



Pacific Northwest Council
for Languages

Lingo

Volume 7, Number 3
May 2007

Podcasting for Language Instruction

By **Bridget Yaden**, *PNCFL Vice President*



Bridget Yaden serves as assistant professor of Spanish at Pacific Lutheran University and as director for the university's Language Resource Center. She is also the co-regional leader of NWALL, the Northwest organization affiliated with the International Association of Language Learning Technologies. Bridget is interested in the uses of technology in the language classroom.



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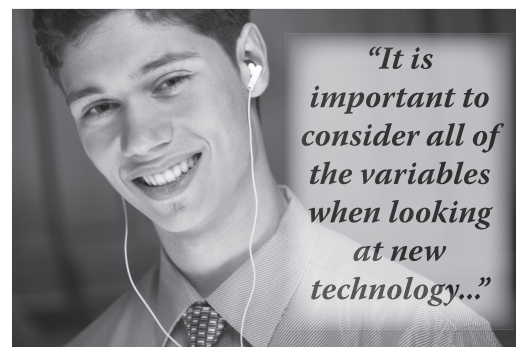
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As language teachers, we are always looking for innovative ways to teach our content in a more engaging and more effective way. Often, we are the first in our buildings to try a new technology to provide more effective resources for our students. Different technological resources, however, will meet different needs, and “newer” is not always “better.” It is therefore important to consider all of the variables when looking at a new technology, including but not limited to the pedagogical beliefs of the teacher; the goals of the teachers and students; the needs, learning styles, and abilities of the students; the access to technology; and the technological abilities of both students and teachers.

With the rise of popular consumer technologies such as iPods, there has recently been an increased interest in podcasting. The term podcast originally comes from the commercial product iPod from Apple. A podcast is a media file distributed over the Internet that can be an audio as well as a video file. The origin of the podcast refers to a format that consumers download from the Internet and then put on their iPods to have a portable audio or video file. The podcasts described in this article, however, can be used with or without iPods or other portable media players, include both audio and video, and can be accessed solely with a computer and an Internet connection by subscribing to broadcast feeds or by visiting a Web site with links to the files.



There are existing commercial and educational sites that provide examples of podcasts for language courses. For a more traditional grammar approach to teaching language, the Heinle & Heinle iRadio site offers audio podcasts of vocabulary lists, pronunciation

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Volume 7, Number 3
May 2007

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The Pacific Northwest Council for Languages publishes *Lingo* in January, May, and September. PNCFL welcomes short articles, descriptions of innovative courses, reviews of teaching materials, and other items of interest to language teaching professionals.

Submissions may be sent by mail to the address above or as an email attachment to pncfl@uoregon.edu. Submission deadlines are December 1 for the January issue, April 1 for the May issue, and August 15 for the September issue.

To obtain advertising information, please contact Mandy Lindgren at pncfl@uoregon.edu or 541-346-5699.

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

Podcasting

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tion practice, and grammar explanations. There are currently broadcasts for French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Heinle & Heinle announced on their Web site plans to expand their iRadio podcasts to include cultural content (http://www.newtexts.com/newtexts/cluster.cfm?cluster_id=1507).

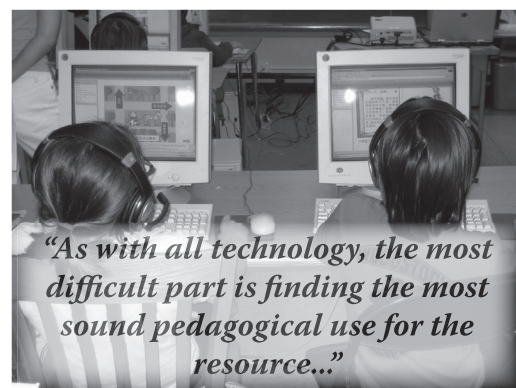
Another example of podcasts for language learning comes from the Modern Languages Department at Western Kentucky University. These podcasts are better suited for a communicative approach. Their podcasts include both student and faculty generated audio resources, and the content is authentic, communicative, and cultural. There are samples of cultural vignettes in English, reflections in Spanish on daily life in Spain from both students and native Spaniards, and segments on various aspects of Hispanic cultures (<http://www.wku.edu/modernlanguages/podcastseries/>).

These existing sites provide examples of different ways in which podcasts can be used for language teaching. Many language teachers, however, prefer creating their own materials adapted to their course and student needs. Although creating a podcast may sound like a daunting task, my experience this last semester taught me that practically anyone can learn the technical side of creating a podcast. As with all technology, the most difficult part is finding the most sound pedagogical use for the resource, not creating the resource per se. In the rest of this article, I will describe a pilot project using podcasts for language classes developed in the Department of Languages and Literatures at Pacific Lutheran University. The initial project included a series of eighteen podcasts for Latin 101.

We began our planning by considering both pedagogical goals as well as technological considerations such as file

size. The goals for our language program, which only has classes two to three days a week, include increasing student contact time with the language, improving success at understanding and completing the homework on the days when class does not meet, and increasing student interest in the language and culture.

The Latin professor decided to make each episode approximately five minutes long and provided a plan for each broadcast that included a welcome segment, an explanation of a grammatical item not covered in class, helpful hints for an upcoming assignment, and an interesting cultural or historical fact. In this way, the episodes complement without duplicating class material and avoid possible incentives to miss class. Each segment also built on a mystery established in the first episode to provide an additional incentive for "tuning in."



"As with all technology, the most difficult part is finding the most sound pedagogical use for the resource..."

Eighteen episodes were developed before the start of the semester, and the professor used a digital video camera to shoot his episodes at various locations around campus and the surrounding community. We then took the videos and used Final Cut Pro to edit the files. Learning the basic features for editing a simple video is straightforward. We added a screen-shot with the episode title at the beginning and end of each episode, cut extraneous audio and video, and saved each five-minute video. For faculty with very little technology experience, this editing process could easily be done by a student or by the institution's tech support.

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10 Things To Do This Summer

By Robert L. Davis, PNCFL President



Robert Davis has directed the University of Oregon Spanish language program for more than ten years.

In addition to serving as PNCFL president, Robert has also served on the COFLT board of directors.

A year of foreign language teaching can take its toll, and we all look forward to the summer break. But should you really check out mentally for three months? You don't have to sign up for endless workshops or graduate classes. There are other simple things you can do to relax your mind yet keep those neurons functioning!

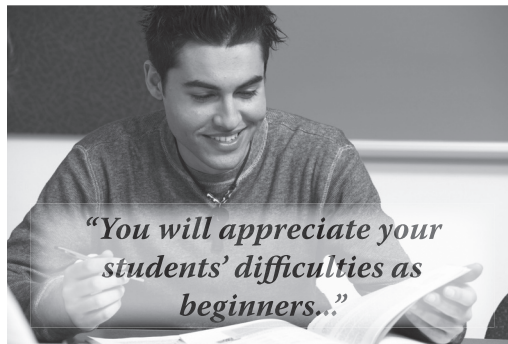
1. View a film in your target language Foreign language films are becoming increasingly available through local movie stores and online services such as Netflix.com. You can brush up on culture and language at the same time while being entertained by the wide selection of thrillers, comedies, and romances. You may even find some interesting clips to use in next year's classes.

2. Write a letter Professional organizations all encourage advocacy for world language study. The Web sites for PNCFL, ACTFL, and COFLT often include announcements of recent government activities that have an impact on foreign language teaching. Your state and national legislators need to hear from you on these issues! Check the Web sites of your professional organizations for template letters so that you don't have to compose them from scratch.

3. Surf the Web Try to spend an hour a week surfing the Web in your target language. Not only will you learn new vocabulary but you'll also keep up with current events and get some ideas for teaching culture in next year's classes.

4. Learn a new tech skill Nothing can spice up your classes like a new technology! There are copious resources available for learning how to use video, iPods, film, and Web authoring programs. *Lingo* often publishes tips and ideas, and the Web sites of national organizations also have many easy-to-implement suggestions.

5. Read a book Ordering books online from your target language country is surprisingly affordable. Try starting with a search for "amazon" followed by the Internet suffix for a target language country (i.e., de for Germany and fr for France). You can also search for other online bookstores such as <http://www.casadellibro.es> for Spanish.



6. Network Use the summer downtime to build a relationship with a colleague who you don't normally see during the school year. Pairing up with social studies colleagues is a great choice for foreign language teachers. You may have a colleague

who turns out to be a hidden resource that could support your efforts at content-based instruction, for example.

7. Register for a pilot The Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) at the University of Oregon develops state-of-the-art assessments for a variety of student levels in several languages. Contact info@uoregon.edu or visit <http://caslpilot.uoregon.edu/> to learn more about assessment opportunities that you and your students can take advantage of free of charge.

8. Learn a new song If you like music, get to know a new artist who sings in your target language. Learn the music or have a student help you prepare the song to teach in the coming year. You can easily create a mini-unit in which students research music forms from the target language country, write artist biographies, perform songs in class, or write original songs in a particular style.

9. Study another language Even if you can't commit to a summer course, find some self-study materials and learn the basics of another language. You will appreciate your students' difficulties as beginners, and you'll have the doors of another culture opened to you.

10. OK, take a break We do have a grueling academic calendar, so take time to disconnect from your normal routine for a while. Do your best to come back at the end of the summer refreshed, both mentally and physically. Our young people need your expertise and enthusiasm! 🐼🐼



Farm Animal Activity

By Lynette Pottenger, Fort Benton Schools

A past participant of the WILL program, Lynette Pottenger now serves as a WILL mentor. She currently teaches Spanish in Fort Benton, Montana. Lynette is also the Montana representative on the PNCFL board.

These activities are taken from my fourth grade farm animal unit. One could adapt these activities for different age and ability levels.

To introduce the animals, I borrowed an idea from Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Dahlberg's book *Languages and Children: Making the Match*. Curtain and Dahlberg suggest using a plain shower curtain and drawing a map of a country on it to "travel" from one geographical place to another. Adapting the shower curtain idea, I made a backdrop of a farm scene using a coloring book page, permanent markers, and an overhead to trace the backdrop onto the shower curtain. I found pictures of animals in coloring books and enlarged those to the scale of my farm backdrop. I cut the animals out of tag board, colored, and laminated them. As I introduce the animals, I tape them to the shower curtain.



"If I accidentally leave the shower curtain up with the animals in the 'crazy farm,' visitors will inevitably ask what is going on!"

I use the laminated animals to describe the location of the animal with prepositional phrases as I attach them to the curtain. For example, I put the dog on the path, and the duck in the lake. As you practice the animals and their location, you can use the TPR method

of questioning. Susan Gross, a master teacher who conducts national and international workshops, called this method circling, where one starts with a statement and follows with a question. For instance, you place the dog on the path. Then, ask a question with a "yes" answer. Is the dog on the path? Continue with an either/or question. Is the cat or the dog on the path? Next, ask a question with a "no" answer. Is the cat on the path? End with the original statement: the dog is on the path.

After we have practiced and the students know the animals and locations, we create a "granja loca" where the animals are found in odd places on the farm. Together, the students and I create sentences such as, "the horse is in the tree, and it says muu, muu." The students really enjoy this exercise. If I accidentally leave the shower curtain up with the animals in the "crazy farm," visitors will inevitably ask what is going on!

You can also incorporate songs and stories into the farm animal unit. As a class, we sing "La Granja" and "De Colores" during the unit. You can find these songs on the Internet at <http://www.heranet.com/dshivers/juegos/>. I would also recommend using a story titled *La Vaca Que Decía OINK* by Bernard Most. Detailing the story of a cow who says oink rather than moo, the tale includes many farm animal sounds while incorporating an important moral: it is better to speak two languages than one! Partnering with other language teachers in your school, upper-level language students could act out this story for younger students. 🐷🐷



Spanish Immersion Classes

By Oriana Cadman, Terrie Jones, Laura Martinez, & Lisa Payne, Washington State University

Being able to speak and understand Spanish is an essential skill for many of us. The Full Immersion Spanish Institute is a great program for everyone – professionals in any field, educators, counselors, travelers, people who work with the public, and those who want to learn Spanish or just brush up on their Spanish-speaking skills. The Washington State University Learning Center in Longview continues its fourth successful year offering this opportunity to learners of all ages, both from the Northwest and across the country. Participants may earn up to 270 clock hours for completing the entire Full Immersion Spanish Institute program.

To accommodate high demand, the Full Immersion Spanish Institute is offered in two intensive program levels. The four-week, beginning-level course is for individuals with little to no Spanish abilities who have a desire to be able to communicate readily in Spanish. The two-week, intermediate class is ideal for people looking to brush up on their language skills, both in speaking and in writing, and who are looking for an opportunity to have in-depth conversations in Spanish with other Spanish-speaking class members. This intermediate class would also be valuable for those who have a working knowledge of conversational Spanish or writing in Spanish, but not both.

Students enrolling in the program will gain an understanding of the Spanish language, both oral and written. Students do verb charades, complete workbook exercises, play dice games, draw cartoons that represent Spanish

phrases, sing songs, line up for a rapid-fire session answering questions, and conjugate verbs while slapping hands in patty cake. Each afternoon the group watches a Spanish language soap opera, and the whole class eats lunch at local Mexican restaurants on Fridays, allowing students to order in Spanish and practice their acquired language skills.

The Full Immersion Spanish Institute not only teaches the Spanish language but it also focuses on culture. The Spanish culture includes so much more than just language; there's marvelous food, exciting music, dancing, and more. The WSU Full Immersion Spanish Institute is a specialty course that will help you understand the literature, ideals, and culture of the Spanish-speaking world.

The Full Immersion Spanish Institute is being held from June 22-August 3, 2007. The beginning session will occur from June 22-July 20, and the intermediate class will be held from July 23-August 3, 2007. Participants have the option of registering for both sessions. Classes are held Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm on the Lower Columbia College campus in Longview, WA. You can receive more information on the program by calling the WSU Learning Center at 360-442-2941 or 360-442-2940. 🎉



"I have never seen such success with students in such a short amount of time!"

***-Laura Martinez,
Instructor***



FLAP in the PNCFL Region

By Ray Verzasconi

Dr. Verzasconi is professor emeritus of Spanish at Oregon State University, where he taught from 1967 to 1996 and served as department chair of Foreign Languages & Literatures from 1989 to 1995. From 1978 to 1999, he also served as PNCFL executive director. Dr. Verzasconi has been the editor of Spectrum, a publication of the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teachers, since 2002.

Although there are several federal programs that fund foreign language programs, such as the National Security Education Program (NSEP) and Title VI of the Higher Education Act (HEA), the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) is the only federal program aimed at establishing, expanding, or enhancing foreign language programs at the K-12 level exclusively. First funded in the early 1990s at a modest \$5 million, the program has slowly been strengthened by Congress. The FY2006 appropriation was \$23.6 million. FLAP funds are granted on a competitive basis to either state or local education agencies (SEA or LEA) for a period of three years. For FY2006, the estimated average grant to a LEA was \$150,000; to a SEA, \$200,000.

With the continuing importance of foreign languages to national security and economic competitiveness, federal funds for foreign languages will likely continue to increase. For example, during the first six years of the current administration, President George W. Bush recommended zero funding for FLAP – funds that were restored and increased by Congress. For FY2007, the President has requested a \$3 million increase in FLAP funding. Funding for NSEP and HEA have also increased. In addition, several bills were introduced in Congress in March 2007 that, if passed and signed into law, would authorize the creation of several new foreign language and culture programs, including a loan forgiveness program for foreign language majors who enter the teaching profession. Authorization, of course, does not ensure immediate appropriation of funds. Still, with the Departments of Defense, Justice, and State; the recent Iraq Study Group; and an independent study group commissioned by the Department of Education all calling for increased funding, increases are inevitable as long as terrorism remains a problem. More important, there is a growing realization in Congress that the emphasis must be placed on sequential K-16 programs.

Over the years, many teachers have asked me how they could obtain a grant to establish or expand foreign languages in their school district. My response usually has discouraged those who've asked me, especially if they come from small- to mid-size districts. Nonetheless, as funding increases, so will opportunities for grant funding, and adverse local circumstances that existed five or ten years ago may be changing. In that regard, here are my suggestions for those who have never applied for an LEA grant and may now be considering doing so.

Since all grant-funding agencies place a high priority on proposals that will likely continue after the grant period ends, it is imperative that you have community-wide support even before you finalize or write a grant proposal. The community includes everyone from students at your school and their parents, the school administration, the school board, all or most of the current foreign language teachers, teachers in other disciplines, and a few "movers and shakers" in the community at large.

Obtaining community-wide support involves doing a needs assessment, which, if there is community-wide support, also allows the community to provide input. Will the focus be on establishing a new language program and, if

districts. The last thing you want is to have foreign language teachers attempt to undermine an existing grant program, arguing to administrators that they were never consulted. That will undermine efforts to secure additional grant funding to expand the program in the future.

There is also a very practical reason to obtain community-wide support as you decide what your program will be before writing a proposal. If you are teaching full-time, trying to obtain an LEA grant from any federal agency is not a task you want to undertake alone. You simply cannot wait until the Department of Education or any other federal agency issues the application notice (which sets forth the criteria for a particular year) and the application deadline. Most often, there is only six to eight weeks between the posting of the application notice and the application deadline. I've even seen times when there was as little as four weeks between them. There is no way you can obtain community support, including input on what the project should be, on such short notice.

In other words, you do all the legwork first. If you have the community support, you determine the broad outline of what the project will be. Once the granting agency issues the application notice, you may have to modify the project. You

won't even be considered in a given year?" Absolutely.

In 2003, the Department of Education did not award any FLAP grants. Instead, as authorized by Congress, it awarded all of the FLAP funds as Foreign Language Incentive Program (FLIP) grants. The 2003 FLIP grants were essentially non-competitive and awarded to LEAs to establish a K-2 or 1-3 foreign language program. Many of the grants, in fact, went to small- to mid-size school districts. But LEAs that had planned to submit FLAP grants for 2003 most likely submitted them in 2004. 2003 was the only year the Secretary of Education authorized awarding FLIP grants.

Since FLAP was first funded by Congress, three SEAs and a number of LEAs in the PNCFL region have received FLAP grants to establish, enhance, or expand programs in Chinese, French, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Russian, or Spanish. There were five FLAP grant recipients from the PNCFL region in 2006.

Wyoming Department of Education: Wyoming Middle School Articulation Project. Ann Tollefson, grant administrator. annt@bresnan.net

The Wyoming Middle School Articulation Project was one of only four grants awarded to SEAs nationwide in 2006. The project "will develop, pilot, and share nationally a curriculum and curricular products that will continue Wyoming's standards-based, content-based K-6 Spanish language program. The seventh and eighth grade programs will be appropriate to the language proficiency and cognitive development of middle school students who began language study in kindergarten and will be linked to and reinforce math, science, and social studies where appropriate. Secondary teachers will be provided professional development - language immersion, working with national experts on standards-based instruction and performance assessment, and access

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"Since all grant-funding agencies place a high priority on proposals that will likely continue after the grant period ends, it is imperative that you have community-wide support even before you finalize or write a grant proposal."

so, at what level? Or will it be to expand an existing language program? Perhaps you offer a language program in grades 9-12, but you wish to expand it to middle school or elementary school. Or will the focus be on both expanding and enhancing an existing program? Giving all foreign language teachers an opportunity "to buy into" the project before it is finalized is especially essential in small

will have ample time not only to write the proposal but also to receive feedback from the granting agency before you submit a final version. (All federal granting agencies willingly provide advice and feedback.)

"Heavens," teachers have asked, "does that mean we do all this work in advance and maybe the project we have in mind



FLAP in the PNCFL Region

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to mentoring and study groups with colleagues via interactive video and online technology.”

The Wyoming Department of Education has been the recipient of a previous FLAP grant to develop model FLES programs in French, Japanese, and Spanish and another to develop online proficiency assessments for Chinese, French, Japanese, and Spanish in cooperation with a six-state consortium (Georgia, Kentucky, New Jersey, South Carolina, and Virginia) working with the Center for Applied Second Language Studies at the University of Oregon. The Wyoming Department of Education and the Natrona County School District have received a number of other federal grants for foreign languages over the past decade, making Wyoming a leader in foreign language education, including distance delivery of Russian.

Anchorage School District: Anchorage, Alaska. Starship Mission in Russian Advances (MIRA). Janice Gullickson, grant administrator. gullickson_janice@asdk12.org

Starship Mission in Russian Advances expands and strengthens the existing Starship Mission in Russian in the Anchorage School District, whose initial funding was provided by a FLAP grant. Russian is already offered at the middle and high school levels, and there is a K-2 50/50 immersion program. MIRA will fill the gap in grades 3-6 and give the district a complete K-12 Russian program.

Eugene School District 4J: Eugene, Oregon. Proficiency in East Asian Region Languages (PEARL) Project. Abby Lane, grant administrator. lane@rj.lane.edu

“This project will expand and enhance the school district’s three East Asian language programs: Korean FLES, K-12

Japanese immersion, and Japanese FLEX (which will be expanding to FLES by the project). It also supports the planning of a Chinese immersion program. The goals and objectives are based on a needs assessment conducted with all participating schools. The support of our community partners such as the Center for Applied Second Language Studies and the Center for East Asian Pacific Studies will ensure the fidelity of our East Asian language programs.”

The Eugene School District’s K-12 immersion programs in French, Japanese, and Spanish were all established with the assistance of several federal grants, some dating as far back as twenty years ago, as were the district’s Korean FLES and Japanese FLEX.

School District No. 1, Multnomah County: Portland, Oregon. Russian Language and Culture Program. Mary Bastiani, grant administrator. bastiani@pps.k12.or.us

“Establishment of the Portland Public Schools (PPS) K-12 Russian Language and Culture Program will expand the choice of language studies available to students in Portland, Oregon. It will improve language education by increasing the number of students studying foreign language for a significant length of time and by increasing high levels of student achievement.”


The Russian Language and Culture Program will be established at Kelly Elementary School and Franklin High School. The Russian program complements PPS’ Japanese immersion program (Moshi Moshi), its Spanish immersion program (Hola Hola), and the Oregon K-16 Chinese Flagship Program, a cooperative project with the University of Oregon. The Oregon K-16 Chinese Flagship Program was established with a grant from the National

Security Education Flagship Program (NSEP). Students who remain with the program until high school graduation can then apply for scholarships to continue their studies at the University of Oregon.

Seattle Public Schools: Seattle, Washington. Establish Chinese Partial Immersion Elementary School, Expand Japanese Partial Immersion Elementary School. Linda Hoste, grant administrator. lhrhoste@seattleschools.org

“During Year 1, two teams consisting of principals and project staff will visit and observe Chinese classes at Woodstock Elementary School in Portland, Oregon. Second semester, the project will establish pilot classes in Chinese for kindergarten and first grade in three elementary schools, establish a curriculum development team for the John Stanford International School’s partial immersion Japanese language classes (now up to fourth grade), and develop a pipeline for certification of Chinese language teachers. During Year 2, Chinese partial immersion will expand to second grade. A curriculum team will develop the transition from Japanese immersion to middle school immersion, then high school. In Year 3, the city’s first Chinese partial immersion elementary school will be launched by adding third grade to the existing pilot school(s).”

The Seattle School District has previously received FLAP grants to establish a FLES Chinese program in three elementary schools and a FLAP grant, in conjunction with the State Office of Public Instruction, to establish a Chinese teacher certification program.

For more information about FLAP or other federal grants, visit the JNCL-NCLIS Web site at <http://www.languagepolicy.org>. 



Video in the Classroom

By Jeff Magoto, University of Oregon

A previous editor of Lingo, Jeff Magoto currently serves as the director for the Yamda Language Center, the University of Oregon's language lab.

Video has played an important part of language teachers' repertoire for almost twenty years. Each one of video's media incarnations, from VHS tape to DVD to Web-based digital video files, has made it easier to use and potentially more pedagogically interesting.

Thanks to free, commercial sites like YouTube and Google Video (where thousands of videos get uploaded daily) and the more venerable SCOLA (where news from more than twenty different countries and comprehension exercises get uploaded weekly), working with or repurposing digital video has never been easier for language teachers.

Very few of us have the luxury of teaching in a fully wired classroom with laptops on every desk, but these days many of us have the ability to rent a laptop and use presentation software like PowerPoint or media players like

Quicktime to play back high-quality recordings that we are able to legally download from the Web. Some of us have the added ability to put those files on course management systems or on streaming media sites where our students can watch the video at home in order to prepare for the next day's class.

A stumbling block to making video files available, though, has proven to be the difficulty of downloading the video from the Web and then editing it into the manageable chunks needed for a specific group of learners. File formats lie at the crux of this problem: different sites use different methods of encoding their videos. For example, YouTube and Google Video use Flash, SCOLA uses Quicktime, and TV 5 in France uses Real or Windows Media Player. If you want to download a video for use in a PowerPoint presentation or even just to play back from your desktop, the file often needs to be converted to a format that is compatible with your Mac or PC. (Audio doesn't present quite the same challenges because podcasts, for instance, all use the widely available .mp3 format.)

Downloading the video has become much easier thanks to the popularity of "add-ons" for Firefox and Internet Explorer. (Add-ons are small programs that run inside your browser to perform a specific function.) If you're trying to download a Flash video from YouTube, installing the "video downloader" add-on will do the trick. However, teachers who like to repurpose content have an even better option for sites like YouTube. A stand-alone program called Tubesock downloads the video and converts it to a Quicktime file automatically.

Converting your downloaded video file to a format that is useful is the next step. Some media editing software such as iMovie on Macs or Movie Maker on Windows will be able to read the file directly and allow you to begin editing. When that isn't the case, you'll need to convert the file to a format that is "importable." The most versatile tool for converting files that I have found is Apple's Quicktime Pro. This program reads and writes a variety of different forms and can edit and compress files for Web delivery. Nevertheless, as iPods and other portable media players become a potential teaching tool, software

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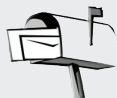
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German Charter School in Alaska

By Laurel Derksen, Romig Middle School



The current Alaska representative to the PNCFL board, Laurel Derksen teaches Spanish at Romig Middle School in Chugiak, Alaska.

The Rilke Schule, a semi-immersion German charter school, will open next fall in Anchorage, Alaska. The Rilke Schule will be the fifth immersion school in the city. Currently, Anchorage has two Spanish immersion schools, one Russian, one Japanese, and now one German. Unlike the immersion programs already established, the Rilke Schule will be for grades kindergarten through eight; the four others in the city serve grades kindergarten through six.

As a charter school, the parents and teachers will have more input in the curriculum and the administration of the school than in public schools. The new charter school expects to have 160 students enrolled the first year. The Rilke Schule is still seeking native Germans with elementary certification for their staff. If interested, see their Web site at <http://www.rilkeschule.org>. 



The Rilke Schule will be the first German immersion charter school in Anchorage.

Podcasting

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Once the videos are digitized and ready to go, there are several choices for getting the content to the students, depending on their individual technological resources. The videos can be stored and accessed on computers in a classroom or lab, or the podcasts can be distributed like any other media content on CDs or DVDs. Since we wanted to come close to the "broadcast" nature of podcasting, we posted the podcasts in our learning management system (Sakai). This program allowed us to upload all of the videos at once but set dates for when the videos could be accessed by the students. Sakai also sent out email notifications when each segment was ready for students to download.


Assessing both faculty impressions and student feedback, this pilot project for Latin 101 was a success. Students completed an optional survey online at the end of the semester. The results of this survey indicated that students used the podcasts for their entertainment value as well as for reviewing for tests, although they admittedly did not watch every

single episode with regular frequency. Students' comments indicated that they enjoyed the mystery that was woven into the eighteen episodes. In this pilot project, the podcasts were not a required component of the course, so the fact that students voluntarily tuned in at the very least resulted in more contact time with the language and culture.

We also found that, in terms of production time compared to the value of the end product, the time needed to create these podcasts was reasonable and led to high-quality resources. Each five-minute video, including shooting and editing, took approximately one to two hours, so the eighteen-episode project took between eighteen and thirty-six hours for content that is valuable for this year's twenty-seven students in Latin 101 and that can be used again next semester. For courses with more students or more sections of the same course, the production time is even more reasonable.

Now that we feel comfortable with the technological process of creating pod-

casts, we are ready to expand the use in more languages as well as develop projects in which students create podcasts. In our language program, the most common approach our faculty follow is a communicative methodology. For this reason, our podcasts will include authentic materials such as interviews with native speakers, cultural vignettes shot both locally and abroad, and other resources that will naturally lead to more exposure and communication in the target language.

Podcasts can be a useful tool in any approach to language teaching. They can increase student interest in the content of a course by using the modern and popular multimedia of iPods and podcasts. However, as with any technical resource, faculty must consider a number of variables discussed in this article. We must weigh the pros and the cons, taking into consideration the learning curve and time commitment for creating high-tech resources as compared to the pedagogical benefits of integrating new technologies. 



Teachers Find a Path With WILL



Brandee Mau teaches German at Campbell County High School in Gillette, Wyoming. Brandee participated in WILL from 2003-05 and served as a mentor to the 2005-07 WILL cohort. Currently, Brandee serves as president of the Wyoming Foreign Language Teachers' Association (WFLTA) and as an ACTFL delegate.

What new experiences have you had in local or regional leadership as a result of your involvement with WILL?

Through the influence of WILL, I was elected WFLTA president and WFLTA's ACTFL delegate. I serve on several state foreign language task forces and as my district's foreign language curriculum facilitator. Recently, I was selected to be part of the AP Best Practices Commission, which has been assigned the task of identifying best practices of a third-year college language course according to ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. My WILL connections have also provided me opportunities to present at state and national conferences, publish several articles, and attend a National Foreign Language Resource Center institute in Ames, Iowa. I would definitely say that WILL has broadened my professional horizons.

As a teacher in an isolated district, how can language teachers be best supported?

Teaching is a challenging profession, and being a language teacher only compounds that challenge. Add isolation to the mix, and a situation for frustration, burn out, and failure is in the making. Opportunities for isolated language teachers to come together, especially when the professional development is considered an honor and the participants are treated as such, go a long way to alleviating job-related stress and fatigue. Isolated teachers need access to a support system that includes financial assistance.



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WILL participants Brandee Mau, left, and Kacey Larracoechea, right, enjoy the professional development opportunities at the ACTFL Annual Convention in 2004.

Based on your experience, what advice do you have for new teachers located in rural areas?

1. Reach out. As head of a state organization, it is hard to know where new teachers are to pass on professional development opportunities such as WILL. If you do not make contact, we might not even know that you are out there. There are language professionals that want you to succeed and are excited that you have chosen to be a language teacher; they just don't know where you are!
2. Get involved with your state organization. It is worth the time AND money. If your state doesn't seem all that active, maybe they have been waiting for someone like you to get the fire started. Your home district will most likely approve of your involvement, as it adds prestige and attention to your school and district in the state arena.
3. Don't reinvent the wheel. Often we rural teachers are bound by lack of resources, poor or absent curriculum, and haphazard articulation. Through your newly minted connections, you will have access to what other teachers have done, affording you the opportunity to "take and make" better! 🤝🤝

WESTERN INITIATIVE FOR LANGUAGE LEADERSHIP

The Western Initiative for Language Leadership (WILL), sponsored by the Center for Applied Second Language Studies at the University of Oregon, is a two-year program designed to reach out to novice language teachers in rural areas. WILL unites and supports these teachers through technology, action research, and leadership training to combat isolation and encourage professional development. The long-term goal of WILL is to promote a high-quality international education for students by building teachers' pedagogical and leadership skills.



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Video

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such as Visual Hub becomes essential. Visual Hub can be considered the “de-Babelizer” of video conversion software. Users can easily convert a file from one format (i.e. Quicktime, DVD, Flash) to another. Visual Hub allows you to compress files from different forms and even connect fragments of video. The University of Oregon’s Yamada Center prefers Visual Hub so much that we bought a site license to allow students to download, convert, and reconnect video files themselves.

In contrast to the do-it yourself approach above, there’s always the foreign language satellite TV service called SCOLA, which has been available to schools since the early 90s. SCOLA is particularly attractive to teachers working in less commonly taught languages and those who teach advanced learners. Thanks to the web, SCOLA no longer requires an expensive satellite set-up to access its content.

Over the years, SCOLA’s producers have tried to make its multilingual offerings more pedagogically interesting. Their latest effort, Insta-Class, is quite impressive. Insta-Class is a Web page consisting of downloadable audio and video files, tran-

scriptions in both the target language and English, and comprehension exercises. At least once a week, an Insta-Class is made available to educators on the SCOLA Web site. All the material may be legally downloaded and repurposed, which contributes to SCOLA’s pricey cost.

A more recent entrant into this area of fee-based, online authentic foreign language video content is Yabla. Several universities are now using Yabla for French, Spanish, and ESL listening content as well as self-study work. Yabla is entirely Web-based. In contrast to SCOLA’s focus on the news, Yabla offers students a variety of genres, including talk shows and soap operas, with comprehension exercises already programmed in.

Video has always added so much to the world language classroom. Now that teachers are able to manage and package video in even more meaningful ways, a profound change in our thinking and use of authentic materials may be underway. 



“A profound change in our thinking and use of authentic materials may be underway.”