



Anniversary Reflections

Carnegie Mellon University
Department of Modern Languages

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MODERN LANGUAGES PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

It's wonderful to be celebrating 100 years of modern languages at Carnegie Mellon, and also 25 years since Modern Languages established department status as we know it today! My very first official visit to Carnegie Mellon was 32 years ago to interview for a position as a Lecturer in Spanish in the History Department. Yes, the History Department. At that time, Modern Languages was a program in the History Department. My interview took place on January 28, 1986, the morning of the Challenger disaster, which tragically took the lives of 7 astronauts, including Carnegie Mellon graduate, Judith Resnik. I can still picture on the television screen in the History Department the plume of the explosion on the sunny blue-sky backdrop. Days like that make an indelible impression. They heighten appreciation for the important people in your life and for the positive forces that give meaning to your life. For these more than three decades as a faculty member and now in my eleventh year as head, working with students, colleagues, and staff at Carnegie Mellon has been an extremely fulfilling part of my life. Thanks to the enormous efforts of so many, supported by previous heads Barbara Freed and Dick Tucker, our Modern Languages community shares a story of remarkable development. We have much to celebrate!

We celebrate that from the late 1980's, Modern Languages has grown more than six-fold from a unit with five full-time faculty members and a few adjunct faculty teaching undergraduate courses in French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish, to be today a richly diverse department with undergraduate and graduate programs, and faculty engaged in deeply interdisciplinary research in second language acquisition, literary and cultural studies, and technology-enhanced learning. Through the early 1990's we experienced a period of rapid expansion and established department status in the Spring of 1993. Since then, in addition to the majors and minors in French and Francophone Studies, German Studies, Hispanic Studies, Japanese Studies, and Russian Studies, we have added a major and minor in Chinese Studies, a minor in Arabic Studies, course offerings in Spanish and Arabic at CMU-Qatar, a doctoral program in Second Language Acquisition, an M.A. program in Applied Linguistics, and are launching a new M.A. in Global Communication and Applied Translation in collaboration with the English Department.

We celebrate that Carnegie Mellon students understand the importance of studying additional languages and cultures in our Twenty-First Century world and pursue their interests with enthusiasm. Without a university-wide language requirement, in the graduating class of 2017, 48 percent of degree recipients took at least one course in the Department of Modern Languages, and 15 percent took at least one advanced-level course in a modern language. These statistics compare favorably with a national scene where there is enormous room for improvement. The 2016 Modern Language Association enrollment survey reported that roughly only 7.5 percent of undergraduate students in the United States study a foreign language at all during their college careers.

We celebrate how creatively and productively our students have combined their study of modern languages with other disciplines, and how these choices have impacted their life paths. This is a quick sampling of the concentrations of the Modern Languages graduating class of 2018: Chinese Studies with Philosophy, Psychology, Chemical Engineering, or Art; French and Francophone Studies with Biological Sciences, Statistics, or Computer Science; German Studies with Civil and Environmental Engineering; Hispanic Studies with Economics, Global Studies, Art, or Business Administration; Japanese Studies with Biology, or Humanities and Arts. Graduates of Modern Languages have found rewarding positions in government, entrepreneurship and business, law, technology and engineering, media, public health, health policy and health professions, nonprofit organizations, entertainment and creative arts, and education. Time and time again, our alumni tell me and colleagues how their multilingual proficiency has opened doors to careers, global experiences, personal enrichment, and treasured relationships, including meeting their life partners!

We celebrate how Modern Languages faculty members have encouraged and supported the interests of our students in a wealth of opportunities in and out of the classroom. Faculty and students have dedicated themselves to community engagement work with children and adults abroad and in the Pittsburgh area. They have collaborated to produce technology-enhanced learning materials, film projects, conference presentations, articles, and books on cultural topics and strategies for acquisition of additional languages.

We celebrate this year's opening of the Askwith Kenner Global Languages and Cultures Room in the new Tepper Quad, where students and faculty of Modern Languages and other members of the campus community and beyond can interact with each other locally and around the world. In this new space with cutting edge technology, students will design and engage with innovative multimedia to showcase the importance of language learning, cultural awareness, and the global presence of Carnegie Mellon.

I feel very fortunate to work with great students who energize my teaching and research, with dedicated colleagues who place high value on scholarship, education, and service, and with outstanding departmental staff members who provide crucial support day in and day out to all of us. With appreciation for the past and the present, at this milestone for Modern Languages, it's exciting to look ahead to the future!

Susan G. Polansky

Department Head and Teaching Professor of Hispanic Studies



Carnegie Mellon University Qatar Campus

Over the years, I have been struck by five traits that seem to characterize the fabric of our department:

- Our ability to recruit and to retain the very best educators in our field (as evidenced in part by the listing of our faculty and graduate students who have received college and university awards for educational excellence over the years)
- Our commitment to ensuring that members of the teaching track and the tenure track participate fully and equally in departmental reviews and decisions
- Our commitment to ensuring that all faculty and staff understand that family well-being is a high priority within the department
- Our commitment to building an inclusive community by ensuring that adjunct faculty as well as graduate students are invited to participate in department meetings and discussions
- Our commitment to preparing our doctoral students to participate in life after the graduate program by involving them in various department committees and meetings

Dick Tucker
Department Head 1995-2007
Paul Mellon University Professor of Applied Linguistics Emeritus

Historical reflections take many forms. Mine come as a chronological story, tracing the evolution of this wonderful Department of Modern Languages. My reflections are personal, focusing primarily on incidents, people, and feelings.

Throughout early 1989, I was recruited by the then dean of the College of Humanities to come to CMU to head a new Modern Languages (MLs) Department. The stated goal was to create a dramatically different department, quite unlike customary programs devoted to literature/culture/civilization along with the usual service language courses. The focus of this department was to be Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Available funds to hire a corps of tenure track faculty to jumpstart the department were assured. Additionally, the then ESL program was to be incorporated into the new department to permit comparisons in SLA research between English (in which most prior SLA research existed) and other second languages (L2). We expected this new department to quickly achieve national distinction.

I arrived at Carnegie Mellon in August 1990 as the first female Department Head in the male bastion of strength in the then College of Humanities. I was energetically and enthusiastically, if naively, convinced that this could be accomplished easily and quickly. For many years, MLs had languished, with few resources and no status, under the tutelage of the History Department. Its corps of talented "lecturers" maintained this program. Without their extraordinarily hard work, devotion, and support, the new department would not have been possible. They - Chris Hallstein, Susan Polansky, Sono Takano-Hayes, Michael West - were and remain as the heart of the legacy of the department.

To suggest that my arrival and the changes it implied were perceived as a threat would be an understatement. It didn't take long for me to understand that the proposed ML Department stood as a potential hostage, to be fought over by the College's other longstanding and powerful departments. Soon the very notion of the new department and its stated goals was perceived as available property to enhance the stature of these other departments. English believed the ML's program

should parallel its own literary and cultural studies of the period, albeit in "foreign languages." Psychology supported the idea of SLA to the extent that it complemented its own psycholinguistic orientation. History and Philosophy had their own versions of how MLs might best complement their programs. It wasn't merely a question of ideological differences, but a sentiment that the money being invested in MLs could be better spent to enhance their own departments. In addition, I was advised by some that the surest guarantee of success was to expand enrollments in language courses per se. Conflicting advice was to quickly create a graduate program because "nothing short of that would bring respect." Further, under no circumstances was ESL to be incorporated into our program. This battle (not without its retrospective cover of #MeToo overtones) lasted for essentially two years. Ultimately, a resolution was achieved when a new dean proposed a compromise solution that the new ML Department, and its yet to be hired tenure track faculty, not be exclusively devoted to SLA, but that it also include literary and cultural studies as well.

This agreement led in 1992 to one of my happiest moments when Dick Tucker accepted the offer to join me as the second SLA faculty. I recall with humor working together the next year to hire new faculty. We interviewed so many candidates that we photographed each one during interviews, so we could be certain to keep them straight. In 1993 we hired three promising scholars including Kenya Dworkin and Stephen Brockmann, still among the stars of the department. Subsequent fulfillment came with the hiring of respected colleagues Keiko Koda and Naoko Taguchi. At the same time, we worked to instill a more contemporary approach to language teaching, one emphasizing communicative instruction rather than the more traditional methods previously used nationally. Those were the days when all faculty devoted countless hours to workshops in proficiency-oriented-teaching and oral proficiency-testing (OPI) certification. These new teaching methods were accompanied by full reviews of curricula in each language program. During this period, we added Chinese, with resounding success, to our repertoire of existing languages. We all took great pride in overflowing

enrollments. I internally celebrated the implementation of our SLA graduate program and admission of our first cohort of graduate students. I reflect with nostalgia and continued joy at awarding our first doctoral degree to my student Dan Dewey.

My most vivid recollections are of those first five tumultuous years. The following years left fulfilling memories of continued departmental growth under the extraordinary leadership of Dick Tucker and Susan Polansky, who each in their own style, brought about further refinement to the department. I am utterly stunned in comparing the rigor, depth, and breadth of current ML programs with those of only a decade or so ago. I felt gratified to see the research of our younger faculty mature and applauded their receiving tenure. I look back now to witness a department robust with language enrollments that exceed national averages, respectable support for study abroad, including scholarships for those who could not consider study abroad otherwise, along with research investigating the linguistic impact of these experiences, as well as with strong interdisciplinary cooperation and programs with many other college departments.

My final reflection is the enormous pride I feel at having been offered the opportunity to found a new department of MLs that has influenced the stature of SLA/Applied Linguistics in other language departments nationally. This is accompanied by the recognition of the salience of the research that has emerged from our faculty both in SLA, and cultural and literacy studies.

Ultimately, reflections are purely subjective. As much as anything else, my recollections are of a department and an institution which recognizes individuality along with achievement. The personal support I received, primarily from Susan Polansky, during the intermittent traumatic years in my own life, remain indelibly etched and serve as a model of generosity of spirit from which I, and hopefully many others, will learn forever.

Barbara Freed
Founding Department Head
1990-1995
Professor Emeritus of French
Studies and Applied Linguistics

When I started teaching in the Italian program at Carnegie Mellon in 1975, the Department of Modern Languages, headed by prof. Juris Silenieks, was much smaller than what it is today, both in language offerings and in faculty. In the mid 1980's, the department worked in association with the History Department. The Department of Modern Languages as we know it today re-emerged in 1990, expanding the language offerings and with a much larger administration and faculty. Under the headship of Barbara Freed, Richard Tucker and Susan Polansky, it became one of the fastest growing departments at CMU, offering students a large choice of world languages and cultures, taught by top-notch professors. That same year (1990), additional course sections were offered in the Italian program and prof. Janet Vairo joined our department.

*“Kindness,
cooperation, support
and mutual respect
sustained and
motivated me all
these years.”*

- Giovanni Puppo

For almost 40 years, I was able to teach both at Carnegie Mellon (part-time) and at Oakland Catholic High School (full-time), given the proximity of the two institutions. My physical presence on campus was mostly in the classroom, teaching the afternoon classes. Nevertheless, I had the opportunity to get to know and work with very fine people: administration and staff, faculty and students. Kindness, cooperation, support and mutual respect sustained and motivated me all these years.

Following the Department of Modern Languages' guidelines, I have always emphasized to my students that especially in today's world, more and more inter-related, becoming proficient in foreign

languages and gaining familiarity with foreign cultures, can be very useful in their professional careers and, more importantly, can teach them to become aware and respectful of other peoples' cultures. The students on our own campus are indeed a microcosm of people with different languages and cultures. I was educated at an international university in Rome, with students and faculty from around the world. Consequently, I, myself, always valued the opportunity to teach at CMU, which attracts so many students from around the world.

In the last 45 years, our department has changed in size, faculty, programs, teaching methodologies, electronic communication, technology, etc. One thing the department has always maintained has been the end of semester course evaluations by the students, which I have always used as a useful tool to improve my teaching approaches in order to better respond to my students' needs.

Outside the classroom activities, I miss the annual parties at the end of the semester when the entire department (students and faculty) used to gather to celebrate. It's always been a pleasure to attend the students' theater performances and musical recitals as well as hearing positive comments from students after their successful trips abroad, expressing their gratitude for having studied a foreign language.

I would like to close with my sincere thanks and warmest congratulations to the entire Department of Modern Languages celebrating its 1st Centennial and express my best wishes for continued success in the future.

Congratulazioni vivissime per il Primo Centenario e molti auguri per un futuro ancora più grande.

Giovanni Puppo
Adjunct Instructor of Italian

Having been hired in 1979 as an “Adjunct Assistant Professor of History” to teach German at Carnegie Mellon, I could probably write a book on how the teaching and learning of modern languages has changed here over the past 40 years. Suffice it to say: We are no longer part of the History Department, and WE HAVE GROWN! Grown from four languages (French, German, Italian, and Spanish) to eight (adding Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Russian).

But one thing has not changed for me over these 40 years: I have been surrounded by incredibly supportive colleagues and bright and energetic students right from the very start.

As I reflect on how my teaching has changed during this time, I believe that I have tried to make the “human” in the “humanities” more prominent. I try to get my students, whether at the elementary or the advanced levels, to reflect on the “human condition” as it both changes and stays the same from one century to another and from one country to another. I am convinced that we really don’t know ourselves until we learn about other people, in other places, at other times.

Christian Hallstein
Teaching Professor of German



Photos from a student trip to Weimar, Germany



Christian Hallstein experiencing Google Earth VR in the Askwith Kenner Global Languages and Cultures Room



Dance lesson during "Al-Andalus With Love" event at the Center for Diversity and Inclusion



2018 Welcome Back BBQ for Modern Languages Majors and Minors

Joined Modern Languages in the summer of 1990 at a time of fairly great uncertainty. The program was just separating from the History Department and was being re-established as a stand-alone program. Barbara Freed was coming in from Penn to head the program, and was charged with creating a unique modern languages program that was to be quite unlike any other in the country. She was looking for a part-time business manager to help manage the program as it grew, and at that time, I was raising a young family and looking to make a change from full-time to part-time work so I could spend more time at home. I seemed to have the skillset Barbara was looking for, and the fit felt right, so I decided to jump in, despite my reservations about the financial risk that would come with working part-time and the professional risk that would come with moving to a new position, particularly one in a program whose success was largely dependent upon the strengths, skills, and vision of a new department head who was just joining Carnegie Mellon.

Fast forward 28 years, and I am still the business manager of Modern Languages (now full-time), although neither the position nor the department bear much resemblance to their earlier counterparts. I could quote many statistics to illustrate the changes that have taken place over the nearly three decades since I came to Modern Languages, but these would just be numbers. The real story is in the people. Someone once told me that people come in and out of our lives for a reason, and that we can learn something from each of them. I believe this is the case for everyone I have met in the years since I joined ML. I have had the good fortune of getting to know people from all over

the world, some for brief periods, some for much longer, and all have touched me in ways I will always treasure. From the visitors and students who passed through for only a short time, to the faculty and staff with whom I have worked for many years, I am fortunate that each of them has been in my life, and I have learned a great deal from them.

“As I reflect on my time at CMU, joining Modern Languages was one of the best decisions I have ever made[...].”

- Nancy Monda

As I reflect on my time at CMU, joining Modern Languages was one of the best decisions I have ever made, and the reservations I had back in 1990 are a distant memory. The sense of belonging I felt from the start has only strengthened over time. The wealth of kindness, support, and guidance I receive from Susan – and Dick and Barbara before her – is incredible. Vera, Sue, and I know each other so well and spend so much time together that we’re like sisters. I think of the department as my extended family. Modern Languages and I have been through a lot together, and we have endured and thrived, much like a strong family, and, much like my real family, I can’t imagine my life without it.

Nancy Monda
Business Manager

Twenty-six years ago, I stepped into Baker Hall 160 for an interview for the position of an adjunct faculty of Chinese in the Department of Modern Languages. Although I'd had two decades of experience in teaching a foreign language, I was still very nervous and wondered whether CMU was the right place for me. Now, looking back onto the years that have passed, I must say that applying to work in CMU's Department of Modern Languages is one of the best decisions I have made in my life.

"[...] it is in this department where I have found my life really worth living."

- Yueming Yu

I have been a foreign language and culture professor for over half a century, first in China and later in the United States. I have always loved my job because teaching has been my passion and students are like my own children. I have received tremendous satisfaction from my work and the accomplishments of my students. One of the places where I have enjoyed all the happiness and satisfaction is CMU's Department of Modern Languages. It is this department that has provided me the second stage of my career and it is in this department where I have found my life really worth living.

Today, the Department of Modern Languages is ushering in its 100th anniversary and our Chinese Studies Program has traveled 26 years, growing day-by-day, month-by-month and year-by-year, from one with only 5 students in one elementary level class to around 250 students in classes of five different levels each semester. The largest enrollment once reached nearly 400 a semester for a couple of years. Since 2006, we have graduated around 100 majors and more than 300 minors, and 349 students have had great experiences studying in our Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) summer program in Shanghai since 2001. In addition to the SISU summer program, nearly 50 students have participated in other study abroad programs in China, most with scholarships offered by various donors.

Not only have we produced quality undergraduate students of Chinese, but also, we have contributed our share in nurturing 19 students of our department's ASLA M.A. Program, and 19 of our SLA Ph.D. program students into highly qualified teaching professionals in their own fields.

Looking back onto the 26 years of my work in the Chinese Studies Program, I feel truly blessed that the second stage of my career has been so rewarding. I am grateful to all the help and support from the department, the concerted efforts of all my colleagues in the program, and the students I have taught all these years. I have fully enjoyed the very favorable working atmosphere in the department for us to work and contribute in both teaching and research.

Twenty-six years is just a short span in CMU's history and only a fourth of the 100 years of the Department of Modern Languages' history. Compared to other language programs in the department, the Chinese Studies Program is still young. However, what we have accomplished undoubtedly contributes in a very positive way to the development of the whole department. Looking forward, we can hope with full confidence that our Chinese Studies Program will continue to grow into one with even higher quality. On the personal side, I am certain that the second stage of my career will continue to be rewarding.

Yueming Yu

Teaching Professor and Coordinator
of Chinese Studies



Chatting with language partners - SISU 2018



2018 Program Closing Ceremony - SISU



Bonnie Youngs and daughter Catharine, an initiate at the Phi Sigma Iota Ceremony

Straight out of grad school in 1993, I was hired into Modern Languages with seven other faculty members. Twenty-five years later, four have left and one has retired, so that leaves three of us from ‘The class of 1993.’

Whenever we hire in the department, I participate in the individual interviews with the candidates. I always tell them that this is my first job, and it will be my last. They are either impressed with my commitment to the department for academic reasons or for personal reasons. Once I explain why I have never looked for another job, they understand that it’s for the second reason.

“[...] this is my first job, and it will be my last.”

- Bonnie Youngs

In 1993, the semester started on August 24th, my daughter’s first birthday. To my surprise, the department put together a party for Catharine: banner, cake, the whole shebang. So, after I finished my first day of teaching, we celebrated my baby girl. Tom (the hub and dad) brought her to campus and members of the department stopped by to wish her well. Their kindness was a good start to my career.

In 1995, our first son Thomas was born on March 17th and died at birth. Once again, the department stepped up. My colleagues in French covered my courses, department members attended the funeral, and thoughtfully, on his first anniversary, we

received a letter from the department telling us that a tree had been planted in Thomas’ name.

Over the years, other family events came up: a healthy and happy second son, Daniel, in 1996, emergency visits to elderly parents during the semester, tolerance for absences due to childhood illnesses like chicken pox, and understanding for the children’s presence in the classroom and at meetings for illness, snow days, and school holidays.

So now you ask, ‘Well, this is a nice story but how is it relevant to the topic at hand?’ To my mind, Carnegie’s quote about heart and work could be understood in two ways. First, we understand it in the usual way that we see on our campuses, in our publications, and so on: ‘My heart is in the work.’ For example, ask anyone about our department’s outstanding teaching and research, our ability as a department to retain student interest even though a course in Modern Languages isn’t required for CMU students, our active presence at campus events, and our engagement on committees at the college and university levels.

Second, though, the quote also implies that in our work, there is heart. Work is work – no one likes to have to work. But if there is heart in how the people around you validate the importance of what you do, in how they encourage exploration in your career, and in how, during difficult times, they support you as a human being, then that makes the work worth doing, year after year after year (after year...). This is why my first job will be my last job. (But make no mistake, I’ll still retire.)

Bonnie Youngs
Teaching Professor of French and
Francophone Studies



Sébastien Dubreil and students in Nantes, France, enjoying crepes and galettes from the crêperie Heb Ken

1993 was a major year for both me and Modern Languages at Carnegie Mellon. It was the year I came to Pittsburgh, and it was also the year that the Department of Modern Languages almost tripled in size, transforming itself from a mere “program” into a full-fledged department. Because so many new people were arriving in Pittsburgh, and in the department, at the same time, there was a real feeling of camaraderie and new beginnings.

I recall that there was a lot of work. We revamped the existing language programs with more of a focus on “content-based” instruction, moving from courses on “writing,” “reading,” “conversation,” and “grammar” to broader-based courses—for instance on German cultural history or twentieth-century Central Europe—that included key skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as a natural part of instruction.

For me personally the most challenging and interesting new course in the required sequence for German majors and minors was “Introduction to German Studies,” the capstone to the third-year German program, which offered a broad overview of the cultural and political history of the German-speaking world for a period of about two millennia, up until the end of World War One. My recollection is that the course started out with the Germanic tribes, the Old High German language, and the battles between the Romans and their Germanic neighbors, and ended up with the German defeat in the Great War, covering Barbarossa, Luther, the Thirty Years War, Goethe, Schiller, Mozart, and Wagner in the process, all in the space of fifteen weeks.

As is sometimes the case with courses like this, I probably learned at least as much as my students did, because I had never actually taken a course like this during my own days as an undergraduate or a graduate

student. I had to cobble the course together out of bits and pieces. It was a challenge for me and for my students as well. But it was also a lot of fun. This course has gone through an evolution over the past twenty-five years, and is now a bit more user-friendly, a “kinder, gentler” version of Central European cultural history (which was admittedly not always kind and gentle). And it’s now called “The Emergence of the German-Speaking World” rather than “Introduction to German Studies.” But it is still ambitious and still covers a remarkable time span in only fifteen weeks.

I created a number of other new courses over the years, including “Nazi and Resistance Culture,” “History of German Film,” and most recently, “Germany and the European Union.” Often these courses were taught in German; sometimes they were taught in English; and sometimes there was a mix of the two languages, with one section (Section A) being the German-language section and another section (Section B) being the English-language section. The goal was always to challenge and fascinate the German students while at the same time making aspects of the cultural history of the German-speaking world available to other students with little or no knowledge of German. Yes, as they say, “membership has its privileges,” and there is no doubt that membership in the community of German speakers also gives access to a distinct and inimitable cultural heritage that can be found nowhere else. And yet Carnegie Mellon as an institution, and I personally as an instructor, wish to open up knowledge more broadly. I have always felt that it is important not to restrict knowledge of the German-speaking world to an exclusive club of people who have the appropriate tools (i.e. the German language).

From the very beginning, Carnegie Mellon students have shaped the curriculum and my approach to my own research.

Carnegie Mellon students tend to be both intelligent and pragmatic, and their pragmatism has definitely had an impact on my approach to teaching and research. My sense is that Carnegie Mellon students want to know in a concrete way the interconnection between what they’re learning and the real world. That desire has always challenged me to explore the tangible ways in which language and culture have made a real impact on the world. In the German-speaking world, for better and for worse, the impact is clear—but I have learned, over the years, that, in teaching and in life, it is frequently important to state the obvious and make one’s assumptions explicit. What is obvious to a teacher or a researcher, after all, is not always obvious to a student who is just beginning to study a subject.

“Carnegie Mellon students want to know in a concrete way the interconnection between what they’re learning and the real world.”

- Stephen Brockmann

All of German cultural history, of course, rests on the foundation of the German language, and above all, I hope that in my teaching and research, I have conveyed my immense love for the German language and helped to communicate it to my students—even to students who don’t speak German and will never speak it. Language, after all, is part of what makes us human, and the diversity of languages and cultures around the world is part of the diversity of humanity itself.

Stephen Brockmann
Professor of German

Non-traditional courses for non-traditional students. Since my arrival at CMU in August 1993, I have been offered the opportunity to shape a distinctly ‘new’ department and curriculum, a real blessing but a challenge, too. From day one on, my colleagues and I have been engaged in truly groundbreaking curricular design and delivery, especially for the third and fourth years of Spanish. To my knowledge, no other U.S. university offers the kind of upper division courses we do in Hispanic Studies. Not only did we create an innovative curriculum, but we also did so carefully keeping in mind the many unique, but not always traditional, liberal arts students one would expect in humanities courses. Working with students whose fields range from, e.g., computer science to music, robotics to history, chemical engineering to global studies, and just about everything in-between, has changed the way we ‘think’ about our courses and what our graduates ‘need’ to become successfully multilingual and multicultural in today’s world.

Interdisciplinarity at its best. I have lost count of how many different course contents I have designed since my arrival in 1993, but their focus and complexity have changed in response to different factors: departmental needs, student or personal interests, recent or current social, cultural, or political trends, or areas I have identified as important for students’ understanding of how the past shaped the present, or of how language shapes human perception. There are two courses I think best reflect my desire to offer students something they probably would not find in any other language program: an advanced course on U.S. Latinos that analyzes their presence since 1513 in what became the United States—all in Spanish and using original, Spanish-language materials (a course that exists nowhere else), and a very advanced course in Spanish about print, digital, and visual news media from the Spanish-speaking world with a focus on examining journalistic “information” and “opinion,” how they are produced and disseminated, and how they can be manipulated to make “meaning” for readers and viewers.

Locally and globally connected. In 25 years, Modern Languages has grown from a small department to a vital entity with strong connections to many other units across CMU—and not just through our students, many of who are working on multiple majors and minors—but also with faculty across the college, university, and elsewhere. Our department’s tripartite research and teaching focus—second language acquisition/applied linguistics, cultural and historical studies and technology enhanced teaching and learning, and our interdisciplinarity, are very strongly

reflected both in our faculty and undergraduate and graduate students, which makes for a very stimulating environment. ML also has extremely strong connections to communities—local and global, e.g., through service learning, departmental-community cultural collaborations, study abroad programs and international research, and teaching and service collaborations.

Colleagues and creative collaborations. ML and CMU have created a space in which collaboration has been greatly encouraged, supported, and rewarded. Early on, I got to co-design and teach with a colleague in German studies a course on the cultural production of the years between WWI and WWII to English, History, German and Hispanic Studies students. In 2007, two Hispanic Studies colleagues and I created the *Círculo Juvenil de Cultura* outreach program to support heritage language learning and culture maintenance among immigrant Hispanic children in Pittsburgh. Also, I have participated in numerous interdepartmental and interdisciplinary programs such as the Center for Arts in Society, on topics such as immigration, public art and the State, media, and with the Humanities Center, and its Humanities Festival, and International Film Festival. Collaborations have often involved partnerships with other units, e.g., the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion. Last year, we organized ‘From Al-Andalus with Love,’ a two-hour public program highlighting the rich blend of Muslim, Jewish and Christian culture in Spain through music, language, food, and dance. The year before we organized an Afro-Puerto Rican Bomba drumming session in collaboration with the Latinx Alliance, the School of Music, and a community artist.

Research that is respected. The fact that one might research topics that take forever to thoroughly study, may seem a bit too obscure or specialized, or cross disciplinary boundaries that may make publications on them more difficult to place, has never been an obstacle in ML. Whether my work has combined literary and cultural analysis, salvage ethnography, and urban archaeology, or blurred the boundaries between literature, theater, and sociology, or emerged as a true blend of scholar-activism, it has always been supported both financially and in spirit. This tendency to look at things from multiple angles has, of course, crossed over into my course design and teaching, as can be evidenced in my courses on the trans-Atlantic Spanish-speaking world, U.S. Latinos, language and the media, translation, or race and class in national identity formation.

Kenya Dworkin
Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies

“I am so thankful for working in Modern Languages. It has given me the wonderful opportunity to meet and forge relationships with a host of people from around this beautiful world of ours. I am amazed that our planet is so big yet so small and we, its inhabitants, are so different and yet so similar.”

- **Vera Lampley**, Assistant to the Department Head and Graduate Programs Coordinator



It has now been 18 years since I joined the faculty of the Chinese Studies Program in the Department of Modern Languages at CMU. Throughout my experience here, our students have stood out as focused, motivated, smart, talented, and hard-working individuals. To help students and watch them grow has made my teaching very interesting and rewarding. Take the Chinese folk performance class as an example. In that class, I have incorporated some of my recent puppetry and folk performance research to help students obtain a general understanding of the various Chinese folk performance forms including puppetry, opera, oral storytelling traditions, traditional Chinese music and instruments, and temple festival performances. Students have achieved amazing learning outcomes through their active

involvement in class activities such as hands-on performing experiences, observations on the unique socio-linguistic and cultural phenomena of Chinese society, exploration of each performance form's special features, and discussions about the biographies of master performers.

Students in the class showcased their talents and learning outcomes by publishing reflections in the Modern Languages undergraduate journal, Polyglot, and by collaborating on a documentary filmmaking project. A final term project showcase was held at the end of the semester and was highlighted by a student's performance of a Shandong Clapper Ballad and a showing of the innovative Hand Puppet Theater documentary film produced by the students and

the instructor. The student group filmmaking project challenged students to use their linguistic, cultural competence, observation, and critical thinking skills to become filmmakers and arts ambassadors.

The short documentary film produced by the class has been shown to the public at several Pittsburgh community events and has received some attention from the media.

Our CMU students' attitudes and motivation make it quite exciting and fun to teach here and encourage us to continually reinvent the ways we teach language and culture. You rock, CMU students!

Sue-mei Wu
Teaching Professor
of Chinese Studies



Student-led class filmmaking

The Taiwanese Hand Puppet Theater film can be seen at <http://xinterra.com/suemeiwu>. An innovative Hand Puppet Theater Documentary Film produced by students and the instructor. The film incorporates ethnographic fieldwork, cultural studies and language learning, and creating it has been an important learning outcome in the course.

“To have the opportunity to work with such a great group of people, from all different languages and cultures, is immeasurable.”

- Sue Connelly, Undergraduate Programs Coordinator

Since I joined the Japanese Studies Program in the Department of Modern Languages as teaching track faculty in 2005, I have benefitted enormously from teaching various courses, especially Elementary Japanese I & II, Intermediate Japanese I & II, and Advanced Japanese I & II by using their course packets. I am much indebted to those who produced them and contributed to the development of our program and therefore would like to take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to them.

The Elementary Japanese I & II course packets by Keiko Koda and Etsuko Takahashi introduce information gap activities as a step toward genuine communication in real life (e.g., free expression of one's own thoughts) from dialogue practice, conjugation drills, and practice of sentence patterns. In information gap activities between two students, one possesses information that the other has no knowledge of and the new information is transmitted across the gap between them. In the conventional type of information gap activity, the crucial information comes from the teacher, not from students themselves. The course packets, however, require students to use their own private information (e.g., name, major, department, birthday, hometown) and personal experiences to convey to their conversation partner, thereby generating interesting, lively, and meaningful exchanges.

The Intermediate Japanese I & II course packets produced by Sufumi So and her students extend the use of the information gap activity to culture learning by means of a small group discussion for comparing Japanese culture with the students' own. After learning Japanese cultural products and practices from reading passages, students ask one another about their own products and practices in a small group of three or four with various cultural backgrounds. In addition to their personal experiences in their own culture, they exchange their views on the similarities and differences among the products and practices of various cultures.

The Advanced Japanese I & II course packets by Sono Takano-Hayes, Naoko Taguchi, and Yumiko Kono-Okada further promote culture learning through the information gap activity. Specifically, they narrow their focus on, and deal in depth with, four topics (i.e., youth culture, work culture, school culture, and family culture) down from twelve topics in the intermediate Japanese courses. They also include interviews with some Japanese people in Pittsburgh and video clips as well as reading passages. These

measures bring about a shift of focus from the discussion of one's own cultural products and practices and of the similarities and differences between them and those of the Japanese to the discussion of the perspectives of their own culture and of the similarities and differences between them and the perspectives of the Japanese culture.

From elementary through intermediate to advanced levels, the course packets provide students with ample opportunity to exchange genuine messages of their own from private factual information to personal opinions. With greater facility in the use of medium, the students can increasingly afford the luxury of constructing elaborate, well thought-out messages. The course packets have thus proven to be of great benefit to students and instructors alike.

Yasufumi Iwasaki

Associate Teaching Professor of Japanese



Japanese Speech Contest



Michael Furman tutoring Japanese at a local high school

CÍRCULO JUVENIL DE CULTURA

In 2007, a group of faculty in the Department of Modern Languages, with the assistance and support of two adjunct faculty in the History Department created the Hispanic Studies Outreach Program Círculo Juvenil de Cultura, a program with the dual purpose of serving Latin@/x students on campus as well as Latin@/x families and children in the community. Its primary goals have been 1) to promote Spanish-language maintenance and acquisition, and foster dual-language linguistic and cultural competency; 2) establish a network of community partners including the children's families, and educational, artistic, technological and philanthropic institutions; and 3) promote native/heritage speaker and L2 learner, college student engagement with the community through the various roles they play within the program, e.g., as volunteers, teachers' aides and instructors. Throughout the past decade El Círculo strived to enhance the opportunities to maintain and develop the communication skills and appreciation for Latinx cultures through a project-based multidisciplinary curriculum that integrated Spanish language use with cultural and content learning. The program functioned as a meeting space to generate social networks among Latinx adults, university students and children in a medium size city where there is a small density of Hispanic residents. We also intended to develop awareness in the larger community about the richness, diversity and contributions of Latinx cultures and peoples at the local, national and international level.



Children made masks for El Círculo's Carnival workshop

The creation of El Círculo was a response to local needs and research-based issues that foregrounded the importance of providing strong and dense social networks, positive representations and opportunities for minority language use to ensure language maintenance and positive identity development for immigrants. In our case in Pittsburgh, PA, we did not have a context of strong ethnolinguistic vitality, but there was not a stigmatization of Spanish as in other regions of the US. This offered challenges and possibilities in terms of designing a program to support the maintenance and development of Spanish and Latinx cultures. How could we support and strengthen the possibilities of maintaining and appreciating Latinx language and cultures in this particular socio-historical and regional context? Our response was to design a space where local residents and university students would have opportunities to use Spanish and engage in cultural and service activities while connecting to resources in the greater Pittsburgh community.

“We decided to offer the program as a workshop on 10 consecutive weekends every semester in order to be able to integrate the work with children, university students, and institutional resources.”

- Mariana Achugar, Kenya Dworkin, Felipe Gómez

Our work began by doing a survey of the community to identify the needs and interest in a heritage language and culture program. We found there was community interest among Latinx parents in the community as well as institutional support to engage in this project. This positive environment encouraged us to volunteer our time and join efforts to design the program. We decided to offer the program as a workshop on 10 consecutive weekends

every semester in order to be able to integrate the work with children, university students, and institutional resources. These workshops were designed as projects that had a concrete outcome (e.g. a play, a stop motion film, a radio program, a computer game, etc.) resulting from participants' collaboration to create a product or event that would be shared with the larger community.

For *Círculo*, "community" has many definitions: each one describes people or groups important to our all-round potential for success. This has meant working constantly to foster and sustain connections and in-kind or financial support from our Department of Modern Languages (other CMU supporters include the Modern Languages Resource Center, Gelfand Center for Service Learning and Outreach, School of Music, Center for Arts in Society, WRCT 88.3 FM), and with our students (undergraduates and graduates), students at other local

universities, community teaching artists, amateur sports coaches and organizations, funding and community development agencies, and public health initiatives. Just a few examples of just such institutions include the Carnegie Libraries, Sprout Fund, ReMaking Learning Council, Vibrant Pittsburgh, the Greater Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh, and University of Pittsburgh Center for Health Equity. The list of partners and sponsors goes on, but we can state without a doubt that none of it would have been possible without the volunteer help of many of our Modern Languages undergraduate and graduate students and colleagues or without the assertive support we received from the start from the department and both Dick Tucker and Susan Polansky as Department Heads. We look forward to continuing to offer our best potential to the continuation of this initiative.

Mariana Achugar, former Professor of Hispanic Studies and Second Language Acquisition
Kenya Dworkin, Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies
Felipe Gómez, Associate Teaching Professor of Hispanic Studies

Purpose and Goals

To support the maintenance and development of Spanish as a heritage language and cultural literacy for children of Latino families in the Pittsburgh community.



~ To raise consciousness among the children of the value of being bilingual

~ To offer the children the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the use of the internet and electronic technologies as a resource to enrich and construct their creative work with language and culture

~ To establish an environment in which the children feel comfortable speaking or trying to speak Spanish and through which to build friendships

A Snapshot of "El Círculo"

"El Círculo" promotes heritage language and culture development by creating an environment in which bilingual children can explore and maintain their identities and cultures. The program aims to strengthen children's awareness of the relationship between the arts and society through music, poetry, stories, songs, theater, art, and dances.



Through interaction with Spanish-speaking teacher-facilitators and college students, children are encouraged to develop and be proud of their heritage language and cultures and appreciate the social and cultural value of being bilingual-bicultural citizens of their new country, the United States.



"Los Padrinos"

"El Círculo Juvenil de Cultura" is a volunteer-based, not-for-profit program led by Carnegie Mellon Hispanic Studies faculty with collaboration from University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon students and other community members.

Approximately 25 children between the ages of 5 and 12 years old participate in each workshop.

We appreciate both financial and in-kind contributions to our efforts.

Sponsor a child! Your contribution will allow a child from a family in need to experience a Círculo Juvenil workshop. Contribute \$25, \$50, \$75, \$100, or the amount that suits your budget.

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Normally when crowded into a room with 40-50 individuals whose native languages include Russian, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, French, German, Japanese, and Korean, one might feel a bit intimidated – quiet even. However, when Susan Polansky, the head of the Department of Modern Languages is tasked with starting the faculty meeting, it is a challenge to get everyone’s attention. How can this disparate group of people find a common ‘language?’ Simple – the languages of pedagogy.

In the 12 years I have been part of this department, the language of pedagogy has been the connective tissue that has brought us all together. Through brief central office conversations to larger conversations on learning and teaching, what consistently rings out is a perpetual priority on the experience, growth and learning process of our students. What drew me to this department and only continues to grow is that our members view pedagogy not simply as a career, or even an art, but as a worldview.

What is sometimes seen as a dirty little secret in post-secondary education is that most people who join the campuses of elite institutions as faculty have not been trained to teach. Many of us have not taken courses on how to develop a syllabus. We have not sat on lectures about the best methodologies for advanced level French. The exception is sometimes found in graduate programs that ‘train’ teachers through teaching assistantships.

When I joined the faculty in the fall semester of 2006, I had at least 8 years of teaching under my belt. In fact, I considered



Alex McCloskey working with students of Spanish at a local high school

myself to be quite a good instructor. I was proud of the rapport that I was able to establish with my students and was aware of the tools needed to create an organized but inspired classroom experience. However, in those prior 8 years, I had not found a teaching and learning environment that felt as deliberate and inspiring. My colleagues here at CMU suggest ways to facilitate student engagement in the classroom, assignments to help take learning outside of the classroom, and thoughts on approaching a class of learners with very different levels of language ability. These conversations have been rich and rewarding and have led me to realize that teaching is a life-long endeavor. There will never be only one way to teach.

“What is not as visible, however, is the behind the scenes moments of support that I have seen colleagues provide to their students.”

- Candace Skibba

Our department consistently scores high in the infamous FCEs (Faculty Course Evaluations), and members of our faculty and staff have been awarded the Teaching Innovation Award, Elliott Dunlap Smith Award for Distinguished Teaching and Educational Service, Doherty Award for Sustained Contributions to Excellence in Education, Ryan Award, Academic Advising Award, Barbara Lazarus Awards, and Gelfand Awards. We serve on a multitude of committees and boards both within and outside of the campus community. What is not as visible, however, is the behind the scenes moments of support that I have seen colleagues provide to their students.

And so, in today’s world in which the product seems to outweigh the process, I feel extremely fortunate to be part of a community that strives for excellence in teaching and student success.

Candace Skibba
Associate Teaching Professor
of Hispanic Studies

I have taught as adjunct faculty in Modern Languages for more than 10 of its 100 years. It's been a long journey from my B.A. in physics from Reed College in 1982, to teaching in the Japanese Studies group here. My first trip to Japan was with the Portland Youth Philharmonic, to perform in Sapporo, celebrating 20 years of sister cityhood. After two M.S. degrees (one in Physics and one in Energy and Resources, including a background in public policy and social science), and work as a government researcher (New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory), Japanese language study that had begun as a hobby, ended up being more like a calling. I lived in Tsukuba, Japan during my husband's sabbatical, soaking up language and culture as the mother of two young children, integrated into Japanese society. Upon return to Pittsburgh, I retrained to teach Japanese in the public schools. There were no openings in nearby schools, but Modern Languages had a glut of students taking Elementary Japanese 1, so I found work in my field. The following semester, I was given the opportunity to co-teach Introduction to Japanese Language and Culture, with Keiko Koda, with the intent that I would teach this course regularly in the future. That was ten years ago. Besides growing into that role, I have also had the great opportunity to develop, in collaboration with Yasufumi Iwasaki, and teach the Technical Japanese course from 2013 on. Looking back, I am grateful for my liberal arts undergraduate education and the critical thinking and

research skills gained along the way. These have allowed me to grow into my role, to continue growing each and every semester, and to enjoy interactions with colleagues.

I will describe the 300-level Technical Japanese class here, because that is the class to which I bring my whole academic and professional background. It is not a course for memorizing technical terms, learning to pronounce equations and reciting pi (though there is a little of that). Rather, students learn about, discuss, formulate and communicate opinions about current issues related to technology and society in Japan, consider similarities and differences with their own countries and cultural backgrounds, and choose one topic for an in-depth term project. At present, the first half of the course covers energy and environmental issues, while the second focuses on robotics. I am in my element for the former, and often there are students who know much more content in the second half than I do (and they don't seem to mind that). I often have heritage language students in the class, and I used to worry that I couldn't teach them anything. But this is not just about language skills, or technology, since critical thinking is front and center. This course works on many levels, depending on what the students bring to it. No background in technology is needed for this course. Excellent work has also been done by art majors and English majors.

Barbara Litt
Adjunct Faculty, Japanese Studies



Barbara Litt showing off the "kankeisha" badge as she observes a Grand Sumo practice



Litt at Shinano Junior High School, a public school in Seto, Japan



Litt outside the Kokikai-Aikido Hombu Dojo in Nagakute, Japan

When I look back to 2008 when I first came to the Department of Modern Languages, it is with utter disbelief that it's been ten years since I started my job at CMU. I know that I am not a new instructor anymore, but I still feel new at times, given the fact that there is still so much more I can learn – from my immediate colleagues in the department, from my students in the classroom, and from other faculty members in different disciplines. One thing that I came to appreciate above all over the years is the emphasis on interdisciplinary work and collaboration in our department and at the university in general, be it in the form of team-teaching, workshops at the Eberly Center, or joint research grants. Coming from an interdisciplinary background myself in Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies, it has been such a pleasure to continue my work with colleagues who value collaboration and the exchange of new ideas as much as I do and who inspire me on a regular basis. The spirit of innovation and exploration has impressed me from the very start and still impresses me after ten years on the job.

Working in an atmosphere of support and kindness is an important prerequisite when it comes to creativity and innovation. Over the years, I have been able to rely on my colleagues in the department to listen to my projects, share their own experiences and expertise with me, or connect me to people with similar interests. Through their help I have become more and more interested in fields such as technology-enhanced learning and the digital humanities and have been able to use them productively for my own teaching or research endeavors: making maps about food insecurity, designing final projects requiring websites or audio recordings instead of research papers, or combining Viennese history with 3-D modeling. Seeing myself grow as a scholar and teacher alongside my students and colleagues has been a unique experience for which I am very grateful. It truly distinguishes Modern Languages and fosters productive bonds and collaboration between faculty members.

Gabriele Maier

Associate Teaching Professor of German

International Translation Day Open House 2018





View from The Museum of Islamic Art - Doha, Qatar

Nine years ago, I stepped out of the plane at Doha airport wondering about my new life experience in another Arab country. I have to admit that the first couple of months were so challenging. The weather, culture, and work environment were all different.

When I look back now, I feel that all these years passed by like a blink. They were full of a lot of new experiences and an ongoing learning process. I got to know the culture of my home department in Pittsburgh through the e-mails I received about their meetings. It is a culture full of vividness, innovation and support. I've always felt that I am standing on solid ground as I have many colleagues to whom I can resort whenever I am in need of advice or knowledge. This applies also to all my colleagues here in Qatar.

Being part of CMU gave me the chance to participate in many community service activities. Society values and appreciate our university and this opens doors to relationships in many educational contexts.

Research is the heart of all sciences and the opportunities for research is wide open here and anyone gets the support of both the department and university.

It has been and will always be a rich experience on a professional and individual level. I am happy to live it.

Zeinab Ibrahim
Teaching Professor of Arabic Studies, Carnegie Mellon Qatar

Teaching is my passion. What I feel especially grateful to the Department of Modern Languages is that it always provides me with a friendly and truly supportive platform where I can explore, to my heart's content, all the exciting new ways of teaching and possibilities to enhance my students' language/culture learning experience.

I started my teaching career in the department in 2010 with two fundamental language courses, Elementary Chinese and Advanced Chinese. But the more I teach language, the more I have learned to realize that it should never be separated from culture instruction. A good foreign language class should always be enriched by meaningful cultural content, and the teaching of cultural content can only become meaningful if it is accompanied by effective language learning.

With this realization, I started to design and develop a variety of courses that combined the instruction of Chinese language, literature, and culture all in one. Some of these courses focused more on modern Chinese society and culture, such as "Visions of China: Modern Chinese Society and Culture through Documentary Films and New Media," a course that helped students develop in-depth knowledge of modern Chinese society and culture by way of watching, analyzing, and discussing a series of Chinese documentary films and TV shows made with a documentary touch. Other courses drew from my academic training in classical Chinese literature and culture. For instance, a course that I developed in 2011, "Into the World of the Anomalies: Chinese Ghost Literature and Culture," used a 17-century Chinese literary masterpiece, *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio*, to help students look into the richly bizarre world of ghosts and anomalies in traditional Chinese culture. Another course developed in 2012, "Traditional Chinese Thoughts and Literature through Comic Books," used the

comic book series created by Tsai Chih Chung (a master cartoonist in Taiwan) to familiarize students with canonical works in traditional Chinese philosophy and literature.

The development of these courses made me realize that teaching and learning are an open-ended process that should never be limited to one type of knowledge or one set of skills. More importantly, it also made me see teaching and learning as mutually inclusive and reciprocal, where the growth of one is inseparable from and indispensable for the other.

"[...] teaching and learning are an open-ended process that should never be limited to one type of knowledge or one set of skills. More importantly, it also made me see teaching and learning as mutually inclusive and reciprocal, where the growth of one is inseparable from and indispensable for the other."

- Gang Liu

This realization urges me to constantly reflect upon teaching, trying to turn those inspirational, exciting and yet fleeting moments in my classes into something that is more solidified, tangible and explicit, something that can be passed on or shared with other educators who are also passionate about teaching. That's why I also started to write about teaching. Most of my publications in the past few years have had teaching as its centerpiece.

The article that I published in 2015, "A Concept-Based Instructional Design: Introducing Chinese Color Terms and Their Metaphorical Meanings at the Elementary Level," explores the effectiveness of concept-based instruction for raising students' conceptual awareness of the cultural implications behind certain Chinese color words and metaphors. Another two articles, titled respectively "Integrating Cultural Content in Language Teaching: Storytelling and Content-based Instruction in Advanced Chinese Classes" and "Integrating Language and Content: A Case Study of An Advanced Business Chinese Class on China's Recent Currency Rise," examines how social topics (e.g. Chinese currency rise) and technology-enhanced teaching strategies (e.g. multimedia storytelling) can be used to enrich classroom instruction and students' language learning experience.

In addition to these articles, I also serve as the chief editor of two forthcoming books on teaching. As their titles suggest, *Tales of Chinese Teachers: Case Studies and Reflections from CFL Classrooms in North America and Tradition and Transition: Teaching Chinese Culture Overseas*, one book is a collection of different kinds of true stories that have happened to K-16 Chinese language teachers in North America, and the other is a resource book for language educators on the theory and methodology of teaching Chinese culture in a foreign language setting.

All of these accomplishments would be impossible without the platform provided by the Department of Modern Languages. This platform gives me not only the chance to explore and experiment new ways of teaching, but also the motivation to reflect upon them and learn from them. To me, this is what makes teaching complete!

Gang Liu
Associate Teaching Professor
of Chinese Studies

ANNIVERSARY REFLECTIONS



Opening of the Askwith Kenner Global Languages and Cultures Room during the Tepper Quad Grand Opening Celebration

It has been my great pleasure to be an adjunct faculty since 2013, and I appreciate the opportunity to express my gratitude to the Department of Modern Languages (ML) at the special moment for the 100th anniversary celebration. The ML faculty and staff have provided me all kinds of support to make my teaching and learning a very pleasant experience. The benefits to me are in all aspects: academically, professionally, and personally.

“[...] I have been fortunate to work with inspiring mentors and colleagues.”

- Haixia Wang

Academically, I have been fortunate to work with inspiring mentors and colleagues. With Yueming and Gang's insightful suggestions, I was able to complete IRB and implement my doctoral research on “Integrating Language and Culture through Conceptual Metaphor in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language.” A paper based on the pilot study, focusing on “Introducing Chinese color terms and their metaphorical meanings” was published in 2015. Same as Adam, my theoretical framework draws on Vygotskian cultural-historical psychology, also known as sociocultural theory of mind. My advisor, Dr. Donato, highly recommended Adam's book, *Interaction and Second Language Development: A Vygotskian perspective*, in which theoretical discussion are complemented by pedagogical implications.

With the belief that the integration of language, content and culture is the key, Yueming, Gang, and I organized a panel on the curriculum articulation through content-based instruction in CFL teaching, and presented at the 2016 ACTFL Conference. As co-editors, Gang and I are working on the book titled *Tradition and Transition: Teaching Chinese Culture Overseas*, and have a signed contract with Beijing University Press.

Also based on cultural-historical content, I am very fortunate to be one of the team members and humanities advisors of a media project, funded by National Endowment for the Humanities. The project director is Ms. Darryl Ford Williams, the Director of Content at WQED Multimedia and Emmy Award winner of documentary films. The project title is

“Shanghaianders,” a documentary film about the social, cultural, and political legacies of European Jews who found refuge in Shanghai, China, during the late 1930s. The well-known Shanghaianders are Peter Max (1960s iconic pop artist) and Mike Medavoy (film mogul, founder of Phoenix). I should thank ML faculty for giving me the experience working with documentary films.

Professionally, I really appreciate the learning opportunities both in the Chinese program team and in the department. Especially thanks to Yueming, I have had chances to teach language courses at elementary level and intermediate levels, as well as the culture course on “Chinese Calligraphy: Culture and Skills,” which was designed by Yueming and Huiwen. Based on the materials they shared, I added the Chinese painting part and tried new things every semester. Thanks to Gang, I participated in the curriculum design for his course “Visions of China: Modern Chinese Society through Documentary Films and New Media,” which explored the issues in modern Chinese society through documentary films. When I taught a Hong Kong-China Study Abroad Preparation course for the Tepper School of Business, Gang was the co-designer for the curriculum and guest speaker. The purpose of all the courses is to integrate language, content, and culture through well-designed curriculum.

The department also provides opportunities for professional development. I have learned a lot from faculty's presentations. For example, Seth and Gabi organized ICOR on the topic of “Language and Culture Learning through Games.” Sébastien shared his expertise in game design and language learning. Naoko and Xiaofei introduced the project on game-based learning. Felipe and Marc invited us to the project presentations in the Second Language Acquisition & Technology course. The project languages included Spanish, French, Chinese, and ESL, demonstrating strong instructional design integrating new technologies and digital media.

Thanks to Bonnie who organized a two-day Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) training in 2014, I continued to complete a 4-day training in 2018, and am now in the process of being a certified OPI tester. I also attended Dietrich Undergraduate Colloquium, and was impressed by the high-quality presentations given by students and their ML mentors.

Personally, I have enjoyed participating in the cultural events. One of the highlights was the multicultural event, “Al-Andalus With Love,” at the Center for Diversity and Inclusion where Kenya, Nevine, Candace, Yoshi, and Therese showcased the joint efforts of Hispanic Studies, Arabic Studies, and Japanese Studies faculty. I really enjoyed the jeopardy game, great food, and especially the music and dance. Khaled and Tatyana organized the MLSAC culture event “Time to Taste the World,” and showed the movie “Russian Ark,” which tells the history through the Hermitage Museum.

My whole family enjoys the cultural events on campus. Henry and Jerry come to Spring Carnival every year. While they are learning Chinese at Pittsburgh Chinese School, I am learning Latin dance and Italian songs such as “Santa Lucia” in the adult classes. I truly believe that languages are the bridges in our increasingly diverse multicultural and globalized world, in which diverse populations can coexist and even thrive.

Haixia Wang
Adjunct Faculty, Chinese Studies



Chinese Calligraphy Showcase

“I joined Modern Languages in the Spring of 2016, and I feel fortunate to be part of a community that values my research goals and my vision for the Arabic Studies program. The generous collegial spirit in ML has helped me to grow as a researcher and a language educator. And the growth of the Arabic Studies and interaction with our students have been very rewarding.”

Khaled Al Masaeed
Assistant Professor of Arabic Studies and Second Language Acquisition
and Coordinator of Arabic Studies

“The Modern Languages community welcomed me very warmly when I joined in 2016, and I feel so lucky to be part of the very collegial and supportive environment in our department. It has been such a joy to work with our students in both Spanish and Second Language Acquisition courses. They are passionate, curious, intelligent, creative, engaged, and they always make me laugh! Happy Anniversary, Modern Languages—may you continue building bridges between people and cultures for 100 more years and beyond.”

Katharine Burns

Visiting Assistant Professor of Hispanic Studies
and Second Language Acquisition

Though this is only my third year with the Department of Modern Languages, my work has already benefited tremendously from the generosity of my colleagues and students. The department’s ethos of inclusion and curiosity has helped me be bolder and broader in the kind of research I pursue, stretching well beyond my immediate expertise in 19th-century Russian prose to engage with translation studies, ordinary language philosophy, and the digital humanities. In teaching, too, I have felt encouraged and inspired by my colleagues to offer courses that allow me to learn along with (and from) the students—for example, in a course I teach on the history of Russian anarchist thought and its legacy in digital culture. I am now looking forward to involving more of my students in a large-scale digital humanities project centered on Tolstoy’s life and work.

Tatyana Gershkovich

Assistant Professor of Russian Studies



Students enjoying traditional Russian food and the Pittsburgh Balalaika Orchestra during the first Western Pennsylvania Russian Speaking Olympiada



Launch of the M.A. in Global Communication and Applied Translation in the Askwith Kenner Global Languages and Cultures Room

Language acquisition often starts with learning greetings and salutations, how to welcome and get to know someone. As one of the newest members of the Department of Modern Languages, I'm in the midst of introductions and enjoying warm welcomes. If first impressions stay with you, then the openness and generosity of the department will keep me warm for some time.

I'm excited to arrive into a thriving Modern Languages department, one where many themes and subjects abound. One where the learning is led by students, and where a vision for understanding the needs and demands of their many futures translates in a multitude of projects, across literature, art, society, finance, and technology to name a few.

“Technology may bring the world closer, but journeys still need to be undertaken and our stories captured and re-told.”

- Stephan Caspar

My work here will be to better understand how technology can facilitate new ways to acquire language and shape cultural competence. Students are starting to learn through interactive media and virtual reality. Can these virtual experiences better prepare students for real-world encounters and interactions? Are we comfortable using the language of games and play to present research and simulate political and social situations? My hope is a yes to both.

To truly celebrate culture, you have to appreciate identity, you need to recognize difference while seeking unity. Pittsburgh truly encapsulates this challenge and provides a rich seam for our students and scholars in Modern Languages. Technology may bring the world closer, but journeys still need to be undertaken and our stories captured and re-told. Technology will make those introductions easier but we will still need to use our experiences and knowledge to further our understanding.

Stephan Caspar
Assistant Teaching Professor of Media
Creation and Multi-Cultural Studies

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT REFLECTIONS



2018 Time to Taste the World event

LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCES

Learning a different language is what truly changed my career path and life goals. Prior to studying language, I hadn't thought much about growing my global perspective or pursuing opportunities in international relations. Language is what led me to find a passion for both, and to eventually apply for jobs/fellowships that specialized in Russian relations. If I had not been able to continue my language study, I would not be in the position that I am today. It has truly changed my path in life.

Lindsay Poss
Class of 2016

Oftentimes, the small things end up making the biggest difference in the long term. I first enrolled in Elementary Japanese II during my second semester of freshman year at Carnegie Mellon University. I decided to take the class “for fun” after a very difficult first semester transitioning from a high school to college environment. I took Japanese language classes in high school, and although I had no intention of pursuing a career necessarily involving use of a foreign language, I always enjoyed language classes in high school and thought, “why not?” As an Art major, I was steeped in art practice and theory, and with a few free elective slots, decided to try a college level language course. I thought it would be fun to get outside of the Art Department for an hour or so, four days per week.

I loved the class, and formed a great relationship with the professor, and also got to know other students. Most students in the class were majors in other departments who like me, enrolled in Japanese class to try something outside of their comfort zones. It was refreshing to meet people from different colleges within CMU, many of whom I would have never interacted with otherwise, and bond through our mutual desire to learn Japanese. I had no idea that this class I decided to take “for fun” would lead to many life-changing relationships, experiences, and ultimately influence my overall career path in far bigger ways than I could have imagined.

I kept on taking Japanese classes, and also picked up elective Japanese courses, such as Japanese Literature, out of my own interest. My Art Department advisor encouraged me to declare a second major in Japanese Studies, as it became clear that I wanted to continue taking the courses of my own volition. As I saw the ways that taking classes outside of the Art Department only helped, rather than detracted from, my

art practice, I started seeking out avenues to study abroad in Japan. I was extremely fortunate to be twice awarded a Critical Language Scholarship from the U.S. Department of State, and spent both summers of 2013 and 2014 in Himeji, Japan. While in Japan, I made a point to visit art museums and participate in various cultural experiences. I met dozens of people from various walks of life. I found that I had completely underestimated my own language abilities. I never expected I could make genuine friendships while speaking Japanese, discussing interesting topics in arts, literature, politics, and culture. This revelation gave me a massive boost in confidence, which only helped my language abilities increase over a short period of time.

In my final year of undergrad, and into graduate school, I started taking Chinese language classes. I had exhausted all Japanese language and cultural courses within the Department of Modern Languages, but felt that I couldn't stop studying language. Language learning had become part of my art practice and something that I was interested in far beyond a hobby. Through learning Japanese and studying in Japan, I had gained so much more than I ever imagined, and I couldn't just stop cold-turkey. Enrolled in CMU's Heinz College to earn a Master of Arts Management, I had a hard time explaining to my advisor why I wanted to enroll in undergraduate Chinese language classes. I earned no credit for these courses towards my degree, and it actually brought down my GPA due to the way undergraduate courses are weighted for graduate students. However, I didn't mind. I explained that I needed to take these courses “for my sanity,” and that I was certain I could manage the work on top of my Arts Management curricular requirements. I managed to get through Advanced Chinese I before graduating with my Master's degree.

“I had no idea that this class I decided to take “for fun” would lead to many life-changing relationships, experiences, and ultimately influence my overall career path in far bigger ways than I could have imagined.”

- Dervla McDonnell

I now live in Los Angeles and work at a nonprofit organization, benefitting recent immigrants to the United States (primarily from Central America and Asia) who seek education, community, and financial stability. I believe my decision to go into this work was heavily informed by my language studies in undergrad and graduate school at CMU.

Now, all I can think about is how to incorporate Spanish language lessons into my already too-busy schedule of work, family and social engagements. Thanks to Modern Languages at CMU, I have caught the language bug for life. I believe that communication is the gateway to build relationships, and ultimately empathy for other people. Although on the surface, people may look different and speak different languages, we are all the same at our core. I am so thankful for my seemingly insignificant decision to enroll in Elementary Japanese II at CMU, and for all of the faculty who both challenged me and supported me as I grew into the person I am today.

Dervla McDonnell
Class of 2015

SUMMARY OF AN INTERVIEW WITH AUSTIN SAUNDERS, A CMU STUDENT

by Li Yameng

Shanghai International Studies University (SISU)

How would you like to spend your summer?

By taking summer courses at school, or going back home to relax? By watching the World Cup with your friends or looking for an internship to gain more experience?

This is how we usually spend our summer. But sometimes we end up having new adventures far away.

To experience a different summer and pursue his dream of going to China, Austin from CMU decided to participate in the SISU 8-week Summer Program.

How far away is Pittsburgh from Shanghai? 14000km, 16 hours flight. What happened when this dream comes true?

Austin says, when I first arrived in Shanghai, I felt fairly confused. The taxi driver couldn't fully understand what I meant. The elderly friend at Luxun Park spoke too fast, and with a strong accent. I could only get the key points. Later, I met with my language partners, who showed me around and took me to the fantastic restaurants. I introduced some of my American culture and my home university to them. I hope they also have a chance to experience being an exchange student.

After my experience here, I realized that human beings have more similarities than differences. Language is not the barrier to exchange our thoughts. Now, I can talk with the taxi drivers and Daye, Dama without any problem.

Scorching afternoon,
the shadows of the trees,
the cicadas' singing,
what can appease this restless heart of
Austin?

Austin found his inner peace in his calligraphy class. One of his principle reasons for learning Chinese is the uniqueness of Chinese characters. Writing Chinese characters is a relaxing way for him to escape the academic pressures back at CMU. Learning Chinese calligraphy also cultivates his personality.

When the night falls, and the lights go out, people's emotions are amplified. Does Austin feel nostalgic in China?

Austin enjoys the time all by himself. After class, he likes to do his homework in the Café Bella. The Chinese idiom "learning without thinking leads to confusion; thinking without learning ends in danger" was taught by his Chinese teacher today. Austin found another side of himself through learning Chinese old sayings. He is calm and patient inside. Austin keeps a good habit of writing journals in Chinese. He wrote down the following ideas in his journal.

"Nothing can be taken for granted. I used to take fresh air, toilet paper, tap water for granted. China is very different. It is hard to use one or two words to generalize China. China by virtue resists any type of generalization. The only way to understand this country is by experiencing it on your own. So far, this has been one of the best experiences of my life. Getting the chance to interact with China's culture, people, and language on a daily basis has proved invaluable. I can't wait to see what other adventures my summer holds."



Chinese New Year Dumpling Party

REFLECTIONS ON SISU STUDY ABROAD

On Sun, August 8, 2010 9:14 am, Kristina A Dacosta wrote:

Hi, Yu Laoshi,

I just wanted to say how amazing my two months in China were. When I signed up for the program, I was expecting to have an exciting experience, but I really had no idea what I was in store for. This being my first time in China, I could not have asked for a better way to obtain my Chinese experience.

I greatly enjoyed the experience and training I obtained from taking the classes at SISU. I have to admit, though, the first day I walked into the classroom and heard the lesson, I had absolutely no idea what the teacher was saying! It scared me so much, and definitely motivated me to step up my game and work harder than I've worked in a very long time. It forced me to not just study what was given, but to find extra practice using other sources, such as Chinese music, Chinese movies, and other native speakers. And what better place to find these things than in China? It was tough at first, but I found out that the key was to just keep trying and eventually I would get it. After the first week, my listening skills were so much better! And throughout the two months I found myself improving immensely. I am so much more confident and more skilled in Chinese than I was before.

I also really loved the language partner program. When I first heard about it, I thought that it was going to be similar to the SA sessions where we would go over work together in a certain amount of given time. However, to my excitement, I found that it wasn't like that at all! I was extremely fascinated by the opportunity to just practice speaking in Chinese with a native speaker, and I took complete advantage of the situation. I saw this as the perfect opportunity to practice new grammar and vocabulary that I had just learned, practice how to speak in paragraphs rather than just saying one sentence, learn new words and grammar, and to have my mistakes corrected. While the classes mainly helped my listening, it was my time with the language partner that helped my speaking skills. I thought it was also really cool that the three of us got to go different places, have dinner together, and even do some fun stuff like shopping and karaoke.

I'm so glad we got to go on the trips to Hangzhou, Nanjing, Suzhou, and Zhujiajiao. Chances are that I wouldn't have been able to get to those places any other time that I would be in China, so I was really happy that I had the opportunity to do so this time. Plus, the itinerary for each place was so carefully constructed so that we were able to see all the highlights of each place and what made them individually special. I think my favorite by far was Hangzhou, it really is a gorgeous place and it's no wonder they call it "The Back Garden of Shanghai." I learned so much about the different places in the experience and the tour guides made the trip entertaining as well.

What I loved the most about being in China, though, was the overall experience of living in Shanghai. When I travel somewhere (though I haven't traveled too much), I want to get the full experience of where I'm going. I want to be able to see the place through the eyes of someone who lives there. And so being in the SISU Guesthouse, on the east side (Puxi) of Shanghai, by East and West Tiyuhui Road where so many people walk and so many people sell food, clothes, and other trinkets, I really felt like I was living there myself. I really started to understand why so many people moved to Shanghai, even though (compared to America) the lifestyles were far from ideal. I saw that even running a tiny restaurant on a road full of vendors allowed a person a better life than they would have had in the country. I saw that even though the Shanghai conditions were worse than the conditions in America (there was more pollution, less attention to hygiene, and more trash on the streets), the state of Shanghai was much better than it had been even five years earlier.

Also, the fact that you couldn't drink the tap water, that toilet paper wasn't offered in public facilities, and napkins weren't given in restaurants (and a few others) made me understand that America is truly an ideal country. People living in America that haven't seen other countries tend to take for granted certain things in life, like toilet paper for instance. It doesn't occur to them that things are slightly different in other countries, and not just in 3rd world countries. Before my trip to China, I knew that America was the world power and offered more opportunities for people than other countries did, but I did not fully understand how until I spent these two months in China. And I am absolutely fascinated that I have gained a new understanding not just of China, but of the world as well. I have much more respect for America now, and I can understand why foreigners have looked to America as an ideal country where "the streets are paved with gold." I have never had more respect for China, and I have never been more proud to be an American citizen.

"And I am absolutely fascinated that I have gained a new understanding not just of China, but of the world as well."

- Kristina DaCosta

Thank you Yu Laoshi so much for this opportunity, and thanks also to Wang Laoshi, Zhang Laoshi, the SISU teachers, the tour guides, the language partners, and the many other people who spent much time trying to put together this opportunity for us!

Xie xie,
Krissy DaCosta (Deng Kexin)
Class of 2013

SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES

When I entered Carnegie Mellon, it was never a question of whether I would continue to study Spanish. I had been “good” at it in high school, and it seemed like the logical way of breaking up an extremely science-focused schedule. I expected that studying a language in college would improve my language skills, diversify my resume, and maybe even give me an opportunity to study abroad. While I did walk away with these things, what I truly gained from the program was not so much a set of skills as a life experience - a new perspective that I can honestly say I did not have to go looking for.

“I may not always remember how to conjugate verbs in the present perfect tense, but I will always remember the way that Spanish enabled me to connect deeply with people near and far.”

- Christina Cabana

What stood out to me the most was how quickly my classes became focused on culture and history rather than the language itself. Speaking Spanish turned from a fun thing I could do into a way to communicate, in the deepest sense of the word. For example, it was impossible to learn about the importance of Mexican cinema without watching the movies in their original form. Moreover, when watching clips of survivors of violent situations, their stories lost all poignancy and depth once translated into abbreviated sentences that flashed across the screen. Spanish became my key to understanding. I think the word context best describe what I gained from this type of teaching. The language skills I was developing were my key to understanding parts of the world and parts of history that I could not previously tap into. However, this idea of context was not limited to the language. The content I was learning in classes helped me to better see and understand the world around me, even when it was in English. Having read *Drown* in class, I picked up more books by the same author, Junot Diaz, to read in my spare time. Stories which one year earlier would have seemed like simple coming of age stories held new depth. I began to notice and appreciate the commentary on xenophobia, on life as an immigrant, and to recognize the intent in the precise way the author switched between English and

Spanish. My time in the Department of Modern Languages gave me a new avenue to learn about the world.

Perhaps even more rewarding than gaining this empowering context was the fact that I did it alongside a group of thoughtful and supportive peers. Unique to my language classes, I found that most courses consisted of small groups of students and were heavily discussion based. Rather than just learning material together, we built the material from our own opinions, interests, and ideas. As the class material was often serious, this type of class lent itself to a sense of community which I did not experience elsewhere. The best example of this community for me was when I took a 300-level course with Professor Tardio, which centered around violence and conflict in Central America. We were asked to be vulnerable, to push ourselves to the limit of our speaking abilities while sharing personal and moving thoughts about topics as sensitive and mature as genocide and gender violence. In doing so, our community almost formed itself. I took this class during a very hectic semester; I was traveling for graduate school interviews, and I was working endlessly to try and keep up with the material. I was awestruck by the compassion my fellow students, and my professor, showed me. More than just keeping me up-to-date on the material, they were constantly checking in with me about my interviews and they even celebrated my successes with me. I realized that the trust we had built between each other extended past discussions on the class topic. In other classes, your peers can come to respect you as a mathematician, a scientist, an artist. In a language class, where you are constantly analyzing the way people live and interact and have lived and interacted, you come to respect your peers as people.

Overall, I would say that I got more out of my Spanish curriculum than I bargained for, and I wouldn't trade that experience for the world. I found out that learning a language allowed me to see the world around me differently, to understand more, and to listen better. I experienced the power of learning and growing with my peers, in a new and powerful way. I may not always remember how to conjugate verbs in the present perfect tense, but I will always remember the way that Spanish enabled me to connect deeply with people near and far.

Christina Cabana
Class of 2018



Colin Tait studying abroad in Jordan

When I registered for my first German class in the Department of Modern Languages, I knew exactly what I wanted: a solid boost to my language skills for a master's study in Germany, nothing more nothing less. Little did I know how this first encounter would change my perception of the German language and the German speaking cultures.

One of the classes that left a huge mark is German romantic literature in the 19th century with Professor Brockmann. I still remember all the names I called him (in my head) after many long hours reading those obscure pieces of German writing. As a student newly graduated from the cases, genders of nouns and adjective endings, this exposure to the classical literature was, in a total understatement, a struggle. Even if I understood every word in the sentence, it wouldn't make sense to me at all. And it certainly didn't help when some of the sentences were constructed differently from the modern German language and some words were spelled differently. Luckily, with the help of English translated versions and some Google Translate, I survived that semester and I was never prouder. This class totally changed my perception that German people were boring, predictable, and just practical. Underneath all those grim fairytales and gruesome depictions of events lies a special kind of wit nowhere else

to be found. Sometimes I even find the humor so dark that it is kind of disturbing. But I guess without some proper humor the German speaking world would never be what it is today after all those hardships and setbacks.

What's more special besides the curriculum is the friendly relationship I have with the professors. I can never thank Professor Maier enough for her help with my grad school application and her constant support outside the classroom. Professor Brockmann is always like a friend who I can disagree and debate with. This friendly and welcoming atmosphere eases students' angst learning a new language and new culture. Moreover, the professors become the best ambassadors for the German world. They introduce students to the first impression of the German speaking cultures and societies, and they do not let you down. Even as I'm studying in Stuttgart, Germany right now, I cannot get as deep an insight into the German culture as I have from the classes and conversations with the professors at CMU. And to my German friends, the fact that I read 19th century poems and watched early 20th century silent films is really cool.

*“After all, language
builds bridges, and
with more bridges
to cross, life is much
broader and wider to
experience.”*

- Sang Xu

It is an honor for me to have this opportunity to reflect on my journey and celebrate the 100 years of modern languages at CMU. As an international student, I deal with foreign languages in my everyday life. This in return benefits my ability to think in other people's shoes, to express myself to different audiences and to absorb information from different cultures. I would encourage every student at CMU to try a new language, study abroad for a semester, or just get in touch with the Department of Modern Languages to see future possibilities. After all, language builds bridges, and with more bridges to cross, life is much broader and wider to experience.

Sang Xu
Class of 2017

BUILDING COMMUNITIES BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Goethe once said “those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own.” While at CMU, I discovered the beauty of persistence in learning a language and accepting apparent differences to grow in perspective of your own culture. The CMU Department of Modern Languages enabled me to engage in cross-cultural experiences that changed me: I have a broader perspective on the world, learned what it’s like to live in multiple different cultures, and made lifelong friendships.

My experience with German began before I was 5 years old. My family lived in Germany and I attended German preschool — my first experience with a foreign language. When I went to college, I knew I wanted to study abroad and travel the world. I began taking German my sophomore year and was delighted to learn about a new side of German culture. I remember finding myself intrigued by German pop culture and modern Germany — growing up I thought Germany was a land of cathedrals, castles and fairy tales.

I continued taking classes in the German department and was encouraged by Gabriele Maier to apply for a scholarship to study abroad at the Goethe Institute. The next summer I found myself at a 4-week language intensive in Freiburg, Germany with the intent to continue the fall semester in Berlin. My assumption was that the assimilation would be immediate. Four weeks in, I was humbled to learn how much I didn’t know, but by the time I got to Berlin, I was ready and I thrived. The classes I took at CMU paired with the language intensive gave me the confidence to speak German, make bold mistakes,

and discover subtle cultural differences.

I lived with a host family and as my German progressed throughout the semester, the conversations we had together began to deepen. I learned about what it was like to grow up in the German Democratic Republic — one story from my host mom that I will never forget was about her waking up on the day the Berlin Wall fell and hiding under her sheets, because she was too scared to know what was going to happen next. It certainly gave me perspective on my own personal freedom.

As my knowledge of German grew, my understanding and confidence of the culture grew. I immersed myself completely - even joined the Berliner Singakademie - and truly felt that I had tapped into what it was like to live in a culture outside of the one I had always known. Little did I know at the time, the seeming discomfort when I arrived in Freiburg would pale in comparison to the distress I felt arriving in Chile.

My last semester of college, I took Spanish with Therese Tardio. Towards the end of the semester, I asked her about programs teaching English in Spanish-speaking countries. She told me about the English Opens Doors Program in Chile, and 3 months later I found myself in Region de Maule, in a small rural town called Pelarco. I had no idea what I had gotten into. With minimal Spanish and a community of 1,000 - maybe 3 of whom spoke English - the first 3 weeks were humbling, at best.

To be completely honest, I considered leaving. With such minimal Spanish and so few things in common with my host family, it was extremely difficult to sustain conversation, let alone even think about

enjoying myself. I felt lonely. With encouragement from my mentors and family and reflection on the time I was learning German, I decided to stick it out and commit to both the small-town life and really making an effort to learn Spanish. My host mom brought back a Spanish/English dictionary that soon became an active guest in our dinnertime conversation. All of us became more comfortable with the discomfort of our cultural differences and we began to discuss everything from music to politics — in fact, my experience in Chile fell during the time of the 2016 election, which opened up a window for interesting conversation about my host family’s experience with political regimes in Chile.

“I felt that once I was able to accept the cultural challenges, I could open myself up and engage in meaningful relationships.”

- Emma Harger

Looking back, I’ve found that the underlying factor in both Germany and Chile was the relationships I was able to develop with the people I met. I felt that once I was able to accept the cultural challenges, I could open myself up and engage in meaningful relationships. Those relationships only happened because of the nurturing relationships I developed with my professors in CMU’s Department of Modern Languages.

Emma Harger
Class of 2016

The spring of my junior year, instead of coming back to CMU, I was hiking in the middle of the desert in Arizona to put water out on migrant trails and then working in immigration detention centers in prison towns. When I decided to take some time off from school to volunteer on the U.S.-Mexico border, almost every adult at CMU told me that this might be a mistake; it would look bad on my transcript to have an “empty” semester.

My professors in Hispanic Studies were some of the only adults who encouraged me to volunteer, supported me throughout the experience, and helped me develop a research project from this hands-on work. I never thought I would become fluent enough in Spanish to really use it and I really never thought I would major in Hispanic Studies. But, as it turns out, Spanish has been the reason for almost every opportunity I’ve had. It was through Spanish classes that I gained access to one-on-one mentoring and support from faculty members that has been integral to my development, was encouraged to study abroad, and most importantly was a member of such an amazing and supportive community throughout my entire time at CMU.

By being able to communicate with the men and women that I met in the desert and in the immigration detention centers, I was able to forge connections that I never thought possible. Language and culture are more than a means to communication, but rather vehicles for understanding and growth. The people that I met in Arizona have exposed me to the harshest of injustices and the fiercest of friendships. When people talk about immigration, I see the faces of the people I met and remember the stories of those friends. This direct connection and exposure has fostered a strong sense of moral responsibility to fight for a more just immigration system.

In my Spanish class this year, we learned the phrase “Poner su granito de arena.” Put your grain of sand or less literally, do your part. Speaking Spanish has enabled us to see the world in a new way and focus on what unites us rather than divides us. As we move forward beyond graduation, this is the most important lesson. The problems that we face in the world today are so large that it is only possible to solve them if everyone is able to poner su granito de arena and work together. I want to thank everyone in the Hispanic Studies Department for their incredible gift to us. Language and culture have changed the way we interact with the world, but the support we received on top of these language skills has helped us become better people and more conscious citizens of the world.



Students having lunch at Casa Reyna in Pittsburgh's Strip District

“Speaking Spanish has enabled us to see the world in a new way and focus on what unites us rather than divides us.”

- Mikaela Wolf-Sorokin

Therese Tardio was by far the most influential professor that I ever had at Carnegie Mellon. Beginning with Intermediate Spanish II, which I took my first semester of college, Therese began mentoring me. She was always interested in all of her students as people, not only as academics. Because she helped make connections between my classroom learning and personal development, encouraged me to reach outside of my comfort zone, and motivated me to make change, I chose to work with Therese every single semester.

Furthermore, I know that I am not the only student Therese mentored. My friends, both in and out of the Hispanic Studies major, often chose to take her classes regardless of the subject matter because they so enjoyed working with a professor who cared so much about them as whole people.

Personally, I cannot imagine where I would be today without her support. With each new academic and extracurricular activity at CMU, my interests grew and changed. Through conversation, Therese helped me reflect on each experience to determine how I could apply what I learned to future research. I am extremely grateful for everything she has done and continues to do for students. Without Therese I would not be where I am today.

Mikaela Wolf-Sorokin
Class of 2018

There are a lot of great schools out there. I chose Carnegie Mellon because I wanted to be an engineer, but also because I was very, very undecided. I wanted a school that was good at a lot of things, a school that allowed me to change my mind, a school that would nurture my flitting attention and frequent changes of heart.

I did end up graduating with a degree in engineering, but my indecisiveness showed through my dual degree in Hispanic Studies and my almost-minor in Computer Science. Carnegie Mellon is academically strong in all these areas; I couldn't have asked for a better education from any of them. However, I spent a lot of time in a lot of different departments, and Hispanic Studies still managed to stand out: while so many departments offered so many things, Hispanic Studies most of all shared its heart.



Beth Anne Katz sharing alfajores with students of Spanish at a local high school

One day in Felipe Gómez's class on Hispanic detective fiction, I showed up after two consecutive all-nighters in the engineering labs. I lasted about five minutes before my eyes fluttered a final time and I couldn't pull them back open. I jerked awake toward the end of class and rushed up to the front of the room to apologize. Professor Gómez stopped me mid-apology: "Are you okay? Are you taking care of yourself?" With those few sentences, I was completely floored. Engineering had left me literally sleepless night after night and sent me through multiple existential crises, sometimes in the

same week. Though engineering caused immense stress, it never noticed and certainly never asked if I was okay. But Hispanic Studies did. Hispanic studies was the cradling hand that kept me sane through the rolling punches of Carnegie Mellon.

"The returns I've gotten from studying Spanish at Carnegie Mellon have come back in spades. I've been able to connect with locals from Mexico, to Costa Rica, to Spain. Hispanic Studies lent me the courage to live abroad and embrace a new culture."

- Beth Anne Katz

Engineering was my work, a department where I came in every morning, kept my head down, and punched out in the evenings. Hispanic Studies was the warm "bienvenido" when I was done, with a home-cooked meal and a smile waiting. My memories in Hispanic Studies are filled with holidays at Professor Polansky's house when I couldn't go home to my own family, watching the department support me post-graduation when I ran a marathon for charity, encouraging me as a commencement speaker, picking out a perfect personalized book for me as a graduation gift, and welcoming me graciously into their national honor society.

The returns I've gotten from studying Spanish at Carnegie Mellon have come back in spades. I've been able to connect with locals from Mexico, to Costa Rica, to Spain. Hispanic Studies lent me the courage to live abroad and embrace a new culture; as I write this, I'm in my tenth month of living in the Czech Republic. I owe so much of my success and my ability to connect with people to what I learned in Hispanic Studies. I promise though that it's not just what I learned in the classroom; it's what I learned from spending time with a solid group of people.

Beth Anne Katz
Class of 2014

TEACHING LANGUAGES

I distinctly remember my first day of German class at CMU. It was actually my first class on my first day of freshman year. (Talk about a triple whammy!) I had been placed into a class of students older than me, all of whom exuded a confidence and openness that I found completely terrifying.

During our introductions, I didn't understand a key word in the question I was supposed to answer. And after so many of my classmates had already answered perfectly, I felt my stomach drop and my palms break into an anxious sweat. "Oh my gosh, they must think I'm an idiot! What am I doing here?" My mind was spiraling down a rabbit hole of embarrassment and confusion, and I am pretty sure I ran out of the room as soon as we were dismissed.

You see, being a perfectionist and being a good language learner are generally incompatible. But, I wanted both. And on that very first day, I was still too overwhelmed to realize that I would have to make a choice, or rather, that choice would soon be made for me.

For the majority of my time at CMU, I had the privilege of studying with Professor Maier. During my years of learning German, and really, beginning on that very first day, my professor showed me that, when studying a language, grammar and vocabulary are nothing without humor and humility.

Incredibly precise and unsurprisingly organized, Professor Maier always had a plan, but she wasn't afraid to deviate, to meet us where we were and work with what we brought. She made German come alive for us, not for the sake of academia, but for the sake of practical application.

Once I got over my innate fear of my classmates, I discovered that all of us were equals, giving this language our best shot and learning as we went along. Mistakes weren't a setback, but an opportunity for progress. And even the most confident among us would have an off day or two. We were all just humans, doing what we could.

By encouraging us to speak up in class, Professor Maier was not seeking to create an environment of fear, as my earlier self had thought, but one of learning and expansion. She knew that the only way we would ever

become confident speakers of German was to actually speak it. And so, with time, I began to comply.

Professor Maier's high expectations led me to take my time with assignments, diligently study vocabulary, learn grammar rules I had never once learned in English. And in doing this, I found that it wasn't just our success that she praised, but our effort.

After returning from a summer in Munich, I was completely touched by Professor Maier's enthusiasm and praise regarding my much-improved German. It wasn't the perfection of it that stood out to her, but the ease and readiness with which I supplied it.

It's been two years since I graduated, but I am happy to say I still keep in touch with Professor Maier, grateful for an opportunity to speak in German, and for a professor who cares not just about my achievements as a student, but my wellbeing as a human. I may not know all the words, but now I don't hesitate to ask, because the lessons learned are always worth it.

Laurie Wilson
Class of 2016

Liling Huang sharing sticky rice dumplings in a Chinese classroom at a local high school



Learning languages is one of the greatest joys of living in a world full of beautifully diverse humans. On one hand, it's like solving a puzzle. Figuring out all the rules, what pieces go where, and feeling very satisfied when you've got it just right. At the same time, it's like glimpsing into another life. Learning about other cultures to challenge the ideas from your own, having to express yourself with a different foundation of words, it's almost like stepping into the shoes of another self.

“Learning languages is one of the greatest joys of living in a world full of beautifully diverse humans.”

- Estelle Tian

I want to thank the Department of Modern Languages and all my wonderful professors for letting me pursue those experiences. I took courses in Chinese, German, French, Japanese, and Arabic. I was able to learn new ways to write, reconnect with my

heritage, engage in literature in its original language, and more! Professors encouraged me to study abroad, gave me the opportunity to mentor others as a TA, and created spaces for me and my classmates to grow intellectually. I even tried as many language-related StuCos as I could—with Esperanto, Navajo, American Sign Language, and Hebrew. I still wish I had had time for more while I was a student.

After I graduated, I spent two years with Compass AmeriCorps, teaching English as a Second Language to Pittsburgh's adult immigrants and refugees. I honestly never thought I would enjoy teaching, let alone teach well, but those two years were so incredible. The multilingual skills I developed helped me bridge gaps in communication. All my time spent learning about different histories and traditions helped me better understand my students' backgrounds. The thoughtfulness and guidance I received from my own teachers informed the ways I taught in the classroom. I hope I can continue on teaching, learning, and exploring this wonderful world, for the rest of my life.

Estelle Tian
Class of 2016



2018 Phi Sigma Iota initiates from Carnegie Mellon University and Duquesne University



Modern Languages Senior Capstone Seminar - Spring 2018

I took six German classes towards my minor in German Studies while I was getting my B.A. in Linguistics at CMU. Many of these were with Professor Maier, who was particularly influential in my growth as a German speaker. She challenged me to push myself and deepen my understanding of German grammar, and her advice in my senior year was a catalyst in my eventual career choice.

Like most CMU students, by my senior year I was very focused on finding a job in my field, so I was somewhat hesitant when my professor told me about a year-long English teaching assistantship program through Fulbright Austria. I eventually decided to go for it – it would be a good way to continue my German studies and hopefully do some linguistics research on the local dialect. What I did not know then was that this experience would fundamentally change the direction of my career.

I was placed in a small town in Lower Austria. It was there, as an English teaching assistant at two rural vocational high schools, that I fell unexpectedly and completely in love with teaching English. I taught in a rotation of 26 different classes,

switching between the schools every two weeks, and I worked with students ranging from 14 to 20 years old. It was challenging (I was so afraid of public speaking at first!), but I quickly found a support network of other teachers in the schools, and soon was taking the lead on planning activities and class discussions.

Although I did not immediately pursue a career in education after leaving Austria, I kept coming back to how much I had enjoyed working with students and creating educational materials. Fast forward four years through a Master's program followed by two software/research jobs and finally a teaching certification, and I'm a full-time teacher at an adult education charter school in Washington D.C., where I teach literacy-level English to immigrant students from all over the world.

It has been an adventure getting to my current career, but I absolutely love my job, and I am so grateful to Professor Eichmanns and the Department of Modern Languages for helping me get here.

Anna Donohoe
Class of 2013

BUILDING COMMUNITIES AT CMU



Students, faculty, staff, and friends of the Department of Modern Languages attending the Centennial Celebration in October 2018

It was in Modern Languages where I learned the most about myself. It was in my Spanish courses where I discovered my interest in qualitative research and where I was encouraged to explore topics on my own. It was in small classroom settings where I felt the most vulnerable and insecure each time I had to speak in Spanish for more than a minute, but it was where I grew the most. Each professor within Modern Languages pushed me to stay out of my comfort zone, to ask the challenging questions, and in doing so allowed me to build relationships with inspiring individuals. They immediately became lifelong mentors whose doors are always open.

As students, we built a community. A community of students who had unique academic interests. Within these communities, we were encouraged to connect ourselves to the world beyond our campus. In our small communities, we were exposed, we discussed challenging topics such as immigration, race, politics, gender equality in a language that I was struggling to conjugate my verbs. Just as our professors became lifelong mentors, my peers and I became lifelong supporters of one another.

Kayla Lee
Class of 2017

When I took my first German class at Carnegie Mellon to fill an elective during my freshman year, I never imagined it would turn into such a huge part of my life. Now, having completed my German Studies major and entered the “real world,” I’ve come to understand just how valuable languages are. We bridge worlds through our words, whether that is through connections made while studying abroad, engaging with immigrant communities, reading historical texts, or simply having a conversation with another second language learner. And though I spoke those exact words at our graduation ceremony in May of 2018, I certainly did not expect to meet so many people who shared my passion for language learning and my particular love of German culture outside of the university. Without my Modern Languages family, I wouldn’t have learned to take risks and step out of my comfort zone to connect with others, and I certainly wouldn’t have the language skills I needed to do so.

“Without my Modern Languages family, I wouldn’t have learned to take risks and step out of my comfort zone to connect with others, and I certainly wouldn’t have the language skills I needed to do so.”

- Molly Whittaker

For me, languages are invaluable tools that we use to connect with different people and cultures and to see the world through their perspectives. Through my languages classes at CMU I’ve had the opportunity to combine my passion for environmental engineering with the courses I’ve taken in German and really broaden my horizons. From researching the environmental justice demonstrations of 20th century Germany to investigating the cultural and environmental impacts of globalization, studying a second language has provided me the opportunity to explore the world through the eyes of different people, and from that my education has been more robust and enlightening than I ever could have anticipated.

What is really special, though, at the root of all the special topics courses and field trips and cultural events, is the community within the Department of Modern Languages. The faculty, staff, and students uplift one another and foster an environment where diverse ideas and perspectives become the foundation for great works, be it art, publications, research, or services to our community and beyond. I know I speak for many when I say that this department is unique in its unfailing support for all members of the community in all of their endeavors. I am grateful for my brief time in the Department of Modern Languages and cannot wait to watch it grow in the years to come.

Molly Whittaker
Class of 2018

Students, faculty, and staff attending a fall Welcome Back BBQ



GRADUATE STUDENT REFLECTIONS

I decided to take “Chinese Calligraphy: Culture and Skills” in the fall semester on a whim, as I was looking at taking a class at CMU that helped channel my creative energies. To my pleasant surprise, taking the class not just gave me an outlet to learn a beautiful art skill, but also helped broaden my horizons and helped me appreciate the nuances of Chinese culture vis-a-vis art and calligraphy. As a Ph.D student, the classes served as a means of practicing mindfulness and helping clear out my headspace whilst I devoted complete attention to my brushwork. It was a refreshing oasis of calm in the sandstorm that can be the research process. Encouraged by my instructor, I attempted more ambitious work for my creative project than I had imagined when first starting the class, and I was immensely happy with the result. The overwhelmingly positive experience I had in the class spurred me to take the other such class offered by the department, “Arabic Calligraphy: Culture and Skills” in the next semester, which was equally rewarding. Despite being stuck outside the country for the first month of the semester, the instructor made special arrangements to interact with me for the period and definitely went the extra distance. Both the instructors (Dr. Haixia Wang and Ethan Pullman, respectively) were passionate about what they taught, and were genuinely interested in teaching the skills to the students, and established a personal rapport with all the students, which was excellent to see. I have nothing but high praise for both the classes, and they've definitely been some of the most fun classes I've taken in my academic life at CMU.

Kumar Shaurya Shankar
Class of 2018, Ph.D.



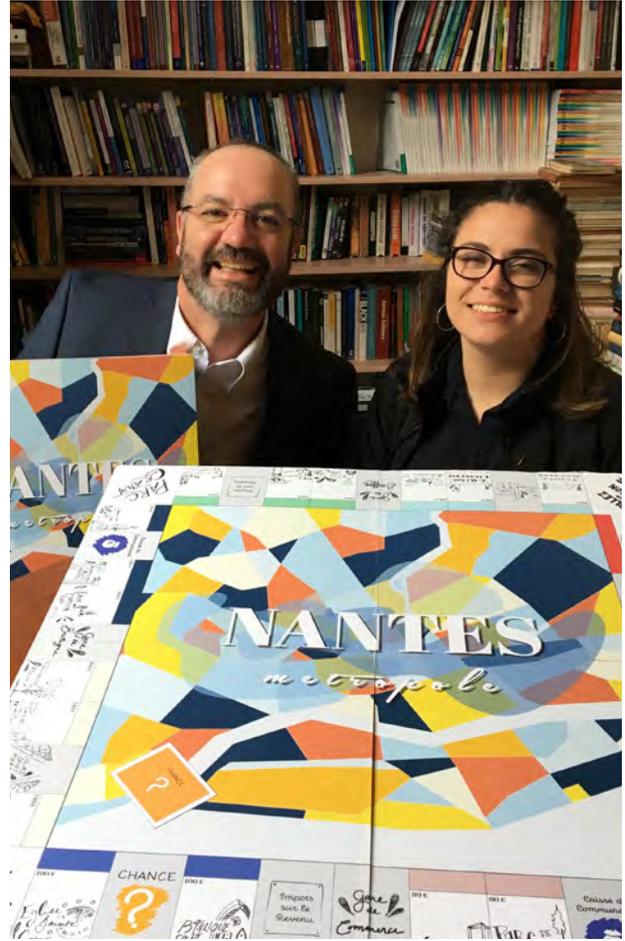
Students showcase their projects in Arabic Calligraphy - Spring 2018



Dr. Ashley Weber (Class of 2018) and daughter, Jeanette

"[...] the professors in the program were so incredibly encouraging and supportive, particularly at times when I needed them the most."

- Wenhao Diao



Sébastien Dubreil and student, Laura Rospigliosi, with her project from the course, "French in its Social Context through Media Creation in France"

Igraduated from CMU's Department of Modern Languages in 2013, and I still look back at my days at CMU very fondly. The SLA program in the Department of Modern Languages was always a closely-knit family during my time in Pittsburgh. The majority of us came from abroad — China, Japan, Chile, to name just a few. The faculty members were also from many different parts of the world. But it was such a unique place where we could all learn about each other's languages and cultures, quite literally through our research presentations and also the many jokes that would probably have been too geeky for people outside of the program. As a doctoral student, I was understandably feeling anxious and stressed and sometimes even doubtful about my own work. But the professors in the program were so incredibly encouraging and supportive, particularly at times when I needed them the most. I felt extremely fortunate and grateful. A few years later, one of my own doctoral advisees would tell me that she could not thank me enough for the support that I have given to her during her dissertation research. All I could tell her was, "It was nothing compared to the amount of help that I received as a grad student at CMU."

Wenhao Diao
Class of 2013, Ph.D.



Keiko Koda with graduate students, Helen Zhao and Sihui (Echo) Ke, and Dr. Hong Gang Jin at a Cognition and SLA Seminar at the University of Macau

There is a global learning crisis. Some 250 million children cannot read a single word even after being in school up to 4 years. While there are a host of complex reasons for this, language is a core, often overlooked one. My time as a doctoral student at Modern Languages not only trained and prepared me to examine the role of language in this crisis; but it also challenged and inspired me to think innovatively about multi-disciplinary ways to tackle this crisis.

I currently conduct research to support the development of language of instruction policies and practices across several low and middle-income countries worldwide, including Laos, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Guatemala, Tajikistan, and India. The training par excellence that I received at ML taught me the important balance of conducting rigorous cognitive and linguistic research (micro level) to inform regional and national educational policy (macro level) decisions.

The unique, powerful combination of advisors I had, in Professors Keiko Koda and G. Richard Tucker specifically, supported the development of a nuanced approach of blending cognitive science and education policy research to make a societal impact. That has held me in good stead since, and its positive impact on all aspects of my professional life only increases with time.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002238/223826e.pdf>

Pooja Reddy Nakamura
Class of 2011, Ph.D.

In the spring eleven years ago, the moment when the doctoral admission letter from the Department of Modern Languages travelled across the Pacific Ocean and arrived in my hands, I knew that Carnegie Mellon was the university for me. This is the school where Dr. Mao Yisheng graduated as its very first Ph.D. nearly one century ago in 1919. Perhaps more importantly, Dr. Mao's masterpiece, The Qiantang River Bridge (the first dual-purpose road-and-railway bridge designed by a Chinese), is located in my hometown - Hangzhou, China. So, I have always felt an additional layer of connection with Carnegie Mellon.

To me, what defines Modern Languages is its constant pursuit of innovation and perfection with high standards, and at the same time with a profound humanistic touch. Such defining characteristics are reflected in the curricula of its programs and are jointly enriched by the faculty, staff, and students as the years pass by.

Even though I graduated from Modern Languages years ago, I consider myself forever a member of its community. The culture and traditions of the department continue to inspire me, and I strive to bring its values to Georgia State University and to places where I may live and work in the future.

My very best wishes to Modern Languages for its centennial celebration, and for the many years to come!

Shuai Li
Class of 2011, Ph.D.

“To me, what defines Modern Languages is its constant pursuit of innovation and perfection with high standards, and at the same time with a profound humanistic touch.”

- Shuai Li



Undergraduate student, Lucy Pei, and Susan Polansky



Doctoral student Frank Dolce sharing reflections at the Centennial Celebration

ANNIVERSARY REFLECTIONS



The Department of Modern Languages Centennial Celebration

As a student in the SLA Ph.D. program, I learned a great deal from all SLA core faculty members as well as other faculty in the Department of Modern Languages. I truly enjoyed all of different courses I took during my Ph.D. program, but the course on Second Language Acquisition that I took with Naoko Taguchi always stands out as one of the most interesting and enduringly helpful. Her knowledge of and genuine interest in many different areas of language acquisition and teaching has always been inspiring to me. The depth and breadth of articles and other readings in key areas of language research and pedagogy that she carefully selected for her course greatly expanded my understanding of the field of SLA and helped me identify and specify my own interests within the field. She deftly designed many of her assignments, such as writing a book review, so that students could have a better understanding of the publication process for academic research. She encouraged students to submit their book reviews for publication, and she helped guide us in selecting appropriate journals for submission. Her course was as immensely rewarding as it was rigorous. I was and still am amazed at the way she was able to so seamlessly combine course content with assignments that could yield positive, practical benefits beyond her course. Outside of class, she was always accessible and provided invaluable insight for students with questions about the job market and hiring processes for recent Ph.D. graduates. Although I came in to the program with many years of teaching experience, she provided me with new insights into how to improve my own teaching to always challenge and inspire my own future students and how to give them something that they can apply to their lives beyond the course material.

Eric Mayceko
Class of 2014, Ph.D.

Iwas a Ph.D. student in the SLA program. All of the staff, friends, and faculty that I met in the department inspired me, supported me, and gave me the strength to continue growing in the professional world. The department staff members were very thoughtful, and they helped me so much so that I could focus on my work. The friends I made in the department are now close colleagues in the same field. I owe so much to the faculty members who provided me with their valuable guidance, especially Professor Dick Tucker. Even today, I still carry his words with me, “Put students first.” This became my most important motto as an educator. I am truly grateful that I had the opportunity to work with such wonderful people in the Department of Modern Languages.

Kiyomi Chinen
Class of 2004, Ph.D.

My time in the Ph.D. program at Modern Languages was highly enjoyable and rewarding. I’m grateful to this day for not only the full financial support I received for the entire duration of my graduate study, but more importantly, for the rigorous academic training I received. I am still in touch with many of my professors from the program, Drs. Keiko Koda, Dick Tucker and Susan Polansky, to name a few. They still respond to my emails for help astonishingly quickly, gather with ML students at conferences, etc., and I know they are there for us however many years after we have graduated. Knowing this makes me feel I have never left Carnegie Mellon and will always be there.

Chan Lu
Class of 2009, Ph.D.

The year was 2003, and I was contemplating pursuing a Ph.D. degree in the US. If I did, I would have to leave Israel, a steady job, and hope my husband would be equally enthusiastic about the idea. Reading the description of the program at the Department of Modern Languages at CMU was enough for me to understand that this academic, international venture was something that I ought to concretize. In August 2004, I landed in Pittsburgh (with my husband and children) and became part of the student body in the Second Language Acquisition Ph.D. program.

I was already aware of how lucky I was to be there, and fourteen years later the feeling is as strong as when I first set foot in the department. Welcomed by Vera Lampley, I immediately felt at home. Gradually meeting the faculty, the staff, and fellow students in different stages of their studies, it became clear to me that I was about to embark on a unique academic experience. Although I was already an experienced language teacher when I started the program, I soon grasped that there was so much more to learn. I suspected that every academic encounter, in class or in the library would become a learning moment. And so, it was.

First, there was the research seminar. I was thrilled that we students would meet weekly with the faculty of the program to discuss second language acquisition issues. Professors Dick Tucker, Barbara Freed, Mariana Achugar, and Keiko Koda each contributed from their expertise; they were supportive while expecting serious work and excellence; they guided us students in the right path to become independent researchers; they displayed genuine interest and dedication. It was very helpful to listen to the presentations of more senior students, who served as models in the nurturing environment of the research seminar. There was a sense of community and mutual support among the students that was an essential contribution to the positive experience during my years at the department.

Then there were the lessons themselves. The high level of the lectures, the arduous work we were expected to complete, and the professors' careful and professional

guidance made participation in each course a memorable experience. The courses facilitated advanced development of knowledge in the subject matter, they served as models of how to teach content courses, and they planted seeds of curiosity for further individual exploration of the topics uncovered and discovered in class. Each course – a wealth of seeds, a variety of research interests, a treasure for a language teacher, a sociolinguist, an academician.

Finally, there was the dissertation. One mandatory step was the excruciating experience of the 51-hour comprehensive exam. I remember I took my sleeping bag to the TA's office, and, a little lost and a little optimistic, started the unbelievable academic marathon. Besides the sense of urgency, the ticking clock, and the high stakes of the situation (what if I fail?), I remember that I felt respected: "If I am being asked these questions, my professors believe I am capable of answering them (I am not as certain, I hope they are right). So, let's do it!"

In sum, my experience as a Ph.D. student at the Department of Modern Languages was professionally and personally gratifying. The contact with my fellow students and with the professors was both academically and personally enriching. There was true friendship amongst students. The faculty never, ever forgot the person behind the student. I remember how they revealed an interest in my personal wellbeing. I am reminiscent of Prof. Susan Polansky's warm words of support during the tense moments after the oral defense of the dissertation, waiting outside the closed door; of the supportive interest of Prof. Dick Tucker and Prof. Barbara Freed given the challenges of a graduate student with a family in a foreign country; of Prof. Mariana Achugar and Prof. Keiko Koda's assistance every step of the way.

While at CMU I learned that professors set the tone, that they must be as demanding as supportive, and that if one rides a bike to school in the snow at 20 F, it might take the entire morning to defrost.

Deborah Dubiner
Class of 2008, Ph.D.

“I aim at making innovative use of educational technology to enhance students' second language learning experience. Thanks to the solid Ph.D. training offered by the Department of Modern Languages, I have established my interdisciplinary research grounds and academic profile.”

- Helen Zhao

Ijoined the CMU Department of Modern Languages as a Ph.D. student in 2008. The Ph.D. program is a unique one. One can hardly find a Ph.D. program that specializes in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), a core area in applied linguistics. This is exactly the area that I want to work in. Before doing the Ph.D., I had experiences in foreign language education. I taught English to learners at elementary, high-school, and also college levels in China. There are many teaching resources that I believe do not transform well into satisfactory learning outcomes despite heavy investment from educators and learners. I want to look for ways of helping learners to acquire those difficult aspects of language.

The CMU Ph.D. program offered me exactly the type of training I wished for. I was able to learn from internationally renowned scholars specializing in various sub-areas of SLA such as second language reading and writing, study-abroad research, pragmatics acquisition, language education, etc. The program cultivates students to situate themselves in SLA while building interdisciplinary research ideas that branch into areas that are related to topics in second language learning such as psycholinguistics, corpus linguistics, and

sociolinguistics. We were also fortunate to be allowed to take courses for credits from the University of Pittsburgh where there is a very strong Linguistics Department.

Perhaps what makes me a unique student in the Ph.D. program is my involvement in the Pittsburgh Science of Learning Center (PSLC). I owe a special debt of gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Brian MacWhinney, who is PSLC affiliated and who encouraged me to join it as a Ph.D. student member.

My experiences at PSLC shape my research path to a great extent. At PSLC, I got all these valuable opportunities of networking and exchanging ideas with faculty and graduate students who work on psychology, computer science, human-computer interaction, among others. Their areas may be different from mine, and yet we are all interested in researching learning and the learner. I opened my eyes to the Learning Sciences and realized that many language learning problems that I know of are not unique to language, but are generalizable to other domains of learning such as math and physics. And in these domains scientists have developed advanced learning tools as intelligent tutoring systems to address complex learning problems and challenges. I got deeply influenced by many notable PSLC affiliated scientists from both CMU and Pitt including Profs. Kenneth Koedinger, Charles Perfetti, and David Klahr, and I started working on English language tutors for my dissertation.

I'm now working at the University of Melbourne in the School of Languages and Linguistics, where I'm continuing my research on second language tutors. I aim at making innovative use of educational technology to enhance students' second language learning experience. Thanks to the solid Ph.D. training offered by the Department of Modern Languages, I have established my interdisciplinary research grounds and academic profile. CMU taught me to be an independent researcher and educator. Thank you so much, my alma mater!

Helen Zhao
Class of 2012, Ph.D.

Congratulations to the Department

of Modern Languages on 100 years of modern languages at CMU!

I remember clearly me saying goodbye to colleagues and friends in Singapore, and my wife and parents in China, and starting a new life journey of studying in the Ph.D in Second Language Acquisition program in the Department of Modern Languages in 2006. It was a time full of mixed emotions: exciting and aspiring yet anxious and nostalgic.

The culturally diverse and inclusive environment, the smiles on everyone's face, and a kind, ready hand everyone had to offer, all made my initial days, and the next few years in the Department of Modern Languages, a very warm experience. I came to the department to both learn and (learn to) teach. My scholarly inquiry skills were crude; and a native speaker of Chinese, my knowledge of teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages was very rudimentary. These, among other factors, made my first year a big challenge; yet the year (and the next three years, too) was also highly productive, thanks to the interactive learning environment in the doctoral courses I was taking and the fabulous support from the Chinese team. The two roles, a Ph.D. student learning about how learners learn and a novice Chinese language teacher teaching others to learn, strengthened each in me and made each a very rewarding experience.

One of the unparalleled strengths of the Department of Modern Languages, as I reflect on my experiences of studying and working at different institutions in different continents of the world, is that everyone is an inspiration. The department inspires every student to unleash their potential, preparing for the opportunities ahead in life and motivating them to learn further and lead. Among my most rewarding experiences are, for example, participating in planning doctoral seminars, coordinating scholars' visits, serving on search committees, and research collaboration with professors and fellow students. This would not be possible without the first-class scholars and the wonderful leadership of the department.

I successfully defended my dissertation in 2010 and then started new journeys of life with my family moving across continents. The lovely and inspiring memories are as fresh as they were about a decade ago: Chris (Hallstein) holding his Guten Morgen mug; the busy (Yasufumi) Iwasaki sensei I saw on campus on weekends; the emails I found sent to students in very early mornings from professors; the Chinese team busy preparing dumpling parties and activities for Chinese students ... My connection with the department is as strong, if not stronger, than ever: chats and dinners with old and new friends at conferences; travels to Pittsburgh to re-walk the long hallway of Baker Hall; collaboration on publications and other scholarly activities; service as a member of the editorial board of the Chinese learning and teaching journal; a member of the WeChat group of Chinese fellas in the Modern Languages ...

The Chinese idiom goes 饮水思源 (yǐn shuǐ sī yuán), so does the English proverb, let every man praise the bridge that carries him over.

Dongbo Zhang
Class of 2010, Ph.D.

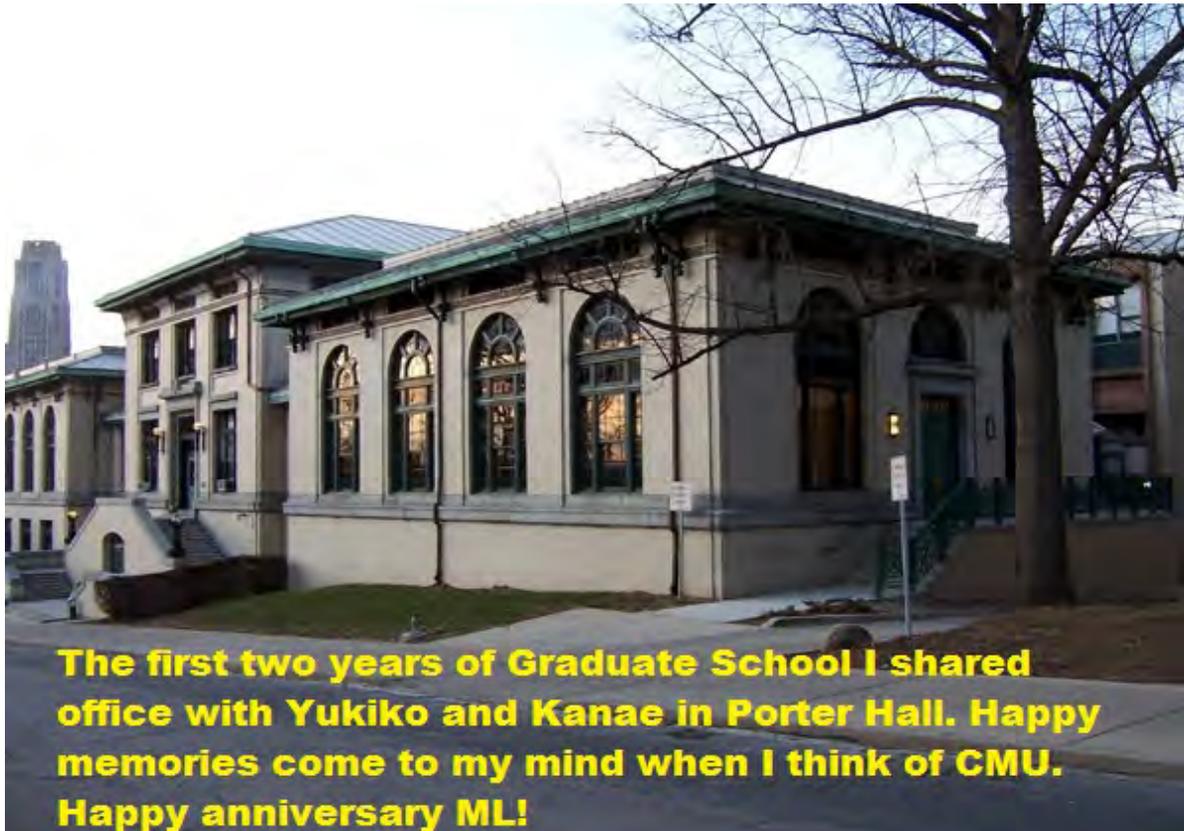


Sonya Anopa studying abroad in France

My experience as a doctoral student at the Department of Modern Languages (ML) was transformative. I came in with limited knowledge of second language acquisition, and it was the ML professors who helped me achieve my aspiration to become a teacher-scholar. Their dedication to students' success is the core of the ML legacy. I feel very grateful to all my professors for their constructive feedback on my work, teaching, and professional development. I remember receiving individualized comments from professors such as Dr. Koda, Dr. Achugar, and Dr. Yu. I also remember being introduced to keynote speakers by Dr. Tucker at major conferences and being advised by Dr. Polansky on job searching when she was on the way to the airport for a family trip. My special thanks go to my advisor Dr. Taguchi, who spent enormous time and efforts supporting me in all academic

developments. For example, after winning an external scholarship, I was told that she wrote a three-page recommendation letter for me while my proposal was only two pages. All these memories have inspired me to work diligently with my own students. I am sure that my story resonates with many ML graduate students such as my wife Kun Nie. Although Kun and I graduated in 2015, we still feel that we are part of the big ML family because we have been engaged in events and communications with the alumni association, and Dr. Polansky and her husband were able to visit us to see our baby boy Yi when they were on sabbatical. For these reasons, my family and I will always appreciate what we have received from the ML family and are willing to contribute back when needed.

Feng Xiao
Class of 2015, Ph.D.



Rocío Domínguez
Class of 2002, Ph.D.

Along with five other students, I was fortunate enough to be part of the first cohort to join the Master's Program in Applied Second Language Acquisition in the Department of Modern Languages at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in 2010–11. The learning experience in the program was immeasurably stimulating and enjoyable.

“The learning experience in the program was immeasurably stimulating and enjoyable.”

- Mo Chen

Under the tutelage of my professors at CMU, I learned various teaching methods and theories related to second language teaching and learning from courses such as Second Language Acquisition and Teaching Methodologies for Foreign Language. As students, my colleagues and I benefited greatly from learning to apply SLA theories in language teaching. For example, Dr. Bonnie Young inspired us to explore means of integrating technology and multimedia resources into the classroom to promote apperceived and comprehended input and to induce output from learners. When I co-taught the third-year Advanced Chinese course with Dr. Yueming Yu, she demonstrated how one might balance language and content learning in each lesson of a content-based course. Teaching various language courses years later at another university, I remained acutely aware of the importance of the pedagogical training I received from the Master's Program at CMU.

Professors in the Department of Modern Languages have been mentors for my career development. During my first semester in the Program, I developed interest in corpus linguistics and in pursuing a Ph.D. in SLA. However, I was hesitant to apply to a Ph.D. program due to the time requirements and financial costs. I spoke with different professors about my research interests and concerns. They all provided valuable suggestions on my career development, discussing my concerns and inspiring me

to pursue my goal. Currently, I am studying corpus linguistics and computer-assisted language learning at Iowa State University and working on my dissertation. For my dissertation, I have developed a corpus-based corrective feedback system to provide written and audio feedback on errors in ESL students' academic writing. Without the academic training, support, and care I received from my professors at CMU, I would not have challenged myself to further my study in the current Ph.D. program. The CMU faculty equipped me with the tools I needed to arrive at the place I am today.

The Department of Modern Languages is now celebrating 100 years of Modern Languages at Carnegie Mellon, giving me occasion to reflect on my profound appreciation for the training I received in the department. Professors there taught me that second language research findings will no longer lie unused in research databases or on bookshelves, but instead will truly benefit students' learning and development. I congratulate the Department of Modern Languages on its sterling past and I look forward to the brilliant future that still lies ahead as it continues to cultivate innovative language instructors and researchers.

Mo Chen
Class of 2012, M.A.



Keiko Koda and graduate students showing their Dietrich College pride



2016 Calligraphy Showcase



CMU SLA group at 2015 AAAL in Toronto, Canada

It was a bitter-sweet day when this photo was taken. Mr. Everything (Dr. G. Richard Tucker) told us about his plan to retire, and the SLA master and doctoral students managed to get together and chatted with him in a cafe near the conference hotel. It was the first time for me to meet so many ML SLA folks all at once at a conference. Yet, later on, I get used to running into an ML SLA student or alumnus at different conferences because we have such a strong and active SLA program.

Sihui (Echo) Ke
Class of 2016, Ph.D.

While doing my M.A. in the Department of Modern Languages, it was a privilege not only to meet and learn from renown professors from all of the world, but also to have classes with students from different cultures and nationalities. Classes were always an enriching experience that allowed me to put my own ideas and knowledge of the world into completely different perspectives, for which I'm truly thankful.

Erika Abarca
Class of 2014, M.A.



Giovanni Puppo at the department's Centennial Celebration



Zhiyi Wu and Tingting Gui celebrating Dietrich College Day

Thinking back to the days in the Department of Modern Languages, I feel so lucky to have met and befriended people of different color, race, gender, age, and sexual orientation. These people help me understand the breadth and diversity of the whole world. Studying second language acquisition at the department, I interacted with professors and peers with diverse backgrounds and created sparks through their various accents, personalities, native languages, ethnic customs melted in the same classroom, and thus I learned to appreciate the uniqueness of each individual and each nationality. I firmly believe that it is an essential quality for an international university as well as department. Also, it is what I was pursuing while I made the decision to cross the Pacific Ocean and study abroad.

Tingting Gui
Class of 2018, M.A.

Iremember being a student in the M.A. in SLA in the Department of Modern Languages as one of the most rewarding times in my life. Even though I already had a background in foreign language teaching, the program completely changed my views about what it means to learn a second language. I realized how language and culture are intertwined and how it is not possible to communicate one without the other. Through the hands-on teaching approach, I was able to witness how to really help students succeed when going through the process of acquiring a second language. The program was both challenging and stimulating. It made me reevaluate my preconceptions related to teaching methodologies and approaches, and I became a more competent and confident educator. I gained very valuable professional skills that I bring into the classroom with my students. The Modern Languages' faculty was remarkably knowledgeable and was always eager to share their own experiences with the students. Last but not least, I met wonderful people and I developed relationships that I think are going to last for life.

María Soledad Díaz D.
Class of 2016, M.A.



María Soledad Díaz D.
in the classroom



Barbara Freed with Sister Jacques-Marie,
inspiration for Barbara's film, "A Model for Matisse"

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