

Appendix

Glossary207

Credits212

Glossary

A

authentic text Authentic texts are print, audio, and visual documents created and used by native speakers. Examples include books, Web sites, articles, artwork, films, folktales, music, and advertisements.

B

backward design Backward design, also called backward planning, is a pedagogical approach to unit or lesson planning in which the teacher first identifies the desired end task or product, then works in reverse from the assessment task(s) to identify the prerequisite learning tasks.

Bloom's taxonomy Bloom's taxonomy is a method of categorizing cognitive skills by increasing order of complexity and can be used as a means to organizing tasks and assessments in the classroom. The categories are: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. The taxonomy was devised by educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom. More information can be found in Bloom, Benjamin S., ed. *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Education Goals. Handbook I, Cognitive Domain*. New York: Longman, 1956.

C

classroom discourse Classroom discourse refers to connected verbal (oral or written) exchanges used for teaching and learning purposes. Discourse may be sustained by the teacher or students.

co-construction of meaning Co-construction of meaning is a process in which a teacher and a student, or two students, collaborate to interpret and understand written or oral communication.

communicative action A communicative action is a response given in the course of a conversation between a teacher or expert and a student or group of students that furthers a substantive exchange. For example, one of the speakers might clarify, expand upon, or react to another's statement, rather than end the conversation with a response such as "Good" or "Correct" that evaluates form rather than message.

communicative modes The three communicative modes—interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational—are the basis of the Communication goal area of the National Standards. (To read more about each of these standards, go to National Standards on page 11.) These modes emphasize the context and purpose of communication, unlike the traditional four-skills approach of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which treats skills as isolated units.

comprehensible input Comprehensible input, an element of language acquisition identified by education professor Stephen Krashen, refers to written or spoken language that is possible for students to understand, but is just beyond their current level of competence. The information should also be interesting to students and presented in a low-pressure way to help them better understand it.

constructivism Constructivism is a learning theory based on the premise that learners develop their understanding by linking new knowledge to prior knowledge. Teaching in a constructivist manner means that new information and experiences are presented in a way that places them into context and integrates them with knowledge the students already possess.

content-based instruction Content-based instruction describes a curriculum or lesson that emphasizes subject matter (content) over elements of language such as grammar and vocabulary. In this method of instruction, students use the new language to learn engaging content.

cross-disciplinary content Cross-disciplinary content is subject matter that relates to multiple disciplines. For example, World War II could be studied in social studies, language arts, geography, and foreign language classes. Thus, while students are learning the history of the war in social studies class, they could also be reading stories or newspaper accounts of the war in Russian in their language class.

D

differentiated instruction Differentiated instruction occurs when teachers adapt tasks to meet the diverse needs—the different ability levels, proficiencies, learning styles, heritage backgrounds, ages, or grades—of students in a classroom. Differentiated instruction is often a necessity in the foreign language classroom, as mixed levels are not uncommon.

Glossary, cont'd.

F

four-skills approach The four-skills approach focuses on listening, speaking, reading, and writing as distinct skills. The current communicative modes model reconfigures the approach such that the four skills are intertwined in real-life communication. (See **communicative modes** for more information.)

G

genre Genre refers to a class or category of authentic text that has a distinctive and recognizable style, form, or content (for example, poetry, biography, cartoon, etc.). Working with genres in the foreign language classroom requires that both teacher and students be familiar with the conventions of each genre. This knowledge is also helpful to both interpreters (readers/listeners) and presenters (writers/speakers).

H

heritage speaker A heritage speaker, also called a heritage language learner, is a student who is exposed to a language other than English at home. Heritage speakers can be categorized based on the prominence and development of the heritage language in their daily life. Some students may have full oral fluency and literacy in the heritage language; others may have full oral fluency, but their written literacy was not developed because they were schooled in English. Another group of students—typically third- or fourth-generation—can speak to a limited degree but cannot express themselves on a wide range of topics. Students from any of these categories may also have gaps in knowledge about their cultural heritage. Teachers who have heritage speakers of the target language in their class should assess each student's proficiency level in order to understand what their strengths are and what gaps in language skill may exist that need to be addressed. For more information about heritage speakers, go to the Characteristics of Home Background Students chart at the end of the Glossary.

I

Individualized Education Program (IEP) An Individualized Education Program entitles students with qualifying disabilities to receive specially designed instruction, accommodations, and services, at no cost to parents. An IEP is created for a student by classroom teachers, subject teachers, other professionals, and parents, and all of the student's teachers, including foreign language teachers, are required to comply with it. (For more information on the IEP, go to Session 6 Resources for the U.S. Department of Education Guide to the Individualized Education Program Web site.)

Initiation/Response/Evaluation (IRE) communication pattern IRE is a teacher-led, three-part sequence that begins with the teacher asking a student a question or introducing a topic for the purpose of finding out whether the student knows an answer. In the IRE pattern, the student answer is evaluated by the teacher, who makes a brief reply such as "Good," or "No, that's not right." Then the interaction ends. This is in contrast to the Initiation/Response/Follow-Up pattern defined below.

Initiation/Response/Follow-Up (IRF) communication pattern IRF is a sequence that begins with either the teacher or student asking a question or introducing a topic. After a response is given, the initiator then uses the response to move the conversation forward. This conversation can continue for as long as the participants wish to talk about the subject, and may include contributions from many people in the class. This approach is in contrast to the Initiation/Response/Evaluation pattern defined above.

instructional conversation (IC) Instructional conversations are classroom interactions that simulate real conversations, but with a focus on topics and processes related to classroom instruction.

intercultural competence Intercultural competence refers to the ability of an individual to move beyond his or her own language, culture, and world view and interact effectively with members of another culture.

interdisciplinary content Interdisciplinary content is subject matter from several disciplines that is combined in one lesson or unit. For example, a unit on the French elections in language class might combine topics from social studies (such as U.S. and French history, civics, and geography) with the study of the French language.

Glossary, cont'd.

K

keypals Keypals are students who communicate with one another electronically (via email or instant messages) for the purposes of practicing their communication skills in the target language and learning more about the target culture. The process is parallel to the letter-writing process for pen pals, but more immediately interactive.

Knowledge, Attitude, Skill, Awareness (KASA) Knowledge, Attitude, Skill, and Awareness (KASA), created by applied linguistics professor Alvino Fantini, are the categories by which intercultural competence is often analyzed. Knowledge refers to a person's understanding of the target language and culture. Attitude is a person's willingness to try to understand and adapt to the expected norms of the target culture. Skill refers to the behaviors of a person when he or she interacts in the target culture. Awareness refers to an understanding of your own cultural values, the cultural values of the target culture, and the similarities and differences between them. A person's awareness is enhanced by his or her knowledge, attitudes, and skills, and can also lead to the development of deeper knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

L

learning style Learning style refers to the general ways in which students approach the learning of another language. These preferences—for example, auditory, deductive/inductive, or random/sequential organization—should be understood by teacher and student so as to facilitate learning. In some cases, teachers may need to help students expand their range of styles and approaches. For example, helping a student overcome a low tolerance for ambiguity will make him or her more comfortable when interpreting an unfamiliar text.

M

multiple intelligences Multiple intelligences, an approach developed by psychologist and educator Howard Gardner, looks at intelligence not as a single concept, but as varied areas of human ability that shape behavior and learning. He originally identified seven intelligences—visual/spatial, verbal, logical/mathematical, musical/rhythmic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal—although recent developments in the field have suggested there could be even more. There is no consensus currently about the role of multiple intelligences theory in the field of foreign language instruction. More information can be found in Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.

N

native speaker A native speaker considers the target language to be his or her first language. Teachers seek opportunities for students to communicate in person or through technology with native speakers. Students in foreign language classes who are first- or second-generation immigrants and who use the language extensively outside the classroom are also considered native speakers. These students typically maintain the cultural norms of their heritage in certain situations.

negotiation of meaning Negotiation of meaning is a natural component of conversation in which speakers work through confusing words, phrases, or ideas that have caused a breakdown in communication. When information is not understood, the speakers must convey meaning through restating, clarifying, and confirming information. The teacher may help students get started or work through a stumbling block using linguistic and other approaches.

P

performance assessment During a performance assessment, students demonstrate their ability to use the target language in activities that parallel what native speakers might do. For example, students might create a newspaper, respond to a want ad, or conduct an interview to learn about a cultural topic. These assessments are best evaluated using clearly developed rubrics, although grades can be assigned in a more traditional way.

performance level Performance level refers to the language outcomes for students in standards-based language programs according to the K-12 Performance Guidelines (derived from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines). The performance levels include Novice, Intermediate, and Pre-Advanced. Novices operate primarily with learned and practiced material. Intermediate learners use language to communicate on familiar topics. While operating primarily at the sentence level, they begin to expand and string sentences together as they build narrative skills. Pre-Advanced students are beginning to sustain narration and description in past, present, and future time and in a range of content areas.

Glossary, cont'd.

R

rubric A rubric is an assessment tool that describes the components of a student task and the expectations for completion. An effective rubric establishes clear assessment criteria—such as the expectations for vocabulary recall, pronunciation, and creativity—and gives students guidelines for doing the task and teachers a method for evaluating it. A rubric also provides descriptive feedback so that students know how to improve their performance.

S

scaffolding Scaffolding is a method of structuring an instructional task in a way that helps learners gradually advance through the process. Initial portions of the task are designed to be within the learners' competency so that they can complete them on their own. The teacher's role is to assist with the portions of the task that are just beyond the students' competency by encouraging and motivating students, simplifying the task, providing knowledge or practice of critical skills, highlighting relevant cues, etc. As students' confidence, skill, and knowledge increase, the teacher provides less and less scaffolding for that task.

Schema theory Schema is a set of rules that people use to interpret the world around them. For example, if you run into a friend on the street and the friend holds out a hand, you understand that this is a request to shake hands with you. The Schema theory suggests that learners draw upon these rules to process new information. When a schema is relevant to a new situation, the learner is able to correctly interpret and predict the next steps or probable events, even if understanding of actual vocabulary is limited. However, if the learner's schema is inadequate or irrelevant to a new situation, misunderstanding and/or confusion can result.

spiraling Spiraling is the process of teaching a theme or language rule over time with increasing complexity to reinforce previous learning and help students develop a depth of understanding of the topic. Spiraling takes place throughout the year, and can continue across grade levels within a language program. For example, a lesson on weather can be spiraled as follows: (1) Novice students can describe the weather in short, formulaic sentences; (2) when the students move to the Intermediate level, they can talk about the weather and its effect on their activities, or gather information from broadcasts or newspapers; and (3) when the students are at the Pre-Advanced level, they can tell a story about a frightening weather-related event or follow a description of weather in a literary piece.

T

thematic approach A thematic approach refers to curriculum organization that is based on content themes. Vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural information are included as they relate to the themes in each unit. For examples of theme-based units, see the Nebraska Foreign Language Education Web site. You will find this link in the General Resources section of the *Teaching Foreign Languages K-12* video library Web site at http://www.learner.org/channel/libraries/tfl/resources/gen_resources.html.

top-down reading process The top-down reading process begins with readers focusing on the main ideas of a text and any other information that they can understand immediately. They then use contextual guessing to construct meaning at a deeper, more detailed level and to understand any unfamiliar words or phrases. This is in contrast to the bottom-up process, which emphasizes the words, phrases, and structures of a text over its main ideas. An effective reading strategy requires a balance between both processes, but should begin with the top-down process.

Z

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) The Zone of Proximal Development theory stems from the work of social psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who emphasizes the notion that social interaction is critical to learning. He conceives of learning as constantly moving from an "actual development level" to a "potential development level." Between these levels lies the ZPD, where learning occurs through the interaction of an expert (the teacher) and a novice (the learner). Eventually the learner's potential level becomes the actual level and the learning cycle continues. More information can be found in Vygotsky, Lev S. *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986.

TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES K-12 WORKSHOP

Glossary > heritage speaker

Characteristics of Home Background Students

Student Characteristics	English Language Development Needs	Heritage/Home Language Development Needs
Second- and third-generation "bilinguals" schooled exclusively in English in the U.S.	Continued development of age-appropriate English language competencies	Maintenance, retrieval, and/or acquisition of language competencies (e.g., oral productive abilities) Transfer of literacy skills developed in English to the home language Continued development of age-appropriate competencies in both oral and written modes
First-generation immigrant students schooled primarily in the U.S.	Continued development of age-appropriate English language competencies	Development of literacy skills in first language Continued development of age-appropriate language competencies in oral mode
Newly arrived immigrant students	Acquisition of oral and written English	Continued development of age-appropriate competencies in both oral and written modes



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"A Nos Actes Manqués"

a/c: Jean-Jacques Goldman, pub: JRG Editions

Musicales, Music Video: dir: Bernard Schmitt, SONY

Music Entertainment (France). Words and music from the album *Fredericks Goldman Jones* (1991).

"Zydeco Sont Pas Salé" from ARHOOLIE CD 301 – Clifton Chenier (www.ARHOOLIE.com) and composed by Clifton Chenier, by Tradition Music Co. (BMI) adm. by BUG Music Co.

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