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## English Newsletter

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## The NCLRC Language Resource



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Visit our website at: <http://www.nclrc.org>

This month's theme is **Reaching Out through Standards**. The National Foreign Language Standards are a key element in professionalizing the practice of language teaching. We're delighted to present our feature story on **Unpacking the Standards: informing instruction through performance assessment**. We also have a special report on the JNCL-NCIS Legislative Day in **Language Policy**. Be sure to answer our monthly **poll** and **questions** on **Using Music** to contribute to next month's issue. Another way to participate this month is to submit your guess in the May **Where in the World? Mystery Photo Contest** in our Culture Club **Photo Gallery**. No one has yet won the April Where in the World? Mystery Photo Contest so you may want to try to guess that mystery photo as well.



**We're getting underway with the Summer Institutes - register now!**

If you'd like to expand your professional knowledge in the area of using technology, check out our summer institute by Dr. Rich Robin, **Video Production for Teachers of FL**, May 29 - June 1. Learn how to create your own high-quality videos for enhancing your language classes.

### ★ Announcements:

- **JNCL-NCIS Legislative Day** on Capitol Hill brings together language experts to educate members of Congress about how and why their vote impacts language education.
- **Advances in Language Learning and Cultural Understanding: the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Showcase 2007** is planned at George Washington University with plenary speaker Nina Garrett
- National Museum of Language sponsors **R. David Zorc lecture on Language and Culture** in College Park, MD
- **NCLRC's Summer Institutes** are open for registration. Register now and reserve your space.
- A new Issue of the Arabic-K12 Newsletter has been released. **You can download a copy here.**
- Teachers who are attending our summer institutes may be interested in the free **Montgomery County, Maryland Summer Institutes for teachers of Less Commonly Taught Languages**: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian, levels 1- 4. Dates: 7/30 to 8/10 in Bethesda, Maryland.
- **Language Resource Centers around the US** offer a wide range of summer institutes for foreign language teachers of various languages and levels
- Have you voiced your opinion yet through our **POLL** or our monthly **QUESTION**? Be sure to add your voice to those of our other readers on the topics of upcoming issues.
- Click on the **CALENDAR** to review conferences, calls for papers, and grant, proposal and scholarship deadlines.

### Troubleshooting:

If your email client does not recognize the links in this webzine, or the links do not work, you can go straight to the NCLRC newsletter online page by clicking this link [www.nclrc.org/newsletter/english\\_newsletter.html](http://www.nclrc.org/newsletter/english_newsletter.html) or copying and pasting the link into your browser address bar.

### ★ Feature article

**Unpacking the Standards: informing instruction through performance assessment**  
*Dr. Jennifer Eddy, Queens College, City University of New York and Vice President of the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL)*

What are key indicators of true performance and success in a language? Are real life situations always predictable? What do your assessment tasks ask students to do? Do your students

### ★ Culture Club

*Edited by Christine Meloni*

**Visit the Culture Club!** The rooms renovated for May include the Banquet Hall, the Music Room, and the Photo Gallery.

**The Banquet Hall** features "Easter in Rome" with a recipe for a scrumptious dessert called Crema di Zio Nicola (Uncle Nicola's Delight) and photos of La Colomba, a traditional Italian Easter cake, and Cantucci, delicious almond dipping cookies.

**The Music Room** offers reviews of six songs performed by Maná (Amar Es Combatir, Revolución de Amor, Unplugged,

forget, misunderstand concepts, or only can use material the way it was taught? Are you mired in the minutiae of a coverage driven curriculum? How do you know when a student really understands? .... questions like these speak directly to what our National Standards imply for curriculum and assessment design. The Standards set the stage for language learning that goes beyond mastering language codes and lists of vocabulary in isolation; they signaled a paradigm shift in our field from reciting mechanized responses to emphasis on meaningful communication, authentic real life contexts, and cultural understanding. [Read more...](#)

### ★ Teacher's Diary

*Sofia is a second-year Spanish teacher at a charter school in the Baltimore area. Each month she shares her journal of reflections on teaching.*

#### Dear Diary,

I got a job! Starting next September, I will be teaching Upper School Spanish at a local private school. They offered me a fifty percent raise (yes, I really am being exploited where I currently teach) and will pay for half of each class I take towards my Masters degree. The Foreign Language department head seems kind and supportive. Last but not least, I will no longer have to coach sports! Continuing last month's topic, I passed out and reviewed a renewed homework policy with my students when they returned from their internships. [Read more...](#)

### ★ Language Policy

**Report from the Joint National Committee for Languages-National Council for Language and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS) Legislative Day**  
*By Abbe Spokane, Special Reporter to The Language Resource*  
Last week, I accompanied language teachers, advocates and administrators as they learned yet another new language: The Language of Congress. Participants had come from all over the country, including California, Kansas, New Jersey, and many states in between, to speak with their representatives about legislation affecting foreign language teaching and learning in the U.S. [Read more...](#)

### ★ Readers' Corner

*Here's where you, our dear readers, can TALK BACK! This month we ask about teaching culture.*

**Which types of music do you use in your teaching?**  
Answer our [Poll](#)

**How do you use music in year teaching?** Do you ask students to sing in the TL? Do students listen to TL music you have chosen or do they find it themselves? Do you ask students to create their own songs in the TL? Click here to answer the [Question](#)

Last month we asked **Which of the standards is hardest for you to address in daily lessons?** Can you guess which one is the hardest? [See the results here...](#)

### ★ Language at Work

*Give your students real-life examples of "what you can do with foreign language."* This month we talk to Takeshi Sengiku, a Computer-Assisted Language Learning Specialist. [Read more...](#)



### ★ Ask Dora

*Dora Johnson is a Program Associate at Center for Applied Linguistics, and answers reader's questions related to languages. This month's question:*

- I am a teacher educator in New York City and am writing a program to provide initial Arabic certification in New York. In order to submit the proposal I need information about other available programs and I have been looking in a variety of places with no luck. At our state website I

Cuando Los Angeles Lloran, Mana, y Donde Jugarán Los Niños); Exitos by Mercedes Sosa; La Stanza del Figlio, a CD of sound tracks by Italian Nicola Piovani, and 19 Norwegian Folksongs by Edvard Grieg.

Participate in the May **Where in the World? Mystery Photo Contest** in the [Photo Gallery](#). No one has yet won the April Where in the World? Mystery Photo Contest so try to guess that mystery photo as well. We do, however, have a winner for the March contest!

Visit the [Internet Media Room](#) for new links to target language media.

### ★ Dear YANA

*Edited by Sheila Cockey, YANA stands for "You are Not Alone." Your questions on challenges in your classrooms are answered by an expert on languages and culture teaching. This month's questions:*

- I am a career-switcher, having spent many years in the public and private sectors. I now would like to move into education and the local school system actually offered me a position. ... What questions do I need to ask and consider before I accept the position?
- I know that I need to remove myself from the center of instruction and let my students participate more in the class. My supervisor has told me that I must create a more learner-centered environment. How do I go about doing that? My students always do well on their vocabulary and grammar tests, but don't like to speak. How can I get them to speak more in class?

[Read YANA's answers...](#)

### ★ Critical Languages

**Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, and more**

Workshops for teachers of Arabic and Chinese are being sponsored by the [StarTalk](#) grants. Other grants are available for students. And guidance can be found for those trying to gain certification. [Read it all here...](#)

### ★ Websites for Teachers

#### The Essentials of Language Teaching

*by Laura Blythe Liu*

The NCLRC's "The Essentials of Language Teaching" is an online course that supports college-level FL teachers in creating theory-driven learner-centered instruction and reflective teacher practice. Begin with the section, "What Language Teaching Is" for a general description of learner-centered instruction, and then visit the other "Principles" sections to focus on methodology and practice. [Read more...](#)

### ★ Tech for Teachers

*by Jill Robbins*

**Report on NEALLT Conference at Cornell and using SIMS2 in other languages**

Do your students spend a lot of time playing computer games? Here's a way that you can give them the experience of creating a virtual world using their target language and the SIMS2 software. This and other ideas came from the Northeast Association for Language Learning Technology conference at Cornell University in March. [Read more...](#)

### Want to learn how to make your own videos for language learning?

Check out NCLRC's summer institute, Video Production for Teachers of FL led by Robin, Ph.D., of George Washington University. Dr. Robin shows participants how to make videos of interviews with native speakers talking about themselves and their world. These are easy to produce, bringing the language and the culture into the classroom, and even to the student's computer desktop. [See the agenda or register here...](#)

### ★ Professional Development, Conferences and Funding Opportunities

get Arabic language program information of which there are many, and little information as to whether there are education components. I wonder if you would have a resource that would help me find this information as we would like to get this program through the college and available for interested students. [Read Dora's answer...](#)

*We've compiled the conference announcements in one easy-to access place, the Teachers' Calendar.* Many schools are offering summer institutes for teachers at various locations around the country. Learn about all the events coming up soon [here...](#)

### ★NCLRC Staff

The year is drawing to a close and we are glad for the increased input that our readers have give us through emails and the monthly poll and question. Your tax dollars are paying for this center, so [let us know how we can serve you better.](#) Thanks for your contributions to the Language Resource! - Jill Robbins, editor

The Language Resource is a monthly publication of the National Capital Language Resource Center <http://www.nclrc.org> to provide practical teaching strategies, share insights from research, and announce professional development opportunities for all foreign language educators.

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#### Also available on our website

[Culture Club](#)

[Arabic K-12 Teachers' newsletter](#)

[Sailing the 5 Cs with Learning Strategies:](#)  
A Resource Guide for Secondary Foreign Language Educators

[Portfolio Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom](#)

[Elementary Immersion Learning Strategies Resource Guide](#)

[The Essentials of Language Teaching](#)

[Developing Autonomy in Language Learners:](#) Learning Strategies Instruction in Higher Education

[Russian for Russians](#)



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