In November 1979, President Jimmy Carter’s Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies published *Strength through Wisdom*, its report on the urgent need to address the growing deficiency of foreign language education in the United States. That same Fall, as a new graduate teaching assistant at a research university, I taught my first section of French 101. As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the Carter Commission’s report I will summarize, and try to make sense of, three decades of personal experience in one limited but vital domain of French teaching: the first semester of a college-wide foreign language requirement.

Much has been written about using theater in French classes as a medium for enhancing language skills. While these studies have centered on the development and benefits to be gained by the performers, this article aims to address and discuss practical methods to enhance the experience not only for performers but also the audience with the goal of boosting enrollment in French programs. Does the idea of mounting a student production in French at your institution seem a little daunting? It should not—and this essay aims to offer help to the fledgling director.
Through various verbal and non-verbal backchannel cues, a listener signals attention or other reactions to an interlocutor who has the floor. This article reports findings of a qualitative research study of five informal conversations between ten different native speakers of French with a focus on the context and nature of listener feedback, and specifically backchannel response. Analysis of the data yields an inventory of utterances used to demonstrate interest and attention, information on the categories and functions of verbal backchanneling, and an appreciation of listening as engagement in French conversation. Pedagogical implications of the research are discussed, with suggestions for instructional activities to raise awareness of culture-specific aspects of listening behavior.

This article presents an overview of the French pop singer, Tété, and some of the issues raised in his music and situates them in relation to what is generally referred to as the musical métissage or hybridization that characterizes much of the French urban music scene in recent years. This overview is accompanied by an appendix containing a brief interview with Tété as well as some ideas for how to use Tété’s music to introduce students of French to questions of identity and social justice among French youth today, including a sample lesson plan for teaching the music video, “La Relance.”

Le film semble être un outil essentiel en cours de littérature francophone pour permettre aux étudiants de mieux percevoir la réalité qui leur est présentée dans un roman, une pièce de théâtre ou un poème. C’est un instrument doté d’un double pouvoir de communication à travers les images et le texte. Ce qui constitue un avantage aussi bien pour l’enseignant que pour l’étudiant grâce aux rapports établis entre l’image et le texte.
This paper presents an intercultural approach to teaching and learning French. As part of students’ exploration of cultures, they are paired with peers in France and communicate by E-mail, chat, and blogs. As students work together over an academic year, they gain a deeper understanding of perspectives and develop a critical awareness of culture. Levy’s cultural framework is used to explore how culture can enter into different facets of the language learning process; examples of students’ intercultural exchanges are provided to illustrate the framework. Finally, benefits for today’s language learners are explored and suggestions for language teachers are offered.

Cet article présente l’utilisation d’un wiki dans le cadre d’un cours de français des affaires pour étudiants de niveau avancé. Dans ce scénario pédagogique, le wiki permet aux apprenants de collaborer sur des projets de groupe lors de simulations. L’article décrit comment le wiki aide à atteindre les trois principaux objectifs du cours de français des affaires: le développement des compétences écrites et orales dans le contexte du monde des affaires, la découverte de l’Autre et la sensibilisation aux différences culturelles, ainsi qu’une mise en pratique ludique et créative des notions commerciales explorées en cours.

In 2004, a report was issued to the American Congress concerning the writing deficiencies in the workplace of recent graduates of American colleges, universities, and high schools. Bearing these findings in mind, I postulate that the abstract can play a valuable role as an academic writing tool in the learning and teaching of French-language composition that may also prepare students for future professional forms of written communication. In this discussion and subsequent Appendices, I propose how one may use abstracts to support a “coordinated approach” to writing instruction at particularly (but not exclusively) advanced levels of French post/secondary education.
This article presents a process-oriented instructional unit for advanced-level French instruction that spirals language and content by developing students’ skills in literary and stylistic analysis, reading, and writing. Excerpts from Raymond Queneau’s *Exercices de style* serve as the literary content for the instructional unit. The goals are to familiarize students with Queneau and the OuLiPo literary movement; to illustrate that stylistic features may be the primary object and content of a literary work; to critically analyze and compare the stylistic features of texts; and to apply stylistic knowledge to writing.

Kate Paesani

“Exploring the Stylistic Content of *Exercices de style*”

This article presents the “Language Performance Curriculum Design” (LPCD), an approach to creating foreign language instructional units in which planning, assessment, and teaching are guided by student performance. The LPCD demonstrates how teachers can integrate the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners, and the ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment in designing contextualized curriculum at the secondary and post-secondary levels. In a step-by-step fashion, the article explains the LPCD and illustrates it with a sample intermediate-level unit outline entitled “Here and Abroad, Home is Where the Heart Is.”

Linda Quinn Allen

“Designing Curricula for Student Language Performance”

NOTE

Colette Dio: “La Vie des mots”

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