21st Century Tools to Teach, Learn, Collaborate and Advocate for Languages
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"A Monumental Shift"

The Spider Woman meets the Trickster

Many indigenous societies relate wisdom through story.   At the heart of many Native American legends is the Spider Woman. She is wise and powerful, but very discreet and mysterious. Rarely seen, she lurks in the shadows until she senses it is a time of transition. Only then does she emerge and begin to unravel the threads of the old web, representing the old world. She then begins spinning in order to weave the web of new stories and bring them to the forefront. The world has much to gain from observing the unraveling and the redesigning of new perspectives by this powerful mythological symbol. Spider Woman is a metaphor for change. The very metaphoric image exists in the world today as the art form of the Spider Woman permeates the 21st century vocabulary from websites to the Internet to social networking. Spider Woman has emerged and demands attention (Tarlow, 1999).

Another central figure in folktales around the world is the trickster, most often represented as the coyote or the hare. Tricksters, who are very clever, typically present surprises and unexpected events as a way to wake people out of their routines and uniformity. As Arrien (1993) states, the trickster enters to transform the society. The trickster is the master of transitions. It is this mastery that has the average world jumping and trying to control it. But the control is not the way out of the surprise. The trickster reminds all to become more objective, resilient and open to the wisdom of change. Who are the modern day tricksters in this changing society? They are, of course, the students. These 21st century digital native "tricksters" are here not only to challenge the educational system, but also to help make the transitions needed for positive change in the schools. They are here to move the country into acknowledging their diverse needs. They are here to teach that every view of the world and every culture add to the synergetic growth of our country and our world. They are here to let teachers know that they need a media-rich, multilayered environment in order to learn. They are here to say they want to be engaged in ways that help them make meaning. But the path is challenging and demanding and these tricksters will expect change. (Arrien, 1993).

Stories are a way for individuals to project and present themselves and declare what is important and valuable. These tales of the Spider Woman and the trickster embody the vital elements of a changing society that strives to become more inclusive, interconnected and honoring of all. Their metaphoric messages are becoming more apparent and more urgent. The ways in which the educational system and the teachers respond will not only

have major impact on the health and well being of all students, but also the future growth and success of this nation. Therefore, what is the important work of engaging all learners in the 21st century and how do teachers reach those wily, wonderful "trickster" students while using the wisdom of the Spider Woman?

Essential question: What is learning in the 21st century?

<u>Introduction</u>

Dateline: Aug. 15, 2010-Latest school news…

BRIDGETOWN - At Oak Hills High near Cincinnati, Ohio, students will get new laptops and desktop computers at school, or they can bring their own laptops to use in class this school year. The school will also become a massive wifi hot spot for all kinds of tools from cell phones to iPads to netbooks.

As the principal stated, students will be using all this tools for discussion, to turn in assignments, to do research. This is "anytime anywhere learning".

But the unique part of this is that the school district is not just buying everyone tech tools for every student, but instead encouraging students to use the devices they already have. And what if these students do not have any of these tools to use-well, then schools have some to lend out. They are opening their networks to allow for all these devices.

At another school not far away, a similar scenario. Schools want computers, etc., to be just as commonplace as pens and pencils. And the good news, teachers are also being trained and highly encouraged to use these devices and integrate them as part of online learning. As the principal said, "If students don't have access to adequate tech, how can they be ready for the future."

http://news.cincinnati.com/article/20100815/NEWS0102/8150309/1058/Schools-get-wired-for-new-year

Dateline: Aug. 21, 2010-Latest school news…On the other hand:

Teachers asked to 'unfriend' students on Facebook. Florida school district says teacher-student 'friending' is 'inappropriate'.

"It is inappropriate for employees to communicate, regardless of the reason, with current students enrolled in the district on any public social networking website," the guidelines said. "This includes becoming 'friends' or allowing students access to personal web pages for communication reasons."

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38789410/ns/technology_and_science-tech_and_gadgets/

Certainly a contradiction….

But for sure the traditional school model of students sitting passively in nice, neat rows, consuming content such as facts and formulas by lecture and little interaction is no longer sufficient for our digital learners to be successful in an ever changing interconnected world. Solving highly complex problems, creating and designing innovative products and working collaboratively in a global workplace requires that students have not only the basic skills of reading, writing, math and the ability to communicate in more than one language, but also the ability to research, to analyze, to synthesize and to evaluate in multi-sensory and multi-layered learning environments. Students need to be encouraged to be in control of their own learning.

Video: I Need My teachers to Learn by Kevin Honeycutt:
http://www.schooltube.com/video/f63276ab50d24d16bf83/I-Need-My-Teachers-to-Learn

The 21st century is here. Isn't it time we started preparing students for it?

<u>Monumental Shift</u>

Education is experiencing a monumental shift. It is NOT reform, retool, redesign or even transformation. These words mean nothing more than slightly changing things in order to emphasis the state tests.   But none of these terms fit. What we are really experiencing is a "monumental shift" in the ways students learn, teachers deliver instruction and how systems are organized.

1. a monumental shift where learning is the focus;
2. a monumental shift where "just in time" anywhere learning is the norm;
3. a monumental shift where collaboration and global connections are the centerpieces for successful learning
4. a monumental shift where the definition of literacy is much more than just reading and writing. It is also includes media and technology literacy.
5. a monumental shift where teachers are both facilitators and collaborators in the learning process.
6. a monumental shift where students "own their own learning."

And what is happening when we are not paying close attention to these shifts? As David Warlick (http://davidwarlick.com/2cents/) states, " thousands of students leaving "the traditional school" in order have a meaningful educational experience, some by online, some by experts and some by many ways we are not even yet aware of. He further states that this current "testing path" we are on, does not lead to smarter, more passionate students and teachers, but rather it leads to teachers and students thinking that school is something that is done TO students, not with or for them."

Why do teachers need to integrate technology into their teaching?

1. Technology motivates learners and connects them to their passion.
2. Learners want to create content, not consume it.
3. Learners already use it.
4. Technology authentically connects students to the world.
5. **Technology will be a part of any learner's future: both personal and in the world of work.**

Furthermore just because we have turned the pages of a calendar to a new century does not mean that teachers magically become experts at 21st century learning. Learning for teachers needs to model the learning for students. No longer are one-time workshops with no continuing support or follow-up effective. Now, available for teachers are trainings with experts, including such as the powerful video series, TED Talks (http://www.ted.com/talks). Teachers need training at their levels and at their convenience. So if a session is being streamed online directly from another venue, then the teacher should be able to attend virtually. Training needs to be anywhere, anytime. Training should not be just the responsibility of a district, of a school or for that matter, a professional organization. Teachers need to be able to develop their own learning plan, with their own goals indicating how they reached those goals and it should count-count for credit-count for recertification, count for licensure. Teachers also need to live and learn as 21st century educators.

Peter Pappas (http://www.peterpappas.com/) sums it up with his 21st century statement of teacher responsibilities."In order to adequately prepare today's students for their future, teachers must effectively participate in professional learning networks, share and model the use of current internet tools, lead authentic, integrated project-based learning activities, assist students as they establish their own learning networks and digital footprint, learn alongside our students as they create, collaborate, and share, provide sufficient learning opportunities for students to become digitally literate and fluent, while also while also inspiring each child to be quality, digital, global citizen."

Resources

How can all these shifts be accomplished when so many teachers are products of the 20th century habits of school? What are the resources for growth and change?

1. **The Partnership for 21st Century**: http://www.p21.org/ P-21 is a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student. There is a framework of core subjects, 21st century themes and skills. The 21st century skills include: Communication and Collaboration; Critical Thinking and Problem-solving; Creativity and Innovation; Information, Media and ICT Literacy; Flexibility and Adaptability; Initiative and Self-direction; Social and Cross-cultural Skills; Productivity and Accountability and finally Leadership and Responsibility. Each content area, in conjunction with the national organization is

developing a skills map with outcome for grades 4, 8 and 12. Currently the World Languages skills map is under development in conjunction with ACTFL. Outcomes are being designed for all skill areas. We are using novice, intermediate and advanced instead of grades 4, 8, and 12. Stay tuned because we will be asking all of you to come up with examples. We will be turn to the 21st century and use social media.

"Today's students need to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, and effective communicators who are proficient in both core subjects and new, twenty-first-century content and skills," according to "Results that Matter: 21st Century Skills and High School Reform," a report issued in March by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. These include learning and thinking skills, information- and communications-technology literacy skills, and life skills.

Students of today enter an increasingly globalized world in which technology plays a vital role. They must be good communicators, as well as great collaborators. The new work environment requires responsibility and self-management, as well as interpersonal and project-management skills that demand teamwork and leadership.

2. **National Educational Technology Standards for Students, Teachers and Administrators**:
   http://www.iste.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=NETS http://lhs-bestbuy2009.wikispaces.com/ISTE http://nets-implementation.iste.wikispaces.net/

3. **Student Standards**

   Creativity and Innovation

   Communication and Collaboration

   Research and Information Fluency   Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making   Digital Citizenship   Technology Operations and Concepts

4. **Teacher Standards**

   Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity   Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments   Model Digital-Age Work and Learning   Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility   Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership

5. **Administrator standards**

   Visionary Leadership

   Digital age learning culture

   Excellence in professional practice

> Systemic improvement
>
> Digital citizenship

6. TED Talks http://www.ted.com/talks):TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) is a U.S private nonprofit foundation best known for its conferences, now held in Europe and Asia as well as the U.S., devoted to what it calls "ideas worth spreading". Some of the great speakers include: Sir Ken Robinson, David Warlick, Mark Prensky and Daniel Pink. One of my favorite is Daniel Pink's new book, **Motivation,** shows data that disputes the concept of have to get rewards for solving deep, complex problems,

7. PLN-Personal Learning Network

   - So what does it mean to collaborate in the 21st century for teachers? What is a professional learning network? Basically, anybody one may interact with is apart of your PLN, whether they are social contacts, professional peers, or experts in their field.   Most of the 'learning' takes place on-line now, because it is simple to find and connect with others with similar interests from around the world. As world languages teachers connecting with others in the target cultures is invaluable. What are the benefits of a PLN? Sharing information, group feedback on projects and ideas, setting up collaborative projects, learning from content-area specialists and locating resources.
   - American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=40210795119
   - ACTFL Online Community: http://community.actfl.org/ACTFL/ACTFL/Home/
   - Facebook and all the groups such as ACTFL, AATF, AASTP, AATG, etc.
   - Twitter

 A strong PLN harnesses the power of collective knowledge, skills and wisdom.

One more thing…

The teacher matters. No matter what technology one uses, it's all about how. Dan Tapscott, (http://dontapscott.com), author of Grown up Digital**,** reminds us, though, not to just throw technology into the classroom and hope for good things. It is so important to remember to align curriculum and technology to design effective instruction. Learning 2.0 is about changing the relationship between a teacher and the students in the learning process in order to create a collaborative learning environment. Using the Web 2.0 tools is just one path to enhance that relationship.

Instruction and Digital Media

We know that students want to use digital media and tools to create interactive, collaborative environments. Today's students are already truly digital learners. Outside of school they are texting, using cell phones, creating social networks on the Internet, and playing interactive games online; they often do all of these things

at the same time—multitasking. **And they expect to use some of these tools when they are in school. And they also want to connect to the world in meaningful global projects.**

So what are meaningful global projects? These inquiry-based projects encourage students to work in groups to study and explore real-life situations to try to solve real problems—for example, studying the environmental concerns of students in various cultures or exploring how families celebrate holidays around the world, or examining and evaluating water conditions in one part of the world and comparing the situation to their own.   It can also be as simple as just meeting other students and sharing information of daily life. When students research their topics, they use a variety of resources, both print and electronic, to synthesize, analyze, and communicate the information.   And then want to share. They need to publish.

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Students want to create content and not just consume it. There are many digital tools that encourage online communication, collaboration with plenty of possibilities for creating. Tools come and go, but they are very similar in their design. So once teachers begin to understand how tools can be used and how they work, they can continue to add to their repertoire. Students need to experience collaboration tools, communication tools, content area tools, presentation tools and online video and audio resources. They want to use technology, but they need your help.

What are the guidelines for using technology?
1. Use technology when it truly enhances and impacts student learning.
2. Integrate technology into a well-designed lesson or unit: aligned with standards, clear outcomes and purpose and supported with appropriate assessments.
3. Put the tools in the learners' hands.
4. Make sure that the learners have a real audience-more than just the teacher.
5. Always have a backup plan.

And let's not forget the power of video gaming. Jane McGonigal (http://www.avantgame.com) an expert game designer believes that gaming strategies are preparing current students to solve current world problems. She also believes that games of the future will mirror world issues. Students have played up to 10,000 hours of

video games by the time they are 21 years old. That is the same amount of time that students spend at school from grades 5-12 if they never miss a game. What is gaming so powerful? Well, players set personal goals, there is always an epic story and players are encouraged and supported all through the game. There are lots of collaborators to help along the way/ Gamers are inspired to collaborate, be risk-takers and "stick with a problem until solved "Meet and work with other gamers all over the world-without judgment. That you will great if students would approach school in the same fashion. That would definitely be an "epic win."

Moving forward

We all as world language teachers have been wishing for authentic global connections. Here it is-right in front of our faces. But are taking advantage of these resources and tools? Are we challenging students and ourselves to grow and change? Many of us thought we would control the instruction as usual with just a different framework. But as it turns out the learners are truly directing their own paths. But don't count yourself short, because our learners will turn to us because they know we have knowledge and skills and we know how to help them collaborate. Let's make sure we find ways to take the time we spend together be more meaningful.

Conclusion

True that all these new technologies are impacting students' lives. They believe in the power of collaboration, the power of publishing to world audiences, and the power to find new ways to critically think and be creative to solve complex real-world problem. This does not mean to throw out everything that worked in the past. By all means, the importance of finding balance between the old and new provides all sorts of input that can be very valuable to the students' learning. A great song, a paragraph, a selection from a great novel or the fly swatter game can certainly engage the students. It is all in the delivery and the joy in which it was presented.

But when technology combined with sound standards-based lesson design, including a variety of differentiated instructional strategies and strong teaching meet the digital native of the 21st century, the potential for deepening the student's learning and engagement expands even mores. World language teachers and students have been waiting for the day when the access to the world would be right there and just flow into their lives. Today is here! Today a new age is evolving-an age and time when people collaborate to expand disciplines. In the past students have individually mastered their own proficiencies as they explored the world from one perspective, their own. Now with collaboration technologies individuals are enlightened by the easy connections to the real content. Yes, the Spider Woman has emerged and she is unraveling the ways of the 20th century and starting to create the web of the new century. The digital native "tricksters" and the Spider Woman have formed a team and their collaborative project is to help the digital immigrant educators understand the wonderment of their world. The digital native "tricksters" will demand change and today's students, are

challenging educators everyday to engage them at their level. They are pleading to be challenged, to be allowed to make decisions, to collaborate and network with others besides their teachers. The trickster is a creator, a transformer, and a truth teller. Listen wisely. The monumental shift is happening.

Sources

Arrien, A. (1993). *The four-fold way: Walking the paths of the warrior, teacher, healer and visionary.* San Francisco: Harper Collins.

Tarlow, M. (1999). *Navigating the future.* New York: McGraw-Hill.