World Language Walk-through “Look-Fors”

**World Language supervisors – this two-page document is provided for you as a guide for the practices and products you will look for when walking through a World Language classroom.** Our practices currently should look significantly different than those of the 90’s and before. Our written curriculum is thematic, centered on authentic, real-world tasks. The language that students learn is intended to be relevant to students’ lives, meaningful, and interesting to them. The focus should be on language tasks, rather than structure of language (grammar). Could you see the student completing the task on the streets of \_\_\_\_\_or with a native speaker of the language in their community? We hope that the answer to that question would be YES for most tasks that you observe.

***Here are the basics that you will be looking for when you walk into the World Language classroom:***

**Performance Objectives**

1. Should be stated in “I can…” Statements. See Target Language Task document on Weebly.
2. May be written both in English and the target language. At levels one and two, it is perfectly acceptable and even encouraged that those objectives be in English. At levels 3 and beyond, target language MUST be used, but English translation in addition is acceptable.

**90% Target Language Use (Yes, even starting in Level One)**

1. How is the language being used among all stakeholders in the classroom?
   1. Are students using the language for simple tasks like asking the teacher simple questions?
   2. Are students using the language among themselves?
   3. How is the teacher holding the students accountable for using the language?
2. How is the teacher controlling the comprehensible input of oral language in the classroom?
   1. How does the teacher make sure that all students understand the language they are hearing? Do you see any of these strategies being used?
      1. Using visual cues and pictures
      2. Repeating (not translating to English)
      3. Stopping frequently to do informal assessments, such as “thumbs up”, or “take 15 seconds to explain what I just said to your shoulder partner in English.”
      4. Asking other students to explain in simpler terms but not allowing them to translate
      5. Using text to go along with oral language
      6. Providing scaffolding for assignments that accompany listening tasks
   2. How is the teacher making efficient use of English when necessary? In lower levels, the expectation is 90% target language, but in levels 3 and above, English use should be almost non-existent. Does the teacher have a system for intentional use of the language? Some examples might include:
      1. A sign that indicates Target Language ONLY, such as a flag, a diver’s sign, any kind of symbol or visual cue that indicates “no English”, or “it’s ok now to speak English”
      2. Teacher asks permission to speak English, students ask permission to speak English
      3. Instructions for assignments are given briefly at the beginning of an assignment in English because it’s faster to do so, but verbally state “I’m going to use 30 seconds to explain this in English”, then set a timer.
3. Do you see items labeled in the classroom in the target language and “word walls” with vocabulary that helps with basic language tasks?
4. Is there evidence of processes and procedures that get the students into the target language as soon as they arrive in the classroom?

*Signs that the language is not regularly used 90-100% of the time in the classroom:*

* Teacher is speaking 100% in the language, but there is little evidence that students understand.
* Students act confused, even frustrated, may even make comments in English intended for the observer to hear to let him or her know that the target language is not the norm.
* Students will translate for each other.
* Teacher self-interprets: says something in the target language, and then repeats the same thing in English.

**Representation of all Modes of Communication during every class period**

1. See the handout with the definition of the different modes of communication.
2. Do you see evidence that students are engaged in interpersonal, interpretive, and/or presentational tasks every time you walk into the classroom?
3. Do you see students completing textbook exercises or workbook exercises that are “discreet grammar” practice drills? There is very little place for this in the communicative classroom. These kinds of practice exercises should be assigned for outside of class. Teachers have been provided links to many online resources that allow students to practice structure outside of the classroom.
4. In the first and second year of a language, there should be a minimum of time devoted to learning grammar and structure of language. A majority of all time spent on the language, inside and outside of the class should center on the 3 modes of communication.

**Informal and Formal Assessment of Performance in the World Language Classroom**

1. What kinds of assessment are being used? In the performance-based classroom, most assessments will not be paper and pencil, though some interpretive (listening and reading comprehension and written presentational) will be.
2. Do you see evidence of rubrics?
3. Does the teacher have a system in place for quick comprehension checks? Thumbs up? Colored cards? Show of hands? Turn to a partner and…? Exit or entrance tickets?
4. What does a major performance-based assessment look like? Are students working in pairs for interpersonal assessments? Can the students and teacher tell you what kind of assessment they are working on?
5. World Language classrooms should not be avoided on assessment days. Since all major assessments in World language classrooms should NOT be paper and pencil tests (unless students are writing an essay), these are exactly the times when you WANT to see what is going on in the World Language classroom.

**Student Engagement**

1. In what kinds of tasks are students mostly engaged? Individual? Pairs? Small groups? Whole class?
2. When students are engaged in a whole class activity, such as listening to the teacher or to another student presenting something, how are they held accountable for listening and capturing what is being said? Is there any requirement for follow-up?
3. When students are in small groups, is there a role for each student in the group to play (ie. Cooperative learning) and are students held accountable for their level of participation?
4. How frequently do activities change?
5. In a 90 minute block class, is the teacher using the entire time for communicative tasks centered on the three modes of communication?