2000-01 Oregon Eisenhower Professional Development Higher Education Grant Program Proposal

CyberLingua: Teacher Training and Curriculum Development for Combining Standards-Based K-12 Instruction in Second Language and Technology Skills

Objectives

1) Develop a curriculum for simultaneously conducting second languages instruction and student training in technology skills, in order to: a) create a positive, function-based environment for introducing second-language instruction for the general learner, in an environment where language study is no longer an elective but rather a requirement; b) make more efficient use of limited classroom time by addressing two content / process areas; c) promote standards-based language instruction at the CIM (~Benchmark 4), PASS and, if and when it is instituted, CAM levels; d) enlist students to help create resources for the language classroom; e) deliver technology skills instruction that is made more effective and attractive by its immediate practical use

2) Provide K-12 second-language teachers with technical skills especially appropriate to their subject area (image- and sound-processing, databasing for multimedia resource management, DTP for specialized classroom materials).

3) Provide K-12 second-language teachers with language reinforcement in the high-profile area of technology and at the crucial level of ACTFL Advanced that is considered the optimum feasible target for teacher proficiency

4) Begin production of a bank of language resources that are pedagogically organized and available for distance distribution to other programs.

Major Activities

Phase 1: Design of Teacher Training Curriculum and Activity Pilots

A core team of 4 invited K-12 language teachers, representing Spanish, Japanese, French and German, will gather for two days with the PI, his assistants, and a K-12 curriculum specialist to design the main program of language and technology training that will be offered to sixteen more teachers subsequently drawn from throughout the state. (Example: The teams will simulate teaching Benchmark 3 second-language students how to use digital cameras, in order to determine which specific language resources—vocabulary, structures, and strategies—their students will need to manage the technology and carry out useful work with it, and how

much learning time will be required.) In advance, the PI will have determined and sent to the core team the basic specifications for the curriculum, such as the software and equipment that the group will use and ultimately teach to their language students, and the kinds of technological projects the student language learners will then undertake.

Applications will be solicited through the professional organization networks and by contact with the school districts. Participants will be selected on the basis of evident commitment to the profession, knowledge of current pedagogy, and contribution to the balance of the team in terms of language, geographic location, grade level, and kind of school. Some preference will be given to teachers whose proficiency in an additional language is at the Intermediate-Low/Mid level, so that they can serve as trial subjects during development of materials and activities.

Phase 2: Teacher Teams Develop Student Learning Modules

Sixteen K-12 second-language teachers, associated into teams where possible by shared building, language, or region, will join the above core team for 2 sessions, in total 6 working days. During that time they will identify the requisite generic language skills and specialized language that learners will need, acquire the technological skills, and design and produce the instructional modules that will then enable them, and later other teachers to whom the materials will be made available, to deliver in their own programs systematic, long-term instruction in which students will simultaneously acquire second-language and technological skills, both for their own sake and to produce collections of materials of use in second-language programs. They will also generate sample student products to demonstrate what the resource bank will consist of. (Example: While themselves learning how to use digital cameras, process their images, database banks of images, and incorporate images into DTP/PDF documents, the teachers will note the necessary language tools and develop the actual student-centered activity modules that will then be used in their programs).

Depending on the home locations of the participants, the sessions will be conducted in the Portland metro area, at another site elsewhere in the state, and/or by distance delivery. Participants' home districts must guarantee access to adequate technological resources to support implementation of the modules in their language programs. Self-organized teams will be given preference over individual applicants. An attempt will be made to attract a collection of participants with a range of language proficiencies, including not only native speakers and high-level non-native speakers, but also some below the ACTFL Advanced level; for reasons see "Evaluation— c) Research Components" below.

One team will be drawn from Portland Public Schools, which has been asked to provide cost-sharing in space, facilities, and teacher released time. Teams from the mid-Valley,

southern Oregon, and central/eastern Oregon are desirable and can be expected with some confidence. Participation from private schools will be solicited. Any places left vacant will then be offered to post-secondary faculty and teaching assistants who have demonstrated a serious commitment to lower-level language teaching and especially to standards-based instruction. Aside from bringing the team up to full number, such participants can help explore how the program of learning designed for K-12 can be articulated with second-year college language programs, which are a key area of integration and also a notable weakness in the curriculum.

Useful here is a specific example of technology-based activity and the associated language learning as it will ultimately take place in the language programs. Two important parts of language development in the range between near-CIM and near-PASS are the abilities to describe people and objects physically ("the kid with the red hair"), and to locate entities in three-dimensional space ("standing in front of the school"). Description demanded for its own sake does not yield much in the way of commitment or memorable language. But taking a picture of items with names and prices in a local store in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood, so that other students can use it to learn language, can improve the language-learning experience in two ways: it adds concreteness ("The Mexican CDs are too dark—I can't read the titles") and it adds motivation ("I made these pictures. They're for our class, I talked Spanish with the people in the store, and now I know how my family can make its personalized Christmas cards.").

Phase 3: Teams Field-Test Modules

The teacher teams, perhaps beginning even during Phase 2, will implement the modules in their own classrooms. (Example: Students of Spanish will photograph or scan local scenes and other resources—shop displays, community posters, product packages, etc.—that are linguistically rich in Spanish-language content that will be useful learning resources for still other students aiming for CIM/PASS/CAM. They will process, organize and catalog the images so that they can be used conveniently in the language program and become parts of a larger resource bank.) This, rather than just serving as a tech-toy reward, is the more important reason for providing each teacher participant with a digital camera on completion of the first part of Phase 2. (Full payment of honoraria will occur only after Phase 4.) Teacher participants will also learn sound-processing, so that they can begin to build up collections of audio realia for their target languages.

During this stage the student learners will experience the full benefit of content-based instruction in a second-language program. Because they will be getting "hands-on" experience with technology, and using it for a purpose, they will be able to make a much better match between the language they are learning and how it is used to interact with the world. Language teachers who have worked with techniques like TPR (Total Physical Response) will readily

take to the activities. Learners who have heretofore found little motivation in acquiring this or that structure or vocabulary area will have much more reason to do so. Learners who are not directly involved in the development of materials will neverthless benefit from them as they are used in the rest of the language program.

Phase 4: Teams Revise and Expand the Curriculum and Modules

After beginning the implemention of their dual-purpose programs, the teams will gather again, for 3-4 working days, to critique and revise the curriculum and materials, to draft performance evaluation guides and apply them to work samples, and to prepare for wider distribution the student-produced resources that have been or will later be generated.

Phase 5: The Curriculum, Modules and Resource Bank Are Readied for General Distribution

The PI and assistants will make ready the curriculum for teacher training, the instructional modules, and, later, the student-created language resources to be distributed over the internet (and possibly locally on CD-ROM) for use by any language program. If previous teacher behavior patterns are any indication, the production of materials, expansion of the resource bank, and collegial exchange of resources could then go on forever.

Timeline

June/July 2000: Phase 1 begins. Project description and solicitation of participants for Phase 2 sent to K-12 language teachers, public and private, before end of school year. in June. Core design team meets late June or early July (=Phase 1). Participants in Phase 2 selected and notified.

Late Summer 2000: Phase 2 begins. The larger teams meet for their first session of several days, either in one large gathering or at two or more sites in the state. Second meeting of several days during Christmas or spring break. Initial presentation of project at fall COFLT Conference.

Fall-Winter-Spring 2001: Phase 2 continues (see above). Phase 3 begins and runs concurrently with latter part of Phase 2. PI will be on sabbatical and will visit participants' programs.

Summer 2001: Phase 4, followed by open-ended Phase 5. Presentation of project materials at spring COFLT Conference.

Fall 2001: Resource bank materials available for general distribution and independent use; curriculum and instruction modules available for use in programs beyond the teams' own sites.

Evaluation & Indicators

a) External: An outside evaluator with professional competence in language teaching and acquisition will review the program during and after the first session of Phase 2, during Phase 4, and when samples for Phase 5 are ready. The evaluator has already agreed to serve.

b) Internal: Phase 2 team participants' language proficiency will be evaluated before and after the program and their subjective responses will be solicited. Student learner work samples and language proficiency samples will be collected during the initial field-testing and correlated to the state standards-based indicators for second languages and technology skills; their subjective responses will also be solicited, especially their estimates of how their skills in both language and technology progressed when the two were developed together, as compared to how they might have developed had they been acquired separately.

c) Research components: Evidence will be gathered to investigate several key questions that have arisen as the state moves toward standards-based second-language instruction: 1) Is the minimal comfortable level of teacher language proficiency for such activities indeed ACTFL Advanced, which is the level recommended in general by state experts and the professional organizations? 2) Does the focus on the relatively circumscribed (though important) context of technology in the classroom, and the development of specialized vocabuary and structures in the teacher, make it possible for teachers whose general language language proficiency is somewhat below the Advanced level nevertheless to provide effective instruction that will help learners move toward CIM/PASS language proficiency and meet similar goals in technology skills?

d) Target indicators: 1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 3.1 to be evaluated by teacher and student work samples measured against standard scoring guides; 1.2 to be measured by participants' production of assessment tools and rubrics; 2.1 to be measured by comparison to second language standards set by participants' districts; 4.1. and 4.2 depend on source of teacher participants, but teachers from schools that serve disadvantaged populations have been regular sources of participation in similar previous projects in second languages.

Key Personnel (CVs attached)

Project Director/PI: William B. Fischer, Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures

Chief Assistant: Kathie Godfrey, MA (Applied Linguistics), Portland State University

Examples of Relevant Involvement

PI statement:

I have a long record of involvement with standards-based second-language education at both K-12 and post-secondary levels. I was a participant in the first team of German faculty in the country to receive OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) testing training (1983). I have served on the various PASS committees since 1994, and on the Portland Public Schools Second Languages Design Team since it began its work two years ago. Since 1983 I have taught most of my department's teacher-training courses, including many years of courses in proficiency assessment in foreign languages. I have published two textbooks which are organized specifically according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and are thus compatible with K-12 language standards. I am a co-director of two previous Eisenhower Grant projects and have been awarded several small institutional grants for development of teaching materials.

My use of technology in my subject area extends over a similar period of almost 20 years. I have taught our department's technology course since 1983. Over the past ten years I have produced computer-based versions of the textbooks I co-authored, as well as several other software programs for second languages. I have done the audio and DTP production for those and other projects, and have received several institutional grants and prizes for my work. Last year I received a similar grant, from the Northwest Academic Computing Consortium, for developing a specialized WWW chatroom for second-language courses. Samples of my projects can be found by following links from "Projects and Publications" on my website (http://web.pdx.edu/~fischerw).

With regard to language across the curriculum (LAC) and content-based instruction (CBI) with technology as the subject of instruction, several years ago I developed and began teaching a third-year German course whose activities were organized as generic business environment in which, of course, basic technology was a rather important element. The target language proficiency level was ACTFL Intermediate-High/Advanced, which is equivalent to what may become Oregon benchmarks 8 and 10 or perhaps the CAM. Participants composed narrative resumes, wrote letters of inquiry and application, and developed presentations based on their vocational or serious avocational interests. We tried to conduct parts of our sessions in a business atmosphere, including both workplace small-talk (also part of the ACTLF Advanced realm) and the language which was needed to carry out essential office tasks, such as replacing copier toner or dealing with broken equipment. I organized the language input and desired output to fit those tasks. Thus, discussing how to replace a toner cartridge focused on giving instructions, first in the active voice that would be used by regular employees ("Pull out the old

cartridge"), and then in the passive voice that might well be used by supervisors who are in charge of equipment but themselves do not maintain it directly ("The old cartridge has to be pulled out."). Another major activity was learning to use computers in an office environment, with German as the language of negotiating meaning.

When I again taught this year the department's technology course for language teachers, for the first time I added a pedagogical component where the participants developed ideas about teaching technology in the target language, and even tried out their ideas by walking through the learning experience using their alternate, lower-level foreign languages. For example, we tried to learn how to use a database to create employee records, while speaking our rudimentary alternate languages and making notes about the words and structures that we found to be essential. One immediate result was an application for an internal PSU grant to develop a multi-language advanced course which would consist of a business that produces specialized glossaries for sale, locally or over the internet, to travelers who wanted quick reference tools, for example a laminated pocket card with specialized skiing vocabulary. We also discussed the Eisenhower Grant project proposed here. My proposed chief assistant is the top student in that course. She has long experience in teaching English as a second language in Germany. Another reason for her participation is that she is based in the Applied Linguistics Department, which perforce has supplied considerable training to second language teachers and which we want to integrate more closely into language teacher training as the need for it expands.

Attached are sample course materials. Since they are mostly in German, I provide here summaries in English:

"Orientierung im Computerlabor" ("Computer Lab Orientation") — Example of partner/small-group activity: directions about how to learn about technology (ask questions, say aloud what you are doing, make notes for an informal manual); skeleton for learning computer basics ("1. We describe the equipment setup and its parts: 'First I'll show you the…'"

"Übungsblatt" (Worksheet: Word Processing and Databases) — Example of class discussion activity: prep stage questions ("How many lists are you in? How many do you keep? Do you keep them on paper or on computer? How do you update them?"); relating topic to the course ("Which companies, universities, etc. maintain data lists, and what kinds? Are there companies or similar undertakings that don't keep lists?"). Purpose: solidify generic Advanced language as springboard for addition of specialized languages in hands-on situation.

My website has course description and discussion that was circulated to students as the course was being developed: <http://web.pdx.edu/~fischer>; follow links from "Stuff for Students" to "German 320."

Budget

1. Salaries and Wages
2. Employee Benefits

PI honorarium for project supervision	$3000
Honorarium for Assistant to PI	1500
Clerical assistant / project materials archivist (CWSP or equivalent)	1000
honoraria for 4 core team teachers for phase 1 (2 days @$100)	800
honorarium for K-12 curriculum expert for phase 1 (2 days %@$100)	200
honoraria for 16 teachers for phases 2 & 4 (10 days @$75)	12,000
honoraria for 4 core team teachers for phases 2 & 4 (10 days @$100)	4000
honorarium for K-12 curriculum expert for phases 2 & 4	1000
project evaluator (20 hours @ $50)	1000
	$24,500

3. In-State Travel

(Figures are based on the following assumptions:
1) In the main teacher group there will be approximately equal numbers of participants from the Portland metro area, the Valley, Southern Oregon, and Central/Eastern Oregon. The core group will likely be from the metro area or the Valley,and will thus need no major travel support for phase 1.
2) Therefore, whether the sessions are held all in one place or at more than one site, approximately 12 teachers will travel to any given gathering. The average distance of participants from the meetings will likely be about 200 miles.
3) Phase 2, or at least its first part, will be held in Portland, to avoid the risk of using unfamiliar technical facilities for the most important meeting of the full group.
4) All participants will provide own meals, aside from refreshments during meetings, provided by grant.

50 round trips of 400 miles @$0.28/mile)	$5600
lodging 150 nights @ $50	7500
	$13,100

4. Materials and supplies

refreshments during breakouts	$500
digital cameras (21 @ $500)	10,500
media (CD-ROM blanks, etc.)	500
other clerical (paper, toner, photocopying, postage)	500
	$12,000

total amount requested: $49,600