

TECHNOLOGY-INFUSED  
**French**

Foreign-Language Instruction for the Digital Age

Edited by Carl Falsgraf



Hawker Brownlow Education



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# Introduction

## How to Use This Book

This book is divided into two main sections.

### Section 1 • Strategies for Getting Started

Section 1 provides chapters that will help teachers successfully integrate technology into P–12 classrooms. Chapters 1–3 provide teachers with guidelines for integrating technology in foreign language instruction. Teachers also are given ideas on integrating technology standards and foreign language goals, and the role technology plays in performance assessment.

### Section 2 • Resource Units

Section 2 provides teachers with four resource units developed as part of two different projects: the CoBaLTT Project (Content-Based Language Teaching with Technology) and the Iowa State National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center Project. For each unit, there are three major sections—the Overview, Teaching the Unit and Unit Assessments.

#### Overview

**At a Glance.** At the start of each unit, an overview provides quick at-a-glance information on the unit, including the target age, the ACTFL Proficiency Level, the primary content area, other disciplines that connect through the unit, and the time frame within which the unit can be taught.

**Unit Objectives.** The unit is designed to meet the objectives listed in this section.

**Description.** This is a brief description of the unit, covering topics such as the unit's development and special resources the unit incorporates.

**Example Standards Addressed.** Standards for Foreign Language Learning (National Standards, 1999, 2006) and National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS•S; ISTE, 2007) that are addressed in the unit are listed. Listings of these standards appear in Appendix C and Appendix D.

**Connections to Other Disciplines.** Every unit connects to other disciplines. This section identifies the content that the unit explores as part of the French language lessons.

**Spotlight on Technology.** Each unit highlights the use of one or more types of technology. This section explains how the highlighted technology is incorporated into the lesson plan.

**Technology Resources Needed.** Each unit provides a list of all the hardware and software needed to successfully implement the lesson.

**Supplementary Resources.** This section gives the teacher a list of important websites, books, videos, audio recordings or other resources that can be used to enhance the lesson. The resources are organised in various ways depending on the unit, to best fit the needs of an educator teaching the unit.

## Teaching the Unit

This section provides a complete teaching plan for the unit, broken into activities and days. Within each section, the subsections “Preview” and “Focused Learning” provide a guide for teachers, and in some activities, the additional subsections “Unit Extension Activities” and “Teaching Tips” offer supplementary instructional ideas.

**Unit Extension Activities and Teaching Tips.** Sometimes lessons are so good, students and teachers don’t want them to end. The “Unit Extension Activities” section offers additional unit-wide suggestions for extending the lesson for teachers interested in further exploring the topic. Many units offer “Teaching Tips” within each activity, while some units conclude with unit-wide “Teaching Tips”. These sections help teachers get the most out of the unit as a whole by providing implementation suggestions and insights into which teaching strategy might be the most effective for you.

## Assessing the Units

Assessment ideas are included with each unit. Scoring rubrics appear in Appendix A as well as on [go.hbe.com.au](http://go.hbe.com.au).

**Downloads: Resources, Unit Supplements.** Technology-Infused French contains a wealth of resources available for download at [go.hbe.com.au](http://go.hbe.com.au), including more detailed unit descriptions, along with handouts (such as worksheets and short stories), and assessment rubrics. The unit material also includes links to online resources.

## Appendixes

The appendixes provide the assessment rubrics for the resource units (Appendix A), additional relevant resources (Appendix B), the Standards for Foreign Language Learning (Appendix C), and the full National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) for Students and Teachers (Appendix D).

## Beyond This Book

The authors of individual learning activities have designed lessons based on their expertise, but cannot account for the needs of every teaching situation. Therefore, educators should incorporate and modify lessons to fit the circumstances and needs of their students. The sample lessons also provide a lens for re-examining traditional lessons and discovering ways to infuse technology to enrich teaching and learning. Appendix B provides suggestions of resources that will help you learn specific educational technologies in depth.

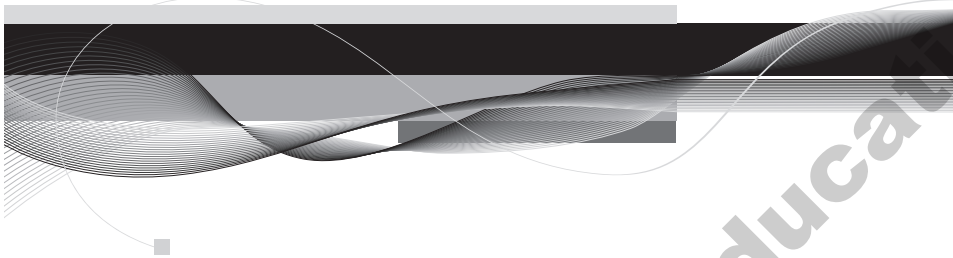
Be proactive about sharing your good work with others. There are many lesson plan websites as well as school, district, professional association and parent meetings at which to present new lesson plans and the resulting student work. Educators need to learn from their peers. Educators also need to make parents aware of their efforts to integrate technology and learning in the classroom, and to inform the greater public about how schools are meeting the needs of students, parents and the community.

## References

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (2007). *National educational technology standards for students*. Eugene, OR: Author.

National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project. (1999, 2006). *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century* (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

# CHAPTER 1



## Learner-Friendly Technology in a Brain-Friendly Classroom

Appropriate Technology in the Service of Proficiency

*Carl Falsgraf*

In this chapter we will explore our mission as foreign language teachers and how technology can help us fulfill that mission.

### Meaningful Content in Realistic Contexts

We all understand that our mission is proficiency: every student able to communicate meaningful content in realistic contexts. How can we create realistic contexts in our classrooms? Role-plays are great and pair work is wonderful, but at some level, students know that this is playacting. The content of what they are talking about, the cultural context in which they are operating, is contrived. They are not communicating with a community of real people, but a contrived community of personas. The best—the most appropriate—use of technology in the



second language classroom is to provide authentic, contextualised interactive tasks with members of the target language community. Let's break that down.

## Authentic

The definition of an authentic text is one that is written by native speakers for native speakers. Authentic oral communication can either be speech between native speakers or speech to or from a nonnative speaker *for a real-life purpose*. Think about what a student hears from you on a typical day. First, how much of that speech is in English? Clearly, not authentic. Using English to teach the target language alters the authenticity of the learning environment. Second, how much is for pedagogic purpose? Also, out the door. Though using the target language for instruction is necessary, focusing solely on this purpose alters the authenticity of the learning environment. Now, how much of the target language does the student hear that is for a real-life purpose? Perhaps greetings, some housekeeping matters, an occasional exchange in the corridor. How can we expect students to succeed in authentic contexts when they never experience one? Technology can help.

## Contextualised

Authentic language always appears in an authentic context. Pedagogic language rarely does. We read the paper for information. We read labels to make sure foods don't have anything we are allergic to. Context aids our understanding because we expect to find certain information in certain places. For instance, you never see stock quotes or poems on the side of a macaroni and cheese box. Context helps us focus on our specific task. The expectations established by a specific context help focus language-learners in the classroom. We have all encountered unfocused, off-task students in our classrooms. Maybe it is because we just gave them a reading passage called "José's Diary", in which he tells us how he gets ready for school in the morning. Though this may be useful for contrasting the preterit and imperfect, it serves no real-life purpose and has no authentic context. Textbooks are, strictly speaking, a context, but not one that will do you much good in the real world. This is what people mean when they say, "I studied two years of French, but when I went to Paris I couldn't say a thing." Of course not. Granted, they had never been to France, but also they had never experienced speaking French in an authentic context. So, how do we incorporate an authentic context in foreign language instruction? Technology can help.

## Interactive

How often do students get a chance to interact with authentic, contextualised texts—spoken or written—in our classrooms? Not often enough. The major focus of

second language acquisition studies over the past 15 years or so has been on the effect of interaction. In study after study, students have demonstrated that they learn better when interacting with others. Play a recording of a native speaker describing how to put together a puzzle and about 40% of the new vocabulary contained in the instructions is retained. Have a real person there to describe the same thing and more than 60% is retained. Why? Two reasons:

1. As human beings, we are wired to remember more emotionally intense events. A monkey watches the rain fall and forgets it. A monkey gets chased by a lion and never forgets it. Interactions among human beings involve complex emotions that become associated with words, helping us to remember them.
2. Two-way communication allows for back channels (responses such as “Huh?” and “What’s that?”) and other devices to increase the comprehensibility of a passage. How much interaction happens in the typical language classroom? Not enough. How can we resolve this? Technology can help.

## Tasks

A task is an activity with a concrete, nonlinguistic, realistic goal that requires language to reach that goal. Notice that the goal is not linguistic, but that it requires language to accomplish that goal. In other words, it is authentic. In real life, how often do we say, “I think I need to brush up on my conjugations: *go, went, gone; come, came, come; amo, amas, amat*”? However, we have plenty of authentic tasks in our lives that require language. You want your kids to do their homework (use imperatives!); you want your principal to give you a bigger classroom next year (use modals and interrogatives!); you want to tell a joke (use narrative past!).

The beauty of tasks is that just as we focus on a goal and let the language take care of itself, students engaged in tasks also are focused on the content of what they are doing, not the forms they must use. Consequently, tasks are extremely valuable as a means for building fluency and for making language automatic. A few years ago, I started doing oral assessment in Oregon with colleagues at the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) and Language Learning Solutions (now Avant Assessment). Initially, teachers complained bitterly when students who “knew” the topics of weather or family or food did not pass the oral performance assessment. We showed these teachers the videos of their students being asked “So what did you eat for breakfast?” and their students sitting there tongue-tied. The teachers’ most common reaction was, “But we covered food in Chapter 3!” Yes, it was covered. Yes, the student “had” words to describe food. But the response was not automatic because the vocabulary was not acquired; it was just memorised. Unlike