



COMMUNITY LANGUAGE RESOURCES: A Handbook for Teachers

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PREFACE

This volume is the culmination of a two-year project conducted by the National Foreign Language Resource Center in Hawai'i. The aim of the project was to capitalize on community language resources in developing programs and products to improve foreign language education. Approaches were developed in Hawai'i schools to serve as a model for similar projects and programs that can be carried out elsewhere in the US. At the time the project began, Hawai'i's Department of Education had just approved new standards for foreign language education and was looking for educational models which would help them to meet these standards (see Appendix).

The Community Resources project set out to inform teachers about the advantages of working to meet these standards by building language programs around existing community resources which directly tied in to student background and interest. A related aim was to inform teachers about language and help them to draw on the diverse language experiences of their students. Teachers and students were introduced to approaches which would provide opportunities for them to grow in their understanding of patterns and principles of language, a key part of the Language Awareness framework which informed the project. These approaches train students to attend to language around them and to hone their ability to become independent language learners by teaching techniques of observation and analysis and maximizing contact with target language speakers. Finally, the project pushed for the creation of programs for the large numbers of students who already had some exposure to and interest in foreign languages such as Ilokano, Tagalog and Samoan yet were unable to study and develop in them until they reached the college level. These students, offered the opportunity to study their languages of interest at the primary or secondary level, are the students most likely to reach the high levels of foreign language competence detailed in the World Language Standards (see Appendix).

In addition to teacher training in language awareness approaches for teachers, programs based on the philosophies and approaches outlined here are under way in after school programs at two junior high schools (an after-school program called LACE: Language Awareness, Culture, and Education). These students (and others) will continue to work with Language Awareness at the high school level as well as studying community languages as heritage and foreign languages. Additionally, a community college Language Awareness program has also gotten underway and is helping students develop a full range of multilingual abilities. All of these programs put students at the center of an inquiry process in which they grow in their understandings and abilities to use multiple languages through working with the language resources available in their own classrooms and communities.

This handbook begins with discussion of some of the reasons why teachers would want to draw on community language resources. We continue with perspectives from second language acquisition research and educational philosophy which support the approaches to drawing on community language resources described here. Next major approaches to drawing on community language resources are explained and, finally, sample activities with examples from Hawai'i are presented. A glossary is provided for those who may be new to some of the terminology used.

COMMUNITY LANGUAGE RESOURCES: A Handbook for Teachers

WHY DRAW ON COMMUNITY LANGUAGE RESOURCES ?

There is a growing awareness that successful participation in the global community of the 21st century entails significant knowledge of world languages and cultures. Schools are implementing curriculum focused on diversity and multicultural education, and there is continuing work on creating systems of foreign language education which will help students become effective speakers of languages other than English. Despite some movement away from traditional grammar-focused approaches to language education and towards more communicative activities, few students exit high school or even college foreign language study with the requisite abilities to function successfully in foreign language environments or carry on conversations at more than a basic level with speakers of the target language. There is typically a great distance between classroom language learning activities and the realities of interacting with target language speakers.

Some students have the good fortune of being able to push forward their language abilities through study abroad opportunities which provide immersion in the target language environment and ample opportunities for interaction with target language speakers. These opportunities, however, are clearly not possible for the majority of students. Ideally, one would like to offer greater numbers of language students the explanations, descriptions and focused practice of the language classroom in conjunction with the multiple opportunities for language learning which immersion in target language environments provide. Drawing on community language resources to supplement and enliven the foreign language classroom can make it possible for students to take advantage of the best of both worlds. The language classroom provides the benefits of instructed language learning, offering a safe haven for practice, drawing learner's attention to features of the language they might not otherwise notice and structuring and controlling the flow of language information to students so that they can make sense of and internalize target language features. These benefits need to be combined with those of naturalistic settings: exposure to natural language variation, opportunities to observe and analyze language use in context, development of strategic competence and the language learning which takes place as a result of negotiation and interaction with target language speakers.

Nearly all of schooling in kindergarten through twelfth grade is preparatory — giving students basic skills for the future doing of things. Language study offers an area where the subject can come alive and be used immediately. Drawing on community resources can create opportunities for students to not just be preparing for authentic interactions in a non-English language and culture but actually doing it.

Community languages

“Community languages” is a term used more widely in Australia, and the UK than in the US. In Hawai‘i, community languages include languages such as Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Ilokano, Japanese, Khmer (Cambodian), Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese and numerous Micronesian languages, all of which are normally considered ‘foreign’ languages in the US, as well as Hawaiian (an official language of the State of Hawai‘i together with English) and Pidgin (an indigenous creole language). Some community languages, specifically Hawaiian, Japanese and Spanish, are widely taught in Hawai‘i. All or the others are less either less commonly taught languages or simply not taught at all.

Of course, the configurations of community languages will vary in every location. When teachers and students begin to look for community language resources they will find that some community languages can be found in local newspapers, schools, t.v stations, radio stations, business organizations, and fairs and others can be found only in groups of speakers who may be clustered in particular areas or come together for activities such as religious worship or cultural festivals. Whatever the case in a particular locale, community languages are an important resource for foreign language study which can be taken advantage of to a greater extent than they have been in a great many locations and educational institutions across the United States.

Exposure to natural language use and variation

One of the benefits of the language classroom (as opposed to naturalistic language learning alone) is the opportunity for teachers to simplify and control the language input which students receive in order to make that input understandable and the learning task more manageable. There is a trade-off here, however, and that has to do with language learners’ abilities to adapt to language use outside of the classroom.

Classroom language is often idealized language — absent the phonological changes of relaxed speech and current popular usages. “Real language” is often considered too messy to deal with in the language classroom. Real language, however, is exactly what learners will have to deal with if they actually want to use the language they’ve learned. This is what is referred to in the psychological literature as a “transfer of training” issue. If one’s training is too different from the situation in which one will apply that training there may not be much transfer between what was learned in the training situation (here, the language classroom) and the real world task or application. The classic example of this is someone who after years of studying French at school reports on a trip to Paris reports that they couldn’t actually communicate with anyone but they could conjugate verbs perfectly. Part of the remedy for this type of situation has already been taking place for years — students are not just conjugating verbs and taking grammar quizzes in their language classes but are instead practicing classroom approximations of the real world tasks they may later need to accomplish, an approach which improves transfer of training.

There remains, however, a gulf between the classroom use situation and what our language student would encounter on the streets of Paris. This is because few people speak in the idealized manner represented in language textbook conversations (with complete sentences, controlled vocabulary, careful pronunciation and consistently standard speech). Therefore, to maximize

transfer of training and to best prepare students for transitions from the classroom to the world of purposeful language use students need training in dealing with the variation they will hear in the outside world.

Ideally, the language classroom would take advantage of opportunities for simplification when necessary to maximize language learning, but also provide a place where students could be trained and provided with strategies for dealing with language in the world around them. These can be referred to as elaboration strategies, which have been contrasted with the simplification which is more common in the language classroom. With elaboration strategies, then, teachers (or students) bring real world language samples into the language classroom and work to analyze and understand the language features and communicative intent contained in them. Community language enclaves are an important source of language sample data for this type of learning. Typically this type of language work is considered too messy to deal with and not sufficiently “proper” for instruction yet it is the type of work which will enable learners to successfully function in a variety of real world contexts.

Exposure to a range of language styles and registers

It is a well-documented finding that classrooms are limited in the range of styles and registers of language that are typically employed. In addition to the simplification strategies described above, classroom language input is limited by the particular ways language is used in classrooms. One uses language in classrooms for a limited range of functions and purposes and as a result, there is a certain amount of “impoverishment of the input” to language learners as well as limitations in opportunities to interact in various registers with various levels of formality. Although language learners can role play with each other various situations, classroom language learner role plays tend to be quite idealized and differ from actual language use. Drawing on community language resources is a way to broaden the range of language styles or registers a learner is exposed to in authentic ways.

Opportunities for interaction with target language speakers

Typically, in communicative language classrooms, students have ample opportunities for interaction with peers (who like themselves are learners of the target language) and virtually no interaction with native or highly skilled speakers of the target language. Despite the benefits of peer practice there are important reasons to make the effort to seek out at least some opportunities for students to interact with target language speakers through drawing on community language resources. Interaction with target language speakers shares some of the benefits of interaction with peers in the language classroom particularly if this practice pushes them to communicate their own meanings and understand others in purposeful communication. There are valuable processes which take place during the interaction process which push forward language learning: negotiation of meaning (in which interlocutors attempt to repair misunderstandings), and recasting (in which the more proficient speaker repairs or rephrases what the other speaker has said but without overtly correcting or interrupting the flow of communication).

Despite the benefits of practicing with peers there are limitations. If the learners all come from the same language and culture they are likely to use the target language in ways which are heavily influenced by the home language and culture. At times what happens might be thought of as something akin to “speaking English in Japanese;” the shared contextual and cultural understandings being more related to the first language than the target language. Working to make possible (at least occasional) interactions with target language speakers (through community language resources) addresses and ameliorates the limitations of classroom peer interaction. Bringing target language speakers to class (see sections on interchange and class visitors below) is perhaps the easiest way to make possible such interactions. Excursions to community language enclaves (for example, Chinatown) is another way. Observation of or participation in language use in authentic contexts will be necessary for students to learn the subtleties and cultural understandings which govern language use in society. Some of these features may be non-verbal such as cultural norms regarding silence and body language. Others will relate to social organization and pragmatics. Students might begin with focused observations in the target language community so that they might practice attending to and analyzing the rules of interaction in a particular setting.

Exposure to living culture

As much as textbook writers have accomplished in bringing world cultures into the foreign language classroom there is no substitute for experiencing a living culture. Most often what is represented in textbooks are aspects of “high culture” (such as kabuki or flamenco) or easily observable surface features of the culture; such as food, clothing and holidays rather than the values and beliefs which shape everyday life. Contact with target language enclaves in the community can create opportunities to explore beyond the surfaces of cross-cultural understanding.

Opportunities to build on strengths of heritage language speakers

When we teach foreign languages that are also represented in local communities, this enables us to build on the strengths of many children who have immigrated from countries where languages other than English are spoken or are growing up in homes where immigrant languages are spoken. These children come to school with the enormous benefit of substantial skills in and exposure to other languages and cultures. Given the opportunity to formally study these languages at school, these students can be expected to reach the highest levels of foreign language proficiency. It is unfortunately the case that school systems, in their zeal to help these children acquire the full range of English language abilities, often neglect or even punish students for using their home languages. Rather than restricting their use, schools should foster the language resources already present in the abilities these students possess. For heritage language learners this often involves expanding the range of the registers they possess; typically these students will need help with more formal language registers, they may need help with literacy if all of their language knowledge is oral and they may need to learn standard language varieties since it is often the case that heritage language learners speak non-standardized varieties of the target language. It is important that whatever knowledge and language varieties

students come to the classroom with are respected. This is particularly important for heritage language learners since there may be strong ties to their identities and their perceptions of themselves as speakers of the target language. Properly handled, these learners can expect to go far in their language abilities as well as provide learning opportunities for other students. Ideally, given numbers and resources separate sections should be created for these learners since their language histories and profiles of abilities differ greatly from those of non-heritage learners.

Learning how to learn

Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of community resources approaches is the opportunities they create for reconceptualizing language education and training students to be at the center of the language learning process. Rather than relying solely on teachers and textbooks to analyze the target language for classroom consumption students start from raw language data and experiences and are given help by teachers in making sense of it. Students who are connecting with community language resources can be asked to observe particular linguistic and cultural features, analyze their findings and bring them into the classroom for comparison and discussion with others. This type of encounter allows students to practice and work on fundamental skills of observation and analysis. These are precisely those skills which will allow them to become lifelong language learners but are rarely present in the language classroom. Without these skills students are dependent on textbooks and teachers for information about the target language. Given the variability of natural languages in the world and the gap between idealized and simplified textbook language and language use outside of the classroom, skills of observation and analysis of language are essential for students who hope to successfully make use of language skills outside of the classroom.

In the Language Awareness traditions which emerged out of Great Britain, students begin to be observers of language by observing their own language use and language use in their families, classrooms and communities. This provides a point of comparison for the target language (also one of the goals of the *Hawai'i World Languages Standards* — see appendix). through these types of exercises and activities students learn how to learn from language in the world around them.

PERSPECTIVES FROM RESEARCH AND THEORY

Choices to draw on community language resources are justified based on the reasons given above as well as the way in which they embody principles of language learning and theories of effective educational practice. These theories and principles are discussed below.

Second language acquisition research

Researchers in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) investigate the ways in which people learn second languages and the ways in which teachers can help students to maximize their learning. The following are some principles and perspectives from SLA and the ways in which they connect to community resource approaches.

Noticing

Current theoretical perspectives on second language acquisition point to the importance of noticing key features of the target language in authentic, communicative contexts (Schmidt, 1990). Schmidt points to findings from research in psychology and psycholinguistics which indicate that the minimum requirement for language learning to take place is for the learner to notice a particular language feature. Often our perceptions are so heavily influenced by our first language that we may not notice that the target language divides the world up in different ways. Current pedagogical approaches offer little in the way of training language students to observe and analyze target language samples in systematic ways. Students who are given the opportunity to study abroad sometimes learn far less than one would expect. They have not learned how to learn outside of the classroom. Although great amounts of target language input surround them they may not be focusing on, attending to or noticing particular features in systematic ways. Drawing on community language resources has the advantage of the making it possible for students to move back and forth between target language immersion and classroom instruction.

Focus on form

In second language acquisition research circles, there has been a lot of attention to the idea of both “noticing” and “focus on form” as helpful to language learning. Both of these have to do with paying attention to form/meaning relationships while engaged in real communicative contexts. While “noticing” refers to what must take place in order for learning to occur, “focus on form” refers to pedagogical approaches which seek to draw learners attention to features of the target language while preserving a primarily meaning-focused orientation (See Doughty & Williams, 2000)

Elaboration vs. simplification

As mentioned in discussion of variation and foreign language study above, typically foreign language approaches have been toward simplification rather than elaboration of language input. Research indicates that this may not be the optimal strategy for language acquisition. Simplification of language often reduces the contextual clues and the natural redundancy of language which help the learner understand messages and acquire new language. Community language resources provide context-rich authentic data which teachers and students can come to understand through elaborative processes.

Synthetic vs. analytic approaches

Typical second or foreign language curriculum is based on a synthetic approach to language learning (See Long & Crookes, 1994). This means that languages are broken into small, “bite-size” manageable bits for the language learner whose task is then to “synthesize” them or put them together into meaningful strings of language. For example, in a typical language textbook we might first be introduced to personal pronouns and then simple present tense verbs; these are then synthesized into simple sentences with additional language “pieces” being introduced as the syllabus progresses. Alternatively, in analytic approaches, students are exposed to language

models or samples and then need to analyze the language patterns in order to make use of it for their own communicative purposes. Community resource approaches draw more on analytic approaches in order to be able to deal with more complex language data and maximize transfer of training (see below).

Transfer of training

Transfer of training is a very basic psychological principle. The closer practice tasks are to real tasks the more the effects of the practice will help in performance of the actual task. For example, a teacher who wants students to learn family-related vocabulary for conversation might construct a crossword puzzle with the words for different family members in it. While this might be a fun way to introduce students to the vocabulary, the set of skills involved is very different from having a conversation with someone about their family. For the crossword puzzle one needs to be good at things like counting how many letters a word has, spelling it correctly and understanding clues. A classroom activity such as having students talk and ask each other questions about their families is much closer to the target task and shares many more of the same skills. If we want students to be able to interact successfully outside of the classroom with speakers of the target language they should practice those skills which are closest to this target skill. Drawing on community resources, for example bringing in target language speaking students, staff or community members for interviews about family in the target language will maximally prepare students to carry out the same task outside of the classroom.

Educational philosophy

The approaches to drawing on community language resources described here, in addition to their connections to SLA research and theory, are also influenced by educational philosophy. The educational approaches described here are ones in which the student plays a central role in the educational process not merely as a passive recipient of knowledge but as an investigator and a creator of new knowledge. The approach is based on a belief in the value of what is referred to as experiential or active learning. This type of educational philosophy is most strongly associated with the classic work of the educational philosopher John Dewey, whose ideas remain valid and influential today (see Garrison, 1994; House, 1994).

There are four key elements of effective educational practice as advocated by Dewey (1916) which inform community resource approaches: 1) education in school should connect directly to life outside of school; 2) participation in school activities should not be coerced but rather come from students own investment in educational programs and their outcomes; 3) education should involve active problem solving by students in environments which are as authentic as possible; and 4) the goal of education should not be seen as the accumulation of large amounts of memorized facts but rather the ability to solve problems and interact effectively with new and ever-changing environments. In the sections that follow, we will examine these elements and how they relate to principles of language learning and pedagogy.

Connectedness

A crucial element of Dewey's educational approach is the importance of connections between life and activities inside and outside of school. He warns against "the danger of creating an undesirable split between the experience gained in more direct associations and what is acquired in school" (1916, p. 9). This split has, in fact, become an important problem with traditional language pedagogy. Because methods and activities in the language classroom often bear little relation to actual language use outside of the classroom, students are often left unable to carry on even the most basic of conversations when confronted with speakers of languages that they have been studying for years.

This is due in part to the artificiality of the type of language practice provided in many language classrooms and the lack of transfer between these types of activities and real world verbal interactions — the "transfer of training" problem. Activities of the language classroom (such as drilling of grammar patterns and memorization of vocabulary lists) do not easily transfer to the real world contexts where one is called on to express one's own thoughts and meanings in the target language and understand natural language use in all its complexity.

Although currently popular communicative language teaching approaches have more connection to real world activities than the audio-lingual type approaches described above, they still produce different strategies and abilities than the ones students need to deal with second language interaction outside of the classroom. This is because the language offered in the classroom has been simplified to such an extent that students are left unprepared to handle the complexity of real world language use. Texts and teachers tend to rely a great deal on techniques of simplification in order to make a language comprehensible and learnable rather than on strategies of elaboration of language as it occurs naturally in communities of users. Idealized notions of monolithic and "standard" languages have dominated conceptions of language in the foreign and second language classroom. In such classrooms, language has been "sanitized for your protection." Students are often left craving the "real language" that is left out of the classroom. In Japan, books of English slang are popular best-sellers. Students of language in Japan, as in the U.S. aren't given the type of training which would allow them to successfully employ current language usage. There is a danger that quickly outdated and rapidly changing slang will be embarrassingly misused by students who really on textbooks rather than systematic and careful observation for their information about language. Students haven't been oriented to the sociolinguistic aspect of language use may also be unaware that some language is restricted to "in-group" users and that they should exercise caution in when and how they use certain styles of language.

In order to understand norms for language use students shouldn't over-rely on books and teachers, but rather, need to be systematic observers of skilled language users, and they need to be more aware of feedback from others on their own language). Dufon (2000), in her study of learners of Indonesian found that when these students were in Indonesia they needed to be able to use greetings and forms of address which varied not only by island but within islands. They needed to be adept at uncovering the unwritten rules that were operating in a particular locale with respect to the language use of foreigners. A single Indonesian textbook cannot possibly

cover all of this type of variation. A classroom teacher, can however, train students to become observers and analyzers of language variation in the world around them.

Students need classroom instruction which recognizes and deals with language variation — not only prestige varieties but vernaculars, not only formal registers but the casual, everyday language that people use. What is needed is an approach which trains students and give them strategies for dealing with the complexities of actual communicative language use outside of the classroom. Drawing on community resources to improve foreign language education makes possible much stronger connections between life inside and outside of the classroom than are typically present.

Investment

Crucial to experiential educational philosophy is the idea that teachers and schools are not effective when they attempt to coerce students into participating in educational activities. The social environment of the school is “truly educative in its effect in the degree in which an individual shares or participates in some conjoint activity” (1916, p. 22) not through external and coercive control but “through identity of interest and understanding in the business of education” (1916, p. 39).

Student investment in learning is not seen as coming from a desire to prepare for some distant future event but rather connections to current interests, experiences and aims. Through looking for the connections between student interest and the course material investment in the learning can be created. When investment happens motivation becomes internal rather than external and paves the way for real learning to take place.

Teachers must find the ways that students want to use language to accomplish their own ends — to use language *for* something. In the activity section below are descriptions of project work in which students take the lead in investigating those aspects of the target language and culture which most interest them.

Active learning

A cornerstones of experiential educational approaches is that students should be active rather than passive in their own learning. Students learn from *doing* and the experience they gain from purposeful interaction with learning environments. This idea which may seem intuitively obvious has yet to be realized in many educational settings. Traditional models of a teacher lecturing and seemingly pouring knowledge into the empty heads of the passive students are ever-present. This is particularly ineffective in language education where much of what students need is procedural rather than declarative knowledge. They need to practice tasks which resemble real-world language interaction. Even better, the teacher needs to organize opportunities for real interaction in the target language so that students are not just “preparing to do the thing” but actually “doing the thing itself.” For example, rather than (or in addition to) doing pair work between classmates who may already know each other and the answers to the questions they are required to ask each other, students might actually be asked to seek out and

interview native speakers of the language on topics of interest to them (thereby also increasing connections and investment). Teachers might facilitate and scaffold this process by bringing in native speakers of the target language and working together with students to prepare for and analyze interviews with them.

As important as learning to express meaning and understand the content of what is said is the ability to understand the ways in which language forms interact with issues of politeness, power and subtleties of meaning. Students are rarely asked to observe such features of language use in social contexts but are instead given oversimplified and often unworkable rules which lack the complexity and flexibility to serve students well. Dewey writes that

To organize education so that natural active tendencies shall be fully enlisted in doing something, while seeing to it that the doing requires observation, the acquisition of information, and the use of a constructive imagination, is what most needs to be done to improve social conditions. To oscillate between drill exercises that strive to attain efficiency in outward doing without the use of intelligence, and an accumulation of knowledge that is supposed to be an end in itself, means that education accepts the present social conditions as final. (p. 112)

The essential change from a passive to an active approach in language learning requires students to form and test their own hypotheses about how language is working in social contexts rather than passively being presented with rules to memorize and regurgitate on tests. The ability to analyze and observe norms of language use in different situations is a skill that serves students well not only in foreign and second languages, but also in learning new genres and registers of English. Dewey writes,

The essentials of method . . . that the pupil have a genuine situation of experience — that there be a continuous activity in which he is interested for its own sake, that a genuine problem develop within this situation as a stimulus to thought; third that he possess the information and make the observations needed to deal with it, fourth, that suggested solutions occur to him which he shall be responsible for developing in an orderly way, fifth that he have opportunity and occasion to test this ideas by application, to make their meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity. (p. 163)

When students draw on community language resources to find out about the language and culture or to experience target language interaction they take on very different roles and often reap greater rewards than in traditional classrooms.

Process oriented

The final, and, perhaps, most essential element of this educational philosophy is that the primary goal is not the transference of knowledge but training in the processes of attaining knowledge and solving problems. Dewey criticizes the “failures” of traditional educational approaches . . . failure to take account of the instinctive or native powers of the young; secondly, failure to develop initiative in coping with novel situations; thirdly, an undue emphasis upon drill and other devices which secure automatic skill at the expense of personal perception” (p. 50). These failures are quite commonly seen in the language classroom. Given the changing nature of language norms and their variability according to context, geographical location and a host of

other factors, to over-rely on drill and memorization at the expense of abilities to deal with novel situations is a serious misjudgment.

Language teachers, then, should not simply reduce the target language to easily digestible pieces for students but instead focus on training students in the *process* of learning from real language use through observation and analysis. Approaches which have developed along these lines in language learning have been referred to as “language awareness,” “students as ethnographers” or “students as researchers of language and culture.” Research indicates that learners must have their attention drawn to the relevant features of the target language *in meaningful contexts* in order for optimal language learning to take place. This allows the appropriate associations between form and meaning to take place. If language is presented in decontextualised form, learners lose understandings of appropriate contextual use in the target discourse community. If learners are only using language naturalistically, with no focus on form, key features of target language use may escape their attention (see Doughty and Williams, 2000).

For example, rather than train students in the often stilted sounding “How are you? I’m fine, thank you, and you?” sequence one often hears from Japan-trained students of English, one might ask students to actually observe and note the greetings they hear around them. After spending some time observing, students might come back with examples of greetings such as “Howzit!,” “What’s up?,” “Hey,” “How ya doin’ ?” and a variety of others. The teacher could then ask students to classify the greetings in terms of formality and investigate appropriate responses. This is a small example of engaging students in the process of learning from language in the world around them. Dewey writes that

the purpose of school education is to insure continuance of education by organizing the powers that insure growth. The inclination to learn from life itself and to make the conditions of life such that all will learn in the process of living is the finest product of schooling. (p. 51)

Language education does not typically concern itself with helping students to become independent learners of language outside of the classroom. Traditionally, students are introduced to rather decontextualized and simplified language in the classroom in the belief that teachers can add to students language abilities by adding vocabulary and grammar block after block until most of the language is there (what Long and Crookes, 1990, refer to as a “synthetic” syllabus). In fact, however, the grammar rules that language teachers present tend to be vast oversimplifications and vocabulary is quite dependent on the circumstances and subject matter which is being discussed. If students must rely on teachers to mediate and present to them all the language and rules of language they will need, there is not much hope for students actually becoming highly functional in the target language. If on the other hand, language teachers ask students to observe and analyze language use of native speakers in the surrounding community or in sources of authentic language use such as newspapers, videos and internet sources, students may develop the skills necessary to continue to learn from language in the world around them.

True understanding of any language includes an understanding of variation and registers which change with context. The assumption of monolithic, prescriptivist norms of language in foreign language education often results in shock on the part of students when they find that real language use differs substantially from idealized versions of standard language usage. Training

foreign and second language students to collect and analyze speech samples themselves and to deconstruct relationships between language and power will make it possible for them to function more successfully in the target language community and provide them with the tools for life-long learning.

The educational considerations that Dewey has emphasized are very much alive and part of the current educational conversation. Although the terms may vary, for example, “discovery learning” to indicate learning that is active, process oriented and invested, the key principles of progressive American educational philosophy have changed little. Community language and culture resources are a key tool for making language study come alive in the ways in which Dewey has envisioned.

APPROACHES FOR DRAWING ON COMMUNITY LANGUAGE AND CULTURE RESOURCES

There are many ways in which community resources can be employed to enhance classroom language study. They might be used to interest students in world languages and cultures before they begin formal foreign language study; they might be used to supplement classroom activities that are structured in traditional ways and follow a textbook or they might be used as the core of a foreign language curriculum. The section that follows describes some major approaches to drawing on community language resources. These approaches inform many of the activities described in the “getting started” section.

Language awareness

The language awareness curriculum is an approach to language education which goes beyond those topics usually covered in first or second language instruction in order to promote greater understanding of the ways in which language functions in society. Language awareness approaches emerged out of Britain, in part, as a response to government reports and other indications of dissatisfaction with English and foreign language education in public schooling (for a detailed account see Hawkins, 1987). Donmall (1985) defines language awareness as “a person’s sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life.” Wolfram (1998) writes that

A language awareness program may concentrate on a cognitive parameter, in which the focus is on the patterns of language, an affective parameter, in which the focus is on attitudes about language, or a social parameter, in which the focus is on the role of language in effective communication and interaction. (p. 172)

British language awareness programs are used as a preparation for, transition to and supplement to foreign language education. They draw on community resources by starting with knowledge students have about their own languages and languages in their community. Multilingual students and community members are an important resource for this approach. Students discuss variation in world languages, examine data (from student bilingual informants when possible) and look for patterns in the ways languages express thought. Such programs seek to develop understandings based in part on making explicit students’ knowledge about their mother tongues

(Donmall, 1991). These understandings include the rule-based nature of language, the possibility of breaking these rules and still being able to communicate, differences between spoken and written language, the lack of word-for-word equivalencies between languages and differences in syntax and inflection between languages (Donmall, 1991). The use of knowledge about variation in the first language and descriptive language data present a picture different from that resulting from the more typically prescriptivist traditions in foreign language education. In other words, students note and describe the language they hear in the world around them rather than being told the rules of what language should be like.

The idea of language awareness has grown to encompass language across the curriculum and brought about collaborations between teachers of English, ESL, and foreign languages (Cheshire and Edwards, 1998). Hawkins (1987) describes a curriculum in which students learn about basic principles of linguistics including sociolinguistic perspectives on language and topics such as language variation and change. Students practice skills such as learning to listen for particular language features and finding patterns in language. Understandings and approaches are intended to aid students in learning other languages as well as their acquisition of various registers of English (including the standard, academic variety). The approach is also meant to combat linguistic parochialism and lead to the perception of the large number of speakers of languages other than English in the public schools as a resource rather than a problem.

A variant of language awareness approaches are what are known as “critical language awareness” approaches (see Fairclough, 1992). Proponents of critical language awareness stress the importance of education about issues of language and power. Although many language awareness advocates would perhaps pay cursory attention to social and political dimensions of language, Clark and Ivanic (1991) argue against any separation of language from the social contexts which shape it:

... language forms cannot be considered independently of the ways they are used to communicate in context. Further, individual acts of communication in context cannot be considered independently of the social forces which have set up the conventions of appropriacy for that context. (p.170)

Whether one analyzes language from social and political perspectives, as in critical language awareness, or from the many other perspectives of language awareness, by undertaking language awareness work one becomes awake to patterns of language in the classroom, the community and the world.

Language across the curriculum

An important contribution of language awareness approaches is the movement to recognize that language is being taught and dealt with across the curriculum and that teachers of various subjects should come together and target the concepts they want students to know and the skills and abilities they would like them to possess. This has been referred to as “Knowledge About Language.” It includes analyzing patterns in one’s own language use; learning about patterns in world languages; becoming familiar with the concepts of genre, register, variation and the ways in which language use changes with various purposes, for example, reports, casual conversation,

academic discussion, and storytelling. Thomas and Maybin (1998) list the following five points: knowledge about variation in and between languages, history of languages, language and power in society, acquisition and development of language, and language as a system shared by its users. By focusing on related themes and skills connections between Language Arts, ESL and Foreign Language Instruction are strengthened.

There are a variety of ways in which the various school disciplines can prepare students for a multilingual and multicultural world. In language arts this might mean working with multicultural literature and knowledge about language concepts. In social studies it would involve learning about world cultures including languages. In science classes it is possible to illustrate the use of the scientific method through language work; students can make hypothesis, collect and analyze data and draw conclusions about language patterns in their communities. In math students can use as their subject matter data about language use in their communities including work with surveys, maps, charts, graphs, and percentages.

Dialect traditions

While most of the work with language awareness has been initiated and carried out in Great Britain, there have been smaller movements in Australia and the U.S. which have focused more directly on issues of non-standardized language varieties or dialects. Students of varieties such as African American Vernacular English and Appalachian English learn to become investigators of language and find the patterns in their own language varieties, the starting point for comparison with other languages and their patterns of use.

Students as researchers of language and culture

For many, the study of language awareness may end with the exploration of the languages represented by the students present in the classroom and classroom study of world languages. Classroom-based language awareness approaches can be strengthened by requiring students to develop skills used in sociolinguistic and ethnographic research in order to become proficient at observing, analyzing and evaluating language use in the world around them (Egan-Robertson & Bloome, 1998). This is consonant with critical educational approaches (Freire, 1970) in that knowledge is located within the student and the community rather than solely with experts and published materials. This differs from the traditional ways in which students are asked to do research. Students are not asked to merely regurgitate library research nor do they carry out laboratory type experiments for which teachers have already determined the answers (Egan-Robertson & Bloome, 1998). They become creators of knowledge instead of merely consumers of it. This approach has been embraced and elaborated upon by the contributors to the Egan-Robertson and Bloome volume (1998), as well as other educational theorists and researchers (for example, Glowka & Lance, 1993; Beard, 1994). Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998) employ this approach for dialect awareness programs in the public schools. A well-known early example of this type of work (though not one that focused on language) is the *Foxfire* series of books created by students in Appalachia as they researched and documented their own culture.

Egan-Robertson and Bloome (1998) write that “there have only been a small number of efforts at using ethnography and sociolinguistic as teaching tools in kindergarten through Grade 12 (K–12) schools.” They find, though, that the relatively small number of efforts that have been made have been extraordinarily exciting in the new directions for classroom education that they have generated.” These approaches often employ oral history as a way into community cultures and frequently culminate in a written product which summarizes findings and serves as texts for future students and others.

Roberts et al (2001) report efforts to incorporate student as ethnographer work into study-abroad programs at their institution. This approach gave students a focus for culture and language learning; developed their observational skills and brought them into purposeful contact with the target language community.

Community and heritage languages at school

Heritage language learners

Awareness has just begun to develop of the valuable linguistic resources we have in heritage language learners. Schools are beginning to understand that steps must be taken to insure that children do not lose valuable language skills that they already have as they pass through the public school system. While language use in the family and community may produce individuals with strong conversational skills, work is needed to develop the kind of bilingualism that will be of use professionally.

Heritage language learners are often speakers of non-standardized or stigmatized language varieties. As with all potentially bi- or multi-lingual students pedagogical objectives should not be to replace their home language variety with another more high status one, but rather to expand their linguistic repertoires so that they may function in the greatest number of language use domains.

The most effective ways to draw on the community language resources represented by these students is to create special heritage language sections of the foreign language since the abilities and needs of these students differ substantially from

Partnership programs

Partnership programs pair heritage and foreign language learners of a language for mutual enrichment. The heritage language learner serves as a language model and peer tutor for the foreign language student. Such approaches have the benefit of raising the status of community languages and their speakers while providing valuable language interaction for foreign language learners.

Dual language programs

The most substantial way in which mainstream and heritage language learners can interact in a school setting are in what are referred to as dual language or two-way bilingual programs. In such

programs, all students study course subjects through both English and the other language. Such programs produce students with substantial bilingual abilities having had the benefits of peer interaction in the target language as well as content-based language instruction (See Cloud et al, 2000; Crawford, 1989)

CONCLUSIONS

Finding the resources

The prospect of seeking out and making contact with the people who represent community language resources may seem a daunting task to language teachers already handling many classroom and administrative responsibilities. It is recommended that teachers start small with the important first step of finding out what resources are out there. The “Language Survey” activity described below should uncover previously unnoticed or unused school community language resources in the form of bilingual students and staff already at the school. Letters home to parents asking about language and culture knowledge they might contribute may not only produce valuable classroom learning but also help to build bridges between schools and parents. Organizations such as ethnic clubs at high schools and colleges and ethnic chambers’ of commerce are also a good place to start. Remember, it doesn’t need to be the teacher alone doing all the work. Drafting letters of inquiry and invitation in the target language and conducting language surveys are valuable learning activities for students.

Making the shift

Starting any new pedagogical approach initially takes extra time and energy. With community resource approaches, as with other approaches, the extra time required becomes less and less as procedures and materials are developed and refined. The rewards of drawing on community language resources are great — more dynamic classrooms in which students can become excited about and make real gains in their language learning. We invite you to open up the classroom door and let in the world. Exciting adventures in language education await!

GETTING STARTED : SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

The following section which draws on the research, philosophy and approaches described above will provide foreign language teachers at the K–12 level with practical suggestions about how to make use of community resources in their classrooms.

Names

Names are an excellent reflection of multicultural and multilingual traditions in a particular community. Our names provide insight into who we are and where we come from. In this introductory activity, students write about the origins of their names, any cultural traditions that

were followed in choosing the name and any other interesting information about the names. They might also like to write about the names of other people in their family.

Discussion of names and naming traditions in different community cultures can be followed up by discussion of different terms of address. For example, in Japan one would call one's sibling "older sister" or "younger brother" rather than by their name. Students can be asked to make observations of what terms of address people use with each other and what factors seem to affect the choices (such as status, setting, degree of closeness).

Additional activities:

- Introduce naming traditions from other countries and cultures. For example:

In Spanish-speaking cultures, everyone has two last names. The first one is your father's last name and the second one is your mother's last name (her maiden name). What would your last name be in Spanish? For example, "Malia Cruz" might become "Malia Cruz-Watanabe."

In Japanese, your last name is said first and then the first name. When other people say your name, they add "san" (like "Mr." or "Ms."). "San" is usually added to the last name but can also be added to the first name. What would your name be in Japanese? For example, "Malia Cruz" would become Cruz Malia-san.

What other naming traditions do you know?

- Every language has its own sound system and your name would sound different written and spoken according to different systems. How would your name be written and pronounced in the Japanese phonetic system (using Katakana)? What would your name be according to the Hawaiian sound system? Other systems?
- The Name Game — Each person in the group introduces themselves and tells one interesting thing about their name. The first person says their name and one piece of information about their name (this might include what their middle name is, who they are named after, the ethnicity or meaning of their name, or any other information they wish to provide). The second person has to remember the name of the first person and what they said about it and then tells about herself/himself. The third person tries to remember and recite what the first and second person's names were and what they said and then adds his/her own. The game continues in this way until the last person who has the challenge of trying to remember what everyone else in the room has said.
- Name Bluff — Each person tells a story about their name. The story can be a true one or a made up one. After the person has told the story, the other people vote on whether the story was true or false. The story-teller gets one point for every person they were able to fool into thinking a true story was false or a false story was true. The people who are voting get one point for each time they vote correctly on whether a story was true or false.

- Find out about naming — Describe naming traditions in your culture / family / heritage/ or community. Interview someone who comes from a background different from yours about naming traditions in their culture. Report about your findings.

Sample findings about names:

The following brief examples show the kind of things students in Hawai'i came up with:

Chinese

My friend's name is Nai Wen Chang and she comes from Taiwan. She has two brothers, Cheng Tao and Cheng Hsin. She and her brothers were named by her paternal grandfather. All the females of her generation have "Nai" in their names and all the males have "Cheng." This is one way of telling who she is related to. In the Chinese tradition, a female would follow her husband's family. In Nai Wen's case her grandfather named only his son's children because they would carry the family name of Chang. Her grandfather did not name his daughter's children. Her family's naming tradition dates back to the beginning of the republic, around 1900. She really didn't know what happened during the Ching Dynasty, the last Chinese dynasty. She is probably of the last generation to continue with this tradition.

Jewish

Jewish people are not named after someone who is still living. There are no Jewish "Juniors" or "the Thirds." Children are often named using biblical names or in memory of someone who has died. When a child is named in memory of someone, only the first letter needs to be the same. Jewish people will often also have Hebrew names which are used in religious ceremonies such as Bar Mitzvahs and weddings. My brother's name is Mark and his Hebrew name is Moshe (which is Moses in Hebrew). A child will have the same Hebrew name as the person they're named after.

Rotuman

The last name of a person is always the first name of the parents. In this way, everyone knows who your parents are. After one generation, it becomes difficult to figure who one belongs to. This practice seems to be changing with the American influence.

Vietnamese

Many centuries ago in Vietnam, the royal family carried the last name of *That* for the male child. Because she is female, Van TonNu has a different last name from the males in the family. She takes on the *TonNu* last name. Many Vietnamese names end with *Nguyen, Le, Ng, Dinh, and Pham*. These names are not from the ancient royal family. Although Van's family is still considered royal, they have no property or other special privileges.

Language surveys

(adapted from Viv Edwards, 1998, *The Power of Babel*)

Purpose

To increase awareness of the extent and type of multilingualism present in the classrooms, schools, communities and family histories of students. To provide students with an opportunity to conduct meaningful research and work with real data while developing math skills.

Getting started

Edwards (1998) suggests that it is easiest to start small and begin with one's own classroom. Traditionally, schoolchildren are rarely asked to actually create new information or compile real data for genuine purposes. Instead, they are asked to demonstrate that they can find answers already known, for example in science experiments and textbook exercises where the answers have already been determined. Through this exercise, students can have the experience of actually collecting and organizing information that will be of interest and value to others. Many schools do not have readily available information about the degree of linguistic diversity in their schools. While they may have information about the ethnicities of their student population or the numbers and first languages of ESL students, this often won't include information about the bilingualism of non-ESL children. Children can gain valuable experience through the collection and analysis of language survey data. This includes constructing survey questions, compiling and analyzing data and displaying data (through bar graphs, pie charts or other means). The last steps provide connections to important math skills and a more useful alternative to surveys of preferences for food, drinks or TV shows often used to demonstrate these math concepts.

What to ask?

Teachers and students begin by deciding what to ask in their language survey. Awareness is likely to be quickly raised that there are varying degrees of language ability (even when it is one's first language). The students in Edwards (1998) example decided to draw the line at whether you could hold a conversation in the language (this helped to address the problem they found of English speakers over-representing their language abilities and bilinguals under-representing their language abilities). The simplest survey would just contain one question such as "What language(s) are you able to hold a conversation in?." This question alone would provide important, basic information about the linguistic profile of a classroom, grade-level or school.

Extensions

Additional questions

Additional questions would lead to more understandings of the nature of language in individuals' lives. For example, many bilinguals use particular languages in particular settings and not others such as Greek or Hebrew for religious purposes, Japanese at work, Hawaiian for dance, etc. Some languages have writing systems and others don't, so literacy mightn't always be included in one's

definition of language proficiency. Students may collect quantitative information which will be calculated and displayed and qualitative information which will provide an opportunity to discuss the nature of language within the lives of individuals, families and societies. Example questions include:

What language(s) do you speak?

How well do you speak them?

Can you read and write them?

When do you use the language (only at home? at Saturday school?)?

What language(s) do the members of your family speak?

What language(s) do you speak with members of your family?

Are there languages you can understand but don't speak?

Do you feel differently when you speak different languages?

When did you start to learn each of your languages?

More detailed survey questions such as these will help raise awareness of students' complex language histories and profiles and provide teachers with information about human language and culture resources (in students and their families) that can be drawn on to enrich curriculum and make appreciation of diversity come alive for students.

Teacher and staff survey

A survey of teacher and staff language backgrounds and abilities might uncover useful language resources that have been going untapped.

Math extensions

The survey data can be used to work with a number of math concepts. In addition to various means of display, such as graphing and pie charts, students can work with the data to calculate percentages and fractions. For example, the percentage of students who speak a particular language, the fraction which would represent the number of students who are bilingual. Comparisons of percentages or fractions across languages or across classrooms or grade levels. There are numerous possible calculations which might be done and ways to work with language survey data to demonstrate and provide practice for math concepts. What might be done depends on the grade levels and target math concepts of students. The language survey data might be returned to at various points in the year to demonstrate new concepts.

Dissemination of findings

Survey results may be made available to school administrators, teachers and parents through inclusion in school newsletters or other means. These groups should have a natural interest in the findings and reinforce students feeling of participation in meaningful work.

Demographic trends

If survey data is collected yearly students can analyze and report on trends in the numbers of bilinguals and speakers of various languages. This type of information might be useful in requesting that a large and growing language group's language (likely a less commonly taught language) be taught at school.

Mapping the classroom / Mapping the world

As with other types of knowledge, geography, world languages and world history become more meaningful when we can connect them to our own experience and history (and/or that of our families and communities). This mapping activity does that by giving us a picture of the world in our classrooms — a snapshot of the diversity we have available as a resource.

INSTRUCTIONS

PART I — The World in the Classroom

1. Take a white sticker and write on it your name and your native language.
2. Place the sticker on an empty space on the map of the world near the place that you are from (where you were born and/or raised).
3. Draw a line from your sticker to the place that you are from.
4. If your parents and/or grandparents are from another part of the world choose a colored sticker for them (blue for father, pink for mother, yellow for grandmother and purple for grandfather); write their name, relationship to you, and their native language. Place the sticker on the map as you did in #2. Note: Only one new sticker is needed for each new native language and place of origin in your family. For example, if your father and his parents are all from Italy and speak Italian, only one sticker is needed.

PART II — Languages of the Classroom / Languages of the World

1. Choose a strip of thick paper (if you can, choose a color that isn't being used already).
2. Cut small tabs with the name of your native language. Put the tabs on pins and insert them on the map in the countries where your native language (and/or those of your parents / grandparents) is spoken around the world. If someone has already done your language(s), there is no need to do them again.

Language and culture directories

(adapted from Viv Edwards, 1998, *The Power of Babel*)

Purpose

This activity broadens the horizons of English speakers by informing them about linguistic diversity in the world while preparing them for or contributing to foreign language study. A completed language directory is a valuable resource for teachers and students, informing them about the world languages and cultures represented in their own classrooms and communities.

Getting started

Once the available community language resources have been established (see section on Language Surveys), specific information about the languages and cultures can be collected. Students should be encouraged to go to families, community members, and other students to collect information. Sample areas of interest include:

Language demographics

How many speakers of the language are there in the classroom? the school? the state? the U.S.? the world? Are there different varieties of the language? Is the language spoken in more than one country? What other languages is the language related to? This topic can be connected to work in social studies and geography. For foreign languages such as Spanish, students can investigate differences in world Spanishes using available community resources (and other sources as well).

Names

For example, what is the significance of names in the language/culture? Is the last name typically given first as in Japanese? Does a child's name include both the mother's and father's last name as in Spanish? What is the significance of the names chosen for children and where do the names come from?

Sound system

What are significant pronunciation differences between the language and English? Are there features of the language which are unique to English speakers such as tones or clicks? Are honorifics in grammar forms an important part of the language (and the culture)?

Grammar

What are some of the basic grammatical features of the language? What does the language do in the same way as English and what does it do differently? What is the order of subject verb and object in the language? Does the language do plurals like English? Past tense?

Non-verbal communication

What are some important things to know about the gestures and non-verbal forms of communication in this language? What is considered rude and/or polite? How close do strangers stand when they converse? What are the norms for eye contact? Silence?

Variation

Are there different varieties of this language in your community and/or in the world? Do men speak differently from women? Are there class related differences? Do some varieties of the language have higher social status than others?

Writing

Is the language a written language? What does the writing system look like? Does it have features that are new to English speakers such as ideographs, as in Chinese? Does it go from right to left as in Hebrew? Are there diacritic marks which change pronunciation as in German?

School culture

What is schooling like in the countries where this language is spoken? Are expectations of students, teachers and parents the same or different from the U.S.?

Here is a sample of the language and culture directory that one group of students in Hawai'i came up with:

Chinese (Mandarin)

Grammar and syntax

The girl kicked the big red ball.

Na ga niu hai te ga da hon chio.
(article) (fem.) (child) (kick) (art.) (big red ball)

The boys are kicking a big red plastic ball.

Na ga nan hai shen tsai te ga da de sheo giao hon chio.
(article) (male) (child) (present) (kick) (art.) (big) (art.) (plastic) (red ball).

No singular or plural.

Hawaiian

Grammar and syntax

The girl kicked the big red ball.

Ua peku ke kaikamahine i ke kinipopo nui a 'ula nui.

The boys are kicking the big red plastic ball.

Ke peku nei na keikikane i kekahi kinipopo 'ulina 'ula nui.

In Hawaiian, the verb comes before the subject. Between the subject and the object is (I). Na makes the subject plural. Past or present tense markers go before the verb and are represented by ua for and ke (verb) nei for present. E (verb) ana means future.

School culture

In ancient Hawai'i children were taught informally and orally.

Sound system

Hawaiian vowels are the same as English A, E, I, O, U. The consonants are H, K, L, M, N, P, and W. Every word must end in a vowel and every consonant must be followed by at least one vowel.

Variation

On Ni'ihau and Kaua'i, the "T" and "R" are used especially on Kaua'i's west side. The "T" would sometimes be used in place of a "K" and the "L" is sometimes replaced by an "R." On O'ahu an okina was sometimes replaced with a "K." For example Mo'oli Island becomes Mokoli'i Island. Even though O'ahu was the most powerful island, the language wasn't the most powerful. There was also language variation among the classes.

Ilokano

Grammar and syntax

The girl kicked the big red ball.
Ti baba'i cinugtaran na ti dackel nalabaga nga bula.

The boys are kicking plastic red big ball.
Dagigi lalakai cugcugaranda ti nalucneng nga nalabaga dackel nga bula.

Non-verbal communication

- Filipinos may greet one another with the "eyebrow flash," a quick lifting of the eyebrows.
- Instead of pointing to an object, Filipinos may shift their eyes toward it, or purse their lips and point with the mouth.

School culture

"The school is always right." The home usually sides with the school. Students are supposed to be obedient and respectful to teachers. Sit and learn! Teachers dress very conservatively. Some students have uniforms, but most of the schools do not. Students there dress like students here. The grading scale is A — F, like here. English is taught, but mostly simple sentences and mostly oral English. Students are assigned a lot of homework to do on their own. It is usually writing or adding practice done in a notebook. Students must pay 100 pesos (\$3.00) for kindergarten. After

that, school is free until age 16. Students go home for a one hour lunch. Schools do not offer lunch. College tends to be for the wealthy.

Japanese

Variation

There is a hierarchy of speech. Those superior to the speaker are spoken to with “polite” endings. It would be strange to speak to someone of lower status using these forms, though. Speech with peers is casual and the use of slang and regional language is evident. Tokyo dialect is thought of by many as being the variety spoken by the well-educated and culturally “high-class” people.

Korean

Non-verbal communication

- Bowing is the traditional form of greeting. Junior people bow first. In international encounters, handshaking is also done but generally just by men. The younger generation does Western style waving (moving the arm from side to side).
- Direct eye contact is generally avoided.
- Public displays of affection are rare, although this is slowly changing.
- Pushing in crowds is acceptable and doesn’t require an apology. Single file lines are not generally formed.
- (Especially older) men are given priority in Korea. They are usually allowed to go through a door first, walk before women, and sit in the BACK SEAT of a car, the place of an honored guest.
- Laughter may be used to disguise many emotions: anger, frustration, and fear.
- Loud talking and laughing in public is normally considered rude and women often cover their mouths when they feel the urge to laugh.
- Blowing one’s nose in public is rude.
- Two hands are used when passing something to or receiving something from another person.

Grammar and syntax

The girl kicked the big red ball.

Sonye-ka khun ppalkan kong-ul cha-ss-ta.
(girl) (big) (red) (ball) (kicked)

The boys are kicking a big red plastic ball.

Sonyn-tul-i khun ppalkan plastic kong-ul cha-ko-iss-ta.
(boys) (big) (red) (plastic) (ball) (kicked)

- There are no articles in Korean
- In Korean, the verb comes at the end
- Adjectives of size normally come before those of color in Korean but it is possible to reverse the order particularly when another descriptor is added.

Writing system

Korean has its own unique writing system and doesn't use the Roman alphabet. Chinese characters are used in North Korea but not South Korea.

Pidgin (Hawai'i Creole English)

Grammar and syntax

The girl kicked the big red ball.
Da girl wen kick da big red ball.

The boys are kicking the big red plastic ball.
Da boys stei kicking da big red rubba ball.

Intonation

Whereas English questions tend to rise in pitch, questions in Pidgin end with a falling intonation. Speakers of Pidgin will use subtle intonational changes coupled with facial expressions to indicate emotions such as sarcasm. These subtleties often go undetected by mainland English speakers.

Body language

The What's Up — The head is thrown quickly back as if you were dumping sand from atop your scalp behind you. This is accompanied by the quick eyebrow elevation. The "what's up" is a greeting and should be returned in kind or accompanied by a "howzit."

The Eye Up — This is an expression that warrants caution. Although it looks similar to the "what's up" it can be a prelude to aggression. The "eye up" would be a head tilt accompanied by "What!," "What like beef?!" and/or a hostile expression.

School culture

Good students are those who do their work and don't act up. Favorite teachers often have "Uncle" or "Auntie" attached to their names, indicating a closeness and familiarity in the relationship. It could also be related to the "uncle show you how" system of informal learning which may be preferred. Two common mindsets for parents are "school as oppressor and tool of 'the man'" and "listen to da teacher or get it." The first perspective is that the school, its teachers and administration and its curriculum are bent on destroying my culture. "I didn't have a good experience here, so how could my child possibly have one." These parents often take oppositional stances on school issues and policies (especially disciplinary actions). The second

perspective takes almost the exact opposite stance. “Do what you gotta do to get out..” There is little parental input and discipline in school is followed up by physical punishment at home. These are extreme ends of a continuum with many parents on points in between.

Variation

Word choice in Pidgin can quickly reveal the island or the generation that someone comes from.

Vietnamese

Grammar and syntax

Plurals are formed by a marker that goes in front of the noun. Verbs don’t change but words are added to indicate present and past tense.

Naming

Many centuries ago in Vietnam, the royal family carried the last name of *That* for the male child. Van TonNu, has a different last name from the males in the family. She takes on the *TonNu* last name. Many Vietnamese names end with *Nguyen, Le, Ng, Dinh, and Pham*. These names are not from the ancient royal family.

Sound system

Vietnamese language doesn’t have the “W, Z and J” sounds of English.

Spanish

Grammar and syntax

The girl kicked the big red ball.

La chica pateó la pelota grande y roja.
(the) (girl) (kicked) (the) (ball) (big) (and) (red)

The boys are kicking the big red ball.

Los chicos están pateando la pelota de plastico grande y roja.
(the) (boys) (are) (kicking) (the) (ball) (of) (plastic) (big) (and) (red)

Nouns have a gender (masculine or feminine) and the article must match this. In the example above, “chica” (girl) and “pelota” (ball) are both feminine and so the article used is “la” and the adjectives match the gender (“roja” is used rather than “rojo”). Plurals are formed by adding “s.” So, “chica” is girl and “chico” is boy. “Pelota” (ball) always ends in “a” and is always “feminine.” “La chica” is “the girl” and “las chicas” is “the girls.” The masculine articles are “el” for singular and “los” for plural. As can be seen in the sentences above, adjectives follow the nouns that they modify. In the case of two adjectives modifying one word, they are connected with the word “y” (and) and not a comma as in English. The material (of the ball, in this case) is mentioned before size and color (unlike English). The accent mark on “pateó” indicates past tense and the “-ando” in “pateando” is similar to English “-ing.”

Non-verbal communication

Richard Nixon created a flap when he toured Latin America in the 50s innocently giving the “o.k.” sign (thumb and forefinger forming an “o” and the other fingers extended) and he later read in the newspaper that this sign meant “screw you”! In many Hispanic countries, to beckon someone you would extend the arm, palm down, and make a scratching motion with the fingers. In most of these countries, tapping the finger on the middle of the temple means this person is “crazy” but tapping the finger on the middle of the forehead means this person is “stupid.” When in a restaurant, to indicate that someone has a phone call, it is the same motion as referring to a person as “crazy” in the U.S., making a circular motion with the finger behind the ear. Touching just under the eye and gently pulling down usually means “look out” or “something is amiss.” Sometimes this gesture means “I don’t believe you.”

Latinos personal space is much smaller than Americans’. Americans often feel uncomfortable when they are being closed in on by Latinos but Spanish-speakers carry on conversation in very close proximity to each other. Good eye contact seems to be important. Men will often touch each other as they speak but they are careful not to touch women in the same way.

Variation

The Spanish language began in Spain, of course, and was brought to other countries where it has undergone changes and mixed with the tongue of the country to which it was introduced. In Castillian Spanish (in Spain), a lisp is used in the pronunciation of c and z (but not s). For example, “gracias” becomes “grathias.”

There are many different varieties of South American Spanish. In the United States, new varieties of Spanish have developed which have been influenced by English.

Yapese

Yap is an island in Micronesia. There are 1,500 people living on Yap and almost everyone knows each other.

Naming

The last name of the individual is the name of the person from whom the land was inherited. The members of one family may have different last names if each has a different plot of land.

Your language autobiography

(See Thomas and Maybin (1998) for one approach to language autobiographies)

Purpose: This exercise begins the process of student reflective self-awareness of language in their lives and the lives of their families.

Instructions to students: Write in detail about your own language learning and use history. Include as much as you know about the language history of your family (for example what languages your grandparents spoke). Consider and write about the reasons for any changes in the languages that were spoken by different generations or people in your family. Students should be

encouraged to see language change not only as personal choice but as a reflection of broader social, historical, political and economic trends, for example, waves of immigration, colonialism, economic opportunity, etc. Include information about your first language(s), the language(s) used at home, at school and with friends; your attitudes towards the languages you were learning including issues of culture and identity; your assessment of your strengths and weaknesses in the language(s); your beliefs about what helped and/or hindered your language learning.

Notes to teachers: These writings should provide rich material for understanding the way students view language. Many of the points students bring up can be springboards for future discussions about language, language learning and language in society. For example, some students may not realize that the non-standardized varieties of languages they speak are in fact legitimate languages (despite being socially stigmatized). Autobiographies are also likely to reveal student strategies for language learning and create an opportunity for instructors to discuss their own beliefs about language learning.

Writing in three registers

This is an exercise which draws student awareness to different registers and speech styles.

Students write about an incident that happened to them in three different ways. First, they write about the incident as a diary entry to themselves. Next they write about it in a letter to their grandmother or other older relative and finally they write about the incident in a letter to their boss. Students may do this exercise in English, in a foreign language or both. After writing, the class should individually and collectively analyze the ways in which language use varied in the three versions of the incident.

Focused observations of target language use (e.g., telephone)

Telephone conversations are an example of a particular kind of discourse. There are particular conventions regarding turn-taking, how to begin the conversation, how to ask for someone and how to end the conversation. These conventions are culture-specific and therefore do not automatically transfer to a new language. For example, a Japanese speaker, translating Japanese norms into English when called to the phone would say “I am Toshi.”

Observe a telephone conversation by a target language user. How does the conversation begin? How does the person you’re observing let the other person know they are listening? What are frequently heard phrases for beginning and ending a conversation? How does the conversation end?

Ideally, the teacher and class members would have already worked out community language resources (possibly teachers at the school, relatives, or businesses where the target language is spoken). As many different conversations should be observed by as many different students as possible. If this is not possible, it might be necessary to seek permission to video-tape and have analysis take place in the classroom. If no community language resources are available, an alternative is to use excerpts from movies in the target language.

Telephone talk is, of course, only one example of what that might be observed. Students might, alternatively, focus on greetings, restaurant talk, store talk, complaints, compliments or any number of language features.

Oral history

Oral history is a wonderful tool for student investigators of language and culture. Depending on the language abilities of the students (and the interviewees), interviews may be carried in English or the target language. Oral histories might focus on a place (for example, Chinatown on O'ahu in Hawai'i), a particular event (such as the Pearl Harbor bombing), a job (for example, Chinese lei makers) or individual and family stories. The focus may be shared between language objectives and objectives related to cultural and historical understandings. Here is an example sequence for an oral history project in Japanese:

Choose a project theme

If possible, one that relates to something being studied in another subject. For example, students in Hawai'i can connect to social studies subject matter by looking at the history of Japanese people in Hawai'i.

Make project teams

Divide the class into smaller groups

Make a list of interview questions in English

Include questions about language and cultural practices

In small groups and as a class work to translate questions into Japanese

Discuss what will translate easily and what won't, discuss politeness

Interview preparation

Practice asking the interviewee to speak as slowly, simply and clearly as possible (learn how to ask this in target language)

Practice greetings and leave-takings in target language

Do a mock interview in front of class with student and teacher critiques of performance

Check that good sound quality is achieved with audio equipment (practice transcribing to check)

Decide who will say which questions

Tape-recorded interview

Interview(s) can take place in class with the interviewee visiting the school, students can find someone that they know to interview in their small project teams or interviews can take place at somewhere like a retirement home

Working with taped interview

Tape listening — students (as a group) write down any words they can understand

They look up things they hear but do not know the meaning of

Students can divide up the translation task and each be responsible for a small portion

When students have done all they can — try to find a Japanese speaker (student, grandmother or whoever can help with transcription)

Teacher uses transcribed material for instruction — grammar points, translation. For example, if students have worked on pronouns, they can be given a copy of the transcript with the pronouns omitted and fill them in as they listen to the tape. Later they can try to do the same exercise without the tape. This exercise can be repeated for a variety of target grammatical structures and vocabulary items.

Book production

Students compile what they have learned in a book (which can be used by other Japanese language classes)

The book might contain a pictures of the interviewee, illustrations and summaries

Presentation of findings

Students present their findings to their own and other classes

Culture interviews

Culture interviews can be carried out in a mix of English and the target language appropriate to student language ability. Following Beard (1994) individuals or a panel of language and culture “informants” can be brought to the classroom for interviews by students. Before the interviews students will need to determine the topics they are interested in (for example, family life); decide who they will ask to be interviewed; compose letters of invitation and come up with the questions and decide who will ask them. The session should be audio- or video-taped. After the session, responsibility for write-up should be divided amongst the students and some type of culminating product produced. A thank-you letter should also be written. Additionally, the teacher may wish to work with samples of interviews to highlight particular language features (See working with target language samples below).

Alternatively, if there are enough easily accessible community language and culture resources, students may interview people outside of class individually or in project teams. An in-class

interview might help to scaffold the process. Students who want to collect a wide-range of opinions and information about a topic might create questionnaires.

Service learning

One way of drawing on community language resources in a substantive way is to become involved in service learning. In Hawai'i, for example, students have made use of their incipient bilingual language abilities at senior citizen homes (which often have concentrations of residents from a particular language background) and as citizenship tutors for native speakers of the target language. Regular encounters in this type of language immersion can provide a focus for and important supplement to regular classroom language study.

Self-observation and analysis of own language use

An excellent starting point for student observation and research work is for them to track their own language use over a period of time. Students can keep track of (and ideally tape-record) samples of the different languages and styles of speech they use during a typical day. This exercise provides an introduction to issues of language variation and language in society.

Working with target language samples

In their role as language learners and researchers of language and culture, students may be able to bring into the classroom bits of authentic language data that they have heard and possibly written down or audio-taped. Alternatively, teachers may bring in authentic language samples (drawing on community language resources) which can be made use of in a variety of ways. This might be done through cloze activities (in which students must fill in the blanks in a transcript); a “scramble” in which sentences or words from the transcript are moved out of order and students must reassemble them; or through listening activities in which students must attend to particular parts of the interview or language features.

Creating target language products for use

School activities become more meaningful when students are creating something for “real” purposes — such as use by other people. There are many useful products language students can create for use by members of the target language community and other students. Many of these are laid out in Edwards (1998). Since speakers of community languages are often a presence in elementary and high schools products for the use of immigrant speakers of languages other than English at school are a worthwhile project focus. Examples of materials that might be created are: multilingual welcome signs and multilingual signs labeling or directing people to important school locations; children's books with accompanying audio-tapes in the community language; dual language children's books with pictures and text in both English and community languages; welcome books for parents and/or student speakers of the community language which orient them towards the school and community and provide useful information.

Classroom visitors

Bringing in classroom visitors who are native speakers of the target language is a basic and enlivening way to improve foreign language education by drawing on community language resources. Visitors can be come to be interviewed by students about cultural or oral history related topics. They can bring in materials from their home country, share them and explain them to the class in their native language (videotaping will allow students to review what they may miss on first hearing). Classroom visitors might teach a game, recipe, song or craft from their home country. Ideas for topics to focus classroom visits may be presented by the text the foreign language teacher is using.

Interchange

“Interchange” is the term used for regular peer tutoring which takes place at one language teaching program in Hawai‘i. Learners are matched with peer tutors in ratios of about three to one and discuss everyday topics and any topic their teacher has asked them to cover. Learners nearly universally report this experience as the most fun and satisfying part of their language study. A limiting factor, however, is that generally peer “interchangers” will need to be paid for their time. Possible alternatives to payment would be college or other students who are speakers of the target language and have service learning requirements, or exchanges in which speakers of the target language would offer their services as interchangers in exchange for tutoring in English or other subjects or some type of course credit.

“A day in the life of...”

(See Syed, 1995). This activity is an example of a “student as researcher” approach. Students discover and share unique information which they have collected. For this activity, students spend a day observing someone’s daily routine. In Syed’s example, ESL students in Hawai‘i observed firemen and airport workers. Once permission was arranged, they were able to observe, interview, take pictures and report findings. Some students tied this experience into a larger research project.

Although possible subjects of observation are more abundant in second language settings like Syed’s, there are also opportunities available in foreign language situations. For example, in Hawai‘i a student of Chinese might observe what happens in a day in the life of a worker in a traditional Chinese medicine shop in Chinatown, an acupuncturist, or a noodle maker. A student of Japanese might learn about the experiences of a Japanese tour guide operator, a flower arrangement teacher, or a sushi chef. A student of Spanish might observe a worker at a Latino market, a salsa dance instructor or immigrant agricultural workers. A student of Samoan might observe a Samoan church minister or a Samoan dance performer. Cultural informants should be chosen based on their ability to provide an entry-way into aspects of the target language and culture. It isn’t necessary that they be involved in the arts or aspects of “traditional” or “high” culture. For example, a Samoan mother raising young children in a Samoan extended family in Hawai‘i would be an excellent subject.

The class, teacher or individual may decide that certain cultural or linguistic features should be attended to. For example, cultural features such as beliefs about health or child-rearing or linguistic features such as ways of showing respect or politeness or of complaining or complimenting.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

accent	The way in which language is pronounced. Everyone has an accent since everyone pronounces words in a particular way.
dialect	The variety of a language spoken by a particular group of people from the same regional or cultural background.
discourse	Language beyond the sentence level.
elaboration	A pedagogical approach which can be contrasted with simplification in that rather than reducing the complexity of language input for learners (as in simplification) language samples are kept in tact and explained or elaborated upon to make them understandable to learners.
ethnography	Systematic study of the culture of particular social groups.
focus on form	A current foreign language pedagogical approach which seeks to maximize connections between language form and meaning through drawing attention to language forms in meaningful contexts.
genre	A particular type and style of speech event such as poem, letter, song.
heritage language learner	A learner of a foreign language who has some connection to the language prior to beginning formal study. This connection might range from cultural knowledge based on family origins in a country where the language is spoken, to early use of the language at home, to passive knowledge of the language to fairly regular use in a limited number of circumstances.
language awareness	An educational approach which focuses on deepening understandings of language in the lives of individuals and society.
language variety	A general term which includes languages and dialects.
linguistic repertoire	The different languages, language styles and registers an individual is able to use.
metalinguistic awareness	Explicit awareness of the nature of language and its characteristics.
phonology	The sound system of a language.
pragmatics	The rules of politeness and appropriateness associated with the use of a language in a particular culture.
prescriptivism	Rules about how a language should be spoken from the perspective of grammarians.
register	A speech variety used by a particular group of people or in particular situations, for example, legal language.
simplification	The process of reducing the complexity of language (often for pedagogical purposes) by controlling the vocabulary, sentence structure and other features.

- slang** Casual, informal speech which tends to change quickly (for example, “the cat’s pajamas,” “groovy,” “the bomb”)
- standard language** A language which has been standardized (usually by becoming a written language with grammars, dictionaries and rules of usage). The standard language has higher status than other varieties in a community and tends to be associated with education.
- stigmatized language** A language with low social status. Often these languages are mistakenly categorized as just “bad” versions of a prestige variety, for example, African-American English.
- syntax** The grammar of sentence structure.
- variation** The ways in which language use changes according to characteristics of the situation (e.g., casual vs. formal; science class vs. social studies class), and the speaker (e.g., female vs. male, Texan vs. Bostonian, grandparent vs. teenager).
- vernacular** A language that is used for every day communication. The term is often used to describe language varieties that have not been standardized.

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**HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WORLD LANGUAGES
CONTENT STANDARDS**

Hawai'i's World Languages Content Standards are based on and quite similar to the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* (1998) used nationally.

Communication

1. Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.
2. Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.
3. Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Cultures

4. Students demonstrate and understanding of culture through the study of relationships among practices, perspectives, and products of another culture.

Comparisons

5. Students demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studies and their own.

Connections and communities

6. Students use the language to connect with other disciplines, access information through authentic language sources, and explore opportunities to interact in multicultural settings