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

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# MIDWEEK NEWS AND UPDATES

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



## Preview of the Next Episode

EPISODE 73: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE  
COMPETENCE WITH MICHAEL BYRAM

A few days ago, I (Stacey) texted a friend to say, "Guess who is going to be on the podcast this week? Hint: He's my FAVORITE!" My friend knows me so well, her very first guess was Michael Byram.

I've been geeking out on his books for years, and I am over the moon that he will be sharing his perspective with the We Teach Languages family.

This is not the first time Prof. Byram has been mentioned on the podcast, actually. His co-authors Manuela Wagner and Dorie Conlon Perugini have both made appearances on the podcast (episodes 8, 27, and 61) to discuss their recent work. In fact, this interview was submitted by Dorie, and we are so grateful to her for sharing this conversation with a remarkable scholar.

It's not inevitable that language  
teaching leads to the good  
results that many policy  
makers talk about. It's got to be  
systematically planned.

-Dr. Michael Byram



**RESPONSE TO EPISODE 72: ONE APPROACH TO A CONTENT-BASED, UPPER LEVEL COURSE WITH ELENA MORGAN AND RACHEL FRENKIL**

This episode response is written by Dalia Wassner, Ph.D. and head of Hadassah-Brandeis Institute’s Latin American Jewish & Gender Studies (LAJGS) at Brandeis University.

By building interactive curricula that unites language learning, Latin American political history, and Jewish Studies, Carolyn Siegel, Rachel Frankil and Elena Morgan of Gann Academy are creating groundbreaking pedagogical pathways that show the relevance and intersection of all of these fields in the realm of secondary education. In so doing, they are empowering high school students to face pre-conceptions or scarcity of knowledge about Latin American history and politics, and to develop instead a nuanced connection to this region in the context of imperiled democracies and human rights abuses. Through this multi-disciplinary approach, Gann Academy is demonstrating that language provides the student as a reader and a writer intimate access to history, culture, and political conversations, whereby local experiences and their narrations emerge as globally relevant. Language thereby becomes a vehicle of connection between peoples and cultures as historical memories carried within the lines of a poetic novel or the reels of a film become the glue of a humanity that refuses to ignore or t become complacent with devastating realities that happen “elsewhere.”

In November, Gann Academy and LAJGS will partner with JCC Greater Boston to bring A Latin American Pen, A Global Memory: Imagining Anne Frank Today, Thursday, November 1, 7:30 p.m., LSJCC, 333 Nahanton Street, Newton. The event will feature a dramatic reading of Chilean author Marjorie Agosin’s Anne: Imaging the Diary of Anne Frank, accompanied by a multimedia art presentation and a panel discussion about the relevance of Anne Frank in Latin America today. The panel includes Dalia Wassner, Marjorie Agosin, Francisca Yanez, Nisha Sajnani, and Sandra Mayo. Click here to purchase tickets: students/free; general public/\$18.

**As always, share your reactions to this episode with us on Facebook, Twitter, or in the comments section on our website weteachlang.com!**



**Reactions to this episode:**

**Carmen**  
@profecarms

Following

Just listened to Episode 72--so interesting! I want to take this class! It surely motivates students to learn Spanish, develops critical thinking skills, and makes the language fun. Culture is key! How many weeks is this course? [@carolynrsiegel](#) [@srtafrenkil](#) [@weteachlang](#)

**Rebecca Blouwoff**  
@MmeBlouwoff

Following

What!?! World Language curriculum-writing + Boston-area Jewish education + Chilean Jewish women = so many things I love, all in ONE episode! Bravo & yasher kochachen! [#langchat](#)

**Bryan Whitford**  
@SrWhitford

Following

Listened to great podcast [@weteachlang](#) with Elena Morgan and [@srtafrenkil](#) discussing awesome humanities approach to Spanish IV. Doing similar approach here with Spanish IV [@BullisSchool](#).

**Updates from Past Contributors**



If you are in New Jersey, check out their upcoming workshops. Two of them feature Martina Bex (episode 56) and Lisa Shepard (episode 14). Martina will discuss pique proficiency, and Lisa will discuss IPAs.



Steve Smith (episode 58) recently wrote a blog post about how to design a plan to improve listening skills. In this post, he details a 6 point plan of action for teachers to implement or to start departmental discussions.