



Pacific Northwest Council  
for Languages

# Lingo

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September 2006

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## The Pile

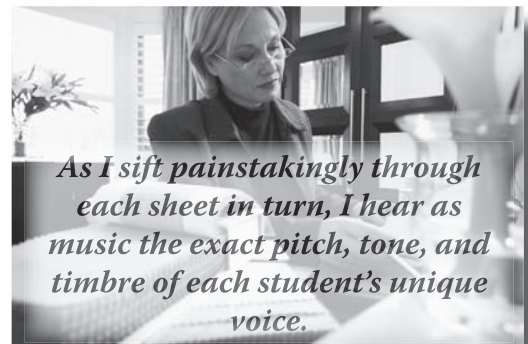
*By Robin Bacon-Shone, Mt. Tabor Middle School*

*Robin Bacon-Shone teaches seventh and eighth grade Spanish at Mt. Tabor Middle School in Portland, Oregon.*

There are two piles, really: the one you see and the one you don't. The pile you see is 130 sheets of notebook paper, some wide ruled and some college ruled. On each sheet is an assignment waiting for comments, class credit, or a grade. These 130 samples of handwriting vary from meticulous script to illegible scratching and appear on papers that may be crisp or tattered.

The pile is there in a dusty corner of my mind whenever I eat or drive or go out to dance. I may burst through my front door exhilarated at 6:00 p.m. or drag myself home exhausted at 1:00 a.m. Regardless, the pile waits for me patiently – never prodding but ever present. It grows and shrinks through ten school months until finally, in mid-June sunshine, what little is left of it sprouts legs, romps off my desk, and swan dives into a deep pool of recycled paper. By this time, the pile's creators have already jack-knifed into local swimming holes and headed off to high school. You probably see this as a pile of drudgery, a stack of trash that exacts from me several hours of lonely concentration several nights a week for thirty-six weeks a year. You may pity me, but remember, this is only the pile *you* see, not the pile *I* see.

I look forward to the calm, electric hours when I am most alert, very late at night. This is crucial teaching time spent evaluating what has already been learned well and planning what will come next. Encouraged by soothing, surrounding stillness, the pile speaks to me in the various voices of its authors. As I sift painstakingly through each sheet in turn, I hear as music the exact pitch, tone, and timbre of each student's unique voice, struggling to communicate something important to me in a language that is new and foreign.



*As I sift painstakingly through each sheet in turn, I hear as music the exact pitch, tone, and timbre of each student's unique voice.*

*Continued on page 2...*

## LINGO

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### Pacific Northwest Council for Languages

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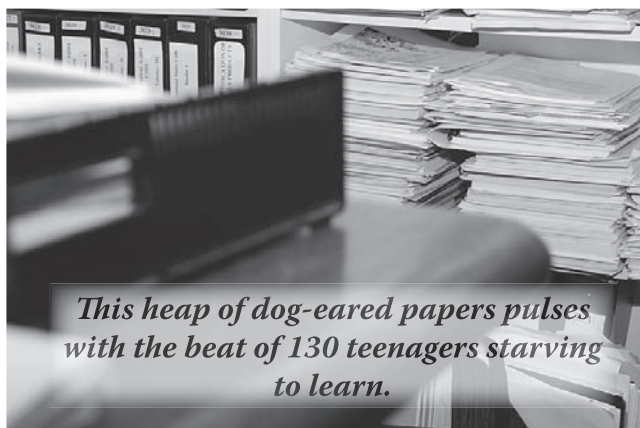
Ideas and opinions expressed in *Lingo* are those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of the council.

#### **The Pile**

*Continued from page 1...*

Through daily assignments over the course of a school year, I see teenagers in goofy-grape braces flinch in frustration or grin in the glow of understanding. In language not native to her ears or tongue, one brunette in chic jeans and a tight-fitting tank top declares confidently, "Soy de Las Vegas, pero me gusta más vivir aquí en Oregon con mis amigas tontas." (I'm from Las Vegas, but I prefer living here in Oregon with my silly girlfriends.) A dance team member shows temerity: her quavering utterances are correct but curt for fear of stumbling in her climb to the next rung on the ladder of proficiency. "Soy de Portland como mis amigos," she writes. (I'm from Portland like my friends.) With abandon, the blonde student body president flirts boldly: "Soy alumno norteamericano," he begins his tease. "¡Me gusto las chicas!" (An attempt to say "I'm a male American student. I like girls!")

transforms itself into 130 individualized Spanish lessons. Here with this pile, I engage in thoughtful conversation with each of over one hundred teenagers several times a week. This heap of dog-eared papers pulses with the beat of 130 teenagers starving to learn something challenging, exciting, and useful. Although in class some may be too cool or self-conscious to risk a misstep, on paper they all feel safe. My comments of encouragement and gentle correction will guide them until they can stitch together a parachute or grow wings. This pile is truly a beautiful thing. Can you see it now?



I am warmed with the thought that all of these teens have something they're just dying to tell me. Not one voice is mute. At first, I write back in short, easily understood phrases. As the

year progresses, my responses pose new language puzzles for my students to solve. This act of assessment

transforms itself into 130 individualized Spanish lessons. Here with this pile, I engage in thoughtful conversation with each of over one hundred teenagers several times a week. This heap of dog-eared papers pulses with the beat of 130 teenagers starving to learn something challenging, exciting, and useful. Although in class some may be too cool or self-conscious to risk a misstep, on paper they all feel safe. My comments of encouragement and gentle correction will guide them until they can stitch together a parachute or grow wings. This pile is truly a beautiful thing. Can you see it now?



## *Thank you from the Board*

PNCFL would like to thank **Dennis Ohrtman**, Idaho representative, and **Michal Maoluf**, Montana representative, for their service and contribution to the board during their term as state representatives.





# PNCFL Professional Development Awards

*The Pacific Northwest Council for Languages proudly recognizes the following PNCFL professional development award winners for their contribution to the language field. The regional K-12 language teacher of the year will be considered for nomination to the ACTFL national teacher of the year competition. All candidates will be recognized at a formal ceremony during their state's fall conference.*

## *Kathryn Beppler: Northwest K-12 Language Teacher of the Year*

Kathryn (Katie) Beppler teaches French at Evanston High School in Evanston, Wyoming. Colleagues describe Katie as a curriculum innovator. Through her participation in a three-year Foreign Language Assistance Program grant, Katie gained a fuller understanding of national foreign language standards. She collaborated with colleagues to write the Wyoming state standards for foreign language. In 1995, she redesigned the foreign language classes at Evanston to align with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Katie

*"Wyoming is very lucky to have a foreign language teacher with Katie's energy, talents, and expertise."*

*- Lora Hittle, Foreign  
Language Instructor, Casper  
College*

successfully conducted an exchange program between students at Evanston High School and Lycée Notre-Dame in Challans, France for seven years. She continues to create opportunities for her students

to learn and interact with the French language and culture. Sponsor of the Evanston High School Chapter of the Société Honoraire de Françias, Katie ensures that students have the chance to become involved with community projects and educational travel. Katie always looks for ways to share her knowledge with colleagues in her state and across the nation through presentations at the Wyoming Foreign Language Teachers' Association and ACTFL.

## *Dr. Susan Cabello: Ray Verzasconi Postsecondary Language Teacher of the Year*



Dr. Susan Cabello taught Spanish as a professor at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon, and has currently retired to Arizona. According to her colleagues, Susan has been a moving force behind the extensive growth her department experienced in the past ten years. Susan's students often cite their success in becoming proficient in Spanish to Dr. Cabello's teaching techniques, a combination of grammatical instruction, conversation activities, oral presentations, video projects, and community service that invite and encourage students to learn, participate, and grow. In addition to bringing international speakers to campus for public lectures, Susan has worked to develop numerous new programs, including majors in international studies, minors in Spanish and education and in feminist studies, and language mentoring programs. 🎓

*"Susan's approach to teaching and learning promotes bridging the gap between the classroom and the outside community."*

*- Lorely French, German  
Professor, Pacific University*

## *PNCFL Award Timeline*

Please contact your state representative to learn more about the award nomination process.

**May:** PNCFL award nominations due from state associations

**June-July:** Nominations reviewed by outside panelists

**August:** Winning candidates notified

**October:** Award presentation at candidates' state fall conference

# Teaching Tips No One Told You



By Regina Barreca

University of Connecticut



*Author of Babes in Boyland: A Personal History of Coeducation, Regina Barreca is a professor of English literature and feminist theory at the University of Connecticut. This article appeared online for Education World, a teacher's resource guide to the Internet. Education World offers educators, parents, students, and administrators a place to find lesson plans and research materials. Visit them online at <http://www.education-world.com>.*

“Apparently, teaching is difficult. I must admit, I was taken entirely by surprise.” Paul sends me this shocking information in an email from the Czech Republic where he and another one of my former students have just started teaching English.

Paul continues: “I thought all I had to do was stand in front of a class, tell a few jokes, point out a couple of key ideas, and ride a wave of dialectical creativity all the way to the bank.” Not so, say his Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) instructors in Prague. Evidently, to his dismay, he is “supposed to create these strange creatures called lesson plans, preteach ideas constantly, be able to think on my feet (and quickly, at that!), and be capable of explaining to non-native speakers exactly why the English languages feels it necessary to use a bazillion modal verbs (oh yeah, and that means I have to know what a modal verb is). I’ve been in teacher-training for two weeks, have taught two full lessons, and already I want to collapse into exhausted sleep by noon each day.”

Naturally, I am delighted that Paul is learning how to plan a lesson as well as being educated in the finer points of grammar. Also, if he falls asleep at noon everyday, he is likely to stay out of trouble.

But, of course, what he really needs to learn are the classroom’s real lessons.

Strangely absent from any official curriculum and, in certain cases considered a form of contraband offered only through secret conversations and in code, it is now time to reveal the discrete, covert formulas, practices, and dictums we long-time teachers know to be true.

1. You can always get easier but you can’t get harder. ***New teachers often want their students to like them. This is a mistake.*** It’s just dandy if they end up liking you, but during the first few days and first few weeks of class, what your students need to do is respect you. They need to concern themselves with their performance and your judgment of it. You do not really need to concern yourself with their judgment of you. The students are not your friends, just as your own children (if you have them) are not your friends and just as your own parents (if they’ve done a good job) are not your friends. Being an effective teacher depends in part on your will-

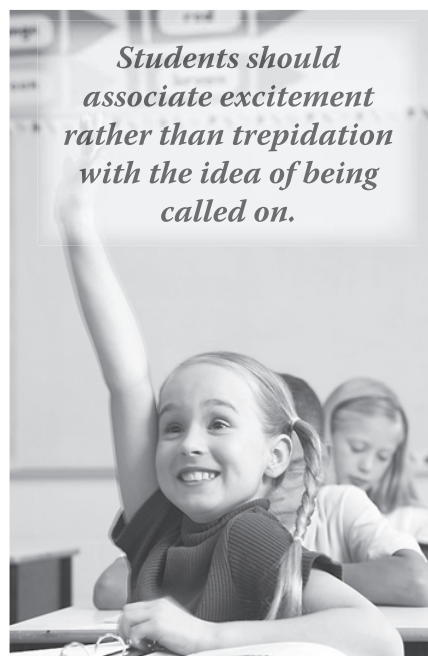
ingness to establish boundaries and maintain them. If you come in acting like Mr. Rogers, you cannot then turn into Mr. T. You cannot come in as Betty Boop and turn into Judge Judy. You can lighten up throughout

the term, but no one will take you seriously if you become tougher. Much better to start out tough and end up warm and fuzzy.

2. ***Even if students say they don’t care about anything, they do.*** Help them recognize, articulate, and embrace their appetites.

3. Nothing, but nothing, beats remembering the names of your students. Allow me to emphasize the fact that this is a very important skill. If this sounds overwhelming because you have so many students, just remember you only have to remember their names while they’re in your classes. Once the class is over, you should feel free to say simply, “Hello there!” with sufficient enthusiasm.

4. One important way you can help your students succeed is to make them understand that ***the heart fluttering and breath-holding feeling they have when they think they’re going to be asked a question is anticipation, not fear.*** They should associate excitement rather than trepidation with the idea of being







# Fall Conferences

October 5-7, 2006

## Idaho Association of Teachers of Language and Culture

South Junior High: Boise

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

*Back to school  
presents an  
opportunity for  
teachers to become  
students themselves.*



October 6-8, 2006

## Alaskans for Language Acquisition *Teaching Language Through the Arts*

Alyeska Prince Hotel: Girdwood

<http://www.afla-alaska.org>

October 12-14, 2006

## Wyoming Foreign Language Teachers' Association

Best Western Ramkota Hotel: Casper

[bmau@ccsd.k12.wy.us](mailto:bmau@ccsd.k12.wy.us)

October 12-14, 2006

## Washington Association for Language Teaching & Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching

*Many Languages, Many Cultures, One Vision*

Red Lion Hotel on the River: Portland

<http://www.open.org/~coflt> or <http://www.waflt.net>

October 19-20, 2006

## Montana Association of Language Teachers

Billings

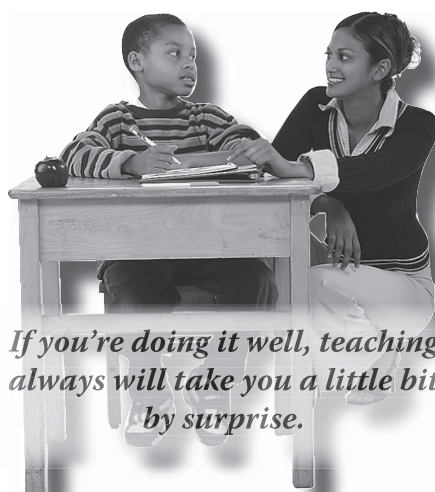
<http://www.maltsite.org/>

called on. Although it's sometimes tedious to **acknowledge every comment a student makes** during a discussion, it's worth it. Calling on one kid after another without recognizing what the previous student has said in any way is as disrespectful as somebody talking to you at a cocktail party but looking over your shoulder to see if there's someone more interesting they can talk to as soon as you shut up.

5. Drinking caffeinated beverages is neither a sin nor a vice. Take advantage of the fact.

6. Students do not have to make you

happy; that's not their job. Their job is to learn what you're teaching them. **You must believe that what you're teaching them is something that**



*If you're doing it well, teaching  
always will take you a little bit  
by surprise.*

**they'll need to know.** You are the authority, not because you're in control of the situation but because you can give them what they'll need to carry them through their lives.

7. And finally, whether your classroom is in the Poughkeepsie, in Portland, or in Prague, remind yourself of this: if you're doing it well, teaching always will take you a little bit by surprise.



# National Language 7



*Dr. Daniel R. Morris teaches French at Southern Oregon University. Dr. Morris was appointed to serve as the PNCFL representative to the Joint National Committee for Languages-National Council for Languages and International Studies Council (JNCL-NCLIS) in 2004.*

**“W**e’re winning, we’re in, we’re hot.” This was the opening address of the annual JNCL-NCLIS Delegate Assembly held in Washington, D.C., on May 4-6, 2006. With the President’s proposed National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), foreign language study currently enjoys unprecedented attention on the national level. During this year alone, approximately thirty-six bills have been introduced in Congress supporting foreign language study. While the language community may prefer that issues other than the economy and national security were driving the current interest, today’s environment provides an opportunity to begin building toward a meaningful national language policy.

The Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) consists of over sixty national, regional, and state language organizations representing nearly all aspects of the language profession. With the goal of providing an opportunity for all Americans to learn and use English and at least one other language, JNCL provides language professionals a forum to discuss

national language needs in addition to providing planning and input on language policy.

During the National Summit of College and University Presidents on January 5, 2006, President Bush introduced the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) to strengthen national security and the economy through foreign language education. NSLI focuses primarily on “critical need” languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, and Russian. NSLI represents the first time that a U.S. president has proposed an agenda to strengthen foreign language education on such a large scale. With an initial proposed budget of \$114 million in 2007, NSLI will have three primary goals: 1) expand



the number of Americans mastering critical need languages, particularly by exposing students to language at a younger age, 2) increase the number of advanced-level speakers of foreign languages, particularly speakers of critical languages, and 3) increase the number of foreign language teachers and the resources available to them.

The Delegate Assembly drafted a response to NSLI. While recognizing the need to increase foreign language

instruction in many of the less commonly taught languages, JNCL-NCLIS’ response to NSLI stresses the importance of all foreign languages and questions the use and definition of the term “critical.” JNCL views NSLI as a beginning towards establishing a national language policy that would balance the U.S. educational system with other countries around the world.

Congressional leaders have proposed their own bills to support language study. Many of these address both the teacher shortage and the need to develop early language programs that continue through the university level. The National Security Language Act (HR 115), introduced by Representative Rush Holt and cosponsored by sixty other members, is one of the more significant bills recently introduced in Congress regarding languages. The bill encourages students to pursue a major in foreign languages by offering loan forgiveness to those who major in a foreign language and enter the teaching field or government service. The bill also encourages students to pursue advanced science and technology studies in a foreign language, establishes grants for partnerships between universities and school districts, and promotes the development of more study abroad programs.

Other recent national-level language developments include the Lincoln Study Abroad Commission report. The Lincoln Study Abroad Commission, tasked with substantially

NSLI



# Policy: A New Era?

by Dr. Daniel Morris JNCL-NCLIS Representative

## SLI GOALS AT A GLANCE

### Expand the number of Americans mastering critical need languages and start at a younger age by:

- Creating incentives to teach and study critical need languages in K-12
- Building continuous programs of study of critical need languages from kindergarten to university
- Providing State Department scholarships for summer and academic year study abroad and short-term opportunities for high school students studying critical need languages
- Expanding the State Department Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program to allow native speakers of critical need languages to teach in U.S. universities and schools
- Establishing Teacher Exchange Programs to assist U.S. teachers of critical need languages in studying abroad
- Establishing language study “feeder” programs, grants, and initiatives to provide summer student and teacher immersion experiences and academic courses and curricula in less commonly taught languages

### Increase the number of advanced-level speakers of foreign languages with an emphasis on critical needs languages by:

- Expanding the National Flagship Language Initiative to produce 2,000 advanced speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Persian, Russian, and central Asian languages by 2009
- Increasing the annual Gilman scholarships for financially needy undergraduates to study critical need languages abroad
- Creating new State Department summer immersion study programs for university-level students in critical need languages
- Adding overseas language study to 150 U.S. Fulbright student scholarships annually
- Increasing support for immersion language study centers abroad

### Increase the number of foreign language teachers and the resources for them by:

- Establishing a National Language Service Corps for Americans with proficiencies in critical languages to serve the nation
- Establishing a nationwide distance education E-Learning Clearinghouse to deliver foreign language education resources to teachers and students
- Expand teacher-to-teacher seminars and training to reach thousands of foreign language teachers

Source: “National Security Language Initiative” <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/58733.htm>

increasing the number of American students studying abroad, has recommended initial funding of \$50 million to enhance and increase study abroad programs. The Commission’s ambitious goal is to increase the number of students studying abroad. Currently, less than 2% of U.S. college students study abroad. The Commission’s work was instrumental in the Congressional declaration of 2006 as the Year of Study Abroad.

For more information about these

and other language legislation and activities on the national level, visit the JNCL-NCLIS Web site at <http://www.jncl.org>.

J. David Edwards, JNCL-NCLIS executive director, refers to the current interest in languages as a “new era for foreign languages.” Those of us who are “in the trenches” on the local level know that there is still a long way to go. In some areas, No Child Left Behind and state legislation continue to reduce rather than enhance lan-

guage programs. It is important that educators continue the momentum initiated by the Year of Languages, the Year of Study Abroad, and the current government sentiment regarding languages to create a new attitude toward language study on the local level. Only when languages are studied and appreciated equally from Seattle to Lakeview, Anchorage to Marsh Valley, Laramie to Butte, and everywhere in between will the U.S. truly enter the new era of language study. 🎉🎉

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# Lessons in Collaboration

By Greg Hopper-Moore

PNCFL Executive Director



*Greg Hopper-Moore taught French at the high school level for ten years before joining the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) at the University of Oregon as a research and development coordinator. Greg has served on the board of the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching (COFLT) and is currently the PNCFL executive director.*

Collaboration leads to a healthy professional life. This became apparent to me in my first teaching position. I was hired four days before the beginning of school and assigned to teach Spanish 1 and four levels of French. My French degree and two years of study in France had prepared me well for my French classes. Teaching two sections of Spanish 1 was another matter. To say that I was “misassigned” would be an understatement - the last time I had studied Spanish academically was in seventh grade.

My lifeline that first year was the help I received from two colleagues who taught Spanish in the rooms next to me. They helped me to supplement our decade-old textbook with proficiency-based activities. They were the first to introduce me to the *Sing, Dance, Laugh and Eat* series, much to my students’ choral delight.

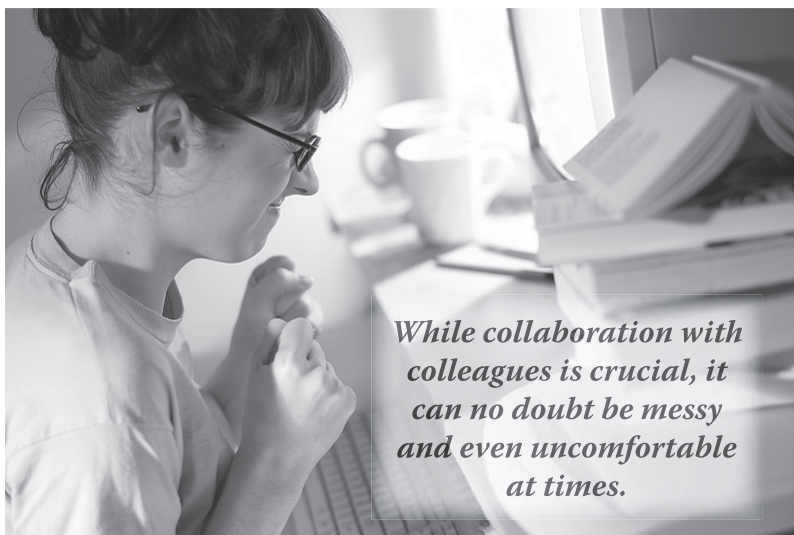
To be quite honest, it would be hard to call my professional relationship with my departmental colleagues a true collaboration. I received much more from them than I ever gave in return.

Later, as the foreign language teachers in our district joined together to form a self-appointed task force on second language education, I was better able to contribute as a full member of the discussions. Agreeing on a district-wide textbook adoption was one of the more difficult tasks we had to tackle. It became clear that the Spanish programs at the two different high schools would not reach

a consensus on which textbook to adopt. The discussion was painful at times, but each of us went away with a better understanding of the issues at hand. While collaboration with colleagues is crucial, it can no doubt be messy and even uncomfortable at times.

Even though I no longer work in the classroom, the lessons I learned from teaching continue to play a role in my daily life, where collaboration remains important. My work life at CASLS is filled with opportunities to collaborate with researchers, colleagues, and teachers to develop curriculum and assessments.

Further, being a part of the PNCFL leadership over the last two years has been very rewarding because of the chance to collaborate with colleagues from around the nation. I serve on the PNCFL council with six representatives from our member states. Each year, we work together to inspire teachers, to advocate for second language instruction, and to communicate effectively with members. It is fabulous to be able to collaborate with individuals who share a common passion.



*While collaboration with colleagues is crucial, it can no doubt be messy and even uncomfortable at times.*

Collaboration in a state or regional language association is really no different than working with the Spanish teachers in my first school. Of course, I have grown professionally since then. Now I try to add as much to a collaborative relationship as I receive. 🤝

# Zertifikat Deutsch at the UO

By Dorothee Ostmeier & Matthais Vogel

University of Oregon



This year, the Department of German and Scandinavian at the University of Oregon will implement a new program for third-year German students. The department will offer a course sequence to prepare students for the highly regarded Zertifikat Deutsch exam (ZD), a test that is officially recognized by the European Union as evidence of language proficiency. The ZD requires students to cope linguistically with a broad variety of everyday situations.

With this new course sequence, Germanic studies at the UO joins the rank of internationally accredited institutions authorized to offer this certification to students. Collaborating with the Goethe Institute and the German federal cultural agency, the Department of German and Scandinavian strives to become a testing center for the Pacific Northwest by spring 2007.

In addition to their major or minor, the top students will have the opportunity to qualify for the internationally accepted certificate. This double qualification will make students very attractive candidates as they apply for a job or for graduate studies. The team developing the course is comprised of Matthias Vogel, M.A. and A.B.D., coordinator of the first- and second-year German language programs at the UO; Doris Pfaffinger, M.A. and A.B.D. working on German pop culture; and faculty advisor Professor Dorothee Ostmeier.

Matthias and Doris will teach the course this year. During the first two quarters, students will study with Langenscheidt's workbook *Berliner Platz*, which solely focuses on training students for the ZD exam. The instruction stimulates students to engage vividly in contemporary issues of German society. It is enriched by a broad variety of Internet sources.

In the third quarter, Doris Pfaffinger will teach her popular class on *Momo*, a contemporary fairy tale by German author Michael Ende. Through extensive discussions, students explore issues and concerns that have occupied German authors in the late seventies until the present: problems of life in a capitalist society, Americanization of German social life, issues of communication and friendship, and childhood in the 21st century. This class will strengthen and review vocabulary and grammar concepts by improving critical writing and oral skills. At the end of the third term of the course sequence, the top students will have the opportunity to

take the ZD exam.

Administering the ZD at the University of Oregon is a great opportunity to collaborate with other German programs. As readers of *Lingo*, please let us know how our plans could help your program. Would you like to offer your students the possibility to receive the ZD and send them to the UO for testing each

spring? Should the department organize workshops to prepare your students for the test? Please contact Dorothee Ostmeier at [ostmeier@uoregon.edu](mailto:ostmeier@uoregon.edu) or Matthais Vogel at [matvogel@uoregon.edu](mailto:matvogel@uoregon.edu).



## 6th ANNUAL ISSA Conference

**All Classes through Global Glasses** is a conference that will provide you with new ideas and mountains of resources to infuse your classroom with a global view.

**International Studies Schools Association Conference  
Portland, Oregon • January 25-27, 2007**

[www.intlschools.org](http://www.intlschools.org) or 1-800-967-2847 x1

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## 2006-07 PNCFL Board Members

*The PNCFL board consists of an executive committee and six state representatives. PNCFL board members encourage the general membership to contact them directly with questions and comments regarding PNCFL programs and services.*

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## NATIONAL ONLINE EARLY LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT NOELLA

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### **What is NOELLA?**

The National Online Early Language Learning Assessment will be the first affordable, universally accessible assessment of proficiency for early language learners. Designed for children learning languages other than English in U.S. classrooms, NOELLA will provide schools throughout the country the means to measure the performance of young students accurately and reliably. It will be available at significantly less cost than existing assessments and will be tied to the national foreign language standards and the ACTFL K-12 Proficiency Guidelines.

### **What skills are covered by NOELLA?**

The complete test assesses reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in Spanish, Japanese, French, and Chinese.

### **Can my students take NOELLA now?**

We invite teachers throughout the U.S. to have their students in grades three through six participate in an appropriate pilot now! You can register online now at the NOELLA web site.

To learn more about how you can participate, visit  
<http://noella.uoregon.edu> !



Center for Applied Second Language Studies  
Contact Eve Ryan: (541) 346-5705

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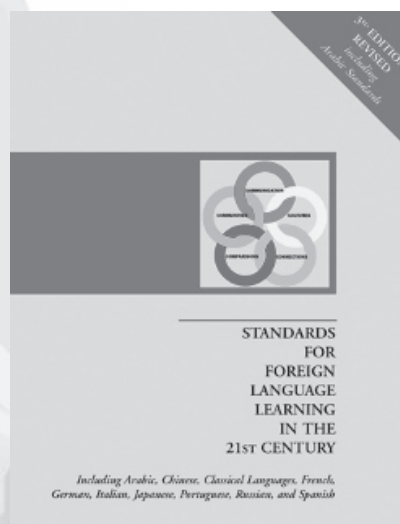
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## Revised Foreign Language Standards



For the first time, formal standards that can be used to develop curriculum for students learning Modern Standard Arabic have been published. The *3rd Edition of Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* has been published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and includes guidelines for students at all levels studying eleven languages, including Chinese, classical languages, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish in addition to the new Arabic standards. These student standards describe what students should know and be able to do across the K-16 curriculum with specific sample progress indicators for the end of grades four, eight, twelve, and sixteen.



*The New 3rd Edition Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, revised and including Arabic standards, is now available through ACTFL.*

The standards for each language were developed by and revised by representatives of the eleven organizations representing teachers of those languages under the auspices of the National Standards for Foreign Language Education collaborative. First published in 1996, the book has now been revised twice. The purpose of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* is to establish common criteria with which educators can measure student progress at different stages of learning a language.

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