# World Language Standards Focus Group and Implementation Services: Literature Review

# Introduction

To ensure that the forthcoming *Massachusetts World Languages Framework* is actionable, inclusive, and relevant to all educators, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) contracted the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) to conduct research on the needs of various less commonly taught courses and programs. The *World Language Standards Focus Group and Implementation Services* project includes three major activities: (1) facilitating two rounds of six virtual focus groups; (2) conducting a literature review of best practices for eight specialized content areas; and (3) developing Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) for these content areas to support teachers’ use and implementation of the framework.

In this report, we summarize findings from the literature review. The purpose of this review was to examine best practices for world language education in eight specialized content areas: (1) languages with diverse written representations; (2) classical languages; (3) American Sign Language; (4) world language courses for heritage speakers/signers; (5) elementary world language programs; (6) world language courses for students with disabilities; (7) social and emotional learning; and (8) assessment. For each specialized content area, we present key findings and relevant resources and supports for educators, an annotated bibliography of frequently cited sources, and a full list of references.

# Languages with Diverse Written Representations

This section of the literature review examines best practices for teaching languages with diverse written representations (LDWRs). This group of languages may be referred to as “non-alphabetic” languages or “languages that do not use the Latin alphabet” and is often included in the larger category of “less commonly taught languages” (LCTLs). Of the wide variety of languages that fall within this group, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Japanese, and Korean are among the most commonly taught in U.S K-12 settings (American Councils for International Education, 2017). Russian is alphabetic (Schwartz et al., 2007), and Arabic is alphabetic although vowels are sometimes unmarked (Everson, 2011). Chinese uses a “non-alphabetic logographic system,” commonly referred to as characters (Everson, 2011, p. 250), and Korean and Japanese both use borrowed Chinese characters combined with native writing systems: an alphabet printed in syllable blocks for Korean (Simpson & Kang, 2004) and two syllabary systems for Japanese (Everson, 2011). Given the diversity of writing systems represented within these languages and varied challenges they may present for language learners, we refer to this group as LDWRs.

In this section, we provide an overview of relevant factors for English speakers learning LDWRs, including differences in writing systems, expected student outcomes, and language varieties. We then explore instructional considerations related to learning alphabets, characters, and symbols; reading and writing; and pronunciation, followed by a brief discussion of resources and supports for teachers of LDWRs. While many of the findings included in this section can be applied across various languages in K-12 settings, much of the information presented is (1) based on research conducted at the university level and/or (2) based on language-specific research related to Chinese or Arabic. This reflects the availability of literature related to this topic and further demonstrates the need for additional resources and supports for teachers of diverse LDWRs. Recommendations presented in this section are therefore some of many potentially effective approaches, as some may be more appropriate than others when teaching different LDWRs in K-12 settings.

## Relevant Factors

There are a number of challenges for English speakers when learning a new language with a different writing system, including (1) recognizing and memorizing new alphabets, characters, and/or symbols; (2) understanding how sounds and meanings are represented in the language; (3) learning new vocabulary; (4) understanding linguistic norms and rules; and (5) applying new knowledge to reading and writing in the language (Brosh, 2020). The amount of time required to learn different LDWRs and expected proficiency outcomes may vary, but most of these languages are categorized as “Category III - languages with significant linguistic and/or cultural differences from English” (e.g., Greek, Hebrew, and Russian) or “Category IV - languages which are exceptionally difficult for native English speakers” (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) by the U.S. Department of States’ Foreign Service Institute (FSI) (<https://www.state.gov/foreign-language-training/>). FSI estimates that Category III languages require approximately 1,100 instructional hours to reach a level 3 on the Interagency Language Roundtable scale (Professional Working Proficiency, or Superior on the ACTFL proficiency scale), and Category IV languages require 2,200 instructional hours to achieve this level of proficiency, in contrast to languages more similar to English that require 750 hours or fewer. Educators working with these languages should modify and adapt expected student outcomes accordingly.

In addition to the general difficulties associated with learning a new writing system, students are further challenged by the need to learn different varieties, registers, and dialects associated with LDWRs (Godwin-Jones, 2013). For example, Arabic has both a formal version (Modern Standard Arabic, or MSA) and several spoken varieties or dialects, and proficient speakers must be able to employ different varieties in their proper contexts. Researchers recommend an integrated approach that teaches both a dialect and MSA, as this more closely mirrors the use of Arabic among native speakers and can help prepare students to speak in culturally appropriate ways in the community (Younes, 2006). This approach to instruction may also enable heritage speakers to use their knowledge of different dialects to enhance their reading and writing skills in MSA (Albirini, 2014). To best support students’ acquisition of multiple language varieties, educators are encouraged to focus on specific communicative skills for different contexts that require each version of the language (Trentman, 2017). In addition, encouraging students to notice the distinctions between language varieties can help them acquire multiple varieties more effectively (Shiri & Joukhadar, 2017), and activities related to the comparisons standard can support this type of instruction. In terms of dialects, research has shown that learning one Arabic dialect helps students understand other dialects (Lathrop, 2019; Trentman, 2011), demonstrating yet another reason for educators of LDWRs to support linguistic diversity in their classrooms.

## Alphabets, Characters, and Symbols

Limited research has been conducted on the “visual, orthographic, lexical, and sentence level processing in the many alternative writing systems” (Reilly & Radach, 2012, p. 936) across grade levels, and most studies related to learning new scripts are focused on English rather than languages that do not use the Latin alphabet (Nam, 2018; Rose, 2019). There is still much to learn about how differences between writing systems impact literacy development, and more research is needed on best practices for teachers working with native English speakers who are learning LDWRs in world language classrooms (Reilly & Radach, 2012). Despite these limitations, a number of researchers have described some of the issues involved in learning to read and write in various LDWRs, and we will present practices and strategies that may be helpful for educators to consider for supporting their students’ literacy development.

Prior to teaching reading and writing strategies, educators must introduce students to the new alphabet/characters/symbols used to represent the language, and students must start to recognize and memorize these representations. Learning a new writing system may require students to identify the shapes of and connections between various characters and/or understand new directional, spatial, or print-related patterns of the language (Brosh, 2020). Research on L2 learners of Chinese has shown that students often develop language-specific strategies to support their memorization of characters, including the use of various mnemonic devices, pictures, shapes, grouping based on similarities, and/or color-coding, the latter of which can be particularly useful for learning “radicals” (i.e., sub-characters) in the language (Grenfell & Harris, 2015; Rose, 2019). Given the differences inherent in learning various other writing systems, researchers recommend that educators limit their use of strategies designed for L1 learners, including repeated copying of letters/characters/symbols, as these are not appropriate for students in the world language classroom (Rose, 2019). Educators can work with students to brainstorm, practice, and evaluate different strategies to find an approach that will best meet their needs (Grenfell & Harris, 2015). Limited research exists about the language of instruction used for teaching learning strategies, and some researchers recommend using English for beginner learners or modeling various strategies while using the target language (Chamot, 2004). In addition, as teaching new alphabets/characters/symbols in isolation may cause students to feel frustrated or discouraged (Godwin-Jones, 2013), educators may want to consider simultaneously teaching other topics and skills related to the language to keep students motivated and excited about learning (Brosh, 2020).

## Reading and Writing

In terms of reading, a number of strategies can help students read new words in LDWRs, including those related to recognizing the sounds of the language, analyzing pronunciation, recognizing different forms of letters/characters/symbols, and using newly learned forms in writing (Matsumoto, 2013; Nassaji, 2013; Shen, 2013). After learning emerging literacy concepts and strategies, some researchers recommend a program of free voluntary reading, also known as “extensive reading” or “undirected reading”. Reading large amounts of material that is within or just above students' proficiency levels and on topics of personal interest may promote greater reading fluency and better reading comprehension when working with texts for LDWRs (Brustad, 2006; Hitosugi & Day, 2004; Suk, 2017). Although educators in this context often struggle to find authentic, grade and proficiency-level appropriate texts, there are an increasing number of online resources available to support reading instruction for LDWRs, including social media, podcasts, and web-based tools designed to further support students in decoding texts with various alphabets/characters/symbols (Godwin-Jones, 2013).

When discussing strategies for reading in Chinese, researchers have emphasized the importance of developing students’ metalinguistic awareness of the various structural features of characters and the relationships between and within characters, as understanding how the characters are formed can support “chunking” and breaking down difficult texts into more manageable sections (Shen & Ke, 2007). In addition, studies have shown that Pinyin, a system for representing Chinese words using the Roman alphabet (Everson, 2011), is highly predictive of subsequent Chinese word reading (Lü, 2017). As Pinyin is also used in the Chinese education system for typing purposes (Guan et al., 2011; Shen, 2013), its use in the world language classroom provides students with an authentic cultural practice and enables them to electronically engage with a community of native speakers. Delaying character introduction until after Pinyin is learned may help students with the pronunciation, translation, and use of Chinese words (Osborne et al., 2020). This advantage can disappear, however, if the workload of learning characters is increased without adquate focus on the relationship between the meaning, pronunciation, and structure of characters (Osborne et al., 2020).

For students learning Arabic, researchers recommend the use of L2-specific, “top-down” learning strategies and explicit decoding instruction, which are both helpful for students at lower proficiency levels when reading unfamiliar and challenging texts (Funder Hansen, 2010). Although there is limited evidence indicating whether strategies should be taught in students’ first language or the target language (Chamot, 2004), educators may be able to use the target language to promote strategic reading through activities involving the activation of background knowledge, the development of text structure awareness, and the use of graphic organizers (Grabe, 2004). Educators should incorporate authentic, grade and proficiency level-appropriate reading materials to encourage students to focus on developing their word recognition skills rather than analyzing other features of the text, including new vocabulary and grammatical structures (Funder Hansen, 2010). Arabic words are based on roots of several consonants, and while short vowels may be marked in “vowelized” texts with diacritics (i.e., small accent-like marks near the main letters of a word), students must be familiar with “unvowelized” Arabic in order to interact with authentic texts. Using vowelized textbooks may support reading speed and accuracy of both types of text (Al Midhwah & Alhawary, 2020), and exposing students to a variety of written representations of Arabic further supports the Cultures, Comparisons, and Communities components of world language standards. In addition, explicit vocabulary instruction is an important component of effective reading instruction in the Arabic context, as students must rely on context in unvowelized texts to support their comprehension. Various strategies can further support reading comprehension, including reading ahead for context, deconstructing the syntax of a sentence, and paying attention to discourse markers, and these methods should be explicitly taught to students in the classroom (Al-Batal, 2006; Brustad, 2006).

Instructional considerations for writing are closely tied with those for reading, and some of the strategies referenced in the above section will also support students’ development of writing skills when learning LDWRs. In addition to learning new alphabets/characters/symbols and words, many LDWRs require students to understand new directional, spatial, and print versus script norms, and it is important for educators to point out these differences to support students as they begin writing in the language (Brosh, 2020). Integrated tasks combining reading and writing may be helpful for students in this process, and other strategies to support writing include text comparisons in English and the target language, genre-based writing that incorporates familiar topics and topics of interest, and electronic exchanges with native speakers in the community at home or abroad (Yigitoglu & Reichelt, 2014). To best support the development of literacy skills, educators are encouraged to provide specific, actionable feedback on a continual basis during instructional time (Brosh, 2020).

## Phonology and Tonal Pronunciations

Another challenge related to the teaching and learning of LDWRs is understanding the rules, forms, and complexities surrounding phonology and pronunciation. Students learning Chinese, for example, must learn the tone of each word to engage in effective interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational communication. Observing and producing gestures indicating the tone contour may be helpful when teaching tones in the classroom (Baills et al., 2019), and some strategies involve using Pinyin representations of words next to lines depicting the tone (Liu, et al., 2011) and using accented Pinyin to show different tones (Chang, 2018). Color coding of characters may further support beginner students learning both tones and meanings (Osborne et al., 2020), and explicit instruction may further support the teaching of pronunciation rules (Wiener et al., 2020). This type of instruction is recommended from the beginning of the course, and it may be helpful to compare and contrast English intonations and tones in Chinese to further develop students “perceptual knowledge” of the language (Jin, 2019).

In the context of Arabic, some researchers have examined the impact of using written representations to support phonological acquisition and awareness. Findings indicate that exposure to written forms of the language may not be helpful for learning about appropriate phonological forms in this context (Mathieu, 2016), and phonological forms written in the Latin alphabet may be even less helpful than providing no written representations at all (Showalter & Hayes-Harb, 2015). Educators are encouraged to orally model various sounds represented in the Arabic language, especially the “guttural sounds” that may require extended practice for native English speakers (Bergman, 2009). In addition, some combination of structured activities (e.g., repetition, authentic listening experiences, structured speaking exercises, etc.) and performance-based activities (e.g., skits, games, presentations, etc.) are recommended to support effective pronunciation instruction for Arabic learners (Shehata, 2017).

## Resources and Supports

Research has shown that educators of LDWRs have limited access to resources, supports, and training opportunities (Wang, 2009), and many of the instructional approaches commonly discussed in the literature on world language education fail to address the needs and diversity of languages that do not use the Latin alphabet (Funder Hansen, 2010). Professional development offerings should focus on the complexities of learning a new writing system, and special attention should be provided to the various issues involved in processing differences between English and the target language (Funder Hansen, 2010). Given these differences, there is a need for more language-specific resources, instructional materials, and performance descriptors to effectively implement world language standards in this context, and because many educators of LDWRs are the only teacher of a certain language within their school and/or district, more opportunities for collaboration and web-based training are recommended (Wang, 2009).

## Annotated Bibliography

**Everson, M. E. (2011). Best practices in teaching logographic and non-Roman writing systems to L2 learners. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 249-274.**

This article opens with a discussion of the general characteristics of several non-Roman writing systems, including Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Hebrew, then examines the research on each language individually. The section on Chinese focuses on learning strategies and the ways in which students extract pronunciation cues from the text. In the section on Japanese, the author discusses pronunciation, meaning inferences, and the impact of attitudes about writing on learning. Hebrew and Arabic are discussed together, and the author focuses on research on the role of vowels, cognitive skills, and reading sub-skills such as letter naming. The article finally turns to an examination of best practices in teaching, with recommendations for the particular challenges of each language.

**Funder Hansen, G. (2010). Word recognition in Arabic as a foreign language. *The Modern Language Journal, 94*(4), 567-581.**

This study tested the decoding skills of Arabic learners at different levels and native speakers. Participants completed several tests that involved reading pseudowords, reading Arabic text with and without vowelization, comprehending Arabic text with and without vowelization, and choosing vowel patterns for unvoweled pseudowords. Results indicated that Arabic script causes difficulty in reading pseudowords. The second test showed that vowelization does not improve reading speed or comprehension, especially for beginner learners, in contrast to other studies. This may be because adding vowels gives learners additional information to process, which is difficult unless good decoding skills have already been established. Finally, beginner learners had great difficulty applying vowel patterns to pseudowords, and advanced learners did not do as well as native speakers. The study closes with a recommendation to target the specific difficulties of learning to read in Arabic by instructing students in decoding new words.

**Guan, C. Q., Liu, Y., Chan, D. H., Ye, F., & Perfetti, C. A. (2011). Writing strengthens orthography and alphabetic-coding strengthens phonology in learning to read Chinese. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 509-522.**

This study examined different methods of introducing Chinese characters to students. Participants in the study saw a new Chinese character on a computer and heard its pronunciation. Half the participants were instructed to mentally recall the character they saw, while the others were asked to write the character on a digital notepad. On a post-test, participants who wrote the characters were better able to recognize the characters, identify their tones, give their Romanization, and translate them. In a second experiment, new characters were taught on two days. Some participants wrote the characters on a digital notepad both days, while others typed the Romanization on the first day and wrote the characters on the second day. The results of this experiment indicated that the typing condition improved participants’ auditory identification of the characters they had learned. Overall, the study indicated that writing characters strengthens students’ recall of how words are written, while typing the Romanization strengthens students’ recall of how words are pronounced.

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# Classical Languages

In this section of the literature review, we will discuss best practices for the teaching of classical languages. First, we provide an overview of different instructional approaches that support proficiency-based learning in classical language courses and programs. We then highlight strategies for addressing various world language standards in this context, including the Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities standards. This is followed by a review of effective assessment practices and a brief discussion of resources and supports for classical language teachers. For the purposes of this literature review, we will focus our findings on the teaching and learning of Latin and Ancient Greek, as these are the two most commonly taught classical languages in K-12 settings.

## Effective Instructional Approaches

Three major approaches to instruction have been widely used in classical language contexts and referenced in the related literature: the grammar/translation approach, the reading-based approach, and the communicative/active approach (Hunt, 2016). The grammar/translation and reading-based approaches are often considered traditional pedagogical methods in this context, and they both underscore the importance of developing proficiency in reading ancient texts (Carlon, 2015; Natoli, 2018; Wingate, 2013). In recent years, however, the communicative/active approach to instruction has garnered increased interest in both research and practice (Coffee, 2012; Hanford, 2018; Hunt, 2016), and this approach is particularly well-suited for both addressing world language standards and developing students’ proficiency in classical language classrooms. By exposing students to spoken Latin and Ancient Greek through a variety of communicative activities, teachers can effectively support students’ language development across domains and simultaneously create an engaging and interactive learning experience that reflects best practices in language teaching and learning (Saffire, 2006). Research has shown that classical language students rapidly acquire new knowledge in active learning environments (Overland et al. 2011), leading to increased self-confidence, enjoyment, and comfort when completing reading activities (Saffire, 2006), which further contributes to the overarching goal of all classical language courses and programs: the ability to read, interpret, and analyze Ancient Greek and Latin texts (Morrell, 2006; Natoli, 2018; Wingate, 2013). Accuracy and fluency in reading require students to have a comprehensive knowledge of the language across domains (Gruber-Miller, 2006), and the communicative/active approach provides ample opportunities for students to develop a more balanced proficiency profile while further developing their reading skills.

To best support students in receiving this type of instruction, researchers have emphasized the importance of providing comprehensible input through the use of simplified dialogues or texts (Morrell, 2006); repetition of limited, high-frequency vocabulary words (Ash, 2019; Hunt, 2016; Ramsby, 2018); and visual supports, including pictures, videos, and gestures (Ramsby, 2018). Repeated exposure to the language will lead students to feel comfortable producing language independently (Ramsby, 2018), and educators should provide opportunities for students to engage in a variety of authentic, performance-based tasks to further develop their skills across all domains of language (Saffire, 2006). Topics and methods of teaching through spoken Latin or Ancient Greek should reflect students’ individual interests, and while activities may initially be limited to core or foundational topics, they can eventually incorporate more complex topics related to ancient history or cultural products and practices (Hunt, 2016). Researchers also highlight how texts written by famous Greek and Roman scholars are intended to be experienced through performance, and students should have speaking and listening opportunities to engage with these texts to support a deeper understanding of their contents (Gruber-Miller, 2006). By producing and understanding meaningful interactions through spoken Latin and Ancient Greek, students can learn sophisticated grammatical forms implicitly and unsystematically (Saffire, 2006), which is beneficial for interacting with complex, ancient texts.

Despite the benefits to the communicative/active approach in classical language classrooms, some educators may be apprehensive about incorporating this type of instruction due to concerns about their own speaking abilities in the language (Patrick, 2015). Many classical language teachers have more developed literacy skills than oral language skills, leading them to feel reluctant about using spoken Latin or Ancient Greek for classroom instruction (Saffire, 2006). Educators should be reminded that it is not expected for them to produce language similar to that which is demonstrated in ancient texts, and speaking in slower, simpler ways can actually be beneficial for students who are unfamiliar with this approach to learning classical languages (Saffire, 2006). In addition, using extralinguistic elements such as hand gestures and other visual supports may help teachers focus on students’ understanding without putting too much pressure on themselves to speak the language perfectly (Patrick, 2015).

While some educators will continue to use traditional approaches to instruction due to greater confidence in literacy skills or various other reasons (e.g., philosophical differences, pedagogical preference, availability of materials, school-wide curriculum, etc.), it is important to note that there may be opportunities to use a combination of these methods in the classroom to support students’ language development across all communicative modes. For example, educators may choose to strategically incorporate different activities as needed, such as using targeted speaking activities for consolidation or additional practice within a more reading or grammar-based approach to instruction (Hunt, 2016). The [*2017* *Standards for Classical Language Learning*](https://www.aclclassics.org/Portals/0/Site%20Documents/Publications/Standards_for_Classical_Language_Learning_2017%20FINAL.pdf) do not explicitly favor or recommend one approach for effective classical language teaching, and they include specific references to the different proficiency expectations associated with approaches that do and do not use spoken Latin or Ancient Greek in the classroom, demonstrating the continued recognition and validity of all three instructional approaches.

Regardless of the overall instructional approach, there are a number of general best practices for supporting classical language students in standards- and proficiency-based classrooms. It is important for educators to understand students’ individual needs, interests, and abilities, and researchers have underscored the importance of student-centered teaching strategies to support classical language development in the classroom (Deagon, 2006). Educators must be prepared to develop a variety of multimodal instructional activities to enhance differentiated instruction, as most classical language textbooks are not designed to accommodate different types of learners, including those who require visual and aural supports for reading, those who prefer to learn grammatical concepts before reading, and those who learn best by reading before completing more detailed exercises (Deagon, 2006). A growing number of modern texts, novellas, and comprehensible stories written in classical languages have been developed in recent years, and educators are encouraged to use these resources to support vocabulary development throughout instruction (Ramsby, 2018).

Although classical language teaching has long involved the transfer of information from instructor to student, educators benefit from introducing learning experiences that allow students to make meaning of the language themselves, leading to a deeper level of understanding and overall comprehension (Deagon, 2006). In addition, there should be variety of opportunities for students to interact through pair and group work, and activities should focus on real-world language use that allows students to express their thoughts, feelings, and values in the target language (Gruber-Miller, 2006). By encouraging students to collaborate on exercises, projects, and presentations, they will have more opportunities to use the language in context, develop their communicative skills, and create a sense of community within the classroom (Gruber-Miller, 2006).

## Teaching Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities

Culture is an essential component to classical language teaching, and it is important for educators to support students’ deep understanding of Ancient Greek and Roman life, as this is required to fully engage with the messages present in various ancient texts (Gruber-Miller, 2006). A number of material remains (e.g., vases, coins, maps, etc.) are easily accessible and informative, and educators should provide a variety of hands-on opportunities for students to engage with culture using these different artifacts and relics (Houghtalin, 2018). To expand upon more traditional concepts of Greek and Roman culture, the issue of diversity in classical language teaching materials has been raised in recent years, as world language standards encourage educators to expose their students to a variety of languages, cultures, and peoples. Researchers have recognized the absence of diversity in most textbooks for these courses (Ash, 2019), and they recommend that educators use materials and texts that go beyond elite, Eurocentric perspectives when teaching about Ancient Greek and Roman societies. Educators should highlight underrepresented voices when teaching about ancient cultures, and students can be encouraged to adapt ancient stories from a variety of perspectives when engaging in role-plays, presentations, and writing activities (Gruber-Miller, 2018).

To address the comparisons standard, researchers recommend the use of exercises in which students examine differences between Ancient Greek or Latin and English, as well as activities that allow students to focus on different textual elements related to various genres while reading (Carlon, 2015). Educators can also use experiential learning to support students in developing critical awareness of the differences between cultural traditions in Greek and Roman societies and their own lived experiences (Gruber-Miller, 2006). Some components of life in ancient societies that can be further explored and compared with modern day society are relationships, family, mythology, religion, travel, and government (American Classical League (ACL) and Society for Classical Studies (SCS), 2017). By examining ways in which ancient and modern peoples differ in their interactions and communities, students will develop a deeper understanding of various intercultural perspectives that may be helpful for their personal and professional lives.

There are also a variety of opportunities for classical language educators to incorporate the Connections standard by linking classical language learning with other subject areas, including math, science, and other disciplines that have been greatly influenced or developed by Greek and Roman societies (Major, 2018). Given the multifaceted and versatile nature of classical language teaching, educators can easily incorporate this standard through a variety of activities, including storytelling, performances, and discussion about greater societal issues from the past that continue to play a role in our lives today (Gruber-Miller, 2006). These connections can reinforce students’ linguistic abilities, cultural understanding, and interdisciplinary knowledge (Major, 2018), and it is important to introduce students to multiple perspectives when discussing different academic disciplines and their relationship to the history and culture of ancient worlds (Gruber-Miller, 2018; Hanford, 2018). The study of classical languages also allows students to make deeper connections to self and identity (Patrick, 2015), and educators are encouraged to provide opportunities for self-examination and self-reflection to promote this type of critical thinking in the classroom.

Although classical language educators do not have access to a living community of native Ancient Greek and Latin speakers, researchers recommend a variety of strategies for addressing the Communities standard in this context. It may be helpful to use technology to connect students with people from around the world who speak these languages (Ancona, 2018; Gruber-Miller, 2006; Natoli, 2018), and presentations, group work, or games can also help to build a sense of community within the classroom (Gruber-Miller, 2006). In addition, community outreach projects that provide students with an opportunity to use the target language outside of the classroom are recommended, including collaborating with a local theater to put on a performance, working with chefs to create a traditional ancient banquet, or reciting poetry or famous speeches in public spaces (Gruber-Miller, 2018). Activities can start in the classroom with targeted reading and discussion related to the topic, followed by background research and group presentations that allow students to practice speaking or performing in front of their classmates (Gruber-Miller, 2018). Students can also participate in state or national Classical League events, such as *Certamen* – a student competition of Ancient Greek and Latin oratory and art performances (Ramsby, 2018).

## Assessment Practices

Continuous assessment and feedback are important components of proficiency-based instruction, and classical language teachers are encouraged to use the progress indicators and performance ranges outlined in world language standards when assessing their students across domains (Natoli, 2018). Backward design and planning can be extremely helpful for articulating expected student outcomes for various activities, lessons, or units (Gruber-Miller, 2006), and this process can help teachers in thinking about the supports they will need to address learner diversity in the classroom. Educators should assess student growth and proficiency using performance-based tasks that focus on various modes of communication (e.g., interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational) (Distler, 2000), and it is important to share learning objectives with students during this process to help them better understand task expectations and their progress in meeting personal goals (Saffire, 2006). Before more complex tasks that require deeper knowledge of the language, students at lower proficiency levels can make lists, categorize items, and/or produce visual representations of a text to demonstrate their understanding and comprehension of spoken or written discourse (Carlon, 2015; Deagon, 2006).

## Resources and Supports

As current trends in classical language teaching may require some educators to make major changes to their teaching practices, additional supports are needed for educators tasked with restructuring their curriculum and lessons around specific learning outcomes rather than focusing on what topics they will cover throughout the course (Ancona, 2018; Ramsby, 2018). Classical language teachers would benefit from additional networking opportunities with educators from various schools and/or districts to support collaboration and the development of a professional learning community (Anderson, 2018). In addition, there is a consensus that efforts need to be made to diversify the field of classical language education (Searle et al., 2018), and these efforts should include representation from educators and students with various backgrounds, interests, and academic or professional experiences (Anya & Randolph, 2019).

## Annotated Bibliography

**Carlon, J. (2015) Rethinking the Latin classroom: changing the role of translation in assessment, *The Classical Outlook*, *90* (4), 138-140.**

This article provides numerous assessment strategies for classical language teachers while incorporating discussions of current issues in the field, including the ‘active’ vs. reading-based approaches. The role of translation is redefined and repositioned within wider goals for the Latin classroom.

**Gruber-Miller, J. (2018) The standards as integrative learning. *Teaching Classical Languages, 9* (1), 19-38.**

This article explores ways to implement all Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities standards in classical language teaching and learning. It gives examples of how interpersonal, presentational, interpretive communication can be addressed, and it provides a sample learning scenario to demonstrate authentic and realistic applications of the standards in the classroom.

**Natoli, B. (2018) From standards for classical language learning to world-readiness standards: What’s new and how they can improve classroom instruction. *Teaching Classical Languages, 9* (1), 1-18.**

This article compares the 1997 *Standards for Classical Language Learnin*g with the updated and revised 2017 edition. Changes are justified through an analysis of recent pedagogical trends and needs in the field. The author makes recommendations for implementing the new standards based on current research and practice related to classical language education.

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# American Sign Language

In this section of the literature review, we will discuss best practices for the teaching of American Sign Language (ASL) in the world language classroom. First, we provide an overview of the differences between ASL and aural modern languages. We then highlight strategies for addressing the Cultures standard in this context, followed by a brief discussion of the use of English in ASL instruction, expected learning outcomes, and various resources and supports for ASL teachers. For the purposes of this literature review, we will focus on the teaching and learning of ASL as a second language or additional language, as world language standards are primarily intended for educators working in this type of classroom. Based on available research (Kurz & Taylor, 2008) and the [*K-12 ASL Content Standards*](https://www.gallaudet.edu/Documents/ASL-Standards/K-12-ASL-Content-Standard.pdf) developed for programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students (Gallaudet University & California School for the Deaf-Riverside, 2018), “signer” is the most respectful term used to describe those who communicate in ASL and will therefore be used throughout this review. In addition, the term “Deaf” is capitalized in this review when describing cultures and communities to indicate the difference between the physical aspects of deafness and “the cultural affiliation of identifying with a like group of people with a shared history, traditions, and language” (Ashton, et al., 2014, p. 6).

## ASL and Aural Modern Languages

ASL differs from aural modern languages in several ways, and the most prominent difference is that ASL is a signed language that is communicated visually rather than a spoken language that is communicated orally. While the native language of many students learning ASL as a world language is spoken rather than visual, students may have a variety of backgrounds and varying levels of exposure to the language or Deaf cultures and communities. Deaf cochlear implant users or hearing children who have Deaf parents or family members may be considered heritage language learners of ASL (Pichler, et al., 2018), and these students may have experience with various sign systems, different variations of ASL, and code-blending when communicating in the language (Isakson, 2018). In addition, students who are already proficient in one signed language before enrolling in ASL classes may be more likely to recognize key features of the language and demonstrate higher proficiency levels (Pichler & Koulidobrova, 2015).

For native speakers of English or other spoken languages, there are greater difficulties involved in the transfer of abilities from one language to another during the learning process (Beal, 2020; Kurz & Taylor, 2008; Pichler & Koulidobrova, 2015). Complex units of meaning are produced in ASL using hand movements, body gestures, and facial expressions, and this can be challenging for students who learn languages best through listening and speaking activities (Ashton, et al., 2014). In addition to learning how to communicate in a physical modality, ASL students must acquire a new syntactical and grammar system, as some articles, verbs, and linguistic features are expressed differently when signing (Ashton, et al., 2014), and students must learn how various head, eyebrow, and mouth movements mark or modify the grammatical structure of signed words and phrases (Calton, 2020). Language is represented through simultaneous manual and non-manual expression, which is vastly different from the way in which spoken languages are sequenced and structured (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). Given these differences, educators must support students in developing visual-spatial literacy (Lessard, 2014), gestural expression skills (Oviedo, et al., 2019), and an understanding of ASL communicative norms (Quinto-Pozos, 2011).

Physical space plays a significant role in how messages are received and produced while signing, and students must understand how various movements and uses of the “three-dimensional signing space” affect meaning in order to communicate in a comprehensible way with ASL signers (Lessard, 2014). Different movements toward and away from the body may impact the way in which someone interprets signed communication, and space can also be used to demonstrate grammatical differences or change the information being presented (Pichler & Koulidobrova, 2015). To help students feel more comfortable viewing and using various parts of the body as a means of expression, educators may focus on different ways to communicate without signing before learning more complex concepts related to ASL vocabulary, grammar, and syntax (Oviedo, et al., 2019). Expressive skills can be further developed by introducing increasingly more difficult topics and types of expression into activities, including those that involve explanations and presentations (Kurz, et al., 2019). In terms of hand movements, fingerspelling (i.e., the act of producing or creating a word or other expression by rendering its written form letter by letter in a manual alphabet) and fingerreading (i.e., the act of receiving (or comprehending) a fingerspelled word or lexicalized sign), are recognized as additional competencies that students must learn for effective ASL communication (Gallaudet University & California School for the Deaf-Riverside, 2018). Although ACTFL does not specify which proficiency levels are associated with these skills, the [*2014 Standards for Learning American Sign Language*](https://aslta.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/National_ASL_Standards.pdf)describe various functions of fingerreading and fingerspelling that are expected at different grade levels, indicating that these skills are developed over time across proficiency levels.

Presenting video depictions of ASL conversations or inviting students to participate in community gatherings may help students recognize norms, learn new strategies, and determine which strategies may be more effective in this context (Ashton, et al., 2014; Quinto-Pozos, 2011; Wilcox & Wilcox, 1997). As ASL is a print-less language (Beal, 2020), technology-based communication also plays an important role in the Deaf community, and students should develop digital literacy skills in order to understand appropriate interactions in this space (Kurz & Taylor, 2008). Researchers recommend that students engage in video blogging, composing electronic newsletters, and various multimedia assignments to practice these skills (Quinto-Pozos, 2011), and educators should explicitly teach students about the capabilities and functionalities of online tools and platforms (Kurz & Taylor, 2008).

## Teaching Cultures

Culture is an essential component of ASL teaching and learning, and it is important for educators to support students’ understanding of the rich history and culture associated with the language. In addition to providing active, hands-on learning activities involving authentic materials (e.g., literature, theater, poetry, art, etc.), educators should encourage students to critically examine the lived experiences and cultural identities of the Deaf community (Reagan, et al., 2020). Representation and diversity are important considerations for teachers when selecting instructional materials and texts, and researchers recommend that students be exposed to numerous varieties of ASL in the classroom (Calton, 2020; Kurz & Taylor, 2008; Reagan, et al., 2020). It may be helpful to incorporate activities into instruction that engage students in researching and discussing examples of ASL slang or interviewing individuals with dual minority identities (Ashton, et al., 2014; Calton, 2020; Kurz & Taylor, 2008).

Educators should also incorporate opportunities for students to socialize with community members both in and outside of the classroom (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). In addition to understanding the lived experiences and cultural practices of ASL signers, students must work on identifying, analyzing, and deconstructing biases and misconceptions about the language, as the realities of teaching and learning ASL may be very different from students’, parents’, and educators’ expectations (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). Because many people believe that ASL is a word-for-word visual representation of English (Calton, 2020; Quinto-Pozos, 2011; Thoryk, 2010), it is important for teachers to explain the differences between these languages to support a deeper understanding of how the unique features of ASL might impact one’s cultural identity (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). Students should also have the opportunity to discuss more complex societal issues and their relationship to Deaf culture and history, including power, marginalization, and discrimination (Reagan, et al., 2020).

## English in the ASL Classroom

“No voice” policies that limit any and all spoken English communication are commonly followed within Deaf culture and communities, and educators of ASL in world language classrooms are encouraged to replicate this authentic practice by avoiding the use of spoken English (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). In addition to considering the sociocultural appropriateness of spoken English in ASL instruction, teachers must consider whether its use is detrimental to the language acquisition process. While more research is needed to determine the extent to which English may affect ASL learning in the world language classroom, the simultaneous use of spoken English while signing may hinder students’ understanding of ASL grammatical structures (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). In addition, it can contribute to the misconception that ASL is a signed version of English that does not have its own grammar, syntax, and culture (Calton, 2020), which may perpetuate existing misunderstandings and biases about the language.

When teaching students how to receive and express messages through signing, educators are encouraged to provide comprehensible input without the use of spoken English, and signs, images and pictures may support these efforts (Rosen et al., 2014). Educators may find the need to rely on written English for various classroom practices (e.g., writing on the board, creating handouts, assigning homework, etc.), as there is no “commonly accepted” written form of ASL that can be used for these purposes (Quinto-Pozos, 2011). Some research has shown that glossing (i.e., a practice in which words in ASL are represented in written English with markers to indicate facial and body gestures) may be helpful for students’ acquisition of various grammatical rules and structures (Buisson, 2007), and educators are encouraged to further explore the use of writing in general in the ASL classroom to determine its effectiveness and applicability (Quinto-Pozos, 2011).

## Expected Learning Outcomes

The amount of time required to learn ASL and achieve target proficiency outcomes may vary, and researchers and educators have debated the language’s level of difficulty for native English speakers in the past few decades. Based on the language difficulty categories developed by the U.S. Department of States’ Foreign Service Institute (FSI) (<https://www.state.gov/foreign-language-training/>), some have argued that ASL should fall under “Category II – languages more similar to English”, while others have argued that ASL is more appropriately placed in “Category IV - languages which are exceptionally difficult for native English speakers” (Kemp, 1998). There is little research or documentation related to this topic, and while there is no ASL-specific ACTFL guidance regarding end of year expectations by grade level or communicative mode, the state of Ohio has developed a set of ASL proficiency targets for middle and high school students (<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Foreign-Language/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum-Framework/Introduction-to-Learning-Standards/Considerations-for-American-Sign-Language-ASL#1>). Overall, students are expected to reach Novice Mid to Novice High levels of proficiency after 135-150 hours of instruction and Intermediate levels of proficiency after 405-450 hours of instruction. Students who complete all course levels and receive 825-900 hours of instruction can be expected to reach the Intermediate High level of proficiency upon exiting the program.

## Resources and Supports

In order to meet the expectations outlined in various ASL teacher preparation standards, educators must be able to demonstrate high levels of ASL proficiency and knowledge of (1) ASL linguistics and literature; (2) second language acquisition and development; (3) products and practices associated with Deaf culture and communities; (4) ASL curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and (5) best practices related to differentiation and technology use (Jacobowitz, 2007). Research shows that many ASL teachers have received limited training for working with diverse populations of learners across a variety of contexts (Jacobowitz, 2007), and educators often need to adapt curricula and materials to best meet the needs of their students and classroom (Beal, 2020). Educators working with ASL in world language classrooms may benefit from further professional development targeting these areas of need, as well opportunities to develop the overall knowledge base and skills required for effective ASL teaching.

## Annotated Bibliography

**Oviedo, A., Griebel, R., Kaul, T., Klinner, L., & Urbann, K. (2019). Course design for L2/Ln sign language pedagogy. In R. S. Rosen (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Sign Language Pedagogy*. New York, NY: Routledge.**

The authors explore the role of second language acquisition (SLA) theories and standards in teaching ASL, as well as adapting world language proficiency guidelines and learning outcomes to the sign language context and issues related to teaching strategies, curriculum, and course design. This chapter examines past and future trends in sign language instruction and provides recommendations for educators working with ASL in the second language classroom.

**Pichler, D. C., & Koulidobrova, H. (2015). Acquisition of sign language as a second language (L2). In M. Marschark, & P. E. Spencer (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of deaf studies in language* (pp. 218-230). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.**

The authors summarize existing research on the acquisition of sign language as a second language for both first modality (students proficient in a first sign language) and second modality (students proficient in a first spoken language) learners, followed by a discussion of studies comparing L2 learner abilities and difficulties.

**Reagan, T., Matlins, P. E., & Pielick, C. D. (2020). Teaching deaf culture in American Sign Language courses: Toward a critical pedagogy*. Foreign Language Annals, 53* (2), 270-291.**

This article discusses teaching and learning Deaf culture in ASL classrooms. It provides an overview of what should be included when teaching about the Deaf experience, and instructional approaches are specifically designed to encourage critical reflection on cultural identity and social justice issues involving the Deaf community.

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# Heritage Languages

In this section of the literature review, we examine best practices for working with heritage speakers/signers in world language courses and programs. First, we describe features of three pedagogical frameworks that may support the teaching of various world language standards, including the Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities standards. We then provide an overview of research-based instructional approaches for teaching heritage speakers/signers and addressing learner diversity, followed by a brief discussion of educator professional development and training. For the purposes of this literature review, we define a heritage speaker as “a student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or merely understands the heritage language and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language” (Valdés, 2000). This definition is perhaps the most widely used in the field and is referenced by many researchers (Kagan & Dillon, 2008; Magaña, 2015; Malone et al., 2014; Polinksy & Kagan, 2007; Wiley, 2014) in describing the criteria for being considered a heritage speaker.

The education of heritage speakers is a rich and growing area of research in applied linguistics and language education (Fishman, 2014; Leeman, 2015; Kagan & Dillon, 2008; Son, 2017; Valdés, 2016; Wiley, 2014) and researchers have increasingly focused on the characteristics and needs of this population of learners. Findings indicate that while most heritage speakers demonstrate native-like pronunciation, advanced oral language skills, and a high degree of cultural competence (Montrul, 2010), they need support in developing literacy skills (Carreira & Kagan, 2011), metalinguistic awareness (Beaudrie et al., 2014), and a more complex grammatical understanding of the language (Polinsky, 2015). In addition, there is a consensus that heritage speakers need support in exploring, constructing, and developing their identities (Beaudrie et al., 2020; Carreira & Chik, 2018a; Leeman et al., 2011), a process which is strongly connected with aspects of the heritage culture and heritage-speaking communities. While heritage speakers/signers can be placed in separate, heritage-specific classes, they are often found in general world language classes, making it necessary for all educators to understand their distinct needs and abilities.

## Teaching Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities

In the absence of nationally recognized heritage language standards, world language standards are often used to guide instruction and assessment for heritage speakers/signers. Although the appropriateness of these standards for this population has been debated (Son, 2017), world language standards can be a valuable tool for educators working in proficiency-based classrooms. One challenge identified in using these standards is that the content of the standards does not reflect specific needs and issues related to heritage speakers/signers (Martinez, 2016). Standards implementation can be difficult due to these limitations, especially when teaching some of the “less commonly taught standards”, such as Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities. In recent years, three major pedagogical frameworks have been adapted for use in heritage language contexts and widely referenced in heritage language research: the multiliteracies approach, the community-based service-learning approach, and the critical language awareness approach (Parra, 2014). Although primarily used in heritage-specific courses at the high school or university level, some principles, features, and practices related to these approaches have clear connections with the Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities standards and thus may be useful for all K-12 educators to consider when working with this population.

The multiliteracies approach, originally developed by the New London Group in 1996, focuses on the increasing diversity present in discourse due to new technologies and the resulting interconnectedness of people from around the globe (Kumagai et al., 2015). By recognizing and legitimizing the “the plurality of discourses, languages, and media,” this approach encourages educators to view literacy as a dynamic process of making and interpreting meaning using multilingual, multimodal communication (Warner & Dupuy, 2018). The approach is comprised of four major components--situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice--and activities that expose heritage speakers/signers to various forms of communication through these stages of instruction can be helpful for exploring and critically analyzing diverse linguistic and cultural forms of expression. By legitimizing diversity and promoting its presence within students’ lived experiences and communities, the multiliteracies approach addresses several important topics for heritage speakers/signers, most notably those related to cultural identity and sociopolitical issues surrounding minoritized language varieties and their role in society (Parra, 2014). Culture, comparisons, and connections can be addressed through various multimodal activities, including creating digital stories, communicating via video conferencing platforms, exploring social media groups and forums, and developing animated movies (Choi, 2015). Through these learning experiences, students have the opportunity to (1) explore the products, practices, and perspectives of their own culture and other cultures; (2) think about similarities and differences in meaning making across languages/cultures; and (3) develop critical thinking and analytical skills while interacting with materials from multiple disciplines.

Community-based service learning connects heritage speakers/signers with the heritage language community, which is a major component of effective instruction for this population of learners (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). It builds students’ critical linguistic awareness (Llombart-Huesca & Pulido, 2017), cultural knowledge (Carreira & Chik, 2018a), and personal motivations for further developing and maintaining the heritage language (Pascual y Cabo et al., 2017), allowing educators to draw connections between different focus areas outlined in world language standards. Using this approach, students often provide language-based support in various academic and professional settings outside of the classroom, resulting in improved language development, increased self-confidence, and greater ownership of their language and culture (Llombart-Huesca & Pulido, 2017; Pascual y Cabo et al., 2017; Pereira, 2015). Studies have demonstrated the efficacy of various roles in which heritage speakers/signers serve as “language experts” outside of the classroom, and some service-learning opportunities include teaching or mentoring young learners, leading adult literacy classes, and providing interpretation and translation services for various social service organizations (Pereira, 2015). To increase the impact of these experiences, researchers recommend that educators thoroughly plan projects that will be meaningful for all participants (Kagan & Dillon, 2009) so that students recognize and appreciate the crucial role they play in shaping the sociopolitical realities of their communities (Martinez, 2016). By helping others through using the heritage language, students can learn the value of their linguistic abilities while analyzing issues of power and equity that may affect their personal, academic, and professional futures (Leeman et al., 2011).

Critical language awareness has been applied in heritage language contexts to increase students’ awareness of the sociopolitical components involved in language use, including mainstream linguistic ideologies and the resulting value assigned to speakers of minoritized language varieties (Beaudrie et al., 2020). Teaching practices that are based upon and adapted from this framework encourage students to reflect on their own lived experiences as heritage speakers/signers in a predominately English-speaking society, resulting in a deeper understanding of how language affects their lives and the lives of heritage community members, as well as critical dialogue about issues related to identity, power, and discrimination. Educators may consider using activities that support the ideological principles behind this approach when teaching the Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities standards in the classroom, such as conducting community interviews, documenting family language use and oral histories, and discussing complex societal issues related to the heritage language and culture (Beaudrie et al., 2020; Correa, 2011; Parra, 2014). By critically engaging students through teaching practices that incorporate these larger issues, teachers can support students in (1) constructing and exploring their identities related to the heritage language; (2) examining the relationship between minority and dominant language use in the United States; (3) developing interdisciplinary knowledge by improving critical thinking skills; and (4) considering their role in promoting equity and diversity within their communities.

## Effective Instructional Approaches

In addition to these larger frameworks, there are a number of general best practices for supporting heritage speakers/signers in the language classroom. Educators are encouraged to use student-centered, individualized instructional practices that incorporate the perspectives, interests, and needs of students and their communities (Carreira & Chik, 2018a; Correa, 2011; Kagan & Dillon, 2009). Informal surveys or questionnaires administered at the beginning of the course are often helpful for learning about students’ backgrounds and objectives (Douglas, 2005), and alternative assessment methods that include authentic, performance-based tasks support educators to better understand students’ proficiency profiles (Carreira, 2012). The information gathered from this process can support educators in developing appropriate and relevant curricula to make learning “meaningful, engaging, and accessible to all learners” (Carreira, 2015, p.2). Some researchers also advocate for a macro-based approach to heritage language instruction, which (1) builds upon the unique background knowledge that heritage speakers/signers bring to the classroom; (2) leverages students’ existing functional abilities in the language; and (3) supports students in developing discourse-level language skills (Carreira & Chik, 2018a; Carreira & Kagan, 2018; Kagan & Dillon, 2009). By using content-based, genre-based, or experiential learning strategies and a range of multimodal instructional resources, educators can support heritage speakers/signers’ acquisition of more complex features of the language while providing engaging and relevant learning experiences.

Differentiation is another essential component of effective heritage language teaching (Carreira & Chik, 2018; Gatti & O'Neill, 2018; Lacorte, 2016), and educators are encouraged to use multilevel teaching strategies to support all learners (Caballero, 2014). Performance-based tasks provide opportunities for students to use and interact with authentic, real-world language, and activities that can often be individualized for various proficiency levels and student needs include portfolios, journals, interviews, surveys, and presentations (Beaudrie et al., 2014; Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Douglas, 2005). There is also a consensus that educators using world language standards with heritage speakers/signers will need to differentiate or modify content and expected student outcomes to make them appropriate for this context. To support this process, a number of heritage-specific goals (as cited in Martinez, 2016, p.42) have been proposed in recent years, including (1) maintenance of the heritage language; (2) acquisition of a standard language variety; (3) expansion of bilingual range (i.e., building on previous knowledge); (4) transfer of literacy skills; (5) acquisition of academic skills in the heritage language; (6) cultivation of positive attitudes toward the heritage language; and (7) acquisition or development of cultural awareness. These goals may be helpful for educators when working with this population in a proficiency-based environment, although teachers should develop their own set of learning goals tailored to the needs of their students and classroom (Albirini, 2014).

## Supporting Learner Diversity

Due to the high degree of learner diversity among heritage speakers/signers, educators must also develop inclusive pedagogical practices to respect, celebrate, and validate the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of all learners. Many heritage-speaking students use different language varieties, dialects, and/or registers that have been learned from familial or community interactions (Albirini, 2014; Lacorte, 2016), leading to feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, and disempowerment when there is an exclusive focus on the “correctness” of standard varieties in language classrooms (Beaudrie et al., 2020; Leeman et al., 2011; Pereira, 2015). In addition to gathering information about the linguistic and cultural backgrounds represented in the classroom, it may be helpful to get to know students’ beliefs, assumptions, and biases related to their own language varieties to better understand how this topic should be approached in instruction (Schwartz, 2001). It is important to emphasize the value of all forms of the language before teaching a standard language variety (Correa, 2011), and educators should explain that it is “simply another register to add to their linguistic repertoire and not a replacement for the varieties they learned at home” (Mikulski, 2006, p.670). To best support all students, researchers underscore the importance of critical, sociolinguistic approaches to instruction that explore several different varieties and provide students with opportunities to develop skills in multiple versions of the language (Albirini, 2014; Beaudrie et al., 2020; Burgo, 2017; Correa, 2011). Educators are encouraged to introduce films and literature representing different varieties, incorporate research projects involving different heritage-speaking communities, and engage students in discussions about the appropriateness of different linguistic forms for informal and formal language use (Albirini, 2014; Correa, 2011).

Learner differences may lead to further challenges when heritage speakers/signers are placed in mixed classrooms with second language learners, as these two groups of students have vastly different abilities and proficiency profiles (Montrul, 2010). Although studies have found that placing heritage speakers in traditional world language classes can be detrimental to all students involved (Correa, 2011), there are few schools that offer heritage-specific courses, leading to an increasing number of mixed classrooms. Heritage speakers are often described as being at a disadvantage in this setting, as instruction is not tailored to their specific needs (Carreira & Chik, 2018b), and mixed classrooms may cause heritage speakers to devalue their language skills when compared to the academic language abilities of their classmates (Leeman & Serafini, 2020). In addition, although heritage speakers bring substantial linguistic and cultural knowledge to the classroom, educators are advised to avoid assigning tutoring roles in the classroom to heritage speakers who may have more advanced speaking skills than their peers. This type of role in classroom interaction can ultimately prevent students’ own personal growth and development in the language (Burgo, 2017). Differentiation and scaffolding are key to supporting learners of varied abilities in mixed classrooms (Kagan & Dillon, 2009), and heritage speakers/signers may benefit from targeted mini-lessons, individual learning agendas, and opportunities to develop personal goals to track their progress throughout the course (Carreira & Chik, 2018b). Researchers also advocate for the use of mutually beneficial activities in this context, including paired work in which heritage speakers/signers gain self-confidence in their abilities and further develop their metalinguistic awareness, grammatical understanding, and literacy skills (Albirini, 2014).

A focus on literacy development is encouraged across all instructional settings, as many heritage speakers demonstrate limited or underdeveloped literacy skills (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). Educators can support literacy-based activities in the classroom by introducing students to various discourse types and genres across languages, which in turn leads to increased metalinguistic awareness and a better understanding of the stylistic and linguistic expectations of various text types (Chevalier, 2004). Other pre-writing activities that have been discussed in the literature include explicit instruction of effective composition planning, focused think alouds (e.g., paired or group brainstorming sessions), and opportunities to develop oral language abilities that can later be transferred to writing (Chevalier, 2004; Elola, 2018; Gatti & O'Neill, 2018; Xiao & Wong, 2014). Researchers have also emphasized the importance of leveraging heritage speakers’ literacy skills in English to support their acquisition of literacy skills in the heritage language, and when students are ready to start writing, educators should begin with low-stakes writing that allows students to write about familiar topics before attempting more complex and sophisticated genre-specific writing (Chevalier, 2004; Elola, 2018; Xiao & Wong, 2014). This can be done through scaffolding “using the functions learners can perform to develop the ones they cannot”, such as using a personal topic for writing a narrative, followed by a more difficult descriptive writing task involving the same topic (Gatti & O'Neill, 2018, p.731). New technologies and computer-based writing activities may further contribute to heritage language literacy development, especially for students who are learning a new writing system in addition to broader linguistic norms (Xiao & Wong, 2014).

## Resources and Supports

Educators need robust professional development opportunities to best support heritage speakers/signers in proficiency-based learning environments (Beaudrie et al., 2020), as there are limited resources designed for heritage language teaching and most teachers have not been trained to work with this population of learners (Caballero, 2014). Educators must first develop a conceptual understanding of what it means to be a heritage speaker/signer, as well as the issues surrounding language acquisition and development for this population (Caballero, 2014). In addition to learning about language use and best instructional practices, researchers underscore the importance of sociolinguistic teacher training, as educators cannot support or empower their heritage students if they do not recognize the social, cultural, and political issues associated with the heritage language in the United States and local contexts (Beaudrie, Amezcua, & Loza, 2020; Burgo, 2017; Correa, 2011; Ortega, 2020; Randolph, 2017).

Overall, educators of heritage language learners benefit from targeted support in developing the following skills: (1) deep knowledge about the heritage language communities represented in the classroom; (2) the ability to implement best instructional practices in both heritage-specific and mixed classrooms; (3) awareness of one’s own professional identity, positionality, and ideologies related to global issues surrounding language use and social justice; (4) familiarity with effective approaches to heritage speaker/signer identification, placement, and assessment; and (5) an understanding of how to address heritage speakers/signers’ proficiencies, interests, and individual needs (Caballero, 2014; Kagan & Dillon, 2009; Lacorte, 2016).

## Annotated Bibliography

**Carreira, M., & Kagan, O. (2011). The results of the national heritage language survey: Implications for teaching, curriculum design, and professional development. *Foreign Language Annals, 44* (1)*,* 40-64.**

This article explores a number of definitions and conceptualizations of the term “heritage language learner” and reports findings from a national survey of 1,732 university-level heritage language learners. Respondents were asked to describe their background, proficiency, experience, attitudes, and goals related to their heritage language, and results show that most heritage language learners are primarily exposed to their heritage language at home and interested in learning their heritage language to interact with their communities. Participants’ responses also indicate that most heritage language learners have strong speaking and listening skills, limited literacy skills, and experience learning the heritage language early in life. also describe informal collaboration with content-area teachers, with the majority expressing a lack of time, support, or value for collaboration as a school-wide, systemic issue. Based on these findings, the researchers provide recommendations for instructional practices that will best support heritage language learners and help them meet their language learning objectives.

**Leeman, J., Rabin, L., & Roman-Mendoza, E. (2011). Identity and activism in heritage language education. *The Modern Language Journal, 95 (4),* 481-495.**

This article discusses the role of identity, advocacy, and social justice in the field of heritage language education. The authors argue in favor of critical pedagogical approaches to heritage language teaching and describe a university-level heritage language program that incorporated service-learning opportunities to support heritage language learners in constructing their identities as agents of change in the community. Findings these activities were positively received by participants, who reported feeling like “language experts” when working outside of the classroom with young students learning the heritage language, leading to increased confidence and deeper connections with the language and culture.

**Martinez, G. (2016). Goals and beyond in heritage language education. In M. Fairclough, & S.M. Beaudrie, *Innovative strategies for heritage language teaching: A practical guide for the classroom* (pp. 39-55). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.**

This chapter presents a set of heritage-specific learning objectives that have been developed by various researchers in recent years, followed by a discussion of the appropriateness of the learning outcomes defined in the ACTFL standards when considering the needs and profiles of heritage language learners. The author argues that community must play a greater role in heritage language education and discusses a number of different pedagogical approaches and initiatives that support heritage language learners, their teachers, and their communities.

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# Elementary Programs

This section of the literature review examines best practices for world language courses and programs in elementary schools. First, we provide an overview of research-based instructional approaches for young learners in world language classrooms, including strategies and activities for teaching reading and writing skills to pre-literate students. We then explore guidance on expected outcomes for various models of instruction, languages, and skills. Finally, we highlight characteristics of successful proficiency-oriented elementary programs, followed by a brief discussion of resources and supports for elementary world language teachers. For the purposes of this literature review, we focus our findings on the two most common program models for teaching world languages in the elementary context: (1) dual language immersion programs, in which students learn content in both the world language and English with the goal of developing bilingualism and biliteracy; and (2) foreign language in the elementary school (FLES), in which students ideally receive a minimum of 90 minutes of world language instruction per week with a primary focus on developing oral language skills and cultural awareness and understanding.

## Effective Instructional Approaches

To best support students learning world languages in elementary contexts, researchers recommend that educators implement standards- and proficiency-based approaches to instruction that reflect young learners’ grade, developmental, and proficiency levels (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Although world language standards may be difficult to directly apply in the elementary classroom, the underlying principles of relevant, authentic, communicative language teaching are important components of effective elementary world language instruction (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Educators are encouraged to use world language standards, as well as knowledge about student and classroom needs, to first develop meaningful goals and proficiency targets that will guide the development of curricula, activities, and assessments (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015).

For young learners, researchers highlight the effectiveness of organizing world language courses around thematic units, which provides opportunities for sharing themes with other core classes (Gilzow & Branaman, 2000) and helps world languages become fully integrated into the school’s curriculum (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Themes also allow educators to focus on a big idea that connects various language and content objectives and addresses different world language standards (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Educators should select engaging, meaningful, grade- and proficiency-level appropriate themes to guide their curriculum for the entire year, and the topics represented within these thematic areas should reflect student interests and overall program goals (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Organizing students’ learning experiences by theme may also support students’ overall language proficiency development (Rhodes, 2014), as it contributes to a clearly articulated series of units, lessons, and activities that can be adapted for teaching about Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities.

In elementary as with all language programs, language should be taught with a purpose, and tasks that require real-world, authentic language use across a variety of communicative modes can keep students engaged, excited, and invested in world language learning (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Students should be exposed to a variety of authentic text and discourse types, and there are a number of activities that encourage young students to use language in meaningful, purposeful ways, including performances, skits, puppetry, podcasts, games, songs, chants, rhymes, and role-plays (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). In addition, teachers may also consider creating partnerships with schools in other countries to help students digitally communicate with children who speak the target language (Rhodes, 2014) or participate in online, collaborative projects from around the world (Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2009). There are many benefits to this type of cooperative, interactive learning, and classroom tasks should provide ample opportunities for pair or small group work that allow students to deeply engage in the language (Gilzow & Branaman, 2000). Some examples of activities that are well-suited for cooperative instruction and learning include conducting interviews, problem-solving, and gathering information (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Researchers also recommend the use of props, manipulatives, and total physical response (TPR) activities that physically engage young learners in hands-on learning, as this will create an enjoyable experience and further support students at various proficiency levels in accessing classroom content (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015).

Differentiation and scaffolding are essential for supporting all types of learners in the elementary context, and educators should provide structured activities for students at lower proficiency levels before gradually introducing them to more complex, performance-based activities (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Researchers also highlight the need to understand the social emotional components of early language learning, which can affect both language development and overall attitudes toward the language and culture being taught in the classroom (Nikolov & Djiguvonic, 2011). As positive associations with language learning at an early age may contribute to students’ overall levels of achievement and continued dedication to language learning in the future (Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007), this is an important consideration in the elementary world language classroom. Educators are encouraged to incorporate student needs and interests into their planning, and it is important for students to be involved in this process through expressing their own ideas about what they like and dislike in their learning experience (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). All learners benefit from comprehensible input throughout instruction, which can be provided by leveraging students’ background knowledge, conducting continuous and ongoing checks for understanding, and providing multiple opportunities for information to be repeated in the target language (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Directions should be clear, simple, and delivered slowly with visual supports, gestures, and modeling as needed, and it is important to use multimodal instructional techniques that address learner diversity in the classroom (Gilzow & Branaman, 2000).

To further support effective instruction in the elementary world language classroom, assessment should take place on a continual and ongoing basis, and students at lower proficiency levels should receive targeted feedback that recognizes the progress they have made toward their learning goals and objectives, even if this is limited (Nikolov & Djiguvonic, 2011). Assessment is an essential component of early language learning (Donato & Tucker, 2010; Rhodes, 2014; Rubio, 2018) and it can be a valuable tool for educators when creating future lessons, determining the need for additional supports, and demonstrating student progress for administrators, parents, and various stakeholders.

## Teaching Reading and Writing to Pre-Literate Students

As many early world language learners are simultaneously developing literacy skills in their first language, it is important for educators to strategically plan for and teach phonetics, decoding, and encoding skills that are specific to the target language rather than a translated version of what would be taught in English (Howard et al., 2018) There is consensus that students must develop oral language skills, knowledge of print concepts, and metalinguistic awareness before acquiring literacy skills in a language (Bialystok, 2007) and instructional practices that incorporate storytelling, labelling around the classroom, and guided reading of a written morning message may be helpful in exposing pre-literate students to reading and writing (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Authentic texts that speak to students’ interests and experiences should be used (Zeppieri & Russel, 2013), and dual language learners may benefit from read alouds that incorporate books written in both English and the target language, as this provides opportunities for identifying and understanding differences between the two languages and cultures (Naqvi et al., 2013) Educators may also find it helpful to talk about a shared experience as a class and then create a story based on this oral retelling of the experience, as students of various developmental and proficiency levels will have the background knowledge needed to engage in this type of group activity (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). In addition, pre-literate students benefit from activities involving gestures, TPR, and drawing to learn about and subsequently demonstrate their understanding of a story (Zeppieri & Russel, 2013).

As students learn the alphabet, characters, or symbols used in the target language, they can begin to engage in matching, sorting, and copying activities to support their word recognition skills (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015), and these tasks can easily be differentiated or scaffolded according to students’ individual needs and abilities. While some researchers argue that early world language education should focus on oral language development (Gilzow & Branaman, 2000), other findings indicate that students may benefit from a “gradual and systematic introduction to reading and writing from an early point” (Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2009, p.47). During this time, educators are encouraged to engage in pre-reading and post-reading activities that support students’ interpretation and comprehension of texts, as well as checking for understanding and providing opportunities for student interaction while actively reading (Zeppieri & Russel, 2013).

## Expected Language Outcomes

There is a consensus that expected language outcomes vary greatly in elementary programs (Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2009), and it is important for educators to consider their specific classroom context (e.g., program model, differences between native and target languages, amount of time allocated to world language instruction, etc.) when developing learning objectives and proficiency targets that are realistic and attainable for their students (Nikolov & Djiguvonic, 2011). Research has shown that although young world language learners may require substantial time to move through the Novice proficiency level (Donato & Tucker, 2010), students enrolled in K-5 dual language programs or extended sequence, K-8 FLES programs can reasonably reach Intermediate levels of proficiency before progressing on to middle or high school (Rubio, 2018). According to the [*2015 ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners*](https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/publications/ACTFLPerformance_Descriptors.pdf), students who receive at least 90 minutes of world language instruction per week from kindergarten to 12th grade can be expected to perform into the Advanced range of proficiency, but there is no specific ACTFL guidance regarding end of year expectations by grade level, language, or communicative mode for elementary world language learners.

In the absence of nationally recognized target expectations, some states have developed guidance to support educators in understanding what students’ proficiency levels should be at different points of their elementary learning experience.. Overall, there is a consensus among the state documents examined that students enrolled in K-5 FLES programs can reach between the Novice Mid and Intermediate Low proficiency levels upon exiting their elementary programs, and students enrolled in K-5 dual language programs can reach between the Novice High and Intermediate Mid proficiency levels. Proficiency ranges can be attributed to the relative difficulty of the language being learned, and some states specify differences in expected language outcomes for learning languages that use the Latin alphabet and languages with diverse written representations. In addition, some states describe proficiency levels by communicative mode, and differences in expected outcomes may reflect the amount of instructional time dedicated to each of these domains in various programs. Although these benchmarks may be helpful for educators to consider when developing learning objectives and proficiency targets, limited empirical evidence has been reported to support the claims made in state-level documents, and more research is needed to determine their accuracy for varied educational settings, grade levels, and languages. To best support students in elementary world language programs, educators are encouraged to base proficiency expectations on their classroom context and individual students’ needs and abilities (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015).

## Characteristics of Successful Programs

Extensive research has been conducted in recent years on the characteristics of successful proficiency-oriented elementary world language programs, and there are several recommendations highlighted in the literature for developing and sustaining high-quality programs. Based on information gathered from 16 leaders in elementary world language education, Rhodes (2014) highlights the following characteristics proven to increase program effectiveness and longevity: (1) high-quality instructional methods and learning objectives that reflect best practices in world language education; (2) extended, connected K-16 learning sequences; (3) advocacy for educator, administrator, and parent support; (4) continuous assessment and program evaluation; and (5) sustainable practices that allow programs to move forward with or without continual, additional funding.

One of the most important steps in initial program planning is the articulation of language learning sequences that go beyond the elementary level (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015), as this is a major indicator of prolonged programmatic success and proven to positively impact students’ overall language development and proficiency. Programs should be developed in collaboration with parents, teachers, and administrators from various schools and universities to maximize their long-term potential (Rubio, 2018), and educators involved in this process must create a strong, shared vision for the program and the role of world languages in the greater school curriculum and culture (Donato & Tucker, 2010). In addition, researchers recommend that educators be given sufficient time for developing curricula and clearly articulated program goals, as well as collaborative partnerships with content area teachers from various disciplines (Donato & Tucker, 2010; Gilzow & Branaman, 2000; Gilzow & Rhodes, 2000).

Although FLES programs that dedicate at least 90 minutes to world language instruction per week can certainly be successful (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015), dual language programs are often recognized as the best approach for garnering public support for language learning and developing highly proficient students over the course of their academic years (Rubio, 2018). In addition to the above mentioned qualities and characteristics, these programs should ensure a strong focus on bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence to effectively support students in meeting their goals, and educators must equally and consistently support both languages in curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Howard et al., 2018). High-quality teachers and administrators are an essential component of effective world language learning at the elementary level regardless of program model, and researchers have underscored the importance of regular professional development opportunities for all staff members to further support the development and maintenance of these programs (Gilzow D. F., 2000). For continued success, systematic procedures for assessment, reporting, and program evaluation are recommended (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015), as this will allow for program recognition, growth, and improvement over time.

## Resources and Supports

Materials designed for elementary world language learners are limited, and this gap requires many educators to develop their own instructional tools, curricula, and assessments. There are very few grade- and proficiency-level appropriate textbooks available for elementary classrooms (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015), and those that do exist may be focused on a small number of languages. In terms of professional development, teachers should receive adequate training to develop (1) strong oral language skills; (2) interdisciplinary knowledge about various subject areas included in the school’s curriculum; (3) skills in curriculum and materials development in the absence of available tools; (4) an understanding of differentiation strategies to address learner diversity and attend to students’ individual interests and needs; and (5) knowledge of authentic, age-appropriate literature that covers a variety of cultural topics related to the language (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015). Professional learning communities may also be helpful for world language teachers in this context, and researchers recommend that educators receive opportunities for virtual online connections and collaborations, as well as in-person observation and learning experiences (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2015).

## Annotated Bibliography

**Curtain, H., & Dahlberg, C. A. (2015*). Language and learners: Making the match: World language instruction in K-8 classrooms and beyond (5th ed.).* Pearson.**

This book explores best practices for world language teaching and learning in elementary and middle school classrooms, and it is designed to provide practical strategies and information for classroom use. Topics include (1) instructional planning; (2) developing proficiency; (3) assessment and feedback; (4) classroom climate and learning environments; (5) materials, tools, and resources; (6) collaboration and professional development; and (7) program planning and implementation.

**Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, B., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (3rd ed.).* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.**

This book provides an overview of research, practices, and policies related to dual language education, and it covers seven major strands of information, including (1) program structure; (2) curriculum; (3) instruction; (4) assessment and accountability; (5) staff quality and professional development; (6) family and community; and (7) support and resources. A set of guiding principles is provided for each strand, which can be used for planning, evaluation, and improvement in dual language programs nationwide.

**Rhodes, N. C. (2014). Elementary school foreign language teaching: Lessons learned over three decades (1980-2010). *Foreign Language Annals, 47* (1), 115-133.**

This article reports ten overarching lessons learned from interviews with 16 early language education leaders focused on successes and challenges in elementary school world language learning. Findings show effective programs are financially sustainable, continuously evaluated, and supported by teachers, program and school administrators, and the community. There is evidence that programs with articulated K-16 learning sequences are more successful over time, and instruction and assessment should reflect best practices in world language education to improve students’ learning experiences and support the longevity and effectiveness of early language learning programs. The author concludes by describing current challenges in the field.

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# Students with Disabilities

This section of the literature review focuses on best practices for teaching world languages to students with disabilities (SWDs). First, we provide an overview of disabilities that can affect world language learning. We then discuss accommodations that are routinely and successfully implemented in world language classrooms, as well as the resources and supports educators may need when working with SWDs in this context. While many of the recommendations included in this section may be useful for students with various disabilities, disorders, and impairments, much of the information presented is based on research related to a few specific disabilities. This reflects the availability of literature related to this topic and further demonstrates the need for additional resources and supports for world language teachers working with SWDs. For the purposes of this literature review, we will primarily examine the following types of disabilities as defined by the [Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Special Education Disability Definitions](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/definitions.html):

1. Neurological Impairment (i.e., a disability in which the capacity of the nervous system is limited or impaired with difficulties exhibited in one or more of the following areas: the use of memory, the control and use of cognitive functioning, sensory and motor skills, speech, language, organizational skills, information processing, affect, social skills, or basic life functions)
2. Communication Impairment (i.e., a disability in which the capacity to use expressive and/or receptive language is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: speech, such as articulation and/or voice; conveying, understanding, or using spoken, written, or symbolic language)
3. Specific Learning Disability (i.e., a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations)

## Disabilities and World Language Learning

Researchers have identified and described the impact of some disabilities on students’ language acquisition, development, and overall proficiency outcomes in the world language context (Abrams, 2008). Despite arguments that there is not enough empirical evidence to support the notion of a “foreign language learning disability” (Sparks, 2009), some SWDs may experience difficulties when learning a new language. Different types of disabilities can impact language learning in different ways (Abrams, 2008), and students may have multiple disabilities with various levels of severity that contribute to language learning difficulties and overall academic skill deficits (Leons et al., 2019). In general, disabilities involving language-based problems, weak phonological processing, and working memory may negatively impact students’ language learning experience (Leons et al., 2019), and the inability to keep up with peers when completing basic tasks and engaging in simple classroom activities may lead to increasing levels of frustration and anxiety, which further impacts the progress and success of SWDs in the world language classroom (Hill, 2006). Research also shows that poor memorization skills can lead to greater difficulties in this context, and students who exhibit native language learning problems may also be more likely to struggle when learning a new language (DiFino & Lombardino, 2004).

Students with neurological impairments involving the use of memory often struggle in world language classrooms, as working memory skills play a significant role in language instruction (Leons et al., 2019) and problems related to memory can compromise the process of integrating new inputs with recently retrieved knowledge (Gathercole et al., 2006). It may be particularly difficult for students with weak memories to develop oral language proficiency, as speaking requires the use of appropriate vocabulary, word order, and verb tenses for effective communication (Leons et al., 2019). In addition, learning activities that involve writing sentences from memory or remembering multi-step instructions may be challenging for students with poor memory function, and students experiencing difficulties involving working memory may not benefit from these types of tasks when learning a new language (Gathercole et al., 2006). In addition, research shows that working memory skills impact the severity of learning difficulties associated with various reading disabilities (Kormos, 2017), which may impact students’ acquisition of literacy skills in a world language.

Language learning may also be impacted by communication impairments, as receptive and expressive language use are essential components of the world language classroom. Deficits in language processing skills can clearly affect students’ language acquisition and development, and communication impairments may lead to problems with decoding, pronunciation, and differentiating between words with similar sounds (Leons et al., 2019). Students with weak phonological processing skills or reduced phonological short-term memory capacity may have trouble remembering the sounds of new words as well as recognizing and generalizing grammatical patterns (Kormos, 2017), resulting in difficulties comprehending or correctly producing sentences in a new language. Disorders related to speech sound production may also cause early literacy problems (Hayiou-Thomas et al., 2017), and students who stutter may overly focus on pronunciation rather than the content of a message (Arongna et al., 2020). In addition, students with various auditory processing disorders often find it hard to maintain attention, follow verbal directions, and understand speech in environments with background noise (Heine & Sloane, 2019). Educators are encouraged to provide targeted, explicit instruction on identifying, distinguishing, and understanding various sounds to further support students with auditory processing disorders in the world language context (Heine & Sloane, 2019).

A growing body of research has examined specific learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia, general learning disabilities (LD), and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)) and their relationship to language learning. Described as a specific deficit in reading acquisition that causes language processing difficulties involving letters, sounds, grammar, and meaning (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2009; Saksida et al., 2016), dyslexia’s impact on language learning is widely recognized in both research and practice. Students with dyslexia often struggle with decoding, encoding, handwriting, notetaking, and developing fluency in reading and writing (Schneider, 2009), all of which may affect language acquisition, development, and proficiency. Difficulties that dyslexic students experience when completing literacy tasks in their native language may transfer and cause further difficulties when learning a new language, and research shows that students struggling with letter-sound correspondence may have “early experiences of failure” in the world language classroom (Schneider, 2009, p.299). Some languages may be more accessible than others for students with this disability, and educators should consider students’ individual needs and the characteristics of a language to determine its appropriateness for dyslexic students enrolling in world language courses and programs (Schneider, 2009). While many educators believe that students who are classified as LD will always experience language learning difficulties, there is a lack of empirical evidence supporting these claims, and research shows that “low-achieving, non-LD students” and LD students often demonstrate similar difficulties when learning world languages (Sparks, 2016). Limited research has been conducted on ADD/ADHD and its impact on language learning, and while students with ADD/ADHD may experience difficulty organizing their work, focusing on tasks, and working independently in the world language classroom, findings indicate that ADD/ADHD itself may not necessarily affect students’ ability to learn a new language (Leons et al., 2009).

Various other disabilities may impact language learning, and more research is needed to determine how these disabilities affect students in the world language context. Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) can significantly impact one’s ability to communicate and interact with others, which may lead to difficulties in processing verbal information, participating in group activities, and responding to changes in routines, instructional methods, and learning activities when learning a language (Wire, 2005). Students with hearing impairments may struggle when asked to form sounds in a new language, and students with visual impairments may need auditory supports and modifications to effectively participate in reading and writing activities (Evarrs & Knotek, 2006). Although research on physical impairments and second language learning is extremely limited (Abrams, 2008), students with this type of disability may need access to specialized equipment (e.g., desks, chairs, keyboards, etc.) to be successful in the world language classroom (Evarrs & Knotek, 2006).

## Accommodations in World Language Classrooms

While educators may face numerous challenges when working with SWDs in the world language context, there are many instructional accommodations that can be made to ensure that world language education is accessible to all types of learners. Students with dyslexia may benefit from sequenced, hands-on instruction to understand grammatical concepts when learning a language, and educators are encouraged to use color-coding, mnemonic devices, repeated pronunciation practice, multi-sensory vocabulary practice, and shape-based learning of various sounds and words to support dyslexic students in the world language classroom (Schneider, 2009). Educators working with students with ADD/ADHD may need to help students internalize information and concentrate during instruction, as they often demonstrate difficulties focusing, tuning out irrelevant information, and recalling central ideas (Miller et al., 2012). Autistic students, on the other hand, may benefit from alternative seating arrangements, visual supports to improve focus and comprehension, and purposeful pairing for collaborative activities (Wire, 2005). Some students with ASD may speak often, interrupt conversations, and/or provide irrelevant, off-topic responses, requiring some degree of redirection from the teacher, and those that speak very little should be provided with opportunities to engage in non-verbal communication during classroom activities (Wire, 2005).

In addition to disability-specific recommendations, there are a number of general best practices for supporting SWDs in the language classroom. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment should be adapted to ensure an inclusive educational experience for all students, and educators should incorporate a variety of learning activities that reflect individual students’ needs and the needs of their classroom (Wight, 2015). Some researchers note that students fail to learn when they are given more material than they can process (Leons et al., 2009), and reducing the scope of the world language curriculum may help some SWDs (Kleinert et al., 2007). Researchers also underscore the importance of universal design (UD) principles when working with SWDs in this context, including (1) equitable use; (2) flexibility in use; (3) simple and intuitive; (4) perceptible information; (5) tolerance for error; (6) low physical effort; (7) size and space for approach and use; (8) community of learners; and (9) instructional climate (Scott & Edwards, 2018). These principles can help educators recognize learner diversity, and develop more inclusive instructional and assessment practices, thus supporting a variety of learners who may experience difficulties in the world language classroom (Scott & Edwards, 2018).

A supportive, encouraging, and welcoming learning environment is essential for SWDs, and students should be provided with ample opportunities to feel successful in their language learning (Leons et al., 2019). Researchers also underscore the importance of clear classroom procedures and routines for SWDs, and resources such as daily agendas, checklists, and explicit scoring rubrics for assignments may be helpful for both students and teachers when planning course objectives and expectations (Kleinert et al., 2007; Leons et al., 2009; Orr & Bachmann Hammig, 2009). Activities should expose students to authentic materials, and songs, games, role-plays, group work, and projects both inside and outside of the classroom can support the language learning process for SWDs (DiFino & Lombardino, 2004). Students may benefit from additional supports when engaging in tasks, including visual organizers, assistive technology, and the use of mnemonic devices, color coding, and targeted decoding strategies (Kleinert et al., 2007; Leons et al., 2009; Orr & Bachmann Hammig, 2009). In addition, educators should provide extended time for preparation or participation in activities that may cause anxiety, such as read alouds or communicative-based tasks (Kleinert et al., 2007; Evarrs & Knotek 2006). Frequent review opportunities and repetition can also help reinforce student learning in this context (Kleinert et al., 2007; Skinner & Smith, 2011).

Multimodal teaching methods are recommended for SWDs in the world language classroom, and educators are encouraged to present information using multiple modalities (e.g., visual, auditory, tactile, etc.) to support students with different disabilities and impairments (Kleinert et al., 2007; Leons et al., 2009; Orr & Bachmann Hammig, 2009; Skinner & Smith, 2011). Educators should leverage students’ background knowledge to support meaningful connections to content in the world language classroom, and teaching materials and activities should be designed for students with varying strengths and weaknesses related to language learning (Krastel, 2008). Some research indicates that SWDs benefit from explicit, highly structured instruction related to skills needed for communication (Sparks, 2016) and various linguistic features, including phonology, syntax, and grammatical structures (Kleinert et al., 2007; Skinner & Smith, 2011). Educators delivering this type of instruction in the target language should use short, simple sentences, provide visuals and graphic organizers to support student understanding, and review or repeat content as needed (Kleinert et al., 2007).

Modifications made to instruction should also be extended to formative and summative assessments, as SWDs may need distraction-free environments, additional time, and scaffolded grading to accurately document progress in the language (Evarrs & Knotek, 2006). Researchers recommend the use of authentic assessments that allow students to demonstrate real-world language use (Abrams, 2008), and students may benefit from alternative forms of assessment (e.g., portfolios) that allow them to demonstrate their knowledge of the target language in multiple ways (Kleinert et al., 2007; Leons et al., 2009; Orr & Bachmann Hammig, 2009).

## Resources and Supports

World language educators need support to understand the difficulties that SWDs face in order to limit the potential mismatch between students’ abilities and classroom practices (Leons et al., 2009). Research shows that teachers who have participated in extended professional development opportunities feel more confident in their ability to adapt instruction for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and training related to specific instructional strategies, inclusive teaching methods, and curriculum or materials development is recommended for educators across disciplines (Kosko & Wilkins, 2009). In addition, providing educators with opportunities, time, and resources that support co-teaching and collaboration with special education providers may improve the implementation of various interventions and positively contribute to student outcomes in world language classrooms serving SWDs (Friend, 2008; Santoli et al., 2008). As world language teachers are often unfamiliar with best practices for teaching SWDs, and special education teachers or service providers may not have experience working with world languages, both types of educators should receive comprehensive training to effectively support SWDs in this context (Lazda-Cazers & Thorson, 2008)

## Annotated Bibliography

**Kleinert, H. L., Cloyd, E., Rego, M., & Gibson, J. (2007). Students with disabilities: Yes, foreign language instruction is important!. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 39* (3), 24-29.**

This paper describes the benefits of world language education for students with disabilities, followed by a discussion of the barriers that may prevent effective language instruction for this population of learners. It also provides an extensive list of strategies that instructors may use to make language learning effective and inclusive for students with disabilities.

**Kormos, J. (2017). The effects of specific learning difficulties on processes of multilingual language development*. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *37*, 30-44.**

This article discusses the impacts of specific learning difficulties (SLDs) on language development in both classroom and multilingual settings. The author reviews the underlying cognitive processes that contribute to language learning and explores the effects that these cognitive factors can have on second-language outcomes. This discussion includes the consideration of both comprehension and production, as well as the role that affective factors may play in language acquisition for students with disabilities. The author also reviews research on the identification of specific learning difficulties, including the challenge of distinguishing SLDs from low proficiency.

**Leons, E., Herbert, C., & Gobbo, K. (2009). Students With learning disabilities and AD/HD in the foreign language classroom: Supporting students and instructors. *Foreign Language Annals, 42* (1), 42-54.**

This article summarizes the difficulties that students with learning disabilities may face when learning a world language, as well as the challenges instructors face in effectively teaching these students. It reports findings from a study that elicited learner reflections on the classroom practices and strategies that they found most useful. The researchers also gathered instructional data, including teacher interviews, classroom materials, and class observation notes. The two sets of data were cross-referenced to generate a set of recommended best practices for effective teaching for students with disabilities and/or ADHD.

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# Social and Emotional Learning

In this section of the literature review, we discuss the role of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in world language education. First, we provide an overview of best practices and effective instructional approaches for teaching SEL skills, including practical ways that teachers can integrate SEL practices into world language instruction. We then highlight the ways in which various SEL skills impact language learning, followed by a brief discussion of resources and supports for world language teachers addressing SEL in their classrooms.

Over the past few decades, the concept of SEL in K-12 education has garnered increased interest in both research and practice (Hoffman, 2009), and numerous research and resource centers have been created nationwide to promote the development of SEL skills and competencies. Although there are several different conceptualizations of SEL in school-based programs, most approaches focus on a shared set of skills commonly associated with this type of learning (Hoffman, 2009). Widely referenced in the literature as a leading organization in the field, the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](https://casel.org/) (CASEL) defines SEL as “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”

Based on this definition, CASEL developed a framework identifying five core SEL competencies: (1) self-awareness, which involves emotions, perceptions, and confidence.; (2) self-management, which involves motivation, discipline, and control; (3) social awareness, which involves empathy, respect, and understanding diverse perspectives; (4) relationship skills, which involves communication, engagement, and teamwork; and (5) responsible decision-making, which involves reflection, problem-solving, and evaluating consequences. While each of these skills is impacted by classroom, school, and community experiences, we will primarily discuss SEL practices at the classroom level that may be used independently or in combination with school-wide SEL standards, programming, and policies.

## Best Practices and Instructional Approaches

In addition to teachers’ personal degree of social and emotional competence, there is a consensus that classroom learning environments and instructional approaches play a significant role in students’ development of SEL skills (O'Conner et al., 2017). Safe, welcoming, and supportive environments are essential for effective SEL instruction and development (Schonert-Reichl, 2017), and educators can develop this type of climate by using student-centered teaching methods, encouraging cooperative learning, and modeling appropriate behavior and language that makes students feel comfortable and secure in the classroom (Yoder, 2014). Well-managed classrooms that promote participation and engagement are particularly important for SEL (Schonert-Reichl, 2017), and students should be highly involved in developing their own learning experiences to increase their sense of autonomy and self-efficacy (Hoffman, 2009). While it is important that students meet rigorous academic goals, educators should also be conscientious of individual needs, abilities, and emotional responses to pressure (Yoder, 2014). Considering how different students will react to challenges and strict expectations is an important step in establishing a warm, positive, and accepting classroom culture.

To best support students’ development of SEL skills, researchers recommend that students be involved in setting goals and objectives for their learning experience, monitoring their progress throughout the course of instruction, and recognizing their strengths and abilities through self-reflection and assessment (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020). Educators should incorporate supported, collaborative, and individual activities that speak to various competencies, and these activities should explore issues that reflect students’ experiences and their personal and academic lives (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020). Active, group-based learning activities are particularly helpful for SEL, as games, projects, and discussions provide engaging opportunities for interacting with classroom content and strengthening relationship skills (Yoder, 2014). Educators should work with students to develop a set of shared norms and rules for participation, and it may be helpful to explain or model expectations to ensure that all students engage appropriately with these types of tasks and activities (Hromek & Roffey, 2009).

While some activities implicitly help students develop appropriate social and emotional behaviors related to turn taking, conflict management, and respect (Hromek & Roffey, 2009), others may involve direct instruction in SEL skills. To explicitly teach SEL skills, researchers recommend the use of therapeutic board games that address different SEL-related topics (Hromek & Roffey, 2009), as well as breathing, counting, and mindfulness exercises to draw students’ attention to the importance of self-awareness and self-control in the classroom (Hoffman, 2009). Morning meetings, sharing circles, and class webs may be helpful for directly discussing social and emotional issues (Hromek & Roffey, 2009), and these activities also promote the development of communication skills that may support students in acquiring various SEL competencies. At the middle and high school levels, research suggests that students may benefit from project-based learning, journal writing, and self-reflection involving topics related to diversity, identity, and social justice (Cervone & Cushman, 2014), as these types of activities allow students to critically engage with a variety of social and emotional issues. Service learning is also recommended for students in secondary schools, and opportunities in which students can serve as leaders in the school community may further promote the development of SEL skills (Cervone & Cushman, 2014).

## Teaching SEL in World Language Classrooms

Although many of the above mentioned instructional approaches can be applied across disciplines, there are several specific ways in which world language classrooms are particularly well suited for the teaching and development of SEL. Students enrolled in language courses and programs are simultaneously taught linguistic, cultural, and social/emotional competence through exposure to various languages, cultures, and peoples (MacIntyre et al., 2019), providing an opportunity to understand and appreciate diverse perspectives. Educators can use films in the target language to support self-awareness by introducing students to various ways of recognizing and expressing emotions (Dewaele, 2005), and authentic materials in the target language that address SEL-related topics can support students’ literacy development while encouraging them to reflect on their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors across various situations (Heath et al., 2017).

Classroom discussions involving identity, social justice, and communities allow students to develop and reflect on their own self-awareness, social awareness, and responsible decision-making, and these topics are naturally integrated into the world language curriculum (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Students can also be encouraged to participate in communicative, performance-based tasks that support self-regulation, conflict management, and teamwork, all of which build SEL competencies that may transfer to various aspects of students’ personal and academic lives (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Teaching students about emotions in the target language is beneficial for SEL and students’ language development, as this approach to instruction may encourage students to increasingly use the language for thinking, processing, and feeling both in and out of the classroom (Swain, 2013). While research on the role of emotions in language learning and reviews of effective world language instruction show implicit alignment with SEL, there is limited information on how to explicitly teach SEL skills using world language standards, and more research is needed to determine best practices for this type of explicit instruction.

## Impact on Language Learning

Psychological, social, and emotional factors play a significant role in language learning (Morilla-García, 2017), and while most second language researchers have focused on foreign language anxiety (FLA) and its impact in the classroom (Ewald, 2007; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Gregersen et al., 2014; Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012; Marcos‐Llinás & Garau, 2009), there is an increasing interest in foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and the effect of other positive emotions in this context (Dewaele et al., 2018). Research shows that students who experience debilitative FLA often feel nervous about performing poorly on assessments, being evaluated by teachers and peers, and communicating, interacting, or presenting in the classroom (Liu & Jackson, 2008), and these feelings may ultimately lead to lower levels of achievement (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012) or a desire to stop learning the language (Elkhafaifi, 2005).

Students’ attitudes, proficiency levels, and perceived abilities in comparison to others in the classroom can may also contribute to FLA (Dewaele et al., 2018), and teaching SEL skills related to self-awareness and self-management may support students experiencing anxiety in the world language classroom. Educators should consider creating opportunities for students to reflect upon their feelings and work together to solve their language learning problems (Elkhafaifi, 2005), as this process can help students work through their anxiety and frustration associated with the language while simultaneously building social awareness, relationship, and responsible decision-making skills. Researchers also recommend the use of self-assessments in language courses, as these evaluations may help identify which types of activities or communicative modes are related to poor self-perceptions, and educators can use this information to further support students in developing their self-confidence in the classroom (Liu & Jackson, 2008). Students that are experiencing FLA related to speaking the language may benefit from extended preparation time before engaging in communicative tasks, as well as scripted dialogues, planned role-plays, and small group activities (Gregersen et al., 2014).

Mistakes are part of the language learning process, and educators should encourage students to persevere through challenging tasks or lessons with a sense of confidence, motivation, and self-control (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020). Researchers also recommend a process in which negative feelings and beliefs associated with the language are identified, disproved, and repackaged in a way that supports a positive mentality about the issue moving forward (Oxford, 2015). Given the potentially detrimental effects of students’ emotional responses to language learning, particularly those related to foreign language achievement, student-centered learning is particularly important in this context. Students who feel recognized and valued in the classroom will ultimately have a more positive learning experience, leading to greater linguistic awareness, increased participation, and a higher degree of comfort when using the language (Dewaele et al., 2018).

Supportive and encouraging instructional practices that develop students’ positive emotions are recommended to further put students at ease during the language learning process (Dewaele et al., 2018). Tasks, materials, and activities that are aligned with student proficiency levels help ensure that they have opportunities to feel successful in the classroom (Elkhafaifi, 2005), and a strengths-based approach to teaching that highlights what students can do with the language may promote the happiness, optimism, and resilience needed for long-term language learning (MacIntyre al., 2019). When students experience increasing feelings of positivity in the world language classroom, they are more likely to be attentive, focused, and experimental with the language (Dewaele et al., 2018), leading to greater participation and engagement in classroom activities. Based on available research, it is clear that students would benefit from receiving direct instruction in SEL skills related to self-confidence, self-efficacy, and accurate self-perceptions in the world language classroom, and educators can support the development of these skills by emphasizing their students’ strengths and creating fun, engaging learning experiences.

## Resources and Supports

World language educators would benefit from professional development opportunities focusing on best practices and instructional approaches for addressing SEL in their classrooms. Researchers recommend that SEL training be focused on (1) embedding SEL into existing classroom practices; (2) creating a positive, encouraging, and motivating learning environment; (3) ensuring that learning materials are culturally and linguistically appropriate; (4) effectively managing conflict and reacting to various emotional responses in the classroom; and (5) communicating behavioral expectations to students, parents, and various stakeholders (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Coaching and feedback should be provided on a continual basis throughout the course of instruction (Jones & Bouffard, 2012), and recommendations for improvement should be tailored to the specific SEL needs of students, teachers, and their classrooms. It is also important to encourage discussion, reflection, and collaboration across disciplines, as this may lead to a shared understanding of and approach to SEL that is consistent, sustainable, and effective while simultaneously supporting teachers’ personal development of social and emotional competence (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Teachers with social and emotional competence are more likely to demonstrate effective classroom management and build strong relationships with students, both of which contribute to positive classroom climates that may prevent educator stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout over time (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Educators should therefore be provided with opportunities to develop their own SEL skills through collaboration and networking (Jones & Bouffard, 2012), and trainings related to mindfulness, resilience, and stress management are also recommended to further support teachers’ overall social and emotional wellness (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

## Annotated Bibliography

**Dewaele, J. M., Witney, J., Saito, K., & Dewaele, L. (2018). Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety: The effect of teacher and learner variables. *Language Teaching Research, 22* (6), 676-697.**

This article discusses the increasing interest in positive psychology as it relates to world language education. Following a brief overview of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language anxiety (FLA), the author reports findings from a study of 189 high school world language learners, in which participants were asked to describe their language learning experiences and the extent to which they experience enjoyment and/or anxiety in the world language classroom. Findings indicate that educators should focus on promoting FLE rather than reducing FLA, as engagement and enjoyment are strongly correlated with teachers and their instructional practices.

**Hoffman, D. M. (2009). Reflecting on social emotional learning: A critical perspective on trends in the United States. *Review of Educational Research, 79* (2), 533-556.**

This article provides an overview of research on school-based social emotional learning practices. Following a description of the growth of K-12 social emotional learning programs, the author analyzes the skills that are traditionally focused on in such programs, the cultural appropriateness and responsiveness of current initiatives, and the overall effectiveness of common approaches to improving school climates through social emotional education. Arguments are made that more work is needed to ensure that classroom social emotional learning practices actually reflect the intentions of the movement, which is to improve children’s personal and academic lives.

**O'Conner, R., De Feyter, J., Carr, A., Luo, J. L., & Romm, H (2017). *A review of the literature on social and emotional learning for students ages 3-8: Teacher and classroom strategies that contribute to social and emotional learning (Part 3 of 4*). Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic.**

This report presents findings from a literature review examining four research questions related to (1) characteristics of effective SEL programs; (2) implementation strategies and policies that support SEL programming; (3) teacher and classroom SEL learning strategies; and (4) outcomes of SEL programs for different populations and educational settings. The authors point out ways in which social and emotional competence can be developed in the classroom, the instructional strategies that support such efforts, and ways in which teachers can develop their own social and emotional skills. Implications of the findings are discussed, and a list of resources on teacher and classroom-based strategies are provided.

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# Assessment

This section of the literature review examines assessment practices in world language classrooms. First, we provide an overview of current trends in world language assessment related to standards- and proficiency-based assessment, classroom-based assessment practices, assessing intercultural competence, and technology and virtual assessment. We then explore best practices for assessing the Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities standards, followed by a brief discussion of resources and supports for world language teachers.

## Current Trends

Over the past few decades, approaches to language teaching and learning have been greatly influenced by standards-based education reform (Cox, et al., 2018). Nationally recognized and used in a variety of teaching contexts, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ (ACTFL) *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* have become widely referenced in both research and practice (Phillips & Abbott, 2011), directly impacting the way in which language is taught and proficiency is measured in world language classrooms (Cox, et al., 2018). Although assessments are not provided within the ACTFL standards, there is a consensus that world language educators should incorporate proficiency-based performance assessments into their classrooms to reflect standards-based instructional practices (Campbell & Duncan, 2007; Cox, et al., 2018; Kissau & Adams, 2016).

There is a growing body of research related to task-based learning and assessment in language education (Norris, 2016), and educators are encouraged to replace traditional methods of assessment with assessments that allow students to “perform in the language” (Adair‐Hauck & Troyan, 2013, p.38). Performance-based tasks are designed to measure students’ authentic, real-world language use (Campbell & Duncan, 2007), and some examples include role plays, presentations, and interviews involving real-life situations (Malone, et al., 2010). It is important to consider a task’s connection to actual target language use in the given context, as well as students’ age, developmental, and proficiency levels when developing and incorporating this type of assessment into the classroom (Duncan, 2015). Oral proficiency assessment has also played a significant role in the movement toward performance-based assessment, and ACTFL’s Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is perhaps the most widely recognized standards-based oral proficiency assessment used in a variety of contexts across the country (Fall, et al., 2007). Given the time and costs involved in test administration, educators may experience difficulties using OPIs in their assessment practices (Fall, et al., 2007), and although there are a number of available ACTFL-aligned summative assessments measuring student performance across all domains of language (e.g., AAPPL, STAMP, etc.), similar practical limitations may make these assessments difficult to use in some K-12 world language classrooms.

Interest in classroom-based language assessment has increased in recent years, leading to greater recognition of the role of formative assessment in world language learning (Purpura, 2016). Designed to provide feedback about students’ progress toward desired learning outcomes (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2017), this type of assessment is often described as “assessment for learning”, and the information gathered from formative assessment can help students better understand their progress and help educators determine how effectively students can apply what has been taught in the classroom (Sandrock, 2013). Researchers and educators have also explored the use of alternative methods of classroom-based assessment in recent years (Ross, 2005). Some examples of recommended alternative assessments include journals, interviews, projects, presentations, and portfolios (Turnbull, 2020), as these activities can often be individualized for various proficiency levels and student needs (Beaudrie, et al., 2014; Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Douglas, 2005).

Once students have become familiar with task expectations, researchers have suggested that it may be useful to introduce self, peer, and/or collaborative assessment practices in the classroom (Adair‐Hauck & Troyan, 2013), and user-friendly explanations of language use at various proficiency levels, such as the ACTFL Can-Do statements, may help students effectively participate in these types of assessments while internalizing expectations and developing appropriate learning goals for the future (Cox, et al., 2018). When used effectively, self-assessment can help students identify, analyze, and evaluate their own language skills (Cheng & Warren, 2005), and peer assessment practices may promote learner autonomy, active engagement, and the development of interpersonal communication skills (Ross, 2005). Although information gathered from these types of assessment can inform future lesson planning and the development of targeted support and feedback (Moeller & Yu, 2015), researchers recommend that they be used in combination with various other assessment practices to ensure an accurate understanding of student progress and/or proficiency (Cox, et al. 2018).

Many researchers have emphasized the importance of an intercultural approach to world language teaching due to globalization and the need to prepare college and career-ready students for the demands of an increasingly interconnected world (Moeller & Nugent, 2014). In response to this need, there is a consensus that educators must teach and assess students’ development of intercultural competence (IC)/intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in world language classrooms (Byram, 2014; Deardorff, 2006; Sercu, et al., 2005). While the Interagency Language Roundtable has developed a set of ICC performance descriptors to determine competence in government settings (<https://govtilr.org/Skills/Competence.htm>), there is no specific ACTFL guidance regarding the assessment of intercultural skills in standards-based K-12 world language programs (Schulz, 2007), and more research is needed on (1) the extent to which teachers’ can objectively interpret and score ICC; (2) the appropriateness of assessing student attitudes and personalities, and (3) the ability to determine competence in each of the different factors associated with ICC (Sercu, 2004).

Although advances have been made in oral proﬁciency assessment, documented outcomes

are needed to establish realistic expectations for programs, instructors and students.

Technology-based language assessment has also gained recognition in both research and practice, and the current state of remote teaching and learning requires innovative, virtual approaches to assessment. When assessing student performance online, educators should make sure virtual assessment platforms, applications, or resources are not frustrating for students to use, thus limiting their ability to show what they can truly do with the language (Chapelle & Voss, 2016). Numerous virtual learning tools are particularly well suited for world language teaching and assessment, and educators are encouraged to explore online discussion boards, videos, articles, voice-recording software, conversation exchange websites, and media archives with audio samples in the target language to support assessment while students are learning from home (Russell, 2020). More research is needed on technology-based assessment practices and their alignment with world language standards (Cox, et al., 2018), particularly in this era of virtual learning, and educators should continue to follow best practices for traditional in-person world language assessment (e.g., backward design, goal-setting, individualizing expectations, etc.) when conducting assessments online.

## Assessing Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities

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Communicative modes should be assessed in an integrated, connected, and sequenced way (Cox, et al., 2018), and although more research is needed to determine its appropriateness for various grade levels, languages, and teaching contexts, a growing number of researchers have described the Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) as an effective approach to assessing the interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes of communication in world language classrooms (Adair‐Hauck & Troyan, 2013; Davin, et al., 2011; Kissau & Adams, 2016). According to the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (2015), IPAs are standards- and proficiency-based performance assessments that can be modified and adapted to meet the needs of students with varying proficiency levels, where each task assessing a different communicative mode is connected by a central theme. For example, students may be asked to answer comprehension questions based on something they have read or listened to, followed by paired discussion of the material and presentations based on a synthesis of information gathered when completing previous tasks (Cox, et al., 2018). This integrated process engages students in authentic task-based learning, provides educators with valuable information about students’ communicative abilities, and incorporates continuous opportunities for feedback and improvement (Adair‐Hauck & Troyan, 2013).

There is limited information available on best practices for assessment beyond the communication standard, and more research is needed to effectively measure student performance related to the Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities standards (Cox, et al., 2018). To effectively address all of the ACTFL standards in both instruction and assessment, educators are encouraged to incorporate backward design into their teaching practice (Kaplan, 2016), and some researchers argue that IPAs could be modified to address multiple communicative modes and multiple standards simultaneously (Troyan, 2012). Learning portfolios incorporating written and recorded student work are recommended for assessing cultural knowledge and understanding (Schulz, 2007), and educators may find it helpful to use student reflections and evaluations for assessing how effectively students prepare for, participate in, and critically engage with learning experiences involving communities where the target language is spoken (Van Houten, et al., 2014). In addition, students can be encouraged to compare their attitudes before, during, and after working on social justice projects (Troyan, 2012), as this process can provide evidence of students’ progress related to the Cultures, Comparisons, and Communities standards.

## Resources and Supports

Researchers have highlighted the significant role of assessment literacy for effective world language teaching and learning, as teachers must understand the basic principles of assessment for developing, selecting, administering, interpreting, and scoring both low- and high-stakes assessments (Taylor, 2009). While there are numerous conceptualizations of the term “assessment literacy” (Harding & Kremmel, 2016), it is often described as a combination of knowledge of assessment, the skills to use assessment, and the principles underlying assessment (Inbar-Lourie, 2017). Given the increasing use of and interest in classroom-based, formative assessment practices, it is also essential that educators understand how to build on prior learning, align assessment with goals and objectives, and appropriately use the information gathered to inform future instructional decisions (Heritage, 2007). Although assessment literacy can be developed by attending conferences, participating in workshops, enrolling in self-paced, online courses, and reading publications from language test providers and language resource centers (Malone, 2013), the largest barrier to understanding assessment seems to be a dearth of training for pre-service and in-service teachers, and educators should therefore be provided with professional development targeting the requisite knowledge and skills for effective assessment in the world language classroom.

## Annotated Bibliography

**Cox, T. L., Malone, M. E., & Winke, P. (2018). Future directions in assessment: Influences of standards and implications for language learning. *Foreign Language Annals, 51* (1), 104-115.**

This article explores the role that standards have played in world language assessment over time, as well as the significance of established proficiency level expectations and ACTFL’s “Five Cs”. It provides an overview of assessment practices, including standardized and classroom-based assessment, and it also addresses challenges teachers may have when implementing standards for assessment practices, followed by a discussion of how to adapt assessment for diverse learners.

**Moeller, A. K., & Yu, F. (2015). *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do statements: An effective tool for improving language learning within and outside the classroom*. University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Faculty Publications: Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education.**

This article shows how to use the Can-Do statements to support alignment between classroom instruction and assessment. It provides examples of how to prepare one’s classroom for effective assessment, and it explores ways to promote a better understanding of the standards and proficiency levels to increase learner autonomy and involvement.

**Kaplan, C. S. (2016). Alignment of world language standards and assessments: A multiple case study. *Foreign Language Annals, 49* (3), 502-529.**

This article presents a case study examining classroom-based assessments practices used by four secondary world language teachers. Findings focus on world language educators’ professional development needs and the current role of standards in world language assessment. The author also discusses ACTFL’s “Five Cs” and formative and summative assessment practices.

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