



International and
Heritage
Languages
Association

Words have a longer life than deeds.

Pindar, Nemean Odes
Greek lyric poet (522 BC - 443 BC)

Tradition and Innovation: IHLA Values Live On

IHLA is approaching its 34th year of operations and this long history makes us all proud of its achievements and its goals. While some years funding and resources are harder to find, and events surrounding us and our community schools sometimes affect the ability to actively connect with one another, IHLA's thirty-plus member schools continue to gather, share ideas and work together building language education on common values.

These values are the belief that all students, no matter their age, can learn, nourish, practice and improve their heritage languages and cultures, connecting with traditions and history that their families have brought to Alberta, and ultimately, Canada. Additionally, students from any background can experience and learn

from international language and culture values and communication from dedicated instructors and community leaders, in ways that are specific to community language schools.

This is the year IHLA wishes to dedicate to values and traditions, while embracing a new direction: the use of innovation through social interactive technologies online.

You will find in this issue and the next ones, that IHLA activities and events will propose discovering these technologies and reflecting on their potentials to continue to support our language and culture education mandate. We invite you to review the professional development sessions for this fall 2011 and register online.

And while we focus on the future with and through technology, we

celebrate and remember our past, especially as we salute two great IHLA leaders who recently passed away: Sab and Bonnie. They shared their passion for language education so that many, in our communities, could learn and be inspired by their example. Innovation gains a whole new meaning through the message these leaders have shared with us for so long. We are grateful for their dedication and we know this organization and so many people who met them are better educators, language speakers and citizens because of their message.

We salute Bonnie and Sab! Thank you for everything!

Josephine, President

A Tribute to Bogumila (Bonnie) Szulc

by Greta Derus

I have had the honour, privilege and pleasure of knowing Bonnie Szulc for 27 years.

There is one strong thread that has been interwoven throughout the tapestry of our friendship. It is that of Blessed Pope John Paul II.

We met in 1984, bl. John Paul II's first visit as Pope to Edmonton. My parents and I were invited to Bonnie's house through my aunt. The Papa Mobile was driving down her street and we all went outside and sang a church hymn entitled, My chcemy Boga (We Desire Thee-Our Lord, Our God). Our beloved Pope waved to us as he drove by. From that point on my friendship with Bonnie grew.

Shortly after, I joined the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Catholic University of Lublin (where John Paul II taught for 25 years). Bonnie presided as president of the present Friends of John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin for the past twenty years.

Ten years later we were brought together professionally at the John Paul II Polish-Bilingual Program at St. Basil Catholic School. A decade passed again and found us both fortunate to have a private audience with John Paul II.

Bonnie constituted the Polish- Bilingual Program at St. Basil School. When one would think of our

program, along with its founder Maria Sava, one would think of Bonnie Szulc.

She was devoted to the program and its students. She instilled in her students patriotism for her and their beloved homeland- its rich history, culture, traditions as well as moral and Catholic values. The countless hours she had prepared students for poetry/literary contests, celebrations, various occasions in and out of school be it the Polish Hall, City Hall, Festival of Trees, Mother Language Day through IHLA and the Polish Radio. She truly was an inspiration to her fellow colleagues.

Bonnie was a private person. She kept her illness (to a great extent) to herself- something that we must respect and understand. Her faith was immensely strong. If you ever wanted to meet with her on a Saturday night, you could easily find her reading during the Saturday Mass at the Holy Rosary Parish. I truly believe that her unshakeable faith and the guidance of Blessed John Paul II helped her during her final days with us.

May we focus on this and the legacy that she has left behind.

(continues)

Bonnie Szulc was born in Poland in 1942, and passed away in Edmonton, on May 13, 2011.





Bonnie and Josephine at the Annual International Mother Language Day. February 2007.



Bonnie and two of IHLA board members, at a Changing Together function. Early 2011.



Bonnie with members of the Polish community. February 2009.

Dearest Bonnie:

You will be truly missed by all. We will miss your warm smile, your presence in our classrooms, hallways, staffroom and during our celebrations.

Farewell esteemed colleague, very dear and cherished friend.

God be with you. May you rest in peace.

Droga Bogusiu, Kochana Przyjaciolko:

Zawsze bedziesz czescia naszej wspolnoty szkolnej, czlonkinia naszej rodziny.

Bedzie nam brakowalo Ciebie w naszych klasach, w pokoju nauczycielskim oraz na roznych uroczystosciach. Pozostaniesz na zawsze w naszych sercach.

Niech Ci ziemia bedzie lekka. Zegnaj kolezanko.

Spoczywaj z Bogiem.

Sabatino Roncucci

The Life Translator

by Valeria Palladino

At the funeral celebrations of Sab Roncucci, on September 2, 2011, the pastor called him an “Interpreter of God”.

Sab’s love for languages was well known to all who had the honour of meeting him, even after a few minutes from the usual introductions to this great Italian community leader. Proud of his Italian heritage and passion, his ability to connect with people from all over the world, here in Edmonton, in Canada or back in Italy (especially during WWII) was evident to all. Talk to him for a few minutes, and he would have a joke for you in almost any language.

But whatever the language or heritage, his profound belief that people are truly better when they can speak and think in more than one language, transpired in every action and word he would set out to share with his peers. And that is probably one of the reasons why, back in 1978, he worked with a number of other leaders to establish the Alberta Ethnic Languages Teachers Association (AELTA), which later became the Heritage Northern Alberta Heritage Languages Association (NAHLA) and is now known as the International and Heritage Languages Association (IHLA).

Sab was our last living founder of IHLA, and we treasured every inspiring word and action he set to share with us, to ensure our association continued its

important mission, to support and enhance international and heritage language education at the community level.

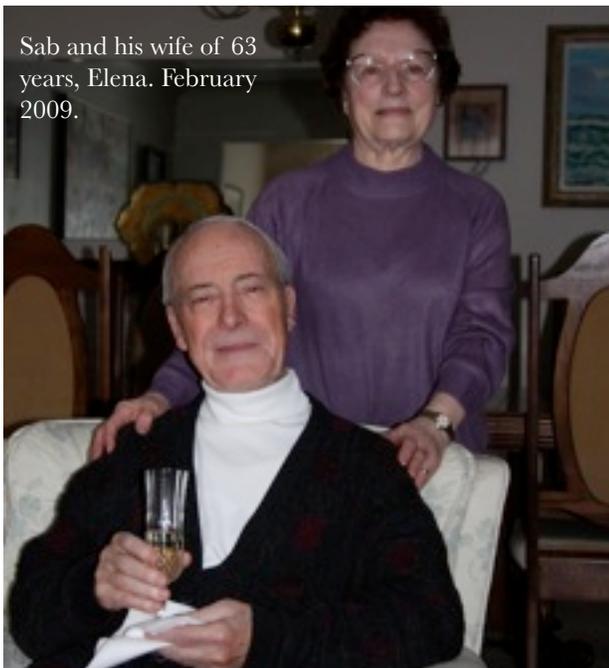
IHLA is one amongst many associations and groups that Sab founded, was a member of or supported. As the pastor shared with us at the celebration of Sab’s life, his gift was simple but great. Sab was a natural translator, an interpreter of life, in any communication form it was revealed to him. By knowing and speaking more than six languages, he not only made connections and built bridges, but he especially opened doors and lowered barriers, so that communities could be created and could flourish. He also spoke the language of music and dance, the language of art and design (he was a professional tailor), and the language of celebration and sharing of values (Sab was the chair of the first Edmonton Heritage Festival Association).

It is this gift of communication that we are most profoundly grateful for to Sab. We know by being active through IHLA’s everyday tasks and as active community members, we will continue to live Sab’s legacy of communication. We can all strive to being translators of life’s many wonders and beauties, values and traditions and messengers of peace and a better future: in all languages of the world!

Thank you Sab!

Sabatino Roncucci was born in Siena (Italy) in 1922 and passed away at the age of 89, in Edmonton, on August 31, 2011.

Sab and his wife of 63 years, Elena. February 2009.

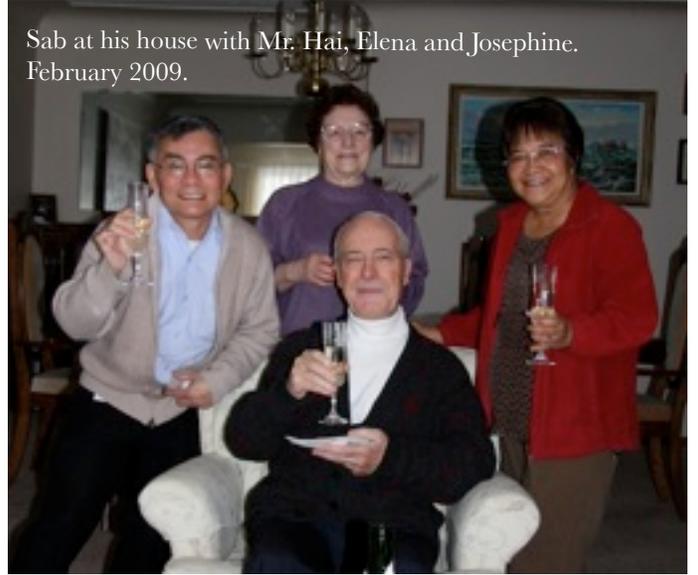


Sab and Josephine at the Annual International Mother Language Day, February 2011.

Sab at his house. February 2009.



Sab at his house with Mr. Hai, Elena and Josephine. February 2009.



Sab and Elena at an IHLA Board celebration. December 2007.



Elena and Sab. December 2007.



Sab and Elena with the IHLA Board. December 2007.



IHLA MEMBERSHIP 2011-12

RENEW NOW!

FALL 2011

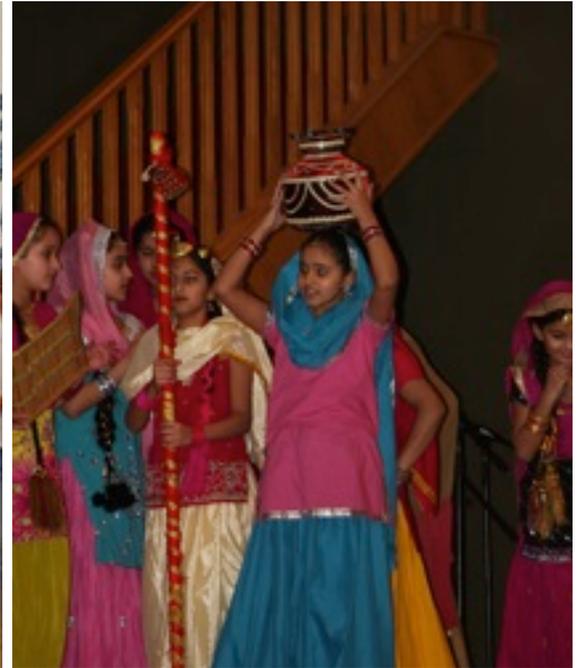
IHLA NEWSLETTER

IHLA schools and individual memberships are voluntary and apply from September 1 to August 31 of each year.

It is important that IHLA member schools renew their membership and take advantage of all IHLA activities, events and resources.

IHLA member schools strengthen IHLA's presence in the community and increase opportunities for networking and sharing ideas.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!



IHLA SCHOOLS Renew your membership today!

IHLA strength resides in the creativity and hard work of its committed members. Especially its member schools.

IHLA schools who renew their membership allow the organization to represent the larger community and speak on behalf of the great number of students, attending heritage and international language schools in

Alberta, from Red Deer and north.

As IHLA continues to work to ensure its member schools' voices are heard and well represented at consortia, through membership to national and international professional associations, and through conference and workshop presentations, **we ask that**

IHLA schools take the time to renew or become new members of our organization. Click online to register and follow up with payment through the IHLA office (call Leticia at 780-428-5510).

Let's make this year's member school list the longest yet!

<http://ihlaactivities2012.blogspot.com/>

IHLA PD OPPORTUNITIES

IHLA NEWSLETTER FALL 2011

Carlos Soler-Montes and Constantine Ioannou are two of our great presenters, offering sessions for IHLA instructors on a variety of topics.

IHLA professional development sessions are highly regarded as great learning opportunities. They are offered free of charge to IHLA instructors and SL certified teachers.

This fall sessions include topics such as: technology, spoken interactive ideas, using calendars and images, planning for language classrooms and much more.

Register online.



REGISTER NOW - ONLINE

Update your personal professional development plan

IHLA has opened its professional development (PD) calendar for the fall 2011. Do not miss the chance to upgrade on some second language planning strategies, learn new techniques for spoken interactions and open doors to technology sessions with a “Wow!!” factor.

IHLA PD sessions are made possible through a special project

grant by Alberta Education. IHLA instructors of IHLA member schools in good standing (remember to pay your school registration fees!) can attend the sessions by registering online for each available PD.

Certified second language teachers teaching in Alberta can also register for free. The sessions are offered outside of the regular school day, so there is no need to

plan for substitute teaching costs. All participants who attend and complete each session will receive a certificate of completion which they can use in their professional portfolios.

All registrations MUST be done online. Click on the link below and register for the sessions that you are interested in.

<http://ihlaactivities2012.blogspot.com/>

BILASH AWARD

FALL 2011

IHLA NEWSLETTER

Dr. Olenka Bilash is one of IHLA's dearest friends and supporters. Her passion and commitment for language education has inspired many IHLA leaders over the past three decades.

IHLA established the Dr. Olenka Bilash Leadership Award in 2010 and IHLA invites its member schools to apply for the award for the 2011-2012 year.



The Olenka Bilash Leadership Award

IHLA created the Olenka Bilash Leadership Award in February 2010. We take the opportunity in this issue of the newsletter to publish the guidelines for this award and invite members of IHLA schools to consider applying for this award. This information is also available at the IHLA website at:

<http://ihla.ca/otherPdfs/olenkaAwardApplication.pdf>

Award Description

Dr. Olenka Bilash is an award winning professor and researcher in second language and teacher education at the University of Alberta. As a member of the Advisory Board for UNESCO's Linguapax (one of 16 people selected from around the world), she advocates for the protection of language rights and language revitalization and has striven to promote plurilingualism, reflecting Canada as a model of a society that respects and encourages language use of its official, first nations and heritage languages at home and in public places.

The Olenka Bilash Leadership Award

Olenka also developed and taught the Heritage Language Instructor Certificate Program, a collaborative effort between IHLA and Grant MacEwan Community College, the first of its kind in Canada; offered university credit courses to heritage language instructors in many of our communities; presented and co-presented about IHLA's community-based history; and has taught leadership professional development seminars for our teachers, administrators and community leaders. She promotes capacity building of community instructors at the grassroots level for long term sustainability of language and cultural identity.

In recognition of her long standing influence on our organization's evolution, the IHLA executive inaugurated the Dr. Olenka Bilash Leadership Award in February 2010.

Rationale

This award is given to an IHLA member school leader (a teacher, an administrator or a board volunteer member) in support of a project this individual can complete within the following school year to benefit the language community school where the individual volunteers, promote HL use within all generations in his/her community, and provide a model of a project, including assessment criteria, that could be replicated in other HL communities. The Award is granted once a year to one successful candidate.

Application Criteria

The candidate and potential recipient:

1. Must be currently an active member of an IHLA member school in good standing (member is defined as a teacher or instructor of the school, an administrator of the school and/or a current member of the board of directors of the community school).
2. Must have been working and/or volunteering for an IHLA member school (or community at large) for the past 3 years or more.
3. Must have not received this award previously.
4. Must submit a personal letter explaining the reasons why he/she will deserve this award to support a specific leadership project in the community.
5. Must submit an endorsement letter to the application signed by at least three additional members of the community organization that sponsors/supports the IHLA community school.
6. Upon its completion will present a report about their project to the IHLA executive and membership in the form of a power point presentation and within two weeks of the presentation will submit a written report including assessment criteria and evidence as well as a statement of expenses (with receipts).

Type of Award

By application and board member selection

One \$500.00 award granted per school year based on available funds.

Final Selection Criteria

All criteria are met as per "Criteria" section of application form.

The letter of application clearly outlines the leadership work and plans of the individual for the benefit of the language community.

The leadership project will be an inspiration for the community of the applicant and can inspire other heritage language and culture communities.

The project is well planned and attainable. The details of the project plan are realistic and attainable according to projected timelines and budget.

The project ideas can be easily reproduced and shared to support future leadership initiatives.

Selection Committee Membership:

The selection committee shall consist of Dr. Olenka Bilash (or her designate) and two Board members. In the event that the school of any board members applies for the award, three board members will be

The Olenka Bilash Leadership Award

appointed to the committee so that the one representing that school will not assess the application from its own school.

Deadline:

April 1 of Current School Year

The successful recipient will be announced no later than May 1.

Successful Applicant Process

All applicants will receive an acknowledgment of their submission in writing by the IHLA office

- There will only be one candidate per school year who will be granted the funds
- The successful applicant will be contacted by IHLA in writing (by e-mail) by the end of May of the current school year.
- The successful applicant will commit to writing a summary about the project for publication in the IHLA newsletter
- The successful candidate agrees, by participating in this grant application process, to allow IHLA to publish the information shared about the project, on the IHLA website, and in its publications and other news venues.
- The successful applicant agrees to continue his/her volunteer collaboration with the language community school for a minimum of 2 years following receipt of this award
- Funds will be released in three installments: \$100 at the beginning of the project; \$300 in the middle of the project; and \$100 after submission of all requirements.

Print the application form from the IHLA website - available for download at:

<http://ihla.ca/otherPdfs/olenkaAwardApplication.pdf>



Leadership is the capacity to
translate vision into reality.

Warren G. Bennis

IHLA YOUTH LEADERSHIP

IHLA is glad to offer a brand new program this year: The IHLA Leadership Program for Youth.

The program is open to IHLA member school students from grade 8 to 12 who are looking for the opportunity to volunteer (up to 40 hours of registered volunteer work) and organize activities for the 9th Annual International Mother Language Day.

Register online.



IHLA YOUTH LEADERSHIP

A special opportunity for IHLA students - Grades 8 - 12

IHLA has a few more spots available for this great initiative. Students of IHLA member schools in good standing, who are currently in grades 8-12, can still register online for this great chance to try out their leadership skills and be integral part of the organizational committee for the 9th Annual International Mother Language Day.

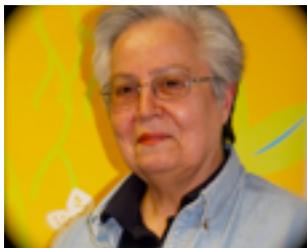
Students will have the opportunity to work with leadership skills such as program for the events, communication management, technical skills (using your computer skills to help the media part of the program) and much more.

Registered students will also attend special sessions by community leaders and speakers

who will focus on leadership themes. All volunteer hours and a specific description of activities completed will be part of a special certificate that students can use towards volunteer requirements in regular school programs.

<http://ihlaactivities2012.blogspot.com/>

IHLA BOARD 2011-12



The IHLA Board is the core lead of its organization. Members meet once a month for their regular meeting and are actively involved in activities and event planning throughout the year.

In June 2012, IHLA will have elections and new Board members will be officially elected .

If your school is interested in knowing more about the Board of Directors, email us at: edmontonihla@gmail.com

IHLA Board of Directors 2011-2012

The IHLA Board of Directors comprises up to 13 IHLA member school representatives, who are elected every two years, and work together to carry out IHLA annual activities, plan for events and ensure that IHLA works to fulfill its goals and mandates.

In 2011 IHLA lost two of its board members, Bonnie S. and its advisor Sabatino R. German V.

also stepped down for personal reasons.

IHLA gained two appointed board members who will officially run for elections in June 2012: Margaret R. and Greta D. To find out more about each individual board member, visit the IHLA website (www.ihla.ca). From left to right the members by first name:

Josephine P.
Cindy P.
Dulce A.
Natalia K.
Shirley W.
Nadia K.
Kiran U.
Olga P.
Louella A.
Olga D.
Margaret R.
Greta D.

GIL VICENTE SCHOOL

FALL 2011

IHLA NEWSLETTER



The Gil Vicente Portuguese Schools of Edmonton is one of IHLA's oldest member schools. It offers credit courses in Portuguese and it is one of the driving forces in the heritage community in Edmonton and in Alberta.

Gil Vicente Portuguese School: Profile

The Portuguese School started in September 1971 with a group of about ten students. In October 1972 with the encouragement of the Portuguese Counsel in Vancouver, at that time Dr. João Valadas, the school continued with 25 students registered. In June 1973, the Portuguese School was recognized by the Portuguese government and the students wrote exams which were recognized in Portugal.

As the interest of the Portuguese community grew and immigration was still open to Portuguese families coming to Canada, the number of students grew to its peak in 1982/1983, with an attendance of about 200 students in 8 different classes

according to their level of knowledge of the language.

In the past few years, with the change of government in Portugal and improvement in the standard of living, there was a slow decline in families immigrating, and more integrating within the Canadian culture. The number of students attending Portuguese School declined.

In the last few years, the interest in learning the Portuguese language has been increasing and the number of students remains stable around the 100 mark. Not only is this a result of our Portuguese 15, 25 & 35 credit courses, but also due to the changes of the Alberta Learning Standards. Students and the community at large are

beginning to be more aware of the importance of language, not only for family relationships, but for economic and personal advantages as well. The school is a very active member of IHLA, and has been a member since 1979.

Our classes are held at St. Cecilia Junior High (8830-132 Ave).

For more information please contact:

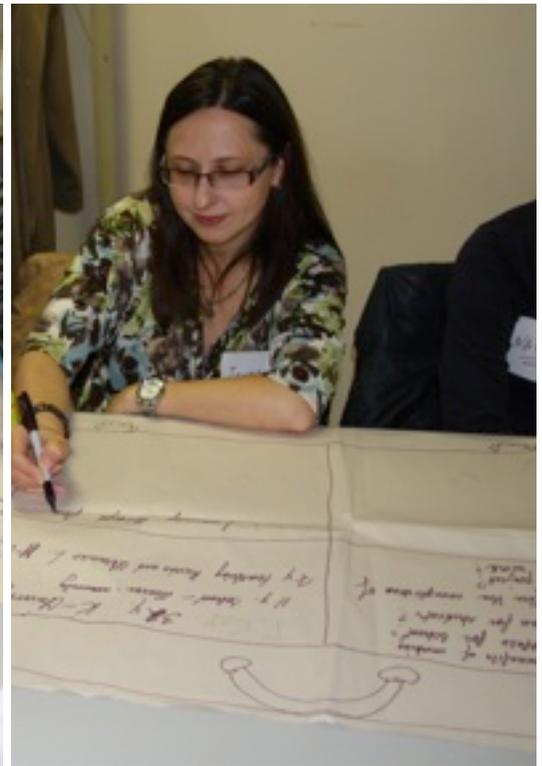
Dulce Azevedo
dulcedoceu@shaw.ca

Cindy Pereira
cpereira@gsacrd.ab.ca

Or visit the IHLA website at
www.ihla.ca

IHLA UPDATES

IHLA has continued its activities and work over the summer month. This page provides a brief overview.



IHLA ACTIVITIES AND CONFERENCE PLANS

IHLA members have been busy even during the summer period, with specific projects and an increased presence in professional online communities of language educators.

PROJECT PORTFOLIO

Eight IHLA schools are currently undertaking a special project entitled: The Common European Framework for Languages Portfolio Project, under the lead of Carlos Soler-Montes, the director of the Cervantes Institute of Albuquerque, New Mexico (former coordinator of the Aula Cervantes in Calgary). The project will create portfolio plans and documents for heritage language schools which will be made available online through a special wiki page (learn to make wiki pages by attending the technology sessions offered by IHLA this fall).

This project is yet another activity that is made possible through funding from Alberta Education. The project details and final products will be made available to all for free. Stay tuned for more details.

CONFERENCES

IHLA will be presenting a special session at the upcoming Second Language and Intercultural Council (**SLIC**) Summit in Canmore, on October 29. The session title is: The Design of Everyday Learning, led by Valeria Palladino, IHLA coordinator.

IHLA will also present at the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (**ACTFL**) annual conference, in Denver, Colorado, on November 18. The session will illustrate ways to use podcasts for language teaching. We are offering an entire

workshop on the same topic - register online at: <http://ihlaactivities2012.blogspot.com/>

Also, as a member of ACTFL, IHLA has been actively participating in its online professional community. You can check ideas and the blog updates on behalf of IHLA at the following website: <http://community.actfl.org/home/>.

IHLA STANDARDS

IHLA has also published its standards, that were approved at the last AGM, in June 2011. Check a copy of the standards at the IHLA website: www.ihla.ca.

9TH ANNUAL MLD



IHLA has continued its activities and work over the summer month. This page provides a brief overview.

THE INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY - 02.25.12

Mark your calendars once more. IHLA biggest community event and international celebration is in the works again!

Celebrate with IHLA the 9th Annual International Mother Language Day event, at the Italian Cultural Centre, on Saturday, February 25, 2012.

This is IHLA member schools annual opportunity to showcase programs, share ideas, communicate their passion with each other and the community and celebrate language and culture diversity.

Everyone is invited and welcome to the event.

IHLA participating member schools MUST register online at: <http://ihlaactivities2012.blogspot.com/>

and at **least two school members must attend the orientation meeting on Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. at the IHLA office.** It is

imperative that ALL schools who wish to participate, in the usual forms (writing essays

and stories, sharing posters, skits, dances, music and tending school tables) attend the orientation meeting.

The Youth Leadership program first meeting will also take place on that date (the Youth Leadership Program information in this issue).

Do not let this chance of celebrating languages pass you by. And remember: you must be an IHLA member school in good standing to participate in this event!

Helping students achieve their best

Dr. Olenka Bilash, University of Alberta

We are living in a rapidly changing world. Along with having a positive attitude we must also learn to adapt to new situations quickly. Knowing why we should do something is a good motivator for changing our behaviour and understandings. When students can explain their likes, wants, needs and frustrations to us we can more easily accommodate them in our lesson plans and teaching style. We are all eager to know why some students are more successful at learning or more eager to use the heritage language (HL) than others and many theories can give teachers insight about this question. In this issue of the IHLA newsletter I would like to discuss attribution theory and self-efficacy theory and hope that the reader can better understand how they relate to student motivation. At the end I offer a survey that you could adapt and give to students to determine how much they enjoy going to your HL school and what they think helps them learn best. September, the beginning of the school year, is a great time to learn about your new students. Then you could offer a similar survey in January and June and compare results: have you made a difference in your students' desire to use the HL? And in their ability to do so?

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory argues that humans interpret events in terms of cause and effect. Our action or inaction is caused by an agent (e.g. ourselves, others) and/or external and internal circumstances. We may think that our successes or failures are caused by external circumstances or situations. We may also think that our successes and failures are caused by our own internal dispositions or choices. (Coleman et al. 2007) We may also think that these circumstances or dispositions are beyond our control. Unless we believe that we can change something our performance will not change.



Attribution theory argues that humans interpret events in terms of cause and effect.

For example, if we plan a lesson and it does not go very well, we may attribute our poor performance to external circumstances such as forgetting some materials, the bad behaviour of a student or an unexpected event in the classroom (water leaking through the ceiling tiles). Or, we might consider the poor lesson the consequence of internal attributes: our lack of preparation time (“I should have started this on Wednesday instead of leaving it to the last minute.”), inability to understand how to do something (“If I had started sooner I could have called my friend and asked for help or checked on the internet for some examples”), or perhaps to a lack of motivation to change (“I have been doing this for 15 years and it has always worked so why invest time in something new”). If we reflect on the set of reasons we can see those that could be changed in the future (e.g. not forgetting important materials or creating more time) while others are beyond our control (e.g. student behaviour or a water leakage). Accepting responsibility and choosing to not have the same ‘reason’ come up again are part of the path of growth, improvement and change.

Attribution theory also applies to our students. For example, if they write a test and do not do very well, they may attribute their poor results to external

circumstances such as forgetting their notes, a bad teacher or a distracting noise in the classroom. On the other hand, they might attribute a poor performance or grade to a lack of preparation on their own part, going out with friends the night before, or perhaps to a lack of motivation to learn (internal attribution). They too can ‘blame’ performance on others or circumstances or accept responsibility and try to do better next time; better means changing the circumstances by creating more time or choosing to study instead of going out with friends (and postponing the visit with friends). Of course, they must believe that it is possible to change.

According to many research studies, students are always assessing their own performance; however, “most students appear to have inaccurate perceptions of their foreign language abilities, with nearly half of them over-estimating their future levels of performance” (Daley et al., 1999, Pg 8). Daley’s research team worked with a group of students for one year. At the beginning of the year they asked students to complete a survey based on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale. It asked students to describe how well they thought they would do in the course and what would make them succeed. At the

Helping students achieve their best

(continues)

end of the year the researchers collected all of the students' grades and compared their perception of their ability to succeed with their actual performance or grades. Together these combined sources offered insight into students' perceptions or beliefs of expected achievement and possible anxieties. Three categories of student beliefs emerged: self-enhancers, self-derogators and self-appraisers.

Self-enhancers are students who thought they would do better than their grades actually reflected. They tend to be "unrealistically optimistic about their ability to learn a foreign language" (Daley et al., 1999, p. 4). They seem to overlook the fact that effort is required to succeed and blame their poor grades on external circumstances (the teacher, the textbook, the lessons) instead of examining their own self discipline. They present themselves to themselves as being better than they actually are. This attitude of self-enhancement may also "stem from students' need to increase their feelings of self-worth" (Daley et al., 1999, p. 4) to overcompensate for something else in their lives. These students must develop the understanding that they must work hard in order to succeed in a course and develop the skills to do so.

Self-appraisers seem to be more self aware and perhaps even more course aware. They have a better idea that their studies need focus and time. They realize how much work is needed for success. They can judge the amount of work required to succeed in a situation and can adjust where necessary. They are more accepting of course goals and expectations and can more easily establish personal goals and outcomes. These students have a better sense of their achievements, capabilities and self.

Self-derogators tend to underestimate how well they will do because they do not desire to perform better. Often fearing failure, they set their standards low so that they are never too disappointed. Worst, they live a

self-fulfilling prophecy: each time they do not succeed they confirm to themselves that they are not able to succeed. They need to develop learning strategies and a greater belief in themselves.

Williams et al. (2004) also conducted a study with students of a second language. They asked students what helped them succeed or fail at learning and using the new language. The students described internal and external attributes. The internal attributes they frequently identify as the reasons for the quality of their performance include: their own effort, interest or motivation, their assessment of the easiness or difficulty of the task in comparison with the level of reward they will feel, the learning strategies they know and can use with minimal effort and their overall level of confidence in being able to achieve the goal. As for external reasons they attributed challenges and successes to their teacher, the materials they use (textbook, assignments, tasks), interest in the lesson, or their peers. See Figure 1.

In the HL classroom context, it is important that students have ample support during a lesson and in the community so that they can be more confident in their efforts. Students who do not see



In the HL classroom context, it is important that students have ample support during a lesson and in the community so that they can be more confident in their efforts.

Helping students achieve their best

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Learners' perceptions of their successes and failures in language learning

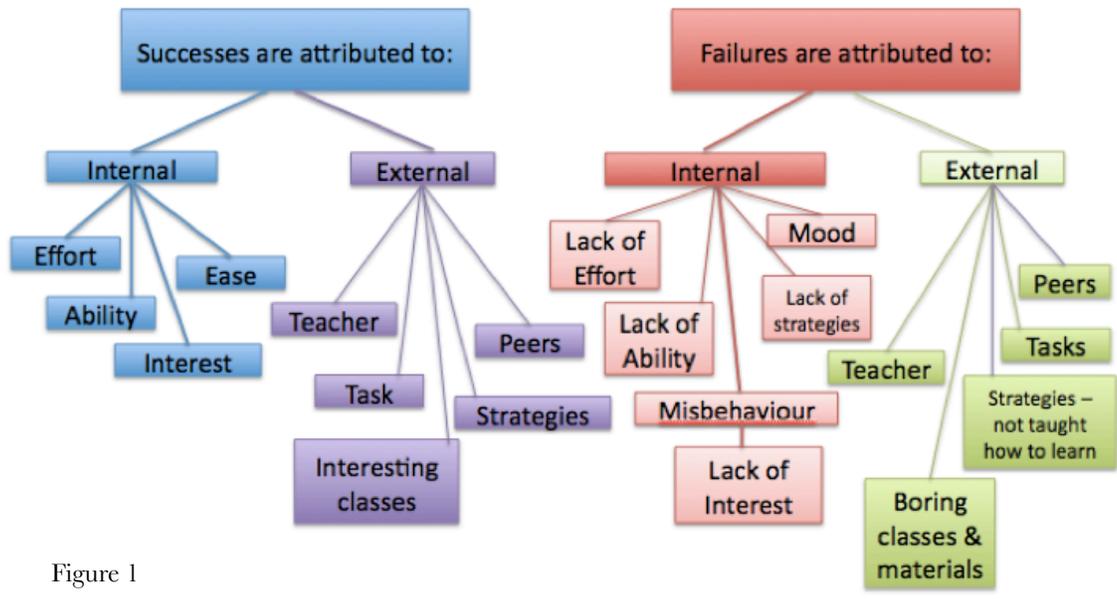


Figure 1

their own progress as a result of hard work may believe that they are “incapable” or “not smart enough”. Students who receive constant criticism at home may give up trying and reject all use of the HL or participation in the HL community.

What is Self-Efficacy?

Self-efficacy refers to our perception of our capacity to perform according to expectations without reference to external rewards or reinforcements (Bandura 1997). In other words, we are more likely to take on a task if we believe that we can accomplish it. It is important that our perception of our own self-efficacy is only slightly above our actual ability level in order to promote growth in ability and skill. If we are too confident in our ability, the chances of disappointment are greater, which may result in a lowering of self-esteem. On the other hand, if we possess little or no self-confidence, there is no chance for growth because we will not even attempt to take on the task at hand in the first place.

For example, if a student’s average grade in class is high, his or her confidence level will also be high. However, if the student’s perception of self-efficacy is too high, s/he may not prepare

adequately for an exam (thinking that s/he does not need to prepare because his/her average is already high). But what if the majority of the grades collected for his average were based on homework assignments completed at home with the assistance of family members? Now, in the classroom on his or her own, the student may not be prepared. The student did not realize that s/he may have needed more independent practice.

Likewise, if a student’s average in class is low, s/he may not even try to do the work at all, thinking that his/her skills just are not good enough. However, the student’s average may be attributed more to the proper ratio of support and challenge being received in the classroom and not to actual ability. Because this student does not take on the tasks, there is no opportunity for growth of his/her abilities and skills.

Bandura (1994) describes two types of self-efficacy based on people’s attitude or style of coping and their way of confronting challenges. People with a strong sense of self-efficacy view:

- challenging problems as tasks to be mastered or opportunities for skills to be developed

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(continues)

- develop deeper interest in the activities in which they participate
- form a stronger sense of commitment to their interests and activities, and
- recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments.

People with a weak sense of self-efficacy:

- avoid challenging tasks,
- believe that difficult tasks and situations are beyond their capabilities,
- focus on personal failings and negative outcomes, and
- quickly lose confidence in personal abilities.

The difference is significant: a person's sense of self-efficacy (strong or weak) greatly influences and may even determine how external variables are perceived and responded to. Are they barriers that can be overcome? How? With help? What kind of help?

In the context of a HL classroom, the teacher plays an important role in influencing a student's sense of self efficacy. This can be done by providing the appropriate amount of challenge and support. Figure 2 below is a conceptualization of this relationship presented by Daloiz (1986).

The relationship is best described as this:

- If there is low support and low challenge, there is no growth (stasis), as students are not pushed to their potential.
- If there is low support and high challenge, students feel frustrated, intimidated or overwhelmed and will not engage in the learning process. They retreat.
- If there is high support and low challenge, there is also no growth occurring because students receive too much help for a task that is too easy. However, they are receiving confirmation that they know and understand what has been learned.

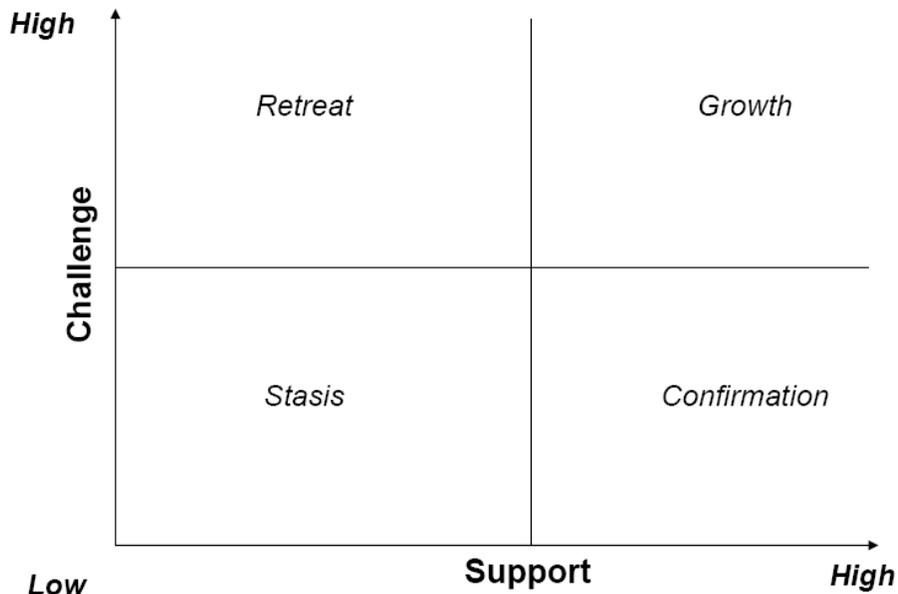


Figure 2: The relationship of support and challenge on student learning

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Only when there is high support and high challenge will there be growth and progress in the students' learning.

Suggestions

Attribution theory and self-efficacy theory can help teachers in several ways. First, in order for teachers to best facilitate the learning for each student they should understand the source of a student's feeling of success or failure. This can be done by talking with students individually and observing their behaviours/interactions. Try to identify the students with inaccurate perceptions of their ability and target the anxious students. Help them work through their issues to prevent unrealistic expectations that could lead to disappointment, frustration and de-motivation. Identify the at risk learners and take steps to create required support through various learning strategies such as scaffolding. Discuss class expectations and ask students about the expectations they have on themselves; steer them towards goal attainment and set-up goals in terms of a task rather than a grade.

The more the teacher knows about the student, the better s/he can help the student learn better and produce better results. Develop a trusting and friendly relationship with each student and between students so that guidance can be offered and accepted. A student who is not exerting effort needs to recognize that increased success will come with increased effort. For example, by reviewing content regularly, doing homework or asking questions. Group work is helpful as students can practice speaking the language with each other in a non-threatening environment. Support from the teacher is also important - by providing genuine words of encouragement and positive, constructive and corrective feedback.

With the relationship of support and challenge in mind, teachers can adapt their instruction in the HL classroom to best facilitate learning. For example, support can be offered through templates, language ladders, scaffolding, fun and interesting homework assignments on the internet, visual cues around the classroom, or a good review/summary of a theme or grammar concept at the end of a lesson. Teachers can also challenge their students by presenting different topics for a written/oral assignment - each at varying difficulty levels

(differentiation) - so that each student can choose the topic that best suits their ability. Choosing practice tasks that utilize all of the multiple intelligences can also help students to become more aware of their abilities.

In the classroom, students' self-efficacy is also affected by comparing themselves to the success and failures of others (Bandura 1995). For example, a student may be unwilling to volunteer to read aloud a text written in the HL if s/he believes that his/her pronunciation is not as good as others in the class. Teachers can help create a good learning environment by keeping the affective filter of students low. They can select activities or games that minimize competition and foster encouragement and collaboration. Teachers may still offer competitive games, but regular regroup the team members so that students who are "losing" do not become discouraged and disengage from the game. Teachers can also choose a variety of games that tap into different multiple intelligences so all students have a chance to 'shine' in their abilities.

When a teacher knows why something seems to appeal to learners and helps them succeed, or not, the teacher is more empowered to develop lessons and choose tasks that will help them grow. To learn more about your students consider adapting and distributing the feedback survey sheet in Appendix A.

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Appendix A: Sample survey to learn more about the internal and external variables your students think influence their successes and failures in the HL

Circle the number that best describes how you feel.

Internal Factors	☹				☺
How interested are you in studying the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How easy is it for you to understand the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How confident are you in your ability to learn the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How much does your mood affect language learning for you?	1	2	3	4	5
How motivated are you to attend the HL school?	1	2	3	4	5
External Factors					
How many hours do you spend studying (speaking or using) the HL in a day?	1	2	3	4	5+
	☹				☺
How much does your teacher help you do better in The HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How much do your peers help you do better in the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you use strategies to help you do better in the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How interested are you in the tasks or assignments you must do in the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you misbehave in the classroom?	1	2	3	4	5
How much support do you need to do tasks in the HL?	1	2	3	4	5
How much do you prepare before a test in school?	1	2	3	4	5
How much do you prepare before a test in the HL school?	1	2	3	4	5



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education, through its many member schools. IHLA serves more that 35 schools who teach heritage and international languages at the community level, in Central and Northern Alberta, Canada.

The Association represents all levels of language and culture instruction and education for over

12,000 students each year, outside of the public school system in Alberta. IHLA's primary objectives include:

- supporting and promoting international and heritage language education
- assisting in the development of international and heritage language curriculum, teaching and learning resources and materials
- supporting international and heritage language teacher training and skills development

IHLA SUPPORTS THE VIEW THAT

international language education increases the level of respect and appreciation for multiculturalism and the diversity of Canada's people.