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1999

# Bringing the Standards into the Classroom: A Case Study of One School District's Implementation Process

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## Bringing the Standards into the Classroom

### A Case Study of One School District's Implementation Process

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#### Introduction

The term *standard* generally is defined as “a minimum level of competency, a measure of adequacy or a passing score on an assessment.” The U.S. Department of Education defines *content standards* as “what a student should know and be able to do” (1994, 2). These standards “describe the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students should have in order to attain high levels of competency in challenging matter” (1994, 2). *Performance standards* “identify the levels of achievement in the subject matter set out in the content standards. They state how well students demonstrate their competency in a subject” (1994, 2).

In 1993 federal funding was provided for the development of national foreign language standards for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The resulting content standards (*Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*) define what students should know and be able to do in grades four, eight, and twelve and were intended to “serve as a gauge for excellence” (National Standards in Foreign Language Learning Project 1996, 13). Like the mathematics goals, the foreign language goals were viewed as criteria for excellence rather than as a minimum level of competency (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics 1989, 2).

The Standards for Foreign Language Learning comprise five general domains, or goals, that describe what students should know and be able to do. Each of these broad goals is elaborated on in more specific standards

statements. These national goals and standards were intended to be used "in conjunction with state and local frameworks and standards to determine the best approaches and reasonable expectations for the students in individual districts and schools" (NSFLE Project 1996, 24). In this way, national, state, and district documents describe related sets of goals and standards that influence and inform one another.

At the state level the *Nebraska K-12 Foreign Language Frameworks* has as its mission to "provide direction and support for school communities in the development and assessment of an articulated foreign language curriculum" (Nebraska Department of Education 1996, 3). Like the national-level document, the state *Frameworks* document defines five broad goals for instruction and offers related sets of standards. It also suggests content, includes sample units and recommends assessment procedures. At the local level each school district curriculum defines the local goals for instruction, content, scope and sequence, and resources, including specific assessment techniques. It is the task of the classroom teacher to (a) identify specific objectives for learning, (b) identify the content and lesson specifics, and (c) determine specific objectives and assessments that directly relate the district goals and curriculum to the state and national documents.

There is an absence of research on the implementation process itself, and the impact of the state frameworks on local school districts and classroom teachers. The study reported here investigates how three classroom teachers in one school district implemented the guidelines of Standards for Foreign Language Learning and the Nebraska K-12 Foreign Language Frameworks. Through the voices of these teachers, insights and understanding can be gained about the implementation process and its impact on classroom teaching and student learning. Such insights can inform decision making on all levels and can guide school administrators, school boards, researchers, and teachers to gain a better understanding of the role of national levels goals and standards, as well as the state frameworks, in curriculum and instruction.

### **The Nebraska Model**

In 1994 the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) received a three-year grant to write and implement state content standards in foreign languages. While the 925 local school boards in Nebraska are each responsible for writing their school district's curriculum, the NDE's role is to provide assistance without mandating what should be taught. Much like the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* document (1996), the purpose of the *Frameworks* document in the state of Nebraska is to set out broad but attainable goals and to build statewide consensus concerning what will be taught in K-12 foreign language classes. Nebraska was chosen as a site for the *Frameworks* project

because it “ranks second nationally in the percentage of students enrolled in secondary school foreign language due to a doubling of enrollment in the last ten years” (Trayer 1997, 1). During the first year of the grant (1994–1995), a writing team consisting of 26 foreign language educators from a variety of regions of the state as well as from varied educational backgrounds, ranging from elementary to university educators, wrote the *Frameworks*. The document is based on the same five goals (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities) and their related standards as those outlined in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning. The *Frameworks* was completed in March 1996. A copy of the *Frameworks* can be accessed on the Web at <http://nde4.nde.state.FORLG/FL20.html>.

The following two years were dedicated to the dissemination and implementation of the *Frameworks*. The project coordinator, Marie Trayer, attributes the success of the implementation stage to the opportunities teachers had to conduct action research in implementing the five C's. Equally important were two additional projects. The first, the Teacher Certification Guidelines Project, involved setting guidelines for teacher certification based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) *Proficiency Guidelines* and the Nebraska *Frameworks*. Implementation at the university level took place as a committee of public school teachers, university methods and language professors, and administrators wrote the guidelines for *Frameworks*-based methods classes. The guidelines were piloted in the fall of 1997. The second, the Articulation Project, focused on the effective communication of K–16 *Frameworks*-based curricula by means of a series of *Frameworks* institutes held during the summers of 1996 and 1997. The institutes gave teachers the opportunity to learn how to use the *Frameworks* and to write the assessment portion of the document. Teachers across the state formed a *Frameworks* facilitators team to continue this “top-down approach” to dissemination at teacher-development workshops and conferences. This team of teachers shifted the focus from using the table of contents of textbooks to planning lessons using the *Frameworks*. This model made the teachers “plan backwards,” Trayer states, because it required them to “think about what they want students to know and be able to do at the end of their foreign language experience” (Trayer 1997, 3–4).

### **School District Implementation**

Copies of the *Frameworks* document were distributed to teachers in the Nebraska school district under consideration in this study during a staff development workshop in the fall of 1996. All 70 foreign language teachers in that district had already been exposed to the theoretical perspectives and content of the *Frameworks* during staff-development meetings or through their voluntary participation in the creation and dissemination of the document.

This study investigates how teachers in this district implemented the five C's. It uses a qualitative, case-study approach. Each of three teachers—one each from the elementary, middle, and high school levels—volunteered to participate in the study. All were women ranging in age from 37–50 with a minimum of 15 years of teaching experience in the district. Observations and interviews of the three teachers occurred in the spring of 1998. The coding and analyses of the data resulted in the emergence of four themes, to be described through the voices of the three participants: Kate, the elementary language teacher; Ann, the middle school language teacher; and Sandy, the high school language teacher.

### ***Theme One: The Frameworks as a “Road Map”***

The metaphor above best reflects the three teachers' perceptions of the *Frameworks*. Ann, the middle school teacher, stated the following:

I think it's a road map, systematic as well as systemic . . . that really helps the teacher. . . . It's a way for a teacher to view not only what he or she teaches but to put it in the context of a total program; take the students from where they are now and where they should be at the beginning or the expanding levels of that document.

She finds that the *Frameworks* document is useful in several ways: (1) “it helps with articulation and with assessment,” (2) “it provides resources that are useful for teachers, the scenarios,” (3) it has “a real focus on building skills focusing on communication in context, making all skills functional,” and (4) “it is not a textbook [but an] objective-based way of looking at what you teach.”

In comparing the *Frameworks* document to the national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*, Ann sees the *Frameworks* as “a road” that brings the national-level goals and standards closer to home, especially because of the effort made to prepare the teachers:

With the *Frameworks* . . . there was a real staff-development component, and I think that is important. There were summer [institutes] at the Educational Service Unit centers, . . . offerings . . . opportunities there for teachers to sit with the document and make it work for them. I think that can happen with the *Standards* [at the national level]. However, I don't think it happens very often or very well. And I go back to when we had the Proficiency Guidelines. We trained, we knew what they were, that's pretty much where it stopped. I didn't bring those proficiency things into my classroom very often, almost never. They did not apply to the kids I taught.

Ann stated that the *Frameworks* is different for several reasons: “it looks at the big picture”; the teachers “have been part of its development.” However, she

adds: "I don't think that the *Frameworks* is a particularly easy document to understand. I work with it a lot, and . . . every time, I have to take a portion of time to . . . reeducate myself."

Kate, the elementary language teacher, emphasized the usefulness of the *Frameworks* in her thematic and interdisciplinary teaching at the elementary level:

I have a copy of the *Frameworks* overview of goals and standards, and as I plan all of my activities, I try really diligently to include each of the goals in one or another component [of the lesson] . . . and I just don't know what I would do without the *Frameworks* and the support it has given me. . . . In a way it is a curriculum, but I would not say it is *the* curriculum . . . it's a format . . . a set of goals and guidelines that one would use to create a curriculum that best meets the students' needs.

In comparing the national-level *Standards* to the state-level *Frameworks*, Kate finds the latter teacher-supportive: "We took the best that we could from the national *Standards* and then even made modifications and expanded to the point that we supported teachers in a really positive way."

Like Kate, Sandy, the high school teacher, finds the *Frameworks* useful:

I would describe it as a very user friendly tool that a teacher can use in daily planning and also in long-range planning as far as addressing what students should know and be able to do. I think it is very easy to understand. . . . The organization is helpful as far as being able to find what you need. I like the way the terms are used and explained so everything in there can be easily understood by the average teacher.

However, she does note that when she began using the *Frameworks*, she took it one step at a time.

### ***Theme Two: The Frameworks as a "Cornerstone" of Curriculum***

The *Frameworks* served as the primary model, or cornerstone, for this district's curriculum guide. Teachers in this district use the curriculum guide as they develop daily lessons and activities as well as in the selection of textbooks. The authors of this district's curriculum guide for foreign language teaching took as their point of departure the overall goals, then considered the standards within each goal, and finally prepared progress indicators that explain how teachers should assess students' learning. In addition, the authors of the curriculum guide listed the skills and knowledge the students need to develop and offered a specific context through which each indicator may be taught (see Appendix A). As Sandy stated, "The Nebraska *Frameworks* originally did not address context in the "Curriculum Planning" chapter. Although the

*Frameworks* did offer contextualized learning scenarios for selected progress indicators, the context was not written into each one the way we have done here in [this district].”

Kate also considers the “Context” section a “really good” and “helpful” addition: “We have taken,” she stated, “what the *Frameworks* writers had intended for the “Curriculum Planning” section and really made it more teacher friendly.”

Ann, who contributed to the writing of the district curriculum guide as well as the *Frameworks* Scenarios section, simultaneously followed a simple but effective strategy: “Last year what I did was basically to familiarize myself with the *Frameworks* document, to use the checklist to see if this is what I teach in the first year and to compare that to what the *Frameworks* is saying.”

In addition, the teachers emphasized the impact of the *Frameworks* on the selection of new teaching materials. Kate recognized the instrumental role of the *Frameworks* in her choosing of new textbooks. According to Kate, by adding a section titled “Curriculum Planning” to the *Frameworks* document, the district teachers were able to develop and use their own criteria for choosing new materials and for teaching foreign languages. “We want our district curriculum guide to not be driven by the text that might be approved by the district or be driven by the materials that are developed or purchased for the teaching of languages,” she said.

In further discussions, the teachers also reflected on the key roles the *Frameworks* play in curriculum development. Sandy noted, “I think a lot of the conference topics referred to the *Frameworks* because that will be our guiding force now, and I think that most teachers are very interested in hearing about how other teachers are using it and hearing suggestions about how to use it.” While Sandy saw the *Frameworks* as the “guiding force” in conferences, Ann described it as a “cornerstone” of the curriculum guide in the district. All three expressed the hope that every teacher in the district will use the *Frameworks* as their roadmap when developing curriculum and selecting materials.

### ***Theme Three: The Five C's in the Classroom***

Overall, all three teachers noted that their lesson plans shifted from a focus on grammar and teaching method to one on outcomes and assessment, as they began to plan from the *Frameworks* and really implement the goals and standards. For these three teachers, the instructional planning process was driven by the goals, standards, and progress indicators derived from the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* and the *Nebraska K–12 Foreign Language Frameworks*. The three teachers noted that the five C's had an important impact on the following aspects of teaching: diverse sources and strategies, technology, creativity, target language, multilingual communities, culture, and immersion opportunities. The five C's also encouraged their use

of authentic and meaningful, real-world, student-centered, cooperative, pair and group activities. Ann used the metaphor of “the gate” to describe the impact of the *Frameworks* on teaching the five C’s. For her the *Frameworks* opened the way to resources and strategies teachers could use in creating activities.

Ann’s lessons themselves are “gates” into the target language and culture and the world of technology. One of her lessons focusing on cultures and communities leads students into exploring Paris via HyperStudio and the Internet. In her lesson the context and outcomes match the progress indicators and the assessment. The students have the opportunity to use a variety of resources and to present their findings.

In teaching based on the five C’s, each teacher followed a different process. When planning a unit, for example, Ann would use the checklist in the district Curriculum Guide to verify the year and level of instruction, would compare that to information from the *Frameworks*, and then would look back at the Curriculum Guide to determine the context. The sample lesson plan from a middle school thematic unit, in Appendix B, shows how Ann first selected the overall goals of the lesson (goals 1, 3, and 4). She then selected more specific standards within each goal; for example, under goal 1, she elected to work on Standards 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3. Finally, Ann selected the specific progress indicators that define exactly what her students will do during the lesson.

For Ann, communication was the C that she used “the most” with partner and group activities. She thought that the connections goal was not as feasible in the first and second year of middle school as it would be in exploratory language classes, in which teaching is more interdisciplinary. She also thought that the communities goal was sometimes hard to apply at the middle school level.

Kate, the elementary school teacher, kept the overview page of the *Frameworks* on her desk and used it to plan activities for her kindergarten and elementary students. “When I sit down to make my plans for my students,” she stated, “I try to always remember that what they are going to do will have an outcome that might be one of the progress indicators of the *Frameworks*.” Kate’s lesson, in Appendix C, also shows the careful progression from goals to standards and from standards to progress indicators. Kate provided her kindergarten and elementary students with immersion opportunities every day, using the calendar, authentic games, and different types of movement. She gave the students “oral or written information” to which they had to respond “by moving to their favorite color, talking about the weather conditions, discussing which food they liked best.”

On a typical day Kate’s classroom vibrates with her pleasant voice as she welcomes her kindergarten students to sit around her on the floor: “¡Buenos días! ¡Vengan aquí! ¡Sientense en el piso!” The students return the greetings and form a circle on the floor around Kate. The lesson is on the days of the week.

Kate claps her hands and starts to sing, pointing to the colorful calendar and inviting the students to join her: "*Hoy es jueves, mañana sera viernes. . . .*" Each time the students finish saying the days, Kate names a different body part: "Tap *en la oreja*; tap *en la boca*." The students follow the rhythm for a few minutes, and as soon as she gives the sign, each gets up and takes a turn hopping on the seven green and red squares placed next to each other on the floor while the whole class sings the days. The students hurry back to the original circle as Kate responds with feedback "*¡Bueno! ¡Qué bonito!*" and they are ready to start on a new activity. She immediately gives them the opportunity to judge their own performance with thumbs up or down.

On a different day Kate starts with the "Tortillas" song. She sits on the floor with the guitar, surrounded by her second-grade students. She sings:

Una, dos, tres, tortillas  
Cuatro, cinco, seis tortillas  
Siete, ocho, nueve tortillas  
Diez tortillas todos.

The students clap and sing along while waving their turtle drawings. The activity is part of an interdisciplinary unit on animals and illustrates goal 3, connections, and Standards 3.1 and 3.2. With this and similar activities, Kate addressed all the learning styles. "I really believe in the learning-styles research," she said, "that talks about different types of learners. . . . It is fascinating. . . ." In all of Kate's lessons, each activity met the communications goal, and it was not a "made-up pie-in-the-sky type of situation." The activities were "authentic, meaningful, useful reasons for kids to be working together."

Kate's favorite C goal was connections because of its interdisciplinary activities. Kate felt that the communities goal was "more of a stretch in some ways." However, to meet it, Kate spoke in Spanish with her Hispanic students and their parents and she and her students could order food in Spanish from the Mexican restaurant across from the school. Other ways to create multilingual communities were through e-mail pen pals, the Internet chat, and "See you, see me"\* that connected local and overseas schools. "As technology becomes more and more part of our teaching," Kate emphasized, "I really do not feel that there will be one C that is more available, or accessible, or easier than another."

When she began implementing the *Frameworks*, Sandy took time to familiarize herself with the document and gradually to adapt all her lessons to it. She believed that in two to three years all her lessons would "fit" the document. "In my classroom," she stated, "I am starting slowly because I have to figure out what exactly I am going to do with the document myself. I have so

\* "See you, see me" is a distance learning program whereby European and American schools are audiovisually connected to each other.

far implemented many of the progress indicators because I think we all do anyway, whether we realize it or not.” Sandy believes that all five C’s have equal importance, but communication spans all of the others because we use it to communicate the connections, comparisons, cultures, and communities we are studying.

As a member of the district’s writing team for the district Curriculum Guide, Sandy included in her lessons not only the specific goal and standards but also the progress indicators followed by the context, the skills and knowledge students will accomplish, assessment examples including rubrics, and finally the instructional strategies. This is the format Sandy plans to follow as she rewrites old lessons and creates new ones.

#### ***Theme Four: The Teacher as Learner***

All three teachers also viewed themselves as learners throughout the *Frameworks* implementation process. They mentioned “setting objectives,” “learning to assess,” “new ways of looking at lessons,” “bright future,” and “friendships” to describe their personal and professional development. Ann noted that the primary insight she gained was the importance of having clear objectives for instruction before selecting the materials and using those objectives to plan her lesson rather than letting the textbook drive her instruction. “I think that’s probably the most important part of the *Frameworks*,” she said. Of equal importance, however, was learning about assessment, about having assessment “as part of your planning at the beginning instead of as an afterthought almost.” She talked enthusiastically about learning to develop rubrics in cooperation with students during a *Frameworks* workshop and later applying them to a verbal activity in her classroom. She noted that students began to recognize the difference between low-, average-, and high-quality work and that teaching or learning was not “the teacher pulling down things out of the air.”

Sandy learned a new way of looking at her lessons and of thinking about what to expect from her students in relation to the five C’s: “Now when I look at what I want to accomplish in a school year, I am thinking about what I want to accomplish with the five C’s rather than ‘will I accomplish this grammar topic or that grammar topic?’” She also learned that teachers are receptive to the *Frameworks*, she stated that “there are always going to be a few who are resistant to the change. . . . but for the most part I feel most teachers are very receptive and open to the document.”

Kate discovered that the *Frameworks* offered her the support and rationale she needed for actually implementing change in her classroom. In planning her thematic units, she used “a starburst design rather than a linear one” and could use the document to show colleagues or her supervisor that her teaching is indeed based on the goals and standards set by national and state projects. She learned that the *Frameworks* document was especially helpful for articulation purposes. Even though elementary students’ developmental needs differ from those of middle and high school learners, “they can all be

emerging learners in a language; we can use the same set of progress indicators and outcomes for all, and that is really powerful." As a *Frameworks* participant, she discovered that there is "a wonderful future" for foreign language teachers and that being a world language educator is "one of the greatest things." The implementation of the *Frameworks* promoted networking among foreign language colleagues both within and beyond the school district. Kate has remained in contact with them through e-mail.

### **High School Thematic Unit: "La Cucaracha"**

In addition to sample lesson outlines in Appendices B and C, which show how the goals and standards can literally become the framework for an elementary and a middle school lesson, it may be helpful for the reader to consider three consecutive lessons in greater detail. The following example, designed by one of the authors for novice-level secondary students, outlines specific sequences of activities that address the *Frameworks*.

Level: second-year Spanish

Goal reflected: goal 1 (Standard 1.3), goal 2 (Standard 2.2),  
goal 3 (Standard 3.2), goal 4 (Standard 4.2)

Time required: three 50-minute periods

The objectives of the unit are (a) to use direct object pronouns (*me, te, le, nos, les*) in linguistic and cultural contexts; (b) to become acquainted with Internet resources in the areas of Spanish language and culture; (c) to locate geographical sites on a map of Chihuahua, Mexico; (d) to sing a Mexican song; and (e) to read about the Mexican Revolution and provide information from such reading.

#### *Day 1*

**Activity 1.** (introducing the pronouns in the classroom). To prepare the students for the activity, teacher places a plastic cockroach (*una cucaracha*) on an overhead projector and counts its legs. She bends one of the legs, pretending that it is broken, and tells the students that the cockroach is missing a leg: "*A la cucaracha le falta una pata. ¡La pobrecita cucaracha!*" Teacher uses total physical response (TPR), moving around the classroom to review the pronouns *me, te, le,* and *nos*, with the students in a question-statement format: "*Me falta un dólar.*" (I'm missing a dollar.) "*¿Te falta un libro?*" (Are you missing a book?) "*Le faltan dos bolígrafos. Nos faltan las bolsas. Les faltan las billeteras. Te doy tres dólares, . . .*" (He's missing two pens. We're missing the handbags. They're missing the wallets. I'm giving you three dollars. . . .)

**Activity 2.** (using the pronouns in context). Teacher hands out a cloze text of the song "*La Cucaracha*" and reads the song in its entirety as students fill

in the blanks. After checking the answers, teacher plays the song and the class sings “*La Cucaracha*” two to three times.

**Activity 3.** (Identifying the cities in the song). Teacher locates the cities of Chihuahua, Saltillo, and Jalisco on a map of Mexico and gives a brief summary of the Mexican Revolution as it relates to the Carrancistas, the Villistas, and Pancho Villa and his train. Teacher explains that “*La Cucaracha*” is the nickname for Pancho Villa’s old train that carried his men and ammunition during the Revolution. This last activity introduces the lesson for the computer lab activities on the following day.

### *Day 2*

In the computer lab with history and geography activities, students, each at his or her own computer, complete the assignment according to the teacher’s instructions. The starting point is the Web Crawler.

**Activity 1 (history).** Teacher types the words *Pancho Villa* and selects search. Among the first 25 resulting entries, students are told to concentrate on two: the first and the eighth. The eighth entry, “Chihuahua, Mexico,” yields General Francisco “Pancho” Villa’s picture, and students may view Pancho Villa on his horse. Next, the students click on the first entry that yields a text on Pancho Villa and the Mexican Revolution. Students are told to concentrate on the first two headings: (a) “Did the United States know of Villa’s attack before it happened?” and (b) “Why did Villa attack the United States?” Students are asked to read two passages and respond to the following questions:

1. Why is the date of March 9, 1916, important for Columbus, New Mexico?
2. What was Pancho Villa’s “real” first name?
3. Which shops were Villa’s favorite eating places?
4. How many men did Pancho Villa lose in his battle against Carranza?
5. What did the battle at Agua Preita change for Pancho Villa?
6. Who was President of the United States during Pancho Villa’s time?

**Activity 2 (geography).** The students are told to go back to the Chihuahua entry and to work with the table of contents at the bottom of the page, where the following categories are listed: (1) geography of the state, (2) history, (3) map of the state, (4) main cities, (5) a weekend in the mountains. Students first select item 3, “map of the state,” and respond to the following directives:

1. Write the names of the two states of the United States that were located in the northern part of the state of Chihuahua.
2. Write the names of three lakes in the state of Chihuahua.

Students then click on item 4, "main cities," to find a list of cities and then click on "Chihuahua City" and to write the names of two churches, two museums, and two amusement parks that they would visit as tourists. They finally click on item 5, "a weekend in the mountains," and find a list of several pictures showing camping sites and natural features in the Sierra Tarahumara. Students are asked to use the arrows and consider all dimensions of the picture and then to decide on the appropriate place to set up the virtual campsite. Before leaving the lab, students are given the following homework: in pairs they will use the Web site [www.netdotcom.com/revmexpc](http://www.netdotcom.com/revmexpc) to find the picture and text of their assigned Mexican revolutionary (examples: Emilio Zapata, Venustiano Carranza, or Francisco Madero). They must enlarge the picture for their class presentation on the following day.

### Day 3

**Activity 1 (classroom presentations).** Each pair of students posts the color picture of its revolutionary figure and presents him to the class in Spanish. Using U.S. and Mexican maps, learners locate the places of each revolutionary's activities.

**Activity 2 (the dance).** Following the presentations, the teacher shows the students the steps of "*La Cucaracha*" dance, and students practice first without and then with the music. They sing while dancing. As they tire, the students complain in Spanish, using the phrases they learned in lesson one: "*¡Ay, me falta una pata!*" (I am missing a leg!) "*¡Le falta la pata!*" (He or she is missing a leg!). The dance provides closure to the unit. Homework: Students are to write a concrete poem in Spanish about Pancho Villa and his *cucaracha* (train) to share with classmates the following day.

### Conclusion

This study shows that the *Frameworks* can give guidance and support to teachers in their daily practice and offer them an opportunity to become involved in professional-development activities. In the classroom the *Frameworks* can play the role of catalyst by providing teachers with a support system for helping them to look at their teaching with a critical eye, to affirm their current teaching practices, or to encourage change. By considering the five C's an attainable goal, they can discover the multifaceted role of the teacher and, by extension, that of the learner. Each one of the C's opens a new horizon in the teaching process, leading the teacher and learner into discovering themselves as communicators, connectors, comparison makers, culture transmitters, and community agents.

In addition, the *Frameworks* provides clear and specific guidelines for the teachers, enabling them to see the whole picture while leaving room for individual creativity. The multiple roles also demand that teachers seek out multiple sources of information and a feasible means of bringing the world into the classroom. In the area of technology too, the *Frameworks* provides teachers with ideas for projects and approaches. Integrating the five C's in the classroom can help reduce the monolithic image of the foreign language teacher as a provider of grammar rules. The change toward communicative classrooms can perhaps be the most important step in the process of implementing the five C's.

The *Frameworks* offered teachers professional opportunities to use their expertise at both state and district levels as they contributed to the *Frameworks* and the district Curriculum Guide. Teachers can assume leadership roles in shaping the language-teaching profession and can gain a tremendous sense of personal pride in their work. The *Frameworks* also fosters a sense of confidence for the future of language teaching, stemming from the conviction that the *Frameworks* is "a living document" as well as a dynamic project and is therefore subject to change and expansion.

Another issue that emerges from the application of the five C's is a gradual shift from viewing a teaching method as the organizing principle of instruction to defining and measuring what a learner is able to do. Determining the progress indicators and assessment at the outset takes precedence over the methods used to reach the specific outcomes. The teachers in the study referred to the methods used to reach the outcomes as the "route" or the "road" whose "gate" and "guide" was the *Frameworks*.

John F. Jennings points out that "the enterprise of developing standards is new for many and so what is learned in implementation must be brought back to change the standards to make them better" (1996, 19). The experience of these three teachers lends insight into the implementation stage of the Nebraska *Frameworks* in one school district and the effect of such implementation on teacher beliefs about teaching, learning second languages, and instructional practices in the classroom.

National efforts are underway to improve the implementation process and make the standards more meaningful to the classroom teacher of foreign languages. A collaborative effort of all major foreign language professional organizations—completion of a document that will provide goals, standards, and sample progress indicators in language specific contexts—is in the final stages (Zimmer-Loew 1998). This national standards effort will be expanded to include grades K-16. As the efforts to improve student learning in foreign languages by the national professional organizations, state departments of education, school districts, and teachers continue to evolve, endeavors must continue in both top-down and bottom-up directions to make continuous improvements. In order to create a profession capable of collective inquiry

and continuous renewal, each and every teacher must take responsibility, much as the three teachers in this study did, to make changes that make rich and multi-dimensional learning a reality in their classrooms.

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