



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2004

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Fall 2004 Meeting

Old Wine in New Skins: Doing Digitally What We Used to Do Analogically
Pre-Conference Workshop on Non-Western Fonts

October 14-15, 2004

Host Site: St. Michael's College, Colchester, Vermont

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Please see the Business Matters section for information about accommodations.

The Prez Sez

From the President of NERALLD:

Let me begin by offering my most sincere apologies for the tardiness of this post-meeting newsletter. I hope that all of you who worked so hard in putting our Spring meeting together can forgive me. You all did a wonderful job and I will do my best to be more professional in the future.

Our Spring meeting was, of course, a huge success since it was beautifully hosted by Cindy Bravo and brilliantly constructed by our program committee. The morning session included two very practical presentations from Kevin Gaugler and Barbara Sawhill, both of whom offered some good strategies for working with faculty that could make all our lives much easier. In the afternoon, David Kanig continued to focus our attention on "customer service" leading us to our breakout discussions, which gave everyone an opportunity to share their personal experiences. For those of you who were unable to attend, Claire Keith's notes will

provide you with a very thoughtful summary. I was especially impressed by how well she was able to summarize the deliberations of our breakout sessions.

Our Fall meeting promises to be equally interesting, as we will be offering two days of informative presentations and some hands-on training. Thursday afternoon, we will be re-visiting non-Western fonts, a topic that we last discussed at Holy Cross three years ago. Friday, we will be taking a closer look at software and hardware that can help us convert and edit our VCR and audio tapes to digital.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the NERALLD members who contributed to the Ursula Williams Memorial Scholarship Fund. We raised \$250 at our meeting in April.

I wish all of you the best as the new semester begins. Keep an eye out for our next newsletter with more details about our two-day meeting at St. Michael's College it should arrive in the next couple of weeks!

Mary Morrisard-Larkin,
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Coming Events

Compiled by the President.

- October 18th: Rhode Island Foreign Language Association Fall 2004 Conference to be held at the Community College of Rhode Island, Lincoln Campus. <http://www.uri.edu/rifla/index.html>
- October 18th: Connecticut Council of Language Teachers Fall 2004 Meeting to be held in Cromwell, CT. <http://www.ctcolt.org>
- October 28th - 30th: Massachusetts Foreign Language Association Fall 2004 Conference to be held in Sturbridge, MA. <http://www.mafla.org/conf2004.htm>
- October 29th - 31st: New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers Annual Meeting to be held in Rochester, NY. <http://annualmeeting.nysafl.org/>
- November 5th - 6th: New Hampshire Association of World Language Teachers 2004 Conference and Annual Meeting to be held in Wentworth-by-the-Sea, New Castle, NH. <http://www.nhawlt.org>
- November 19-21, 2004: ACTFL Convention, Chicago, IL. <http://actfl.org/>

Business Matters!

Sue Breeyear strongly encourages us to start making hotel reservations for our October meeting. She writes . . .

The best list of local hotels and other info is at the St. Michael's Site (<http://www.smcvt.edu/Std2.asp?SiteAreaID=241&Level=1%20%20>).

We have arranged for a block of rooms at the Wilson Inn in Essex at a reduced rate (but it's not a huge block, so I don't know what's left). The Days Inn is right across the street, but the accommodations are, well, not exactly posh, but cheap, and ask for the St. Michaels' rate if anyone stays there! We have our Hampton Inns, Best Westerns, and Sheratons, as well. I'd suggest people try to stay in the Burlington/South Burlington/Winooski/Essex/Colchester area. Stowe is about a 45-minute drive away from campus, and might be a far away, but good choice for people staying the weekend who have a car and want to see the countryside (as if they haven't already seen enough of it on the way up!).

As for leisure activities, Magic Hat is definitely an option. We also have a very nice science

museum on the lakefront (Echo) that people might like to visit-and there's the Teddy Bear Factory, Ben & Jerry's (which you need a car to get to), Shelburne Museum, Shelburne Farms, lots of biking trails, all kinds of fall festivals...we won't be lacking in stuff to do. If people are staying over on Saturday, I might be able to arrange some kind of touristy thing that we could do en masse. (That's just a suggestion, but not a promise!)

Sounds like a great location, doesn't it? Hope that you can all join us!

Editor Notes

The Five College Center for the Study of World Languages offers an extensive collection of country-specific video, audio, and images for use by language learners around the world. This project has been developed under the sponsorship of Five Colleges, Incorporated (the higher education consortium consisting of Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst) and outside funding.

This unique site offers free access to authentic resources for less-commonly taught languages such as Arabic, Bangla, Greek, Serbian, Urdu and Wolof. In addition, for several languages you can choose among resources from countries that speak the same language. For example Swahili has original material from Kenya and Tanzania, while French has resources from France, Luxembourg, Morocco, Senegal, Canada and Martinique,

http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/lm_collection.html



NERALLD SPRING MEETING

The Face of Technology: Connecting with Faculty

April 2, 2004 8:15AM - 4:00PM
Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

MORNING SESSION

Participants were welcomed by NERALLD President Mary Morrisard-Larkin (College of the Holy Cross) and Cindy Bravo (Boston College) who hosted the meeting with her customary organizational perfection! Rebecca Adae (SUNY New Paltz) gave an overview of the program, which featured fewer but longer presentations to allow for in-depth discussion sessions in the afternoon.

From CALL to CALT: A Practical Approach to Computer-Assisted Language Teaching.
Dr. Kevin M. Gaugler, Department of Modern Languages, Marist College

A full time faculty in Spanish, Kevin first explained how both his training and his responsibilities at Marist College have altered the traditional customer/provider relation of technical know-how between faculty and the Language Lab. While completing his PhD. in Spanish literature, Kevin also trained with U.Conn's Barbara Lindsay, a recent NERALLD speaker, in the application of technology to language learning. He was hired at Marist with the stated expectation that he would develop applications for the newly built Multimedia Language Center.

With the part-time Lab director involved in the larger administrative aspects of the Language Center, Kevin is in charge of coordinating online resources for Spanish and training all part-time

faculty in Spanish in order to have everyone “on board”. In addition, the arrival of a substantial three-year grant from FIPSE facilitated his development of two new courses at Marist College: "Spanish and Technology" (the latter now a requirement for the Spanish major) and "Technology for Foreign Language Teachers", designed for local high school teachers. First financed by the grant as workshops, the course will be running for the second time this summer as a regular credit course for teachers.

Kevin’s general perspectives: the pedagogical shift is more threatening to faculty than the new technology *per se*. Faculty are often more successful if they have a *low* dependence on the lab staff. When training faculty, it is important to emphasize the end, figure out the faculty, embrace the free and easy and support your strategic plan.

A – Emphasize the end.

This objective is applied to the “five c’s” by seeking practical results. For instance Communications can be pursued through AOL Instant Messenger (AIM), threaded discussion and Connections (with another discipline) through the [virtual!] exercise of dissecting a frog in any language.

Communities (reaching beyond the school setting) by creating a time-dependent emergency (risk of losing a job) that can only be solved by finding a piece of information on line.

B – Figure out the faculty.

Begin with familiar technology: Google, Word, PowerPoint, AIM, and help faculty “scratch the surface” of these familiar products to see if they know their full functionalities (tracking, changing language settings, inserting comments or graphics, saving downloads, etc). Start with what they know and show how powerful these familiar tools already are.

C – Embrace the free and easy.

Encourage faculty to use free applications first, such as ODIGO (multilingual, worldwide instant messaging service), TRACKSTAR (to generate a frame webpage from an url), HOT POTATOES (to create instant interactive exercises or questionnaires), OPCODE or WINDOWS MEDIA RECORDER to record streaming media on TV to play back to students, copyright permitting) – Hispanic film trailers are great cultural material!

D – Support your strategic plan.

Help faculty establish knowledge outcomes for majors and minors. Recognize what proficiency means in the 21st century: not just knowing a language, but having an adequate knowledge of the tools now used for communications: a Spanish major applying for a job in Criminal Justice or International Business should know how to create accents in any program and be proficient in a Hispanic technical environment. This implies a gradual technical training of the students in the Spanish classroom, from simple voice recording in elementary courses to web page making in Civilization courses.

Kevin then gave an overview of his two new courses:

- *Spanish and Technology* is a project driven course that students run like a business, with the faculty as mere facilitator. Sample projects include the creation of promotional material for a local Hispanic business, after assessing their business needs; a bilingual head hunter project; a community project devoted to training immigrant families in computer uses on machines built and donated by prison inmates; and a Global Awareness Project presented as a Web page with bibliographic resources and an interactive component. The archiving of projects for future classes encourages students to meet good publishing standards.
- The *Teachers Course*, a summer intensive session, is constructed on the same model adapted to faculty and to the time frame. Teachers learn basic web design, desktop publishing and instant messaging in the course of pursuing specific projects of their choice.

Q & A session followed Kevin's presentation:

1. Isn't this addressing computer literacy as much as language? Yes, because future employment for Spanish is crucially dependent on such skills: in teaching, social work, criminal justice, international business, or healthcare, technology is indispensable.
2. What advice do you have for high school teachers who don't have the high-end equipment? Try at least to harness all the free realia that is available on line; adapt it to current practices by creating a paper "desktop" with them on bulletin boards or office doors. Direct students to explore websites on their home computers or in available school facilities, even if no dedicated classroom exists.
3. How can faculty find the time to look for all these web resources? Let your students do the research as an assignment. But in the end, it takes the same amount of time to assemble a good collection of paper resources. Some faculty therefore prefer to rely on ready-made textbooks that increasingly have web resources built-in.
4. What about copyright when capturing web materials? The same guidelines apply as for photocopying: limited distribution, fair educational use. Try to choose non-protected materials (there are plenty out there).

If you teach it, are you -sure- they will come? Strategies for creating successful faculty technology workshops.

Barbara Sawhill, Cooper International Learning Center Language Lab, Oberlin College

Using experience gained both in K-12 and college environments, Barbara shared sound principles and useful tips on creating workshops and training sessions that will successfully attract, nurture, and support faculty as they incorporate technology into their teaching:

It is important to place the Lab Director's objectives in a larger perspective: teaching technology to any profession is a widespread challenge with common problems. However, Lab Directors are also different from Information Technology personnel in that they are educators first, especially at institutions such as Oberlin, and also many K-12 institutions or smaller colleges who do not have an Academic Computing Office separate from the Information Technology office.

Barbara surprised the audience with the news that Oberlin no longer conducts group workshops for faculty, viewing them as inefficient in reaching the target faculty. Statistics show that 50% of workshops attendees sabotage the workshops with two types of behaviors: the "self-starters", early adopters of technology have a "take-and-run" participation, using the instructor's time only to advance their own needs to the detriment of the rest of the class; whereas the "repeat offenders" come repeatedly to workshops but make no effort to progress, and slow down the class.

To reach the other 50% of faculty, Barbara recommends:

- Looking at a question from an adult learning perspective, that is, transformative learning involving problem-solving processes and a highly individualized way of learning.
- Not losing sight of the institutional perspective: Successful faculty participation depends, in a trickle down process, upon four larger prerequisites: institutional vision, shared by senior leadership, who provides access to equipment, and institutionalizes appropriate incentives (release time of stipends). If at all possible, a lab director may want to try to lobby for these and help shape a culture conducive to them. For reference, see Edwina Spodark's article "Five Obstacles to Technology Integration in a small Liberal Arts Institution in the T.H.E Journal, March 2003, available online at <http://www.thejournal.com/>

magazine/vault/articleprintversion.cfm?aid=4344 (click on the “Print article” icon to see full document)

- Recognizing the variables that determine rate of adoption or participation: Of the five customary references (relative advantage, complexity, compatibility, observability, trialability), Lab directors have the most control over compatibility and observability.

In consequence, Barbara customized her training services by conducting what she calls “Private Readings” with faculty members. To be useful, these meetings must be preceded by intensive homework on the part of the lab director or staff, in order to understand how each language works, in particular non-Western languages such as Arabic, Chinese or Vietnamese, and assess the difference between the needs of the professor and the student learner.

Barbara teaches one section of Spanish, which she says gives her considerable credibility with the faculty, and she has an assistant audit classes in German and Russian, watching careful what the teacher does in low-tech. This helped for instance to recognize the tablet PC as a good solution for Chinese character recognition.

After the class visits, the lab writes to faculty to suggest technology that matches their language, and schedules a private session that is entirely hands-on. The mantra would be:

“It’s not the tool or product, it’s the process. Customize, customize, customize!”

Q & A session followed Barbara’s presentation:

1. Isn’t this impossibly labor intensive and socially stressful? Admittedly, such an approach is personality driven: the lab director must enjoy the process and seeing the results, and determine that the time-investment is worthwhile.
2. Is there not a great waiting list? No. Barbara has office hours, and is also a teacher. Faculty members know not to abuse her schedule, and in turn, Barbara watches out for them.
3. How do you document such time investment as data for showing lab use to budget cutting administrators? Using a computerized appointment book such as Meeting Makers allows for great data gathering and pie chart creation.
4. How can institutions with low bandwidth, such as high school, bypass sending sound recording through email? Try inexpensive CD burning.

LUNCH & NERALLD BUSINESS MEETING

President Mary Morrisard-Larkin reviewed the budget and made the following announcements:

- Job opportunities for Lab directors at Harvard and at Amherst (Connie Christo has retired, Kara Schwartz has left to pursue graduate work at Simmons College).
- NERALLD needs a representative to attend the IALLT Summer Leadership Meeting in Provo, UT, on the first week of August.
- In memory of the late Ursula Williams, please check the blog at <http://IALLT.org>. A collection was also taken up at the meeting to start a student scholarship in her name.
- The membership database revisions are in progress, thanks to Inge Brown (Dartmouth), who is cleaning up of the mailing list and has converted the IALLT Board and Council info to electronic delivery. We still have to determine the process for final deletion of names (send a last card warning?), and whether or not we want to continue posting the NERALLD member list on the Web with email contacts.

The main agenda items were the addressed:

1. NERALLD Summer Advisory Board Meeting, with three upcoming topics: the non Profit status (we only need to register in one state); Preparation for Fall elections (the current Webmaster, Newsletter editor and Recording secretary will continue for the next term.); possible NERALLD grant applications, once non-profit status has been established.

2. Fall 2004 Meeting.

Location is already set for the 2005 Spring meeting at Northeastern University on the topic of ADA compliance.

Sue Breeyear volunteered St. Michael's in Vermont for the fall meeting. We will be discussing "Free and easy audio and video software", with a Thursday workshop on the latest in non-Western fonts.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session was scheduled around in depth breakout sessions, and was modeled on Dave Kanig's idea of sharing the lessons learned from personal stories of faculty/lab miscommunication. As an introduction to the discussions, David made the following presentation:

The Human - Human Interface.

David Kanig, Manager Technical Services, Language Resource Center, Brown University

Most participants at the NERALLD meetings are lab staff rather than faculty. It is important, especially when analyzing past failures, to recognize that faculty and staff function in parallel hierarchy that do not report to each other. Faculty are – must be -- fiercely competitive, socially aggressive, and tend to work alone. Staff is more cooperative and product-oriented. David illustrated this point with practical examples of difference of perception by faculty and IT on a given problem: IT may feel positively on an improved response time, whereas an irate faculty member complains fiercely of *any* waiting time in getting a problem resolved.

He then showed how communication and interaction can be explicitly and effectively structured for success in the functions we provide. Techniques, as David demonstrated, can be adapted from the Talmud (never say that anybody is wrong); improvisational theater (accept what you are given as a prompter, and work from there); computer interface design (note the psychological value of "waiting" icons such as turning clocks or flying files, while a operation is in process), network topography (such as the old ARPANET, programmed to by-pass fouled-up nodes). Retail customer service, traffic signaling, and Cold War negotiating for nuclear arms reduction also offer instructive models for effective communications, with cultural perspectives to be accounted for (a transportation survey found New York the least patient city, and Tokyo the most patient).

With faculty tending to carry the baggage of an event for years (with potential long-term resentment), it is important to find non-personal thing on which to agree, and in general, to depersonalize situations. David closed humorously with five bad-case scenarios of faculty hostility:

- The moving target: "Here is what I want" (but it is never the same.)
- The know-it-all

- The camel's noose (getting you sucked into more than was originally requested).
- The missed deadline offender (I was too busy in June to let you know, but I need all my sound files up for my fall class beginning tomorrow)
- The "this time, it's personal" confrontation.

Breakout Sessions.

In preparation for this discussion participants had been asked to reflect of the following questions:

- What's the difference between training and support? Which do faculty typically expect the lab to provide?
- How much of the lab's relationship with faculty is defined by its position within the institution? Are there ways that we can overcome these inequities?
- Could you describe an experience in which mixed signals, conflicting expectations, unspoken assumptions, or carrying personal baggage hindered or disabled your ability to deliver a product or service, or to work harmoniously with a person?

Each group reported its comments, which converged into the following suggestions:

- Linguistics matter: A technical *lingua franca* must be developed and used between faculty and technical people, with needed metaphors to bridge the professional expertise of pedagogues and computer technicians.
- An honest and public assessment must be made of political issues: What is IT's leverage against faculty bullying? In turn, how can faculty effectively protest obstructionist corporate behavior from IT offices?
- IT and administrations must be held accountable for poor choice of institutional equipment and software.
- Clear guidelines must be set ahead of time for: a fair scheduling of electronic classroom use by faculty; the times at which lab staff is available for training; the availability of immediate trouble shooting when class is in session.

In addition, the following list of tips was compiled:

- Recognize faculty who meet deadlines publicly.
- Keep paper trail of difficult interactions
- Plan for the unexpected, add 20% to any job time
- Require faculty to get training before getting them new equipment
- Don't listen to gossip.
- Try to make people comfortable in admitting ignorance
- Ask them to help you
- If sufficient staff, rotate bad customers
- Kill them with kindness
- Meet frequently with staff and faculty, reprioritize as needed.

The meeting ended with a tour, guided by Cindy Bravo, of the Boston College Language Laboratory in Lyons Hall, Room 313.