Seattle Pacific University, "you will never be completely at home again, because part of your heart will always be elsewhere. That is the price you pay for the richness of loving and knowing people in more than one place." Part of my heart will always be in Mexico. I am, and will continue to be, incredibly grateful to PSMLA for the scholarship, and to the people of Cuernavaca for their exceptional kindness, acceptance, and hospitality.

### Resource

Bell B., & Bell, D. (2014). Teotihuacan onsite guide: Let your table be your guide for Teotihuacan. Retrieved from <http://www.mexicoarcheology.com/teotihuacan-onsite-guide>