

ISSUE 20
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This newsletter is brought to you by
Maris Hawkins and Stacey
Margarita Johnson



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WHILE YOU'RE WAITING FOR THE NEXT
WTL PODCAST EPISODE TO COME OUT...



Preview of the Next Episode

EPISODE 65: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR TESTS WITH
SAVAS SAVIDES AND DONGBING ZHANG

In the United States, most students do not have to take standardized language tests as part of their high school exit or college entrance requirements. However, internationally, many students do have to take some form of standardized assessment to demonstrate language ability, and preparing students to succeed at those tests, whatever their form, is often a primary goal of instruction.

In this episode, we will talk with English teachers in Greece and Australia as well as revisit a couple of past guests including Beniko Mason (in Japan) and Steve Smith (in the UK) to hear diverse perspectives on how and why to prepare students for high-stakes standardized language testing.

In order to get the results and pass the exam, students end up doing a lot of exam prep and neglecting actual communication. What usually happens is that they manage to pass the exam, but after a couple of years, they're not proficient users of the language anymore.

-Savas Savides





Linda Egnatz

RESPONSE TO EPISODES 63 WITH LINDA EGNATZ AND 64 WITH MELANIE THOMAS AND PAT DIPILLO

This week's episode reaction is from Laura Sexton, @SraSpanglish on Twitter. Laura blogs at the website PBL in the TL and has found success using the AAPPL to allow students to earn the Seal of Biliteracy.

I cannot imagine having to make the Seal work for every language students speak! I know one of my students wanted a Seal of TRIliteracy, since she also knows ASL, but I never dug that far to see what it would take. It's noble to accommodate all of the students, but honestly I've really just focused on my own Spanish class.

Still, I think it's worth promoting the Seal from at least the world language classes, because I cannot tell you how proud my students were when they met the AAPPL requirements to get the Seal in North Carolina (even if it's not quite as complicated as NY!) It's a real testament to focusing instruction on proficiency, and I think it would have been a lot less...thrilling? if I hadn't already been focused on proficiency-based instruction.

As always, please share your ideas and projects with us on Twitter, Facebook, or in the comments for this episode!



Melanie Thomas



Pat DiPillo

Resource Corner

- You can read Linda's resource page full of links for each state to help advocate for the Seal of Biliteracy.
- Check out Linda's language teacher reading list!
- The Seal of Biliteracy has a page for frequently asked questions.
- Melanie shared a way to give feedback to her students around the proficiency descriptors.
- Melanie wrote a list of resources for teachers developing a proficiency based curriculum.
- Laura details her results with the AAPPL and the seal of biliteracy with her students.
- Read about the Seal of Biliteracy guidelines here from ACTFL, NABE, NCSSFL and TESOL.
- Also, follow the Seal of Biliteracy on Twitter to promote bilingual pride!

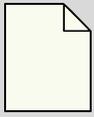
Updates from Past Contributors



Gillian Lord (episode 38) has been working on the website Contraseña with LingroLearning. It helps to lay the foundational groundwork to learn more Spanish, and it is available to try now!



If you are interested in learning more about MovieTalk, you can read Martina Bex's (episode 56) blog post that explains the basics behind MovieTalk and how to use this technique in your classroom.



Kara Parker (episode 41) has published a blog about how to create a proficiency syllabus for back to school. She also provides a template that you can download and modify for free!



Steve Smith (episode 58) recently blogged on the newest research on teaching grammar. In the post, Steve summarizes the research then also discusses some techniques that could be applied to the classroom.



Reactions to past episodes:

Susan Gremel Hojnacki The constant confirmation from all guests that we should be teaching language in context and as a useful tool to better understand the world and ourselves. I hear it in different ways in every episode. Thanks so much for creating this great resource!



Linda Egnatz
@miprofeAP

Following

Thanks to Stacey for inviting me to share on the Seal of Biliteracy on the We Teach Languages podcast. We've added states since we recorded and there are more to come. Podcast online today! #2bilit2quit @JNCLInfo @langchatPLN #BiliteracySeal4All weteachlang.com @ICTFL



Melanie Thomas
@senoraMThomas

Following

Love that part of her vision lies in post secondary. How cool would language classes for your major be?! What good do Lit classes do for SS w other majors? I do know that local Univ @FisherNews offers Lang & culture class for health field!



We Teach Languages @weteachlang · Jul 27

Replying to @senoraMThomas @FisherNews

I love that part too! Although I do have two add-ons. In my experience, most University departments are already thinking about or offering courses for the professions...

1 1



We Teach Languages @weteachlang · Jul 27

And 2, I do think studying literature has incredible cognitive, social, and emotional benefits even if it doesn't apply directly to your career! It builds empathy, historical perspective, etc. Worth it for its own sake. :)

2 1



Melanie Thomas @senoraMThomas · Jul 27

As I wrote the tweet, I contemplated how to say Lit can be useful but decided to go straight for my point!

1



Maris @Marishawkins · Jul 28

Also- I don't want to give too much away, but during my convo w @LeadWLanguages we discussed how knowing another language is extremely important for sts in any field and those who also choose not to attend college!



Carmen
@profecarms

Following

So many great points in Episode 42 @weteachlang with @danielwoolsey. Refreshing to hear - why so much emphasis on literature when undergrads don't go on to PhD programs? Can't agree more about language teaching being an interdisciplinary project. Thanks for sharing!



Angie Therese
@angellieWV

Following

@placido After using @MartinaBex 's "Sofía" packet a couple years ago, I loved the idea of writing pre-song stories to create context for comprehension of lyrics. Finally am writing my own this summer. @weteachlang podcast also w/Martina had great tips for making texts!



Nanette Leonard
@nanette_leonard

Following

Replying to @weteachlang @actfl @AATFrench

Thank you @staceymargarita for your wonderful podcasts and to @miprofeAP for bringing the Seal of Biliteracy to light!



MIWLA
@MIWLA

Follow

Looking for fun PD opportunities over the summer? Check out the We Teach Languages podcast. Listen to diverse perspectives of real language educators. weteachlang.com #weteachlanguages #welovelanguages



Katie Lockett
@katielockett

Following

Every time I'm losing my way with TL in the classroom, I turn to @spsmith45 to reinvigorate me. Great podcast! #mfitwiterrati