

## From the Editor's Desk

### December Holiday Greetings!

A busy time of year for all of us: a time of rejoicing, renewing friendships, reconnecting with family, and revitalizing our teaching. We share some thoughts with you about traveling from one room to another, how authentic texts lead to authentic language, using Flippity to create games,, and new business language programming at GWU. In addition, our SoundBites author highlights some changes at the local level that would impact the success our students have in learning another language. Remember, all articles appear under individual tabs on the website and in [full pdf file](#) ready for download.

We at NCLRC@GW have been successful in locating, on a limited basis, the funding to keep us going through the end of June 2015. Programs and projects slated for 2014-2015 include 6 issues of our newsletter, the Spanish Immersion Institute, migrating the website to GWU, and the possible presentation of some podcasts. We are a small group now, with 4 very part-time people all of whom have other jobs as well, with a small budget, so we can't be too overly ambitious. However, we do want to hear from you about what we might be able to do to help you in your classroom. Now we start to look further into the future. Please contact us! [swcockey@nclrc.org](mailto:swcockey@nclrc.org)

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Always be ready for tomorrow before today ends.  
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For a Foreign Language program to be successful on the national level, [we need] great changes at the local level. From [Feature](#)

Authentic texts provide... "real life" linguistic input as well as valuable cultural information for our students. From [SoundBites](#)

Flippity can be used for many things, including making flashcards and a Jeopardy-style game. From [Tech](#)

"...a top priority for CIBERs is to "provide instruction in critical foreign languages and international fields needed to provide an understanding of the cultures and customs of U.S. trading partners." From [Business](#)

## Feature Article

Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.

### *One Strategy for a National Foreign Language Framework: Begin at the Local Level*

When Russia launched its Sputnik satellite in 1956, the United States government took that as a wake-up call to vastly improve the teaching of math, science, and foreign languages. The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) passed by Congress in 1958 declared that the teachers of those three subject areas were vital to the national defense of the country and as a consequence, because I was a French teacher, I received an exemption from the draft and began my 41 year career as a teacher of French.

As I read the 2009 paper *Building the Foreign Language Capacity We Need: Toward a Comprehensive Strategy for a National Framework*, by Jackson and Malone<sup>1</sup>, I was reminded of the up-and-down ride that the teaching of foreign languages has undergone in our country and of the bittersweet relationship that has existed between Americans and foreign languages. For the past 50 years, various surveys, national panels, and presidential commissions have all concluded that the United States is deficient, if not negligent, in the importance it places in foreign language education and the need to create a bilingual or multilingual populace. Consider the following statements that encourage the inclusion of foreign languages in our schools:

1. Our gross national inadequacy in foreign language skills has become a serious and growing liability. It is going to be far more difficult for America to survive and compete in a world where nations are increasingly dependent on one another if we cannot communicate with our neighbors in their own languages and cultural contexts.<sup>2</sup>

2. To confront...twenty-first century challenges to our economy and national security, our education system must be strengthened to increase the foreign language skills and cultural awareness of our students. America's continued global leadership will depend on our students' abilities to interact with the world community both inside and outside our borders.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of those stated goals the situation has not improved. The paper states that surveys conducted by the Modern Language Association, the Center for Applied Linguistics, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages indicate that from 1961 until 2007, enrollments in foreign language classes K-16 have not changed significantly. As alarming as those statistics seem to be, the paper offers hope for the future and leads one to consider some important factors as to the viability of the proposed goals. It presents a comprehensive picture of the status of foreign language education in the United States, gives the rationale for the need of skilled foreign language speakers, and offers recommendations for a national foreign language learning framework.

The formulation of a national foreign language framework depends very much for its success on the local level programs. This article will list conditions prevalent at the local level that need to be addressed if we are to establish a national rationale for foreign language proficiency in America and offer solutions for its implementation. To be successful on the national level requires great changes at the local level.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS toward the Creation of a National Foreign Language Framework**

The structure of the local system of education, as it now exists, will make the attainment of a National Foreign Language Framework difficult if not impossible unless some changes are made to the impediments listed below that will lead to proficiency in foreign languages. A key step is the creation of a K-12 Director of Foreign Languages at the local level whose responsibility would be to facilitate the recommendations listed below.

#### ***1. The lack of articulation between elementary, secondary, college, and graduate programs***

In most towns, the different aspects of the school system act independently of one another and it is often the case that the high school foreign language department does not recognize the validity of elementary and/or middle school programs and requires that those students be placed in beginning foreign language classes. In some cases, different textbook series are used and different languages are taught at the different levels.

**Recommendation:** Create the position of K-12 Director of Foreign Languages to oversee the articulation between the different levels and to coordinate all staff development programs.

#### ***2. The principle of local autonomy over our schools Vs national goals***

Americans prize the principle of local autonomy. Schools are under the control of locally elected school boards whose members usually do

not come from the field of education. Because of the economic climate of the times, many school boards and superintendents are in the business of cutting the school budget and operate under a “less is more” philosophy.

**Recommendation:** Invite school board members and superintendents of schools to attend foreign language conferences and in-service workshops so they gain a better understanding of current foreign language teaching best practices.

### ***3.The lack of a common goal within the foreign language teaching profession***

Most foreign language teachers have little contact with their colleagues in neighboring towns and many are not given the opportunity to attend any national or state foreign language association conferences due to the unavailability of funds. In spite of continuing research in the area of foreign language learning, the mainstay of the profession continues to be a grammar-based curriculum that leads very few students to achieve the level of communicative proficiency needed to attain the goals described in the paper.

**Recommendation:** The local teacher’s contract stipulates that attendance at foreign language teachers’ conferences, supported financially by the school system, is a crucial part of the system’s staff development program.

### ***4.The unresolved problem of class size***

Large class sizes are not a problem to the old “grammar-translation” approach to the teaching of a foreign language because that focus is on learning the vocabulary and the grammar of the language. However it is difficult to produce skilled speakers who have a high level of communicative proficiency in large classes because the larger the class,

the less the opportunity for individual practice and immediate feedback in the speaking skill.

**Recommendation:** Local adoption of the Modern Language Association belief that “a competency-oriented language curriculum needs to incorporate learning opportunities that focus on language and cultural content and functional ability at all levels, from beginning to the most advanced.” The smaller the class size, the easier to achieve competency and functional ability in all skill areas.

### ***5.Block scheduling and semester courses Vs year-long courses in high school***

Foreign language acquisition is made more difficult under block scheduling because it breaks the continuity of exposure guaranteed by year-long courses. Under block scheduling a student enrolls in a foreign language either in semester 1 or in semester 2 but not in both and the duration of a course under block scheduling is usually 80 minutes per day times 90 days while year-long courses are 50 minutes long per day times 180 days.

**Recommendation:** If proficiency is the goal, then an effort must be made at the local level to prefer year-long courses to the semester courses of block scheduling.

### ***6.The bag of tricks approach to improving teaching methods***

The workshops offered at foreign language conferences or staff development workshops often fall under the category of a “bag-of-tricks” approach to the teaching of a foreign language. There is very little offered toward the development of a “philosophy of foreign language teaching.” Teachers return to their classes happy with the handouts that they accumulated which offer advice on making their classes more interesting.

**Recommendation:** Include more philosophy of foreign language teaching and learning workshops, as well as sessions on language learning and the brain, at state and national foreign language conferences and in local staff development workshops.

### ***7.The lack of intensive training in foreign language teaching***

In most cases, aspiring foreign language teachers are required to take a one-semester foreign language methodology course and one-semester of practice teaching with a weekly seminar discussion. To complement this experience, some schools have established a mentor program to help the novice teacher. In most cases that help comes in the form of classroom management, discipline control, and effective lesson planning.

**Recommendation:** Increase the methodology course from one-year to two-years and include principles of foreign language teaching and learning in practice teaching seminars and local in-service programs.

### ***8.The fear of things foreign in America***

The current antipathy towards “illegal” immigrants is a product of xenophobia. The fact that Spanish is America’s second language and that Hispanics make up the largest minority group in America creates the fear among non-Hispanic Americans that their culture is in danger of disappearing or at least of being assimilated into the minority group. It has given rise to the English Only movement that advocates that “everyone who lives in America must speak English” and that bilingualism and biculturalism are somehow unpatriotic.

**Recommendation:** Establish a local education campaign that focuses on other languages as well as Spanish

showing the advantages of multilingualism and multiculturalism for our country.

### ***9. The multitude of programs at the elementary level***

Foreign languages in the elementary schools has many different faces: Total Immersion, Two-Way Immersion, Partial Immersion, Content-Based FLES, FLES, and FLEX.

### **References**

1. Jackson, Frederick and Malone, Margaret. *Building the Foreign Language Capacity We Need: Toward a Comprehensive Strategy for a National Framework*. 2009. [www.nflc.org-publications](http://www.nflc.org-publications)
2. *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. [www2.ed.gov/legislation/GOALS2000/TheAct](http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/GOALS2000/TheAct)
3. *The Importance of International Studies and Foreign Language Education for U.S. Economic and National Security*. Committee for Economic Development. 2007

**Recommendation:** School systems should adopt an immersion-type elementary foreign language program that will devote the requisite number of hours needed to achieve a high level of communicative proficiency at the end of the K-12 cycle.

### **CONCLUSION**

The fate of foreign language inclusion as a core subject into the curriculum of our public schools rests in the hands of those

responsible for them: school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents. National commissions and blue ribbon panels can set the goals and perhaps provide the rationale and the funds, but unless everyone at the ground level gets on board, those recommendations become wishful thinking. The addition of a K-12 Foreign Language Director in local school systems would facilitate the implementation of a National Foreign Language Framework.

### **About the author**

*Marcel LaVergne, Ed.D., retired, was a high school teacher of French, a K-12 Director of Foreign Languages, an adjunct professor of Foreign Language Methods, a textbook author, and a consultant on Foreign Language Teaching and Learning. He is currently associated with the -NCLRC@GW as the author of the Sound Bites for Better Teaching column.*

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## ***YANA: You Are Not Alone*** ***The Travelling Teacher*** ***Sheila W. Cockey***

*I have more than one teacher this year in my department that is moving from one room to another within the building all day long. They are frazzled with trying to keep track of all of the materials necessary for each class. What can I do to help them?* Cyndie, Department Chair

Travelling teachers do have a very difficult life and it is unfortunate that teachers who pull this duty often are new to the teaching profession and therefore don't have a lot of experience in keeping track of multiple lesson plans, papers, and

materials. One suggestion is to ask some of the more experienced teachers to travel, but that takes away one of the few perks of having been around for a while. So, I'll offer some more practical ways in which to lower the frustration level for the floating teachers.

### **Quick Thoughts**

- Organization is key to being successful in shuttling from one room to another.
- Rely heavily on your desk and filing cabinet in the departmental office. Keep it clear & useful!
- Reduce paper collection to a minimum.

- Keep on top of the grading. It is essential!
- Find a cart with at least two levels for carrying your materials from room to room.
- Find a cart that is a good height for you to push through the hallways, to save your back.
- Separate your Level One materials from your Level Three.
- Put things away every day.
- Before leaving today, pull out everything and organize for tomorrow.



### Diplomacy

As a floating, or travelling, teacher you need to interface with faculty members who may not be teaching foreign languages, and who do not understand what goes on in a FL class. Thus, you will need to establish a rapport with them right away, realizing that you are “intruding into their territory” and they may not be any happier than you are about your presence there.



Talk with the teachers in whose rooms you will be teaching. Try to work out an arrangement where you can keep the items that you will use everytime you are in that room. This should be a relatively secure place, because you may want to keep a copy of your text book there at the very least. Other items in that special place might be desk items (tape, paper clips, stapler, etc.). Find out how the teacher feels about their desk; do not use it if they are territorial about it. Make

arrangements about using a bulletin board or some part of the wall to display teaching aides and/or student work.

### Cart-ology

This is your desk, storage unit, and AV platform. Students should treat it the same way they treat any teacher’s desk.

If you have more than one lesson plan (level one and level three for example) dedicate one shelf to each level. Be very definitive about not mixing up the materials by always replacing them on the correct shelf.

Find a box or crate into which you can place your plan book and grade book. Your text book(s) might also fit in here. Next to this should be a box for pens/pencils, paper clips, stapler, etc. Some teachers use shoe



storage units for this. You might want to find a container for the CDs and DVDs you will be using for the day, week, or lesson.

### Advantages

- You get to see other parts of the school.
- You get to interact with teachers you might not otherwise get to know.
- You get to see your students in places other than your classroom.

However you manage your transport, one thing is imperative: always be ready for tomorrow before today ends. This means that you need to have your cart ready when you leave because you never know what might delay your arrival in the morning. If your things are organized on your cart you can concentrate on how you will use your materials today instead of trying to remember where the things you need today are.

Have fun with this! I know teachers who have installed a flag, flower, or school banner to float above the hallway masses as they pass through to their next class.

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All images are from Google Images (travelling teacher cart), downloaded November 17, 2014.

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*The Language Resource* is the official bimonthly publication of  
**NCLRC@GW**  
**Graduate School of Education and Human Development**  
**The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.**

## Technology for Teachers

### *Creating Flashcards and Jeopardy from Flippity*

*Carol Marcolini, Hampton City VA Public Schools*

*Laurie Smith, Hampton City VA Public Schools, Retired*

Are you looking for a site with ideas and apps? Every day the blog **Free Technology for Teachers**

<http://www.freeteach4teachers.com> provides teachers with free websites and resources that they can use in their classrooms. There is a link to all the resources mentioned on the front page of their site at this link. <http://freeteach4teachers.pbworks.com/w/page/14904890/FrontPage>

One of their resources is creating flashcards from your Google Spreadsheets. Google Spreadsheets has a script gallery that can be used, but Flippity is an easier alternative and is free. <http://www.flippity.net/> Flippity can be used for many things, including making flashcards and a Jeopardy-style game.

#### Using Flippity for Flashcards

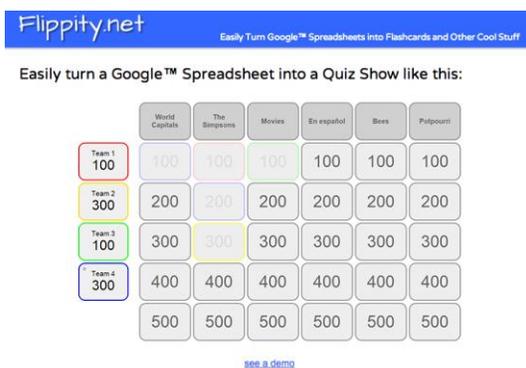
Using your Google Spreadsheet Data, create flashcards using their simple template. Follow the four simple directions on their site, publish the spreadsheet to the web. You will get a link that will take you to a Flippity page on which you and your students can flip through your flashcards. Flippity includes a shuffle function and an option to remove cards from your deck of flashcards as you flip through them.

#### Using Flippity for Jeopardy

Flippity can also be used to create a Jeopardy-style game board using Google Spreadsheets. It is introduced on the [Free 4 Teachers](#) site. Embedded in this [video link](#) is a

demonstration on how to use Flippity to create a Jeopardy-style gameboard and play the quiz game. The directions for the game board are on Flippity at <http://www.flippity.net/QuizShow.asp> There are four simple easy to follow steps.

While not all of the reviews will be specifically for foreign languages, you will find many that can be adapted or used as is in the language classroom, and some that are specifically for foreign language learning. This daily blog has a wealth of resources; follow the blog and these two sites often for more updates.



### A Quick Survey

What topics would like to see addressed in the newsletter?

What resources do you need to locate?

If we do podcasts or webinars, what should be the topics?

Please let us know:

[swcokey@nclrc.org](mailto:swcokey@nclrc.org) or [info@nclrc.org](mailto:info@nclrc.org)

## Sound Bites for Better Teaching

### *Authentic Texts Lead to Authentic Language*

Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.



Created

According to Lonergan<sup>1</sup>, there are three types of texts that L2 teachers use in the classroom: created, semi-authentic, and authentic. In beginning and intermediate classes, students are usually exposed to the language of created texts, i.e., those textbooks created for non-native speakers to achieve pre-determined curricular goals: they contain the targeted vocabulary, grammar, and culture to be learned as well as activities designed to learn the material. In some instances, students are also exposed to semi-authentic texts, i.e., those based on original language materials, adapted to fit curricular needs. Hopefully, in advanced classes, students are mostly exposed to authentic texts, i.e., texts created by native speakers for native speakers of the language. The latter provide "real



Semi-authentic

life" linguistic input as well as valuable cultural information for our students.

<sup>1</sup>Lonergan, Jack. 1984. *Video in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press  
<http://coerll.utexas.edu/methods/modules/culture/02/texts.php>

*Self Evaluation* (no right or wrong answers)

- *Do you find it easy or difficult to incorporate authentic texts in your beginning classes?*
- *Do you use authentic texts as a way to increase vocabulary, to illustrate grammar rules, and/or to teach culture?*
- *How many authentic passages are there in your textbook? How would you categorize them?*
- *Do you make it a point to include the authentic passages found in your textbook or do you tend to bypass them because of lack of time?*



Authentic

- *Are your intermediate classes based primarily on a commercially created textbook or on semi-authentic and authentic materials?*
- *What percentage of time is spent on authentic materials in your advanced classes?*
- *Do you have a library of authentic texts in your classroom, department, or school?*
- *How often do you read authentic texts in the language that you teach?*

#### TIP

When choosing to include authentic materials into your curriculum, you should consider applying Krashen's Input+1 criterion to determine the difficulty level of the texts. If too difficult, authentic materials can discourage students.

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## Business Language in Focus

*Good News for Language Teachers: A New Grant Cycle for Centers for International Business Education and Research*

Margaret Gonglewski, *The George Washington University*

This fall marks the start of a new four-year grant cycle for the Centers for International Business Education and Research, and the George Washington University was among the 17 institutions of higher education awarded funding. Our Business Language in Focus column this month will feature a sneak peek at the exciting programs that the "GW-CIBER" will offer foreign language educators over these four years to help them prepare "career-ready" students.

## The New Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBERs) are Announced

In October of this year, the Department of Education announced the new [CIBER grant](#) awardees. The CIBERs account for one portion (approximately \$4.5 million) of the larger funding amount (\$63.3 million) allocated to more than 250 grants “to strengthen the capacity and performance of American education in foreign languages, international and area studies, teacher preparation, and international business education” ([U.S. Dept. of Ed. Press Office, 2014](#)). The lion’s share of this grant funding is committed to the [Foreign Language and Area Studies \(FLAS\) Fellowships](#) (\$30.3 million) and the [National Resource Centers](#) (\$22.7 million) associated with specific institutions of higher education. Department of Education Secretary

Arne Duncan emphasized the importance of these programs for helping teachers and students “gain global competencies that equip them with an understanding and openness to cultures and languages around the globe, as well as the 21st century skills needed to preserve a rich, multicultural society and thriving democracy right here at home” ([U.S. Dept. of Ed. Press Office, 2014](#)).

For foreign language and culture educators, the renewed funding specifically to establish or continue CIBERs is good news, because a top priority for CIBERs is to “provide instruction in critical foreign languages and international fields needed to provide an understanding of the cultures and customs of U.S. trading learners to become the future partners.” ([Dept. of Ed. 2014](#)) This is crucial to supporting workers who will help our nation address global problems not *independent of* but *collaboratively with* other countries.

Or as Secretary Duncan stated it directly: “we need professionals with solid cultural knowledge and language skills that cover all parts of the globe”([U.S. Dept. of Ed. Press Office, 2014](#)).

While each of the 17 CIBERs has its specific focal areas, they all have in common the mandate to work on curriculum development, research, and training on issues of importance to U.S. trade and competitiveness. The “[CIBERWeb](#),” hosted by the Michigan State University CIBER, provides a plethora of information about all CIBERs and their upcoming activities, searchable under categories such as Research, Curriculum, and Business Outreach. Foreign language teachers will find programming particularly relevant for their own professional development or opportunities for their students under the tabs “Language” and “Study Abroad.”

## GW-CIBER’s Upcoming Business Language Programming

*GW-CIBER Director Reid Click* (Associate Professor of International Business and International Affairs at GW) views GW-CIBER's business language programming as an especially strong component of GW-CIBER activities: “Over the past eight years, the business language programming has gained substantial recognition both within the national CIBER network and beyond, and the past programming provided a strong foundation for even bigger and better things in the new grant cycle.” He noted that the business language programming was “absolutely instrumental in securing the CIBER grant for GW amid significant competition for funds.”



GW-CIBER facilitates active cross-disciplinary involvement from across several schools within GW, including its ‘home’, the School of Business, but also the Elliott School of International Affairs and the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences, where the language programs are housed. This cross-disciplinarity is at the very heart of GW-CIBER’s Business Language Programs, run by this article’s

new skills and give them a competitive advantage in their careers.

Aside from the short-term study abroad courses and the business language minor development, GW-CIBER, supported by the first-rate administrative staff Alexis Gaul (Administrative Director) and Nevena Yakova (Program Manager), will take on projects that language

**Business Language Immersion Workshops.** Each year GW-CIBER’s program will feature an immersion workshop in the less-commonly taught languages of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian. These workshops give participants the chance to learn about methods for teaching the business context of their respective language, exchange ideas and materials, and

author (Margaret Gonglewski, Associate Professor from the Department of Romance, German, and Slavic Languages and Literatures), and Anna Helm, Assistant Teaching Professor of International Business. Director Reid Click emphasizes the value of this cross-disciplinary team: "GW-CIBER is fortunate to have two incredibly talented Business Language Coordinators, dedicated to bridging the fields of language and business for the benefit of students at GW, as well as playing an active role pushing the agenda for business languages nationally."

Click is particularly excited about two of the most ambitious goals for this grant cycle: first, developing short-term study-abroad courses with a business language focus. These courses will provide an immersion experience for students through a study tour and projects with businesses in a country speaking the language being studied. The second program will develop minors in business languages designed to bolster the language skills of business students and the business skills of language students. According to Click, "These minors will enable our students to acquire

#### References:

United States Department of Education Press Office. (October 8, 2014). More than \$63.3 Million Awarded to Colleges and Universities to Strengthen Global Competitiveness through International Studies and World

teachers will benefit from—either immediately or down the road. Here are several highlights:

**Professional Development Workshops and Targeted Trainings for Business Language Instructors.** Delivered by the GW-CIBER Business Language Coordinators, these annual workshops will address topics of interest to business language instructors, such as designing assignments related to specific business issues and implementing business-focused simulation exercises. GW-CIBER will also offer on-site, individualized training at regional schools interested in starting or enhancing their business language programs.

**Webinar Series on Business Content and Skills Training to Language Instructors.** This twice-yearly online series for language teachers will offer instruction in subjects such as international marketing, finance, and management. The goal is to equip foreign language educators with appropriate knowledge and skills to integrate business topics into their courses.

Language Training. Retrieved from <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/more-633-million-awarded>. United States Department of Education. (2014). Programs: Centers for International Business Education. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegps/cibe/index.html>

observe demonstrations and hear presentations from GW professors, students, and guest speakers. Workshops will transpire in the selected language(s) and will include visits to an embassy, cultural institution, or other relevant organization in Washington, DC.

**Expansion of the Business Languages Case Clearinghouse.** Building on previous success, GW-CIBER will grow its Case Clearinghouse, currently featuring multimedia cases for Arabic, Chinese, German, Japanese, Korean, and Russian. We will increase our case collection by supporting GW language faculty to research and write more business cases and by recruiting potential case authors.

Perhaps most relevant in the immediate context, GW-CIBER is committed to continue the **Regular Contribution of the "Business Language in Focus" Column to The Language Resource**, this bi-monthly online newsletter of the *NCLRC @ GW*, which reaches language professionals, like you, dear reader, nationwide.

CIBERWeb. (2014). Retrieved from <http://ciberweb.msu.edu/events/language/colleges-and-universities-strengthen-global-competitive>