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# TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

## Contextualized Language Instruction

Third Edition

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# Preliminary Chapter: Becoming Familiar with the Profession and Expectations for Language Teachers

This preliminary chapter introduces the foreign language profession by describing its structure or “architecture” and by presenting expectations for teachers in terms of standards that have been developed for teacher candidates, beginning teachers, and accomplished teachers of foreign languages. As you explore this chapter, you will want to visit the *Teacher’s Handbook* Web site, where indicated, in order to access the links to professional organizations and standards documents. At the end of the chapter, you will be asked to complete a series of tasks in which you will consult these Web sites to find specific information about the organizations, conferences, and teacher standards.

In this chapter, you will be introduced to:

- key national membership organizations important to the profession
- national language-specific organizations
- organizations that provide valuable professional resources and support
- regional language conferences
- your state language association
- key professional journals
- the continuum of foreign language teacher standards: NCATE, INTASC, NBPTS

**Investigate and Reflect:** Learning About Your National Language-Specific Organization and Your State Language Association; Learning About Your Regional Language Conference; Familiarizing Yourself With Foreign Language Resources; Comparing Teacher Standards Across the Career Continuum

In recent years, the foreign language field has made great strides in achieving a level of professional status that enables us to play an increasingly more prominent role in educational and legislative circles. Professional organizations have collaborated with one another as never before in order to set professional goals, establish policies, and offer their constituents valuable support and assistance.<sup>1</sup> History will mark the past five years as a pivotal time period in foreign language education as our profession came together to articulate its expectations for language teachers in terms of standards for teacher candidates, beginning teachers, and more accomplished teachers.

## ARCHITECTURE OF THE PROFESSION<sup>2</sup>

This section presents important information about the organizations and endeavors that constitute the architecture of our profession. The information described here is summarized from that which appears on the Web site for each organization. On the *Teacher’s*





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*Handbook* Web site, you will find links to each of these sites, which you can access to acquire additional information and updates. You will notice throughout the chapter the use of a number of acronyms. Consult our Web site for a list of key acronyms as you become familiar with the architecture of the profession.

## Key National Membership Organizations

**MLA.** Founded in 1883, the Modern Language Association (MLA) promotes the study and teaching of language and literature and offers opportunities for its members to share their scholarly literary findings and teaching experiences with colleagues. Comprised of over 30,000 members in 100 countries, MLA hosts an annual convention and other meetings, works with related organizations, and maintains one of the finest publishing programs in the humanities. Its involvement with foreign language teaching and learning specifically is evidenced by its role in the creation of other key organizations.

**ACTFL.** The national umbrella organization for the foreign language teaching profession is the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), founded in 1967 by the leadership of the MLA to address issues of teacher preparation, language instruction, and curriculum development. At that time, MLA turned its focus to the promotion of foreign language study and the development of tests for use in colleges, universities, and secondary schools (Hancock & Scebold, 2000).

ACTFL is the only national organization dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels of instruction. The mission of ACTFL is to promote and foster the study of foreign languages and cultures as an integral component of American education and society. It is an individual membership organization of currently more than 7,000 language educators and administrators from elementary school through graduate levels of education, as well as government and industry. The organization focuses on issues that are critical to the growth of both the profession and individual teacher. ACTFL publishes the refereed journal *Foreign Language Annals*, which includes a member news section that features reports on ACTFL's activities and national news on issues of importance to foreign language educators. In addition to sponsoring an annual conference, the organization offers many professional development workshops for its members dealing with a wide range of topics, such as oral proficiency testing, standards-based instruction and curriculum development, performance-based authentic assessment, and second-language research.

**ADFL.** The Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (ADFL) was established in 1969 also under the auspices of the MLA to address the professional concerns of administrators from foreign language departments at two- and four-year colleges and universities. Member departments are represented by their chairs or heads, who may in turn grant the privileges of membership to their faculty and graduate students. The ADFL puts department chairs in touch with experienced peers and provides professional development to help departmental leaders work more effectively. It provides a forum for collegial exchange about important issues through its summer seminars, Web site, and journal, the *ADFL Bulletin*, which publishes articles on scholarly and practical matters of concern to the profession and also contains news and information of interest to the profession.

**State Language Associations.** Under ACTFL's umbrella are the state language associations. To obtain information about your state association, see the *Teacher's Handbook* Web site for a link to foreign language state associations.

Also working in collaboration with ACTFL are the national language-specific organizations, which include:

- American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA)
- American Association of Teachers of French (AATF)
- American Association of Teachers of German (AATG)
- American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI)
- American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL)
- American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP)
- American Classical League (ACL)
- American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR)
- Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary (CLASS) and Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA)
- National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT) and Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ)
- American Association of Teachers of Korean (AATK)
- American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages (AATT)
- African Languages Teachers Association (ALTA)
- Council of Teachers of Southeast Asia Languages (COTSEAL)
- North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers (NAACLT)
- International Association of Teachers of Czech (formerly the North American Association of Teachers of Czech) (IATC-NAATC)
- National Association of Professors of Hebrew (NAPH)
- Norwegian Teachers Association of North America (NORTANA)
- South Asian Language Teachers Association (SALTA)

Some of these associations also have local chapters within the states.

**TESOL.** TESOL—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages—is an acronym that refers to both the field itself and the professional association.<sup>3</sup> The field of teaching English to speakers of other languages is a professional endeavor that requires specialized training. TESOL differs from teaching English to native speakers of English, since its primary focus is on teaching non-natives to communicate in English and understand cultural practices of English-speaking communities. English as a second language (ESL) educators teach in countries where English is the dominant language, such as Australia, Canada, England, and the United States. English as a foreign language (EFL) educators teach in countries where English is spoken only as a foreign language, such as Japan and Saudi Arabia.

In English-speaking countries, ESL teachers work with immigrants and refugees at all levels of the education system, including in adult education in community colleges and community-based programs. In higher education settings, they work with international students in intensive and semi-intensive English language programs. There has been an increasing interest in the specialized area of English for specific purposes (ESP), which focuses on language skills required for academic fields (e.g., engineering, medicine, computer science) as well as business and vocational fields, and in the area of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which prepares students to use English in their academic pursuits.

Founded in 1966, the professional organization, TESOL is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, and has approximately 14,000 members in over 120 countries. Its mission is to ensure excellence in English language instruction to speakers of other languages. TESOL values professionalism in language education; individual language rights; accessible, high-quality education collaboration in a global community; interaction of research and reflective practice for educational improvement; and respect for diversity

and multiculturalism. TESOL's publications include a scholarly journal, *TESOL Quarterly*, and a practical magazine, *Essential Teacher*. TESOL has more than ninety worldwide affiliated organizations that represent 50,000 ESOL professionals, and its annual convention attracts 7,000-10,000 participants.

**NNELL.** In 1987, the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL) was created to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to their own. NNELL provides leadership, support, and service to those committed to early language learning and coordinates efforts to make language learning in programs of high quality a reality for all children. NNELL is located at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, publishes the journal *Learning Languages*, and holds its annual meeting at ACTFL's annual conference, in addition to networking sessions at regional and state conferences.

**AAAL.** Founded in 1977, the American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) is a professional organization of scholars who conduct research in the field of applied linguistics. AAAL members research topics and issues related to language education, first and second language acquisition and loss, bilingualism, discourse analysis, literacy, rhetoric and stylistics, language for special purposes, psycholinguistics, second and foreign language pedagogy, language assessment, and language policy and planning. Among its many scholarly activities is its annual conference, which is recognized nationally and internationally for its in-depth symposia and workshops on key issues in applied linguistics.

**NABE.** The National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) is a nonprofit national membership organization founded in 1975 to address the educational needs of language-minority students in the U.S. and to strengthen the language competencies and multicultural understanding of all Americans. Located in Washington, DC, NABE is the only professional organization at the national level wholly devoted to representing both English language learners and bilingual education professionals. NABE supports the education of English language learners by providing professional development, collaborating with other civil rights and education organizations to ensure that the needs of language minority<sup>4</sup> students are met in every state, and lobbying Congress for funding for programs that serve English language learners.

**CALICO.** CALICO, the Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium, serves members in both education and technology. With an emphasis on the role of technology in language teaching and learning, CALICO is a recognized international clearinghouse and leader in computer-assisted learning and instruction. CALICO sponsors publications, special interest groups, and annual symposia.

**ASLTA.** The American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) is a national organization of professionals teaching American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf Studies that fosters exchange of ideas among teachers on best practices at the local, state, and national levels. ASLTA was originally formed as the Sign Instructors Guidance Network (SIGN) in 1975 as a branch of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). The mission of ASLTA is to preserve the integrity of ASL and deaf culture. The Association is committed to ensuring that teachers of ASL meet the highest level of professional competence in knowledge and skill, improving the professional status of ASL and Deaf Studies teachers, and promoting the teaching of ASL in all levels of education.

**NAD.** The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) promotes, protects, and preserves the rights and quality of life of deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the United States.

With representatives from each state, the following six areas of focus have been identified for current endeavors: Civil/Legal Rights, Education/Human Services, Language and Interpreting, Multicultural/Cultural, Telecommunications/Technology, and Youth/Leadership.

**RID.** Founded in 1964, the Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) works to provide training, testing, and certification for new and professional interpreters, as well as recommendations for ethical practices in interpreting. The philosophy of RID is that effective communication will be ensured by excellence in the delivery of interpretation and transliteration services among people who are deaf, or hard of hearing, and people who are hearing. Their mission is to provide international, national, regional, state, and local fora and an organizational structure for the profession of interpreting and transliterating American Sign Language and English.

**NCOLCTL.** The National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL), known as CouncilNet on the Web, addresses the issue of national capacity in the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) by facilitating communications among member organizations and with the governmental, private, heritage, and overseas sectors of the language community. Its ultimate goal is to increase the collective impact of LCTL constituencies on America's ability to communicate with peoples from all parts of the world.

**NASILP.** The National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs (NASILP) was established to foster self-managed academic programs in the less-commonly taught languages (LCTLs). Among the languages typically offered through NASILP are American Sign Language, Haitian-Creole, Latvian, Slovak, Apache, Hebrew, Lithuanian, Slovenian, Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin (Chinese), Swahili, Armenian, Hmong, Norwegian, Swedish, Cambodian (Khmer), Hungarian, Persian, Tagalog, Cantonese, Indonesian, Polish, Telegu, Czech, Irish (Gaelic), Portuguese (Brazilian), Thai, Danish, Italian, Quechua, Turkish, Dutch, Japanese, Romanian, Ukrainian, Finnish, Kazakh, Russian, Urdu, Korean, Serbo-Croatian, Vietnamese, Lao, Siswati, Yoruba.

**NCSSFL and NADSFL.** There are two national associations for foreign language administrators. The National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NCSSFL) is an organization of education agency personnel from all states of the United States who have the responsibility of foreign language education at the state level. The National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL) promotes excellence in foreign language education for all learners through professional development of foreign language supervisors.

### Organizations/Resources Offering Valuable Professional Support

There are several organizations that provide valuable resources, professional development opportunities, and/or legislative and lobbying support for the foreign language field.

**JNCL-NCLIS.** The Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL), located in Washington, DC, was formed in 1976 as a vehicle for legislative and lobbying support for foreign languages. In the early 1980s, the National Council on Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) was created as the lobbying branch of JNCL, after which the name of the organization became JNCL-NCLIS. The organization has non-profit status and is currently comprised of over 60 organizations, united in their belief that all Americans must have the opportunity to learn and use English and at least one other language. The staff of JNCL-NCLIS monitors and influences legislation and federal programs that support many professional endeavors.

JNCL-NCLIS continues to serve as a forum that is widely recognized as a gathering place for those who govern our professional associations (Wallinger & Scebold, 2000).

**CAL.** The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is a private, non-profit organization, headquartered in Washington, DC, and comprised of a group of scholars and educators who use the findings of linguistics and related sciences to identify and address language-related problems and issues. The mission of CAL is to promote and improve the teaching and learning of languages, identify and solve problems related to language and culture, and serve as a resource for information about language and culture. The organization conducts a wide range of activities including research, teacher education, analysis and dissemination of information, design of instructional materials, conference planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

**NCES.** The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal agency that collects and analyzes data related to education in the United States and other nations. Among its publications is the *Digest of Education Statistics*, which provides a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from pre-K through graduate school.

**U.S. Department of Education.** The U.S. Department of Education has awarded grants to a selected group of institutions for developing and operating "Language Resource Centers," the purpose of which is to improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Currently, there are fourteen Title VI Language Resource Centers nationwide:

- Brigham Young University National Middle East Language Resource Center
- University of Chicago South Asia Language Resource Center
- Duke University and UNC-Chapel Hill Slavic and East European Language Resource Center
- Georgetown University, CAL, George Washington University National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC)
- University of Hawaii National Foreign Language Resource Center
- Indiana University Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region
- Iowa State University National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC)
- Michigan State University Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR)
- University of Minnesota Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA)
- The Ohio State University National East Asian Languages Resource Center
- University of Oregon Center for Applied Second Language Studies
- The Pennsylvania State University Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research (CALPER)
- San Diego State University Language Acquisition Resource Center (LARC)
- University of Wisconsin National African Languages Resource Center (NALRC)

**FLTEACH.** The Foreign Language Teaching Forum (FLTEACH) is a service for foreign language teachers that includes a WWW page, an e-mail LISTSERV Academic Discussion List, archives, and the FLNews server at the State University of New York College at Cortland. FLTEACH was launched in 1994 and operates on a computer at SUNY Buffalo. It is moderated by Jean LeLoup and Bob Ponterio, professors at SUNY Cortland. The focus of the interactive discussions is foreign language teaching methods, including school/college articulation, training of student teachers, classroom activities, curriculum, and syllabus design. Discussions are open to students in teacher preparation programs, new and experienced

teachers, administrators, and other professionals interested in language teaching. Current FLTEACH membership includes colleagues from diverse institutions across the United States and around the world.

### Regional Language Conferences

The foreign language profession also has regional conferences, whose mission is to conduct a yearly conference and other professional development opportunities for language teachers in the region:

- Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (CSC)
- Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL)
- Pacific Northwest Council on Foreign Languages (PNCFL) (meets in conjunction with a state's annual meeting)
- Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT)
- Southwest Conference on Language Teaching (SWCOLT)

As a language teacher, you should become familiar with ACTFL and/or TESOL, your national language-specific organization, your state language association, your regional language conference, and other resources that can assist you in your teaching and professional development. Your local geographical area should also have foreign language collaboratives, local chapters of the national language-specific organizations, and other language groups that offer opportunities for professional development and networking with fellow professionals.

### Key Professional Journals

The following are some prominent journals in the fields of second language acquisition and/or foreign language teaching that you will find helpful as you engage in the assignments presented in *Teacher's Handbook* and as you continue your professional development as a language teacher. You have seen the names of several of these journals in the previous section "Key National Membership Organizations," as many are published by national associations. You will undoubtedly encounter other journals, particularly those that relate to the teaching of your specific language.

*The Canadian Modern Language Review*  
*Die Unterrichtspraxis*  
*Foreign Language Annals*  
*French Review*  
*Hispania*

*Language Learning*  
*Learning Languages*  
*The Modern Language Journal*  
*Studies in Second Language Acquisition*  
*TESOL Quarterly/Essential Teacher*

## EXPECTATIONS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS: A CONTINUUM OF TEACHER STANDARDS



For the first time in the history of our profession, there is an articulated set of expectations for language teachers at three key points across their teaching career paths: teacher education (NCATE), initial teacher licensure (INTASC), and advanced professional certification (NBPTS). These standards offer the framework for a professional development continuum—"a seamless system that takes teachers from the entry level to the accomplished level over

Comment on:

1. The similarities and differences between the state standards and the NCATE standards in each of the areas above.
2. The continuum of expectations across the NCATE, INTASC, and NBPTS standards with respect to the teacher's level of oral proficiency and cultural understanding.

Your instructor might have you work in small groups on this assignment.

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## NOTES

1. On the *Teacher's Handbook* Web site, see the link to the New Visions in Action (NVA) Project, a national endeavor begun in 1998 by the National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC) at Iowa State University and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). It is a project involving Pre-K–16 foreign language educators from every state in a collaborative effort to identify and implement the actions necessary to improve the education system so that it can achieve the goal of language proficiency for all students.
2. The inspiration for this section came from the Foreign Language Methods online course developed by ACTFL/Weber State University in Ogden, UT, in 2003, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This section is an expanded version of Module 2, Theme IV of the online course.
3. Professional preparation in TESOL is available throughout the world for native speakers of English and those whose first language is not English.
4. The term *language minority students* refers to individuals from homes where a language other than English is actively used and who therefore have had an opportunity to develop some level of proficiency in a language other than English. A language minority student may be of limited English proficiency, bilingual, or essentially monolingual in English (August & Hakuta, 1997, p. 15).