Residential Immersion Programs

Saturday, 5/5, 11:45-12:45
Dunwoody
Facilitators

Cynthia Ning, University of Hawaii at Manoa, cyndy@hawaii.edu

Brian Baer, Kent State University, bbaer@kent.edu

Paul Dvorak, Virginia Commonwealth University, pfdvorak@vcu.edu
Program design

- Hawaii: Teacher trainees 3-day pre-residence, then students arrive; Week 1 lead teachers teach while trainees observe; weeks 2 and 3 trainees phased in.

- Va. Commonwealth: 16-17 year old students, at present no teacher training component.

- Kent State: Combined program; trainees observe and then create. Mandatory follow-up blended learning course for students so that students can enter intermediate courses during college freshman year.
Facilities & staffing

- Security concerns – uppermost for programs with young learners. In addition to legal consent form, there is a contract for student behavior. Supervised internet access. Dorm counselors. Roommates (no single rooms). Medical forms. Emergency procedures in case of disaster.
Facilities & staffing

- Creating an immersion experience – Hawaii: one lead instructor has chief responsibility for creating an immersion environment through games/activities, posting paper for graffiti. This year, plan to raise awareness among teacher trainees on the importance of speaking successfully in L2-only to Novice-level learners – special strategies required. Kent State: Allay student fears about immersion from the beginning by reassuring them that they won’t be lost – there will always be support for their understanding. Cal State San Bernardino: Morning time set aside for immersion with broadcasts, games, YouTube etc. Food: if possible, group dining by language; if food services can prepare ethnic food, that’s great; ethnic breakfasts on days the cafeteria is closed. Rotate some classes into kitchen to learn preparation of ethnic dish.

- Re: language pledge. Some places do implement, but the question of downtime arises. Eating every meal in L2 can be exhausting – much support needed in the dining hall for the requisite language. So... perhaps islands of L1 time needed in sea of immersion. What about code switching?
Facilities & staffing

- Setting the foundation for lifelong learning – Priority: learners will come away with a love for the language that will motivate them towards lifelong learning. We often focus on the learning/acquisition experience, but we should not forget that keeping their interest and positive affect is very important.

- Live interaction throughout camp/academy offers chance to build that positive affect and community, making followup more likely. (Kent State actually requires commitment to additional year of enrollment following camp, has found strong

- Teaching the student should be above teaching the curriculum – paying close attention to “how they’re doing” in an affective sense and being attentive

- Online.tech resources offered at camp/academy motivate learners to follow up
Language curriculum themes

- Staying in the target language
- Providing comprehensible input
  - The task-based approach
  - Facilitating pushed-output
The cultural curriculum

- HI: 3 language class hours, one cultural hour, one study hall / reading hour, one martial arts hour, one computer lab hour

- This year during cultural hour will maximize L2 (eg during papercutting, calligraphy) and will task students with choosing and writing 3 words they pick up during that hour, plus a sentence, to be handed in at exit from activity room

- Learners given chance to express own meaning through L2, so not always a case of “giving” culture to students – also need to supply language for learners to express their own culture/intentions. Culture is not just “target” culture – there is a cultural interface
Linking to the digital world

- Getting learners on Web and typing early launches them into online world of authentic material and interactions – highly motivating
Evening & weekend activities

- Banquet w/ cultural performance – everybody invited (including people from outside the camp/academy) – not at the very end – builds community with the parents and community stakeholders – can even fundraise; can be advantageous to play community stakeholders off against one another, competing to support

- Sports – soccer. Students love competing against teachers. Camping – 3 days. (!)

- Bamboo pole dance, Chinese yo-yo, other culturally linked physical activities
Unifying projects or themes

- Hawaii: Camp Currency Project rewards students for systematic practice every day – “money” earned is used in an auction near the end of camp. Provides additional assessment (bank records of “earnings”)

- Make sure that all camp/academy staff who interact with students are aware of classroom themes and can reinforce them throughout the day

- Final show/assembly – four song groups who have practiced throughout camp; skits, raps; one large story (e.g., Snow White) divided into scenes, each performed by one group
Dealing with the unexpected