



Letter from the Editor

M to the Power of 3: MCTLC's Fall Conference 2010!

David Paulson
Southwest Minnesota State University

We had an exciting Fall Conference 2010, and I hope that most of you were able to attend. *M to the Power of 3* showed us that we continue to grow as a **MULTILINGUAL** association as our Chinese language teacher members have increased. Our **MULTICULTURAL** heritage shone through with delightful and interesting displays of artisan works from all over the world. The Day of the Dead objects were especially interesting and timely. And in the face of a tough political, economic and academic climate in **MINNESOTA**, we experienced new enthusiasm, new members and a great variety of session and topics this year such as several sessions on different topics on Assessment, Hybrid teaching, engaging Heritage Speakers and their Families, integration of Song, Dance, Authentic Art forms, Immersion issues, achieving Proficiency, integrating unrehearsed Speeches, the importance of Storytelling and Culture, embracing Content-based Instruction, current issues in using Authentic Media, Reflective learning, the use of the ever-growing Facebook, looking at many different

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English Only? Not in Minnesota!

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Excerpt:

Did you know that there was a time when there were non-English speaking towns in Minnesota that had non-English schools and newspapers? Would it surprise you to learn that in 1890 election instructions in Minnesota were in nine languages? The current uproar over English-only ordinances like the one recently passed by the city of Lino Lakes largely ignores Minnesota's (and the nation's) immigrant history. The sponsor of the Lino Lakes ordinance said it seeks to save translation costs. Those would be unknown future costs, as the city has not had to translate any of its documents to date. And the possible future savings would be limited, as the resolution accommodates translation services in matters of "public health, public safety, the promotion of tourism, the administration of justice and the handling of emergencies."

Critics have argued that proposals declaring English the official language of cities or states are hostile to immigrants. Nativist sentiments are hardly new. Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1751, addressing the issue of German immigrants: "Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our language or customs, any more than they can acquire our complexion?" Much later, President Theodore Roosevelt would express similar sentiments, "We have room for but one language in this country, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house." As recently as 2006 and 2007, the US Senate has voted on amendments that emphasized on English as a symbol of patriotism. Although both amendments passed, they were part of a comprehensive immigration bill that did not become law.

In an interview with the TC Daily Planet, Katherine Fennelly, an immigration specialist at the University of Minnesota, said that, despite language and cultural barriers, most immigrants attempt to learn English. That takes a while, according to Fennelly, who said that "history has shown that it is not until the second generation that children of immigrants begin to be fluent in English." According to Fennelly, the age at which an immigrant enters a country strongly determines new language acquisition skills. "After puberty it becomes more difficult for people to acquire language skills." Fennelly said that immigrants today learn and speak English faster than immigrants at the turn of the century did. She lamented, "It is sad that in many cases the offspring of immigrants tend to lose their parents' language," resulting in a loss of rich cultural heritage. Today, the office of Minnesota's Secretary of State makes provisions in six languages: English, Hmong, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese.

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rubrics for developing and scoring Quizzes, issues in Translation/Interpretation, addressing Achievement Gaps in the classroom, the use of Portfolios and learning to line dance with Paulino! These were just highlights of the some of the session topics this year.

The Board of MCTLC hopes you enjoyed the conference! Let us know your ideas and suggestions for next year – and be thinking about the session that YOU would like to lead! In addition, there are still empty positions on the MCTLC Board waiting for you.

2010 Award Winners:

Kathryn Shorma

Outstanding Student Teacher Award

Dr. Lyn Brodersen

Pro Lingua Award

Dr. Ursula Lentz

2010 Emma Berkmaier Award

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Current immigration trends show that new immigrants, tend to be younger and more educated than immigrants of past generations. A report published by Fennelly through the Humphrey Institute, detailing the economic impact of immigrants in Minnesota, showed that nationally immigrants represent twenty-five per cent of physicians and forty per cent of engineers holding doctoral degrees. An immigrant's ability to learn a new language as an adult is also affected by their education level. Fennelly cites the first wave of Somali immigrants, who were educated and learned English faster than more recent immigrants, who have had little or no formal education. (Before Somalia's 1990 civil war, the languages of instruction in the country's education institutions were English and Italian.) The Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) records show that in 1896, official election instructions were being issued in nine languages: English, German, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, French, Czech, Italian, and Polish. Not unlike present-day immigrants, foreign-language newspapers allowed non-English speaking immigrants to keep current on local affairs and news from their home countries in the late 19th and early 20th century. The IHRC reports that there were over 100 non-English newspapers in Minnesota alone, and over 10,000 in the US. Towns like New Ulm were once German-speaking said Donna Gabaccia, the director of IHCR. According to

IHRC, "fresh immigrants often lived on farms -- or in urban enclaves-- where there was little incentive to learn English." Incidentally, New Ulm, which still has a strong German cultural influences, was named after the German town Ulm.

Additional Door Prizes at MCTLC Fall Conference

In addition to our exhibitors, we would also like to thank the following organizations who all contributed generous door prizes for our conference:

- Brave New Workshop
 - Park Square Theatre
 - Walker Art enter
 - Punch
 - Illusion Theater
 - Germanic-American Institute
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Letter from the President: Jan Kittok

Thank you to many of you for your feedback on the MLR. Communication to the membership and opportunity for members to network with each other has been a leadership goal for the past two years and will continue to be one of our foremost priorities. The MLR in its past quarterly format no longer exists. We have transformed the functions of the former MLR into formats and timetables that result in more frequent and timely communications. We looked at the function of the types of communication we produce and the best format (print or electronic) to deliver that information. We also kept in mind the value of being environmentally "green" in using less paper. Much of the MLR content continues to be available on the website in a more timely and accessible format: board minutes, event registration, calls for proposals, award nominations, fall conference information, advocacy initiatives and ongoing MCTLC events. The speed of electronic communication gets information to members with more consistent and predictable timing compared to the bulk mailing process that takes several weeks of lead time. All communication back to MCTLC (membership renewal, calls for proposals, event registration) is done electronically. Not only is this more accurate and efficient, it saves MCTLC money and literally hundreds of hours of volunteer work that can now be devoted to other projects that move the organization forward.

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Excerpt from JNCL-NCLIS Executive Summary - 2010

JNCL/NCLIS was well-represented at a symposium sponsored by IIE, NSEP, and the Language Flagship Group on “Moving the Dial on Language Learning in the United States: A structured Dialogue on Issues and Policy”. The town meeting format was facilitated by JNCL/NCLIS President Dan Davidson, JNCL/NCLIS Board Member Richard Brecht, and NSEP Director Robert Slater. The dialogue was followed by an address by Senator David Boren, the congressional author of NSEP.

JNCL/NCLIS worked with Senate staff for the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs to plan and hold hearings on “Closing the Language Gap: Improving the Federal Government’s Language Capabilities”. Witnesses on Panel One were from DOD, GAO, and Homeland Security. Panel Two featured Dr. Davidson, Dr. Brecht, and Dr. David Chu, former Assistant Secretary for Planning and Personnel at DOD.

JNCL/NCLIS’ President and staff collaborated with CIE, NEA, CED, ACTFL and the Asia Society in assisting Rep. Rush Holt’s staff with the development and drafting of a new \$400 million foreign language bill entitled the Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act (EILLA). The bill contains state, local and national titles.

Cooperated with the above organizations to hold a briefing in the Capital Visitors Center entitled “Language Learning for a Global Age”. Reps. Paul Tonko and Judy Chu spoke about the importance of language education. JNCL/NCLIS President Davidson spoke and chaired a panel on “Preparing the Next Generation: National Security and Global Diplomacy”. Along with the other sponsors, JNCL/NCLIS’ Executive Director concluded the briefing by summarizing current language legislation and policies... (See full document at MCTLC.ORG)

Excerpt from H.R. 6036 - Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act

Purposes:

To address 21st century U.S. national security and global leadership challenges by stimulating excellence, innovation and reform in national, state and local policies and programs regarding the teaching and learning of foreign languages at the K-12 levels.

Provide every student access to quality foreign language instruction as part of articulated K-12 language sequences with the goal of graduating high school students with an advanced level of proficiency.

Strengthen innovative preparation and recruitment initiatives for future foreign language teachers and enhance professional development opportunities for current teachers... (See full document at MCTLC.ORG)

Excerpt from JNCL-NCLIS Open Letter

Dear Representatives Holt and Tonko:

As representatives from leading national education and language organizations, we fully support your efforts through H.R. 6036, the “Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act,” to help American students become globally competitive by providing them with access to high-quality world language instruction starting in the early grades. We believe that every student should have access to language learning opportunities in grades K-12 that enable them to develop proficiency in another language and understand other cultures. We believe that as they study in college and participate in international studies, including study abroad, they will be prepared to succeed in the global workforce of the 21st Century.

Today, we are falling far short of this goal. According to the National Academy of Sciences, “the pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and languages threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to compete in the global marketplace and produce an informed citizenry.” Increasing the capacity of our citizens to be proficient in world languages and cultures must be a priority in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act... (See full document at MCTLC.ORG)

MCTLC Newsletter

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Letter from The President

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We continue to have print communication going out to membership but now on a monthly basis rather than a quarterly basis. The MLR Newsletter format is a four-page wrap over a national publication, Language® magazine. The content of Language® magazine will educate membership on language and education topics beyond our Minnesota borders, a tool for us to be informed on issues from a national perspective.

The remaining function of the former quarterly MLR is a place where members can submit articles, essays and research for professional publication. We continue to work on ideas for how to meet this need. One idea that has surfaced would be to have an annual juried publication as is done for at the Central States Conference.

If you have further ideas on the MLR, I encourage you to communicate directly with our MLR Editor, David Paulson. You can always find his contact and all Board Members' information on the MCTLC website as well:

www.MCTLC.org

Sincerely,

Jan Kittok

2010 MCTLC President