MAKING A CASE FOR THE USE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF NONPROFIT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

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Thesis

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

In September 2009, Rod Bengston, director of art galleries for The University of Akron, approached me about an idea that had been percolating with him for years. I had just started my two-year graduate assistantship at the Emily Davis Gallery and had told him of my French language background. Mr. Bengston wanted to mount an exhibition of French artwork, but had had difficulties since September 11th in forging strong ties to a French art gallery. He had decided that the way to accomplish this goal was to send a fluent speaker to Paris and propose a full-scale exhibition in person, preferably for a French artist never before shown in America. With my arts and language background, we decided that this project should be my personal undertaking, including securing the grant money with which to fund it. We applied to the Pittsburgh Foundation, who eventually decided not to fund any projects that year, and La Maison Française de Cleveland. In order to make our grant application stronger, as well as to incorporate my strong interests in education, we decided to create a case statement based on a bilingual, educational tours and activities program.

In early February, we were granted money from La Maison Française fund and I flew to Paris over spring break of 2010. Rod and I had selected a handful of Parisian artists to contact via their gallery directors using accessibility to students, quality of execution, and our own aesthetic preferences as guidelines. We emailed galleries in
advance to propose the visit and received a positive response concerning painter Hervé Heuzé from Jean-Luc Richard at La Galerie Jean-Luc et Takako Richard in the Marais district of Paris. Unable to nail down specifics via email, I went to Paris with a letter of introduction from Mr. Bengston and specific guidelines of the kind of exhibition I was permitted to propose. The in-person, French language contact was absolutely essential to the process. Over a two-day period, I met with Monsieur Richard at the gallery and artist Heuzé at his studio in the suburbs, leaving with an informal agreement to host a solo exhibition of Heuzé’s work in fall of 2010. We immediately began planning logistics and determined the size of the exhibition based on shipping costs.

Budgetary restraints determined an exhibition of nine large paintings, some as tall as eight feet high, to occupy the entire Emily Davis Gallery (EDG). We also hoped to arrange an artist residency program, with me as translator because Mr. Heuzé does not speak English, but this proved too expensive and difficult to schedule. Instead, we incorporated a DVD presentation into the exhibition with pictures of my trip to the Paris gallery and my comments, in French and English, about the planning process and my interactions with artist and gallery director. The exhibition ran from September 13 to October 23, 2010, with gallery tours operating on a regular basis. My experiences as an English teacher in Italy and as an education intern for the Krannert Art Museum at the University of Illinois greatly informed my decisions in creating the tour program. Over the course of the six-week exhibition, I performed the bilingual tours for eleven school groups totaling over 230 students, teachers, and parents. Consequently, all observations about the tours and performance by the EDG staff are my own.
The EDG tours were approximately one hour long, the length of the average French class. This was a conscious decision made by the staff in order to maintain student attention for the maximum amount of time. As tour groups entered the space, they were greeted by the guide and given an exhibition brochure with text written in relatively simple French. Chaperons received a bilingual brochure with more complex text, both in language and content. Copies may be obtained from the author. Students were also given a bilingual vocabulary list of words they might need in discussion throughout the tour. This was an easy way for the docent (the author) to break the ice about conversation, especially as she indicated how similar many English and French art terms are, i.e. “monochrome,” “style,” and “sentiment.” At the first painting, the guide stressed how easy it is to glance at a painting and pass it by without truly observing. She asked students to take a full minute and observe all the details of the painting and fully absorb it. After this exercise, the simple question “Qu’est-ce que vous voyez?” (What do you see?) initiated the discussion. From “I see blue” to “I see a peaceful ocean,” all initial responses were accepted. The docent guidelines clearly indicated that the guide should take student input and use it as a catalyst for reflection, stating “suivez la discussion” (follow the discussion), as the most important task. At each painting, the docent had a short list of salient points for students to hit.

For example, at the first painting, after eliciting a purely aesthetic reaction, the docent then informed students of the series title “Abîme” (Abyss) and encouraged students to consider whether this knowledge altered their interpretation. A short discussion of the painter’s airbrush technique here revealed some of the mystery in the creation of these mysterious canvases. Paintings two to four largely dealt with the
question “Où suis-je?” (Where am I?). Students were encouraged to contemplate the introduction of the figurative elements of insects into the pieces. Using fill-in-the-blank questions in the bilingual student brochure, students were prompted to examine their feelings in observing the paintings, always in a very non-judgmental manner. To transition to the lower gallery space without losing the attention of the students, the docent discussed the life of the artist while directly engaging students with questions. For example, she asked, “Qui est-allé à Paris?” (Who has been to Paris?) when explaining how some of Heuzé’s works are in the permanent collection of the President of France in le Palais de l’Élysée in Paris.

The lower gallery allowed for the first discussion of a completely figurative painting as the progression from full abstract to some recognizable shapes, to a full person was complete. At this painting, the docent explained the differing, and valid, opinions that viewers of the girl in the painting tend to experience. Explaining that some view her as romantic, others as unsettling, the activity of vote taking and defense of the students’ opinions allowed for some true artistic debate. Paintings six through nine focused on the differences in the blue monochrome and how they influence emotional reaction. Including grey-blue, violet-blue, and aquatic-blue, the varying reactions of students to color were elicited. Here, the docent was able to incorporate some outside information about French art. In producing examples of three other French modern artists that have worked in blue monochrome, the docent explored how blue may be used for purposes other than emotional stimulation. Henri Matisse’s Nu Bleu II, 1952 shows volume and negative space; Yves Klein’s Archisponge (RE11), 1960 uses blue as an indicator of texture; and Xavier Veilhan’s RAL 5015, 2010 contrasts the natural with the
artificial hues. Note that the full text of the step-by-step docent guidelines, in French, may be found as Appendix A.

As students had now seen all of the paintings, a cross-curricular activity was appropriate. In lieu of an artist residency, gallery staff created a DVD presentation including a description of the creation of the exhibition and pictures of the artist, French gallery director and docent. At the end of this presentation, an excerpt was played from the “En bateau” (In a boat) movement of Claude Debussy’s *Petite Suite*. Following a short description of French impressionism, its focus on emotion and manifestations in classical music, the docent explained how Heuzé often listened to composers such as Debussy while he painted. She asked students to listen to the excerpt and walk about the gallery again, discussing how and if the music changed their interpretation.

The final step of the tour functioned as a culminating activity. The docent requested that students pick a favorite work, one that created in them the most significant emotional response. They were then to select one word describing the piece, a verb they associated with it, a metaphor inspired by the work, and one more adjective. This poème en diamant (diamond poem), named for its graphic shape, was the ideal first writing assignment for the students because it required a great deal of reflection without the stress of creating “poetry” with its full grammatical implications. Sample instructions may be found in Appendix B. Students could freely select just a handful of words, with translation help from the docent if necessary, and leave the gallery with a work of art all their own. The resulting poems by some students were truly remarkable. One seventeen-year-old student, a self-professed art museum skeptic, provided the following words too the author with some translation help from the docent:
The EDG tour program was designed to be flexible, accommodating a wide array of language levels while simultaneously teaching both French language and art analysis skills. The tour also accommodated a large age range, from middle school to college, by alternating activities and adapting their complexity. Students changed activities and group size frequently, seeking the highest level of student attention possible. Research indicates that this is best done by “changing to an entirely different strategy or learning modality…with most classes you will want to change the learning activities about every 10 to 15 minutes” (Kellough 266). This is true regardless of the learning situation, so arts organizations wishing to create a similar program in different contexts should still consider principles of these tours to be valid. In creation of these types of programs, maximizing impact while minimizing staff work with a flexible framework is key. This allows for application of the structure of the program to school groups varying in age, interest, and language ability. The resulting flexible tour program may be applied as a model for other arts organizations. While it is currently limited to the visual arts, the general principles can be relevant for arts organizations of all kinds, including the performing arts.
The research hypothesis in designing this “experiment” was that language and arts would be a natural marriage, strengthening both the language learning witnessed in the tours and the vitality of the exhibition and arts organization. The use of artistic and cultural examples greatly enhances foreign language learning on multiple levels. Furthermore, arts organizations can benefit from increased funding, positive community image and viability by incorporating foreign language into their outreach programming. The exhibition *French Contemporary Art: The Work of Hervé Heuzé* tests this hypothesis. The methodology for enacting the experiment is explained in the proceeding chapter. The body of the thesis details the findings of this main case study while supplementing the information with research from secondary sources.

The first chapters discuss the positive benefits of arts-language fusion programs from an education standpoint. Chapter Four addresses the benefits to arts organizations themselves, while Chapter Five introduces possible limitations arts organizations may face in enacting these programs, as well as possible solutions. The last chapter of the thesis briefly describes ways in which other organizations have experimented with a combination of language and arts programs. Without exception, qualitative feedback forms completed by the attending French teachers support the hypothesis that arts organizations can offer high quality foreign language education programs, while my own observations about the success of the exhibition support the claim that language strengthens the arts organization as well.
CHAPTER TWO

FORMATION AND BENEFITS OF THE PEDAGOGIC PHILOSOPHY

Arts outreach programs that incorporate foreign language lend themselves to a certain kind of teaching strategy, one with considerable benefits to the language learner. The use of arts in language teaching allows for engaged, profound learning far more easily than a non-arts curriculum. In developing the pedagogic theory for the tours, the EDG staff formulated a program incorporating foreign language, fine art, and critical thinking. In this chapter, the methodology of the pedagogy is explored, with particular emphasis on the unique advantages afforded by the arts to better teach foreign language. Secondary research has shown that certain kinds of teaching methods better excite students and encourage learning. The true benefit of arts-language fusion programs is that these best practices in language teaching are perfectly suited to arts programs. Using a strong foundation in secondary research about effective teaching strategies, the EDG staff developed the tours program with the following priorities in order to create the highest quality learning experience possible. Tours focused on student-centered techniques, encouragement of critical thinking, cross-curricular activities and authentic learning. Arts-based language teaching within arts organizations is particularly suited to accommodating these priorities.

The arts are extraordinarily conducive to a student-centered teaching model, which has been proven to be highly effective. Content of discussion during the EDG
tours was largely generated by the students themselves, rather than completely dictated by the teacher or docent. Because analysis of art is such a personal activity, the individual opinion of students was placed front and center during the entire program. The docent, by focusing on the voices and opinions of each student, could easily differentiate between his or her needs. By adapting questions and the tour experience, the docent ensured that each student had the best experience possible. Each French teacher was provided a qualitative feedback questionnaire about the experience of her students. In their responses, the benefits of the student-centered approach facilitated by the arts were clear. Julie Basso, teacher of thirteen years from Tallmadge High School, wrote “the way the tour was made personal for each person was very valuable …I especially liked that you had each student pick their favorite paintings and write a poem about it… they will never forget that.” Every teacher’s comments noted the importance of the personal connection students had with the artwork, a connection that is made possible by the artistic nature of the outreach program. In order to accomplish a student-centered style, EDG staff created guidelines for the tours that were flexible, allowing the docent to follow the line of discussion as it unfolded, while also making sure to guide students to key points of understanding.

Another positive pedagogic goal facilitated by the arts is the ease of upper-level critical thinking tasks such as artistic analysis. The highly student-centered philosophy of the EDG program, as well as the emotional content of the tours, encouraged considerable critical thinking. Because the generation of the tour content occurred with direct input from students, discussion had a very personal quality. This was enhanced by the nature of Hervé Heuzé’s work. Heuzé creates his work with the intention of creating an
environment for his visitors; the emotional reaction is his goal, making his work extraordinarily conducive to a tour program focusing on critical thinking and personal reflection. Press materials sent to the Emily Davis Gallery from the Galerie Jean-Luc et Takako Richard stress this, stating “ce peintre de la lumière a réalisé une vraie introspection pour accoucher de ces nouvelles œuvres les plus mystérieuses et plus inquiétantes qu’il ait jamais peintes” (This painter of light has achieved a feat of introspection that allowed him to create a new series of paintings that are more mysterious and eerie than any he has done before) (Galerie). Self-analysis and individual interpretation was explicitly requested by the artist, which made it easy to focus the tour on such a complex mental task. For other art exhibitions with a different artist goal, slight adaptations may be necessary by the education department staff to encourage critical thinking during the tour or outreach activities.

Generally though, the arts are exceptionally capable of encouraging critical thinking in a foreign language. The very act of analyzing art and defending an opinion, especially with emotionally effectual work, such as Heuzé’s, requires a certain degree of reflection. In fact, the content of the tours accessed learning at multiple levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Thinking, a sort of hierarchy of the complexity of human thought. As cited by Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001, the newest version of the taxonomy includes the tasks “remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate and create” (Shrum 78). The lecture and recall aspects of the tours focused on lower-level thinking, while art analysis and discussion of interpretation hit the mid-level tasks. The creation of poetry and evaluation of the validity of others’ interpretations focused on the higher-order thinking tasks, the most difficult to reach in the classroom. Other research on the topic also argues
that artistic activities in the classroom enhance learning at its highest levels. In her study of the Boston Public School’s, Elizabeth Gruenfeld finds, “if a student is thinking creatively, that student is thinking critically because creative play is critical thinking” (Gruenfeld 72).

This view is supported by the qualitative feedback offered by the French teachers that attended the tours program. Kathleen Lewton, French teacher at Wadsworth City Schools and Executive Board member of the Ohio Foreign Language Association, was pleased by the complexity of thought required by the tours. She writes, “There was variety. It was personal. It required reflection. It was non-judgmental…awesome pedagogy” (Lewton). Another teacher, Veronica Shreffler-Moss from Revere Schools, notes, “the opportunity to apply what [the students] thought and use the language to express their thoughts was exactly what I wanted for them! Art is so personal and different. All students can benefit from art” (Moss). These teacher reactions imply that critical thinking facilitated by art is extraordinarily positive, even more so when this thinking and expression is occurring within the target language of French.

Certainly, an entire gallery tour cannot focus on this most difficult task of critical thinking. The EDG docent frequently started with basic questions that required minimal reflection, but connected to students’ everyday lives. For example, with Yves Klein’s sponge relief, the docent began with questions about the word for sponge “éponge,” and pointed out that Sponge Bob Squarepants is “Bob l’éponge” in France. After attracting giggles and attention this way, deeper discussion of the use of the sponge for texture and the function of the blue monochrome was a natural progression. Rather than simply memorizing facts or vocabulary, the EDG staff wanted tour participants to feel a deep
connection with the artwork and, therefore, with the gallery itself. This not only encourages students to remember the institution in the future, but also creates a meaningful learning experience. The benefits of art analysis in complex foreign language learning tasks are numerous.

By their very nature, the arts encourage cross-curricular learning in an authentic manner when applied to foreign language learning. Just as funding is competitive for arts organizations, so is it in the public school system. By teaching both arts and foreign language simultaneously, both areas of competency may be enhanced. This collaborative style is especially important when students cannot enroll in both arts and foreign language programs, which often occurs due to scheduling or fiscal restraints in the selection of elective high school coursework. The idea of cross-curricular collaboration is extraordinarily popular in the field of education. A buzzword in the field, “cross-curricular” teaching is gaining prominence in the priorities of the average foreign language lesson and unit planning. Teachers such as Ms. Lewton commented, “The older I get, the more value I see in connections…The tour connected art with music with French and, in the closing activity, with poetry” (Lewton). The combination of these fields of study created a richer and more efficient teaching environment than if students had learned the same vocabulary from an isolated word list.

The benefits of a cross-curricular approach to the EDG tours extend beyond the convenience of teaching both art and foreign language simultaneously; the fusion of the two actually enhances language learning by accessing multiple intelligences and senses. The capacity of an arts organization to create a program involving multiple student competencies is very high. In a public school, the average teacher faces the daily grind of
teaching complex grammatical structures, dealing with parents and administration, and executing calm classroom management. Though important to student progress, he or she may not have either the time or energy to develop lesson plans that consistently engage all the varying learning styles of the students. Educators in arts organizations formulating a select few programs to be executed repeatedly and consistently, however, do have the resources to address multiple intelligences and competencies of students. In a one-hour, carefully developed arts-based language lesson, the more varied the learning styles, the richer the program.

The EDG program was engineered to access the highest number of these styles possible. Education scholar Howard Gardner initially pioneered work on the theory of multiple intelligences in 1983. By 2006, he had defended and streamlined the theory, arguing,

the human intellect is better described as consisting of a set of semi-autonomous computational devices, each of which has evolved to process certain kinds of information in certain kinds of ways…. each of the intelligences is seen as a computational capacity – the ability to process certain kinds of information in the process of solving problems or fashioning products (Gardner 503).

The authors of *The Teacher’s Handbook*, a textbook guide to contextualized language instruction, have compiled research on multiple intelligences to create a comprehensive list. These intelligences include: intrapersonal/introspective, interpersonal/social, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, naturalist and existential (Shrum 352). The success of the EDG program lies partially in the unique capacity of the arts to access multiple of Gardner’s intelligences. In doing so, students of varying abilities are engaged in active learning throughout the one-hour tour.
The EDG tour program accessed nearly each one of these intelligences with its variety of activities and its student-centered philosophy. Introspective learners were asked for in-depth personal reflection throughout the tour, especially during the culminating activity of poem creation. Social learners enjoyed activities such as extensive group discussion and possible collaboration during the poem. Focus on pattern and progression of technique accessed the logical intelligence, while emphasis on the meaning of title and descriptive words in discussion attracted the linguistic learners. Circulation and free movement around the gallery satisfied the needs of the kinesthetic learners, imagination of the visual environment created by the paintings activated spatial learners, and the musical intelligence received attention during the classical music listening activity. Even naturalist and existential learners found material to engage their learning style as discussion points focused on the elements of nature vs. artifice and the philosophical questions of the meaning of the series title “Abîme” (Abyss). Arts organizations have yet to take full advantage of their capacity to create multi-sensory and multiple intelligence based programs. Carol Eiber, retired French and Spanish teacher of twenty-five years lamented, “I used to take high school seniors to the Cleveland Museum of Art…They never had any activities to do at the museum other than jot down their responses to my questions” (Eiber).

Furthermore, the use of art in foreign language teaching encourages authentic experiences in the target language that may not be available in the traditional language classroom. Cross-curricular experiences tend to be interdisciplinary, bridging boundaries between subjects. Traditional conjugation tables and vocabulary drilling seem to indicate that language use takes place in a vacuum. However, because students will experience
use of language outside the classroom in a culturally influenced, complex manner, arts-based teaching offers learning that is closer to real-life. This authentic, real-life application of language is demonstrated when the arts are brought into foreign language teaching. Education scholars define authentic texts as “those written and oral communications produced by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group” (Shrum 85). These authentic texts can range from magazine and newspaper articles to audio recordings and radio programs.

Arts organizations working with foreign artists or international artwork have the wonderful opportunity to present language learners with the authentic foreign language texts that surround the art. The Galerie Jean-Luc et Takako Richard in Paris was extremely forthcoming with all press materials and artist statements surrounding the work of Hervé Heuzé. The EDG staff was then able to use excerpts from these materials in projected wall text, as script in the informative DVD presentation, and in the brochures.

The presence of these materials greatly enhanced the authentic nature of the tour, not only because of the richness of their cultural content, but because “through exploring these (authentic) materials, students have the opportunity to see and hear real language that serves a purpose” (Shrum 85). In interacting with an American docent that had met the artist and used her language skills in a real life, practical application, the students witnessed the importance of their own language education.

Furthermore, the fact that the paintings were contemporary products of French culture allowed students to interact with authentic objects in a meaningful way. Rather than being told about a foreign culture from a PowerPoint in a classroom setting, these students were able to experience it first-hand. Participating teachers noted this in person,
authentic experience of cultural materials as the most effective aspect of the tours in regard to their students’ learning and understanding of French culture. The scale and visual impact of the very large paintings surely augmented the power of this authentic experience. The ability of the arts to create authentic experiences using cross-curricular, critical thinking and to directly engage students with a variety of learning styles clearly illustrates the need for creativity in language teaching. Arts organizations are uniquely positioned to offer these kinds of experiences to teachers.
CHAPTER THREE

BROADER BENEFITS TO LANGUAGE LEARNERS

One of the most important aspects in the teaching of foreign languages is the incorporation of cultural information; unfortunately, it is also one of its greatest challenges. The acquisition of a language is still considered to be very much a function of grammar and vocabulary. This means that foreign language teachers feel a distinct pressure, and rightly so, to focus their lessons on “language” learning, with occasional entertainment breaks for culture. Foreign language pedagogy scholars have taken great note of the “area of culture, which in the past has suffered in comparison to linguistic elements of the classroom” (Byrd 5). From curriculum to instructional techniques, culture frequently receives less prominence than linguistic form. Historically, cultural has been “often viewed as a fifth ‘modality of language, alongside reading, writing, listen, and speaking” (6). This hierarchy creates an unnecessary and artificial rift between arts/culture lessons and grammar/vocabulary lessons – an unwarranted division when arts organizations exist that are capable of teaching language through the arts, not simply alongside it.

There are myriad ways to reinforce grammatical structures and important vocabulary within an arts context. Simply in discussing the dream-like quality of Heuzé’s paintings, for example, the EDG staff was able to engage students from middle
school beginners to college-level speakers. Students with basic vocabulary were asked “Quelles émotions est-ce que vous avez?” (What emotions do you have?). This very simple question can easily be answered in level-appropriate fragments such as “sad” “lost” “confused,” sometimes with translation help from the docent. Advanced students capable of complex speech were asked instead, “Si vous étiez dans la peinture, comment est-ce que vous vous sentiriez?” (If you were in the paintings, how would you feel?). This question still accesses the emotional analysis component of the eerie artworks, but requires response in the conditional tense. Rather than repeating conjugation of “to feel” in various tenses, the tour of the gallery elicits the grammatical structure in an authentic, culturally meaningful way. These type of examples mean that multiple standards are fulfilled simultaneously, leading to more productive uses of time and resources in foreign language education. Unfortunately, arts organizations have not taken full advantage of the opportunity to help foreign language teachers in their difficult task. As a result, artistic instruction in the school system has suffered. In an effort to combat this lack of cultural information and to encourage more teachers to integrate culture into the classroom, national and state standards have begun to reflect a new set of culturally focused priorities.

Standards recently have been developed to help move the teaching of foreign language forward to a more culturally rich philosophy. The governing and administrative bodies in American education generally accept the essential nature of a cultural context for language learning. National standards for kindergarten to twelfth grade consistently include cultural awareness as a key part of foreign language education. Direct academic benefits are clearly outlined in government-standardized requirements for cultural
teaching. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is a nationally recognized organization of thousands of foreign language educators and administrators. In collaboration with the American Association of French Teachers, they published their *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*, including multiple facets of a student’s language experience. Of the five goals provided by ACTFL, only one addresses “communicate in French” as an isolated concept. The other four all concern the importance of contextual knowledge in language learning: Goal Two, gain knowledge and understanding of the cultures of the Francophone world; Goal Three, use French to connect with other disciplines and expand knowledge; Goal Four, Develop insight into the nature of language and culture, and use French to participate in communities at home and around the world (Standards).

Sample progress indicators within the publication repeatedly point to the need for cultural examples and arts involvement. One example out of dozens states, “students learn about and recognize artistic contributions from francophone cultures in areas such as art, music, dance, drama, theater, film, fashion, and cuisine” (Standards 260). Therefore, interaction between arts organizations and language teachers would not only enhance learning from an academic perspective, but also fulfill nationally standardized education goals. These ACTFL standards are relied upon heavily by government bodies, creating more legally binding requirements about cultural aspects of foreign language education. The model assessments for French developed by the Ohio State Department of Education include numerous benchmarks, activity descriptions, and goals that focus on “expressive products of the culture such as…types of artwork enjoyed by [the students’] peer group in the cultures studied” (Ballinger 8). These government and professional
standards clearly indicate the academic need for arts involvement in the language classroom. However, teachers often have a difficult time incorporating the arts and culture into language lessons. Arts organizations may address this problem with foreign language outreach activities.

Not only does teacher attention sometimes neglect arts and culture, but training programs nationwide also do not adequately prepare educators for this enormously important aspect of their job. In association with ACTFL, the Professional Development Board (PDB) of the LangSource Project of the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland was charged to “examine how pre-service foreign language teachers are prepared to teach culture and how in-service teachers are teaching culture” (Byrd 5). Part of the study included a survey of 415 world language teachers and 64 teacher educators, the results of which clearly indicate the need for a supplementation of arts and culture training in language teachers. The authors of the article presenting the survey argue that “time devoted to developing a cultural skill set during pre-service teacher education is crucial to future success in the L2 (second language learning) classroom” (10). However, it is clear that new teachers are not receiving adequate training, as they struggle to present cultural materials in class.

The average teacher response for the measure of effort they place in the maintenance of their culture knowledge fell midrange at “some effort,” with maintenance of “cultural perspectives” knowledge falling behind the more easily studied “cultural products” and “cultural practices.” Arts organizations are, of course, capable of supplying professional development and teaching supplements about cultural products. The more complex “perspectives” may also be served by the organizations, as artistic analysis and
interpretation requires critical thinking as to the intentions, attitudes and opinions of the artist. Enhancing teacher preparedness concerning the cultural aspects of the target language is one more potential benefit of arts-language fusion programs.

Ohio French teachers are no exception to the struggle to be culturally well versed. The University of Akron French licensure program, for example, places an extraordinarily high importance on linguistic and literary study. Courses range from phonetics to literature, but nowhere is an art history course or music theory course required (Master’s). This is, of course, a function of time constraints as teaching licensure programs allow little to no room for variation. Students are saddled with an extensive load of education and language courses and cannot also be expected to be experts in every art form they may encounter as French teachers. This lack of artistic training is not unusual at universities across the state and country. Stacey Benson, EDG program attendee and French teacher for Poland Schools, remarked, “I have always been interested in blending, but have a hard time doing so because I do not have the knowledge in the arts area” (Benson). Arts organizations may present the perfect solution to this problem.

Art museums, orchestras, and theatres already specialize in a particular art form and have staff members that possess very specific training in the techniques and history of the particular medium. The staff of an art museum, for example, is much better prepared to provide information about French impressionist technique than the average foreign language teacher. Of course, it is impractical to expect teacher-training programs to require foreign language educators to be experts in all the cultural arts of their target language. Time constraints within a program do not allow for precious credit hours to be
spent in this manner. However, it does seem illogical that American national and state education standards are beginning to place such strong emphasis on culture and arts in the classroom, while not accompanying this shift with adequate curriculum changes in teacher certification programs. Arts organization-based foreign language programs present the added benefit of teacher education and professional development.

In Northeast Ohio, the opportunities for true French cultural experiences are just as limited for teachers as they are for students. Veronica Shreffler-Moss of Revere School District regrettably notes, “I wish there were more cultural activities available… the majority of the events happen in Cleveland (which is a drive both for me and the students)” (Shreffler-Moss). She also notes that high cost and infrequency of events limit her opportunities for involvement in French culture. Therefore, a nonprofit arts organization offering free educational programs is a serious positive for an educator. In explaining the reasons for her positive reaction to the Davis Gallery tour, Ms. Lewton again writes, “I was very much a student today as [Ms. Bordo] walked the five of us (teachers) through the two galleries and took us on an in-depth, personal journey” (Lewton). Enhancing teachers’ cultural knowledge will not only create more excited, engaged teachers, it will make them better prepared to fulfill the numerous culture-based academic standards.

The process of language learning is more about mastery than the linguistic nuts and bolts; it is the formation of a deep appreciate and understanding of a foreign culture. However, many American students do not receive adequate education in the subject of international traditions and cultural products. Ms. Benson notes that her students “were all surprised by the fact that the guide was not French! They tend to forget that French is
taught in other states and can be spoken fluently by Americans” (Benson). This rather amusing observation reveals her students’ limited preparation for global citizenry. Their ignorance of the multilingual capabilities of Americans reinforces the idea that United States citizens are largely monolingual. From an educational standpoint, this means that arts and cultural knowledge must be integrated into foreign language curricula.

The Longview Foundation for Education in World Affairs and International Understanding, Inc. in association with the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning has created a rubric of state strategies to prepare globally competent students. In better bringing the arts and culture into the classroom, the rubric publication speaks to the clear need for thriving “partnerships with universities, businesses, exchange organizations, non-profits outside the US and multicultural organizations with the community” (International 6). Important changes to global preparedness cannot occur solely in the classroom. Instead, this shift in education requires support from community non-profit organizations. The development of culturally sensitive citizens is also important in demonstrating a critical community need filled by the arts organizations. The full role of the arts in this development will be explored in much more depth in Chapter Four.

The potential for broad academic benefits is also significant because fostering cultural understanding can aid student motivation. Aside from enhancing measurable cultural and linguistic knowledge, more intangible benefits are likely. Language acquisition is linked to understanding and appreciation of the target language cultural group, hence the stress on cultural studies by ACTFL and state governments. This cultural appreciation will ideally lead to “personal enjoyment and enrichment,” (Standards 272) a lifelong learning goal that can create a classroom atmosphere of
engaged and interested students. Ethno-lingual scholar James Citron examines the relationship between cultural studies and motivation for second language acquisition. He states, “having a positive attitude toward members of another group and a desire to learn about their cultural attitudes could correlate with an openness to their contrasting cultural and linguistic patterns” (Citron 108). A student with adequate cultural/artistic knowledge and appreciation, therefore, becomes a better and more motivated language student altogether. Although considerable research and official support for artistically enhanced language learning exists, it still remains a difficult and infrequently addressed component of the language classroom.

Addressing student affect and motivation is crucial for developing an environment conducive to learning, especially in the foreign language classroom. This is important because language acquisition researchers such as Stephen Krashen maintain that “acquisition can occur only in the presence of certain affective conditions: the learner is motivated, self-confident, and has a low level of anxiety” (Shrum 31). There is a considerable amount of research devoted to language anxiety and its detrimental effects on student learning. In fact, there is evidence that foreign language anxiety can be so intense as to actually cause students to “postpone required foreign language courses until the last possible moment or change their major to avoid foreign language study” (Horwitz 131). Detrimental anxiety in language learning can, happily, be addressed by such pedagogy as was employed in the Davis Gallery tours.

A student-centered tour philosophy was particularly important in addressing these learner insecurities. A student-centered style in which students individually generate valuable content helped create a non-threatening environment where participation and
individual opinion was valued. Foreign language learning involves risk taking, as students test out new accents and new vocabulary that can make them feel quite vulnerable. In their 1986 research on foreign language classroom anxiety, Horwitz et al. found that linguistic stress can manifest itself in ways that are very harmful to language acquisition, including avoidance of conveying complex or personal messages (Horwitz 126). It is, therefore, very important that arts organizations address this insecurity in the programming of their outreach missions. Failure to do so can result in missed teaching opportunities as students freeze with anxiety and avoid the valuable practice offered by the tours.

Arts outreach programs can address these anxieties and provide low-stress practice of the specific tasks that are most important in language learning. Clinical studies at the Learning Skills Center (LSC) at the University of Texas reveal a specific window of opportunity for arts organizations, should they chose to take advantage of it. Counselors note that Texas students report feeling “fairly comfortable responding to a drill or delivering prepared speeches in their foreign language class but tend to ‘freeze’ in a role-playing situation” (Horowitz 126). These situations, though producing elevated anxiety levels, are also the closest to the real-life situations in which students will need to employ their language skills.

Arts organizations are uniquely positioned to create programs that engage students in a fun, culturally authentic manner. The low stress environment in a casual discussion of Hervé Heuzé’s paintings may be much more palatable to a language student than a dialogue drill in front of his peers in a formal classroom setting. Also, because of the arts’ conductivity to multiple intelligences and multi-sensory learning, students that
require less traditional modes of learning can be comforted. Struggling students made uneasy by conjugation tables and vocabulary lists enjoyed the music, poetry, and even kinesthetic movement offered by the EDG tours. In fact, experience with art has been shown to decrease anxiety in multiple settings, even outside the educational arena. The mission statement of the American Art Therapy Association describes the profession as being “based on the belief that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight” (Defining). Though this statement largely deals with the creative production of art, the principles related to artistic enjoyment hold true.

As discussed in Chapter Two, creative thinking is highly related to critical thinking. Creative thinking is also linked to the emotions in an exciting way for arts and foreign language educators. In an exploration into the effects of art appreciation on cognition and emotion, researcher Tone Roald found participants’ interactions with art to be “a very intense experience and its effects last[ing] for several hours” (Roald 96). These effects could range from feelings of happiness to fear, depending on the connection to the visual art. For arts administrators then, if works are selected for students with the intent of creating a positive emotional response, intense and lasting impressions of the work can be created. Most important though, is the validation of any emotions these linguistically insecure students may be expressing. Much discussion concerning emotions occurred during the EDG tours, perhaps the most frequent subject of discourse through the program. Students were constantly asked to evaluate their reactions to the pieces, with each one given intentional validation by the docent. If they felt “eerie” in Heuzé’s
underwater world, this was just as legitimate as those students who felt “tranquil.” As students’ faith in their own expression of feeling in the target language grew, so did their general confidence in foreign language and arts analysis skill. The arts, when executed in foreign language programs in a non-judgmental, non-elitist way, can truly help students feel at ease with the subject.

Furthermore, the selection of Hervé Heuzé as the artist for the EDG exhibition was done very deliberately and with great care. The staff wanted to be certain that the work would be immediately accessible and engaging for students, so that even the least motivated high schooler would be intrigued. Upon entering the gallery’s engulfing atmosphere of monochrome blue, many students literally exhaled an “oooh” of surprise. This element of visceral response is a key consideration for an arts organization wishing to create such an outreach program. The selection of work that immediately engages from a sensory standpoint, without initial explanation in the foreign target language, is truly essential to creating an immediate positive atmosphere during the learning experience. Arts organizations should note that seemingly elitist environments such as art galleries and concert halls also have the potential to increase anxiety. In order for the positive potential of artistic expression to occur and effectively reduce language-learning anxiety, arts administrators developing education programs must constantly be aware of their program structure and execution. This careful balance is discussed further in Chapter Five.

A fusion of arts and language programs also represents a powerful marriage of two fields that have been proven to independently enhance all other areas of learning. Together, it is logical that even more striking benefits to cognition would occur. There is
a very significant amount of research concerning the cognitive benefits of foreign language and the arts. Even briefly though, it is easy to argue that the two fields have the potential to positively impact the American education system. First, the benefits of foreign language learning have been proven to enhance mental capacities at a variety of levels. Communications abilities are dramatically enhanced in bilingual children. In fact, even performance on tasks in the native language is improved. In a study of applied psycholinguistics performed at the University of British Columbia, researchers Amedeo D’Angiulli et al. compared the performance of nine to ten-year-old bilinguals to English monolinguals on tasks in English. Though not every area of English communication was affected, they did find that “the bilingual skilled readers scored higher on word-reading and spelling tasks than the monolingual skilled readers” (D’Anguilli 479). Cognitive performance on areas other than communication are also improved, making the positive effects of foreign language learning even more striking. There are strong indicators from multiple studies that foreign language helps student improvement on academic achievement tests not just in reading, but also in math (Stewart 11). Even in areas of cognition separate from standardized tests and traditional academic subjects, foreign language learning can alter brain function for the better.

Now entering into the public discourse, this topic has gained considerable coverage from the mass media. In a Los Angeles Times article entitled “Should children learn a second language?”, reporter Amina Khan cites research discussed at the 2011 American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Washington D.C. She explains the benefits of bilingualism with the fact that “bilingual speakers who rapidly switch between languages are better mental multitaskers than their monolingual
counterparts” (Khan). Potentially responsible for remapping brain function completely, foreign language study enhances cognitive function throughout the life of the speaker. Ellen Bialystok, a psychologist from York University in Toronto, has found that “Bilingual speakers have been shown to perform better on a variety of cognitive tasks, and … dementia set in four to five years later in people who spent their lives speaking two languages instead of one” (Cuda-Kroen). It is evident that foreign language learning can promote well-rounded and improved cognition for all students.

Secondly, training in the arts has also been proven to enhance cognition. Although scientifically structured research in this field is still new, considerable evidence to support the claim that arts improves brain function does exist. In fact, recent research even indicates that “education in the arts transfer[s] to seemingly unrelated cognitive abilities” (Posner). In literally changing the pathways of the brain, exposure to arts education can increase things as disparate as attention span and reading fluency (3). Furthermore, these broad benefits translate into quantifiable improvements on standardized tests. In a 1996 study by Martin Gardiner, a research specialist in arts cognition, 96 first-graders were exposed to one hour per week of music and visual arts training. After seven months, the children in the experimental art group improved their performance in math concepts by 73%, impressively outperforming the 55% improvement of the control “non-art” group (Gardiner 284). Different areas of the arts have received varying amounts of research, most notably the “Mozart effect” phenomenon so popular in parenting DVD products.

For the purposes of the EDG tours, the benefits of the visual arts were largely the focus of the program, though classical music and poetry did play a role. In exercising
analysis of visual art, researchers argue that for students “seeing is creating” (Jensen 54). The act of seeing is “not a passive process, as once believed. The information flows not just from the outside world…It also flows backwards, using our cognition and memory to double-check, mediate, and fill in what we see” (55). By asking students to imagine what the relatively ambiguous forms of the Heuzé paintings could represent, the EDG docent was engaging analytic and active capacities of the brain. The areas of communication and self-expression are also enhanced by the arts. In the articulation of emotion, “art gives feelings a form – and an opportunity to manipulate that form” (61). This wide range of benefits, from spatial skills to emotive communication, may be partially responsible for the presence of the arts in many foreign language preparatory programs. Its benefits cannot be dismissed.

It should be recognized that the true benefits of the arts remain intangible. Arts administrators and lovers of culture may find it irksome to seek justification for the arts in better performances on mathematics testing. Truly, depth and quality of artistic experience and interpretation cannot, and likely should not, be quantified. By no means does addition of the arts into a curriculum guarantee a quick fix in terms of students’ cognition, imagination, or even affective motivation in the foreign language classroom. The process is highly complex. It is also difficult to argue that arts and cognition research indicates a causal link. Though some research indicates otherwise, there is the possibility that the strong correlation between arts students and high academic achievement is, in fact related to an outside third factor such as home environment of students, and is not the result of a causal relationship. However, despite these limitations,
an undeniable relationship between arts and enhanced cognition and brain performance does appear to exist.

As arts and foreign language both aid in general learning development and brain performance, a combination of the two is a natural fusion. If the two fields are singularly powerful and capable of creating better and more well-rounded cognition, then together the benefits to American education could be significant. As the arts reflect our reality, they help us to interpret ethnic traditions, social constructions, and cultural landscapes. In doing so, arts education’s function is largely to “contribute[s] to the understanding of the social and cultural landscape that each individual inhabits” (Efland 171). Foreign language study greatly enhances this already important task of arts education by its ability to create culturally sensitive and open global citizens. In the advocacy section of its website, ACTFL argues that, “Research suggests that language learners develop a more positive attitude toward the target language and/or the speakers of that language” (What the Research). Both artistic analysis and foreign language acquisition require deep thinking and reflection, which are very complex tasks. These two fields together, then, can better accomplish their goal of improved cultural understanding and learning. The experiences of the students at the EDG were linguistically, culturally, and artistically rich at a level that would be next to impossible if the arts and language were compartmentalized, either in the classroom or by a monolingual arts organization. It is clear that a fusion of the two fields offers the best of all possible benefits to students and arts attendees.
Aside from distinct benefits to foreign language learners and teachers, the use of foreign language in arts outreach activities can also have a profound effect on the arts organization itself. Nonprofit arts organizations that struggle to obtain local publicity, to assert themselves as relevant and effective in their communities, and to obtain government funding may all benefit by incorporating foreign language into their educational programming.

Regardless of the positive mission statement and intentions of an arts organization, no institution can survive and flourish without community awareness and regular favorable, widely disseminated publicity. The EDG normally makes use of a rather limited array of local media outlets, namely social media, the local newspaper, and university emails. The foreign language aspect of the French exhibition afforded more positive publicity at a considerably wider range. The single most important component in advertising a new exhibition for the gallery is coverage by Dorothy Shinn, the Art and Architecture critic for the Akron Beacon Journal. It is by far the most visible publicity in the Akron arts community, so the length and tone of her article was extraordinarily important. In an interview concerning the effect of the French language component of the exhibition, Ms. Shinn notes how it positively influenced her writing:
The fact that you were having foreign language classes come in to interact in French was interesting; a lot of people at the Beacon Journal commented on that. It also made an additional interesting angle. For a story, the more different angles you have, the better. When a story has “legs,” it means it is interesting from many different points of view. Often, that means sex and violence. In this case, the legs had to do with art and language, which opened it up to a new group of people that wanted to make use of the opportunity (Shinn).

This favorable coverage, made stronger by the support of its “legs,” was directly responsible for an increased interest in the tours program. By noon on the morning after the article was printed, the gallery staff received three phone calls from French teachers requesting tours for their classes. This substantial response led to a total of eleven school groups taking advantage of the program, some traveling from over an hour away.

For a first-time program completely unlike anything previously offered by the EDG, this response was unexpectedly enthusiastic. The French language component of the outreach program allowed for a direct email approach to publicity that had never been attempted by the gallery, as some of the teachers attended as a result of electronic communication sent to the foreign language departments of local high schools. Another expanded area of publicity made possible by the French component was inclusion in multiple foreign language and culture listservs. The local Maison Française chapter and the Ohio Foreign Language Teachers Association email newsletters featured an announcement about the exhibition, as did the monthly cultural update for the American Midwest region of the French Consulate. Presence on these email newsletters and websites, as well as the resulting boosts in attendance, would never have been made possible without the French language aspect of the EDG exhibition.

The collaborative nature of the exhibition was enhanced by joint publicity executed with The University of Akron Symphony Orchestra. Just as a multimedia
approach was taken to the tour program to enhance the visitor experience, the French cultural aspect allowed for a multimedia approach to the exhibition itself. While the students in the tours listened to clips of Claude Debussy’s impressionist orchestral compositions, they were also encouraged to attend a live performance of the entire Debussy suite by the UASO. This free concert was held on October 10th, partway through the exhibition, at First Congregational Church in Akron and was completely free and open to the public. This collaboration was also described and publicized in the Akron Beacon Journal article by Dorothy Shinn. It is likely that these collaborative publicity efforts, both with other university arts organizations and with French culture groups in the area, directly resulted in the altered attendance of the exhibition.

Being located within a rather secluded building of The University of Akron campus, the EDG often suffers from limited attendance. Visitors to the gallery are most often comprised of faculty and students that already attend classes within the Myers School of Art. However, largely due to the foreign language component of the exhibition attracting entirely new groups of people to the gallery, attendance of French Contemporary Art was both more numerous and more diverse than usual. Graduate assistant to the gallery Brittney Breckenridge remarks,

"Usually, Emily Davis Gallery has...sporadic visitors throughout an exhibition. The French show completely changed this. On a regular basis the gallery was hosting tours with students of all ages coming from minutes to hours away. Maybe one or two exhibitions will have scheduled tours during the year, but this exhibition resulted in one or two just about daily, if not weekly (Breckenridge).

She also notes that the experience and composition of the audience was greatly improved. She writes that she has “never seen the gallery so alive and full of audience members that may never of visited us otherwise. The diversity was incredible” (Breckenridge). This
exhibition will ideally be only the first event of a lasting, newly formed relationship to these diverse audiences, one that has never been provided by EDG before.

Though 230 students is a sizeable increase in youth attendance from the previous negligible amount at EDG exhibitions, it still represents a rather modest reach for an educational program. It is true that other, less complicated art education programs could have brought information about the exhibition to more students. However, it should be noted that quality of experience for this program was extremely high. This was not an experience that was frivolously undertaken. Students not only enjoyed themselves; they also learned and retained a considerable amount of cultural knowledge and language practice. Jill Forrest of Wooster City School District notes, “I really saw the effect that the tour had on (the students) the next day in class…I was surprised at how much they took away from the visit. They remembered a lot of the vocabulary and were truly interested in the event” (Forrest). It is this quality of experience that not only aids foreign language learning, but also strengthens the arts organization itself.

One of the most important benefits to incorporating foreign language into arts education is the potential to change the public image of arts organizations by truly becoming more accessible and relevant to the community. The guiding principles of the foreign language outreach program, such as a multi-sensory, visitor-censored approach, do more than simply enhance the learning of the target language. They can also result in an overall gallery visitor experience that is more enjoyable, more relaxed, and more meaningful. These experience attributes are particularly valuable in reaching non-traditional arts audience, such as youth or underserved populations. Just as anxiety of foreign language learners can inhibit the effectiveness of outreach programs, so can the
anxiety young people often associate with the fine arts. A non-judgmental, student-centered teaching philosophy can address and ease these fears in a student population, ideally functioning as effective audience development.

Aside from addressing audience-inhibiting anxiety about arts, the EDG staff was also able to address negative perception of the arts’ relevancy. The fine arts have long suffered from public perception of stuffiness and tedious subject matter, an attitude that is only heightened amongst public school high school students concerned with being “cool.” Quoting sociologist Pierre Bourdieau, arts researchers David D.M. Mason and Conal McCarthy write that, “‘love of art is the clear mark of the chosen’, which is meant to separate them out from other people, and that therefore the ‘true mission’ of museums is to ‘reinforce for some the feeling of belonging and for others the feeling of exclusion’” (Mason 21). A tour program that talked at the young gallery visitors, rather than with them, would only have perpetuated this stereotype of elitism. In developing audiences of regular attendees, forming perceptions of an engaging and relevant arts experience is key. Therefore, the pedagogic technique of the tours needed to focus on direct student interaction and activities that used student input as catalysts for discussion.

Arts administrators creating outreach programs that may attract students unfamiliar with the fine arts should take note of the potential implications of arts programs regarding student perceptions of the organization or the arts themselves. Many young people feel excluded by the fine arts and, accordingly, avoid interaction with arts organizations. There is repeated evidence that “young people visit art galleries less often than the population as a whole,” a pattern that is likely linked to perceptions of the gallery as irrelevant (29). In a survey of over 200 pedestrians outside New Zealand’s Auckland Art
Gallery, ages sixteen to twenty-six, disturbing trends of thought were discovered. When asked what words they most associated with the gallery, the most common responses were “boring” and “old,” with only a few instances of responses such as “interesting” (26). Worse than feeling that the gallery was irrelevant, many young survey respondents actually felt anxiety at their feelings of exclusion, citing words such as “don’t touch” (26). Any arts administrator formulating an outreach program must address these feelings. The description of the rules at the beginning of the EDG tour was intentionally short so as to reduce the stress felt by the students in the formal gallery space. In fact, the guide stressed “approchez!” (come closer!) and encouraged students to move about and increase their proximity to the works, as long as about a foot of space was kept between visitors and the paintings.

Students seemed tentative to participate at first, but after the initial activities and discussions in which the merit of their opinions was intentionally recognized, they began to contribute to the experience in a manner that is frequently foreign to the quiet atmosphere of an art gallery. Ms. Forrest of Wooster again noted her surprise saying, “I thought it was great that the students were so actively participating.” This active participation derives partially from a conscious choice by the EDG staff to make the tours non-threatening and easy to access. Cynthia Mathias of Firestone High School notes that the docent was “energetic,” which helped make the art “very accessible to (her) students” (Mathias). Students were free to ask questions, offer suggestions in whichever language they felt most comfortable, and move about the gallery space. It was clear that they were engaged for much of the tour and that the pretension so often associated with the “fine arts” was not inhibiting their enjoyment of the exhibition. Therefore, it is evident that
aside from being particularly well positioned to enact an effective student-centered strategy, arts organizations can also use this foreign language teaching strategy to address challenges of audience development.

Aside from engaging individual students in meaningful experiences while they attend arts organizations, the question of creating perceptions of relevance in the community at large remains. Commissioned by New Ventures in Philanthropy, Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers and the Council of Foundations Community Foundation Leadership Team, Millennium Research group published a document in 2006 outlining twelve key trends in philanthropic giving. The first trend listed indicates, “Racial and ethnic diverse will increase in almost all communities at large” (Donors). The study indicates that unless arts organizations develop programs to “reach and engage” these more diverse populations of donors, especially those with links to global racial/ethnic traditions, they will lose considerable “market share and community influence” (Donors). Therefore, it will be important for arts organizations to formulate programs that directly access the cultural and ethnic predispositions of these diverse populations. To remain both relevant and positively perceived by diverse communities, arts organizations will also need to put forth an institutional image that is culturally-sensitive and that values and respects the languages and artistic traditions of other peoples. Foreign language outreach programs will be indispensable in this mission.

Arts organizations must convince populations of their important place in society in order to remain viable components of the community. Arts administrators clearly believe in the intrinsic value of the arts and arts education. However, as much as those passionate about the arts’ wide ranging positive benefits do not wish to be required to
justify their organizations, it must be done in the interest of practicality. András Szántó, PhD, a senior lecturer in art business at Sotheby’s Institute of Art, recently published an article for *The Art Newspaper*, reprinted by Grantmakers in the Arts, entitled “Funding: the State of Art. In a world mired in economic uncertainty and with cash for the arts disappearing, how do we argue for culture?” He argues that the topic of arts viability is entirely a question of public perception. For generations, the “great nation” argument fueled arts philanthropic giving in America (Szántó). This rationale operates on the “nineteenth-century impulse that America should have a cultural life equal to Europe’s…If the Soviets had their Bolshoi Ballet, the Ford Foundation would advance the New York City Ballet” (Szántó).

Founded on the notably elitist concepts of good taste and fine quality, this funding rationale eventually gave way to the era of “great cities,” in which “urban elites were …locked in ardent competition for culture prestige” (Szántó). However, these discussions of the arts as perpetuators of “‘pale, male and stale’ European culture were turning into a liability” (Szántó). Therefore, the newest mode of discourse involving arts and giving focuses instead on “great outcomes.” Szántó explains this new preference of granting organizations by saying, “This argument sidesteps mushy and divisive questions about art’s intrinsic value. Instead, it positions art as a means to an end: better test scores, empathetic citizens, innovative workers, and so on” (Szántó). He rightly continues by examining the difficulty the arts have in proving this influence on valuable outcomes. It is difficult to communicate the impact of the arts, certainly more so than an organization that can measure impact in number of people fed, for example. The rhetoric used to discuss the arts in America frequently inhibits giving to cultural organizations,
particularly when groups serving the hungry and homeless appear to be serving a much more immediate need. While these organizations certainly deserve funding, in order to survive, the arts must position themselves as effectively serving equally important community needs.

To accomplish this crucial task then, arts organizations must demonstrate their role in solving a pressing need in American society. While the need for artistic expression is clearly strong in the minds of arts administrators, granting organizations may be more convinced by the role the arts can have in addressing the absolutely detrimental language-learning deficit that exists in America. In our increasingly globalized world, it is essential that American youth grow up learning to be multilingual and culturally sensitive, lest they be excluded from the increasingly international job market. In 2010, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan spoke to the Council on Foreign Relations, giving a compelling defense of internationally focused cultural education. He contends:

Thomas Friedman has observed that in today’s ‘flat’ world, new technologies and instant communications make ‘Beijing, Bangalore and Bethesda next-door neighbors.’ The United States is a country made up of many cultures—and we often celebrate that diversity. But just as often, we rely on the predominance of English as the language of global business and higher education when looking toward the world. This reliance can put us at a disadvantage (Duncan).

Secretary Duncan concludes by calling for dramatic enhancement of language and cultural teaching programs in America as a way to not only augment the opportunities for American youth in the international job market, but also as a method of achieving global understanding and stability.
Research performed by the Asia Society, a cultural exchange and arts advocacy organization, confirms Secretary Duncan’s worries concerning American reliance on foreign employees’ knowledge of English and Anglophone culture. The Asia Society cites figures from the Council on Economic Development “estimat[ing] that American businesses lose $2 billion each year due to lost opportunities as a direct result of lacking cross-cultural skills” (Language). In a special briefing by Congress reported by the Asia Society, Ambassador James F. Collins, former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, “made the point that the nature of diplomacy has changed. ‘In the Cold War, we dealt with 12 people in Moscow. Now in the same region we deal with 300 to 400 million people, all of whom expect to be a participant in the dialogue” (Congressional). He strongly requests that language and culture studies be enhanced in the American education system so that “we are ready to speak to the world and to be heard in their languages” (Congressional). The diplomatic and economic benefits of a multilingual and culturally sensitive American population are, therefore, considerable.

In the example of the EDG exhibition that focused on French culture, the chance to change perceptions of French culture was priceless. Though our two countries have a centuries-old tradition of diplomatic friendship, Franco-American relations have also experienced a fair degree of political and cultural strain. In an article written in The Economist in the midst of Franco-American tensions over the Iraq war, poll results illustrated the French distrust over perceived American political and cultural tendencies towards cowboy-like behavior. In fact, “over half (of the respondents) identified America as a threat to world peace” (Franco). The perception that Americans hold of the French is often no more favorable. American media products, including films such as
The Little Mermaid and European Vacation portray French people as simultaneously rude and unnecessarily romantic (Ferber 4). Perceptions of snobbery by the American public were not aided by the political conflicts of the Iraq war, in which the government took France’s unwillingness to participate as a sign of haughtiness. Few that read a newspaper in 2003 will forget the substitution of “Freedom Fries” on menus in buildings of the U.S. House of Representatives (Loughlin).

The bilingual tours program at EDG offered entire classes of American students of French the opportunity to address these inaccurate stereotypes. Arts organizations are particularly well disposed to dispel cultural myths, as they are presenters of authentic cultural products. Just as these cultural products enhance the authentic nature of language instruction, better meeting state standards, they also address the larger issue of globally aware citizens. In a classroom setting, a French teacher can show a PowerPoint slide or a clip of a film to illustrate contemporary French culture. However, the staff of the EDG was able to directly demonstrate an aspect of French culture that disrupted stereotypical images of the culture. The students saw enormous, immediately exciting and accessible artwork executed with an airbrush. Anything but snobby, the airbrush belongs to the younger generations, a far cry from the oil-painted landscapes likely associated with the French tradition of visual art. Furthermore, students were able to interact with the docent, who had actually had the chance to meet the artist himself. Students were fascinated to view pictures of the trip and to know that Hervé Heuzé is soft-spoken, very friendly and not remotely an incarnation of the rude French stereotype.

In the same Congressional briefing covered by the Asia Society, several speakers chose to use information from the 2003 RAND Corporation survey of human resources
managers at U.S.-based global corporations as they made cases for foreign language teaching. Aside from the linguistic deprivation that clearly permeates the country, lack of artistic and cultural knowledge was cited as being truly detrimental to American business prospects. One survey respondent said, “If I wanted to recruit people who were both technically skilled and culturally aware, I wouldn’t even waste time looking for them on U.S. college campuses” (Congressional). This opinion is supported by data that indicates that a disturbingly low number of Americans are capable of speaking another language. The Associated Press reported information from a “U.S. Senate resolution designating 2005 the ‘Year of Foreign Language Study,’” that indicates “only 9 percent of Americans speak both their native language and another language fluently.” This is in direct contrast to data from a European Union survey cited in the same AP article, that “half of European citizens speak a second language,” with the very lowest country, Hungary, still reporting a figure of 29% bilingual, well above the U.S. figures (Half). It should be noted that the lack of linguistic knowledge accompanies an even more detrimental lack of cultural knowledge. In the above Congressional discussions of language deficit, a deficit in cultural sensitivity is almost always included in the rhetoric.

Chapter Three discusses how the arts can enhance actual foreign language learning in the nuts and bolts of the language and vocabulary. Even easier is the ability of arts organizations to create better understanding of international cultural and artistic traditions within communities across America. This increased ability to connect with and understand foreign culture is essential to the future of the American economy and security. As noted in Chapter Three in the discussion concerning benefits of arts education in foreign language learning, the tours addressed a serious gap in global
awareness amongst the student attendees. Aside from being surprised that an American could be fluent in French, many students were unaware of the name of the French President and other important cultural and current events information that forms a well-rounded global citizen. In increasing perceptions of relevance to community members, individual donors, and granting organizations, the incorporation of foreign language into arts outreach activities is a highly effective and attractive way to demonstrate the meeting of a community need.

This demonstration of relevance and importance can only lead to positive results in arts philanthropic giving. Though the case study at EDG does not extend specifically to the concept of stewardship with individual donors, it is logical that any enhanced community image will lead to an increase in philanthropic giving to the organization. Direct mail expert and founder of fundraising agency Harvey McKinnon Associates, Harvey McKinnon has written multiple handbooks for the nonprofit administrator. In his guide *11 Questions Every Donor Asks (and the answers all donors crave)*, McKinnon outlines the thought process that donors undergo before parting with their monetary contributions. He explains the need for donors to feel as though their money will make a true difference in a cause that they care about, especially in relation to other avenues of spending. He writes, “If you want ongoing support, you must show donors that they can affect a life, save an endangered animal, protect a river” (McKinnon 55). This tangible result so craved by individual donors relates back to the theory of great outcomes discussed previously; in order to succeed financially, the arts must make a case for the greatly positive impact they can have on society. Arts administrators can no longer afford to assume that individual donors understand that the arts, by themselves, are
important. Instead, they can illustrate the significant role they can have in creating globally aware, culturally sensitive, multilingual citizens.

The same principles that apply to individual giving also apply to the prospect of seeking foundation grants. Convincing donors that an organization is viable and important to society may also increase the likelihood of receiving grant funds. Tom Aherhn of Ahern Communication, a nonprofit consulting firm, has written multiple guides to grant applications with particular focus on the all-important case statement. His biggest piece of advice is to “make your case bigger than you” (Ahern). In doing so, it is not enough to indicate that the arts are important. For a community foundation facing requests for programs that feed the hungry and shelter the homeless, the case for a program that addresses a significant community need is important.

The Akron Community Foundation serves the greater Akron area “with creative, visionary and sensitive grants that address the evolving needs of an area experiencing rapid economic and social change” (Mission). In an email interview with Donae Eckert, Vice President of Community Investment, the foundation’s general giving guidelines were explained. Though Ms. Eckert did not indicate that a bilingual arts outreach program would have an advantage over a monolingual program, she did write that the foundation “take(s) note of programs that do deliver” (Eckert). The case could easily be made that a bilingual program “delivers” and educates its participants more effectively and at a deeper level than other education activities. Ms. Eckert also noted the priorities of “depth to the program” and reaching “populations who have no or limited access to the arts” (Eckert). Bilingual arts programs offer both depth of meaningful experience and the ability to reach non-native English populations with foreign language. It is, therefore,
plausible, that fusion programs may have enhanced chances of receiving essential funds from foundations.

Furthermore, arts organizations using foreign language may be able to frame the fusion as a collaborative project, something seen very favorably by granting organizations. Nancy Burke Smith and Judy Tremore, authors of *The Everything Grant Writing Book* and a granting advice series for about.com, write, “Both government and foundation grantors hold collaboration and partnership in high esteem” (Smith). This favoring of collaboration could, therefore, lead to enhanced funding opportunities. The EDG did not apply jointly for funding, but the Myers School of Art was able to collaborate with the French department, as well as with local school districts, for publicity and increased attendance of the tours program. Arts organizations could take the idea of collaboration even further and work jointly with foreign culture organizations in the community. Considerable research in the nonprofit field supports the claim that collaboration between arts and non-arts organizations (i.e. painting and French language) can be extraordinarily positive. Sometimes resulting in increased funding, collaboration also influences community perception of both organizations. In a five-year study published in 2004, the Urban Institute in Washington DC evaluated the Community Partnerships for Cultural Participation Initiative of The Wallace Foundation. The evaluation noted benefits and challenges associated with collaboration between arts and non-arts organizations, noting, “The major benefits…were greater public credit for community involvement, connections to new communities of potential participants, and wider opportunities to carry out creative work” (Walker). All of these benefits can lead to important fiscal advantages in the field.
Aside from likelier funding from the existing range of granting organizations, the use of foreign language introduces a wider range and greatly increased quantity of new granting foundations to which the arts outreach program would be eligible. For an arts organization seeking funding for a specific exhibition, concert, or project, obtaining foundation grants is absolutely critical. Therefore, any idea that can greatly expand the number and type of eligible foundations must be considered. American arts organizations in the 21st century cannot afford to ignore this possibility. Just as the introduction of foreign language into an outreach program could intrigue new donors with a wider range of interests, the fusion can also greatly expand the range of foundations likely to be interested in the program. In the case of EDG, all foundation funds secured were directly linked to the presence of French language in the exhibition outreach program. A significant amount was granted by the foundation of La Maison Française de Cleveland, a nonprofit dedicated to “the promotion of French/American culture and the French language” (About Us). While an exhibition of French contemporary art would have conceivably met granting requirements of half the fund’s mission, the bilingual nature of the tours program meant that the arts program attractively addressed both aspects of the foundation’s granting goals (culture and language).

For arts organizations considering French language outreach programs as a component to their programming, numerous new granting opportunities are presented. La Maison Française de Cleveland is a branch of the global network Alliance Française, a hugely extended organization that “serve[s] as a bridge between the Alliances in the United States and the Fondation Alliance Française in Paris.” The mission of the Alliance is to “support French language and French speaking cultures as they are
practiced around the globe” (Our Mission). With offices in nearly every major American
city, arts organizations across the country have a strong resource when seeking support
for French language cultural programs. The Cultural Services department of the French
Embassy in New York also offers an enormous amount of granting programs through
FACE, the French American Cultural Exchange. Dedicated to “nurturing French-
American relations through innovative international projects in the arts, education, and
cultural exchange,” FACE’s granting interests are divided into book, cinema, visual arts,
performing arts, music, and education categories (French). In the visual arts category,
FACE has given to art museums and galleries from Michigan to Florida in the past year
alone, with their annual giving listed as $3,614,283 by the Foundation Center database
records (French). Aside from these organizations affiliated with the French government,
numerous independent nonprofit foundations also exist to support French language and
culture programs. In a search of the extensive Foundation Center database, results list
twenty-seven organizations that either support French cultural programs or list France as
an international interest in giving.

When the database search is expanded to include organizations supporting foreign
language programs other than French, another twenty-three foundations are available.
Perhaps most impressive though are the 321 foundations that are listed that fund cultural
awareness in the arts. These include organizations such as the Asian Cultural Council,
the Center for Arab-American Philanthropy, the Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Russian
Arts Federation. For an art museum in possession of cultural products from around the
globe, exhibitions during financially difficult times could be largely supported by these
dispersely focused organizations. Performing arts organizations also have the
opportunity to access these foundations with foreign language programs. For example, the Max Kade Foundation is partially dedicated to “strengthen[ing] the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning of foreign languages,” with a strong focus on the German language (Max). In 2007, the Kade Foundation granted $100,000 to New York City’s Metropolitan Opera Association for the Lindemann Program for the study and mastery of the German language, payable over 1 year (Max). Such enhancement of the artistic quality of Met programs is entirely linked to German, one of the many examples of foreign language strengthening the financial standing of arts organizations.

In the current economically trying times, any opportunity to innovate and create new financial solutions must be examined. Arts organizations must be willing to seek out new collaborations, new programming, and new donation sources in order to survive. The key to unlocking these new opportunities may be a fusion of arts and foreign language outreach activities. Addressing the 2010 conference of the Association of Arts Administration Educators, keynote speaker Ben Cameron compared the current state of the US nonprofit sector to that of civil war America. He borrowed the words of President Abraham Lincoln’s second inaugural address, quoting, “The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. As our case is new, so much we think anew and act anew” (Cameron). Part of this thinking and acting anew is a creative-problem solving that can be performed well by arts organizations. As lovers of art, creativity, and innovative work sometimes considered to be on the fringe of society, arts administrators are open to new methods of thinking. It is only logical that this openness should apply to the educational programming of their institutions. Furthermore, the connection of art and foreign language is a natural one for artists and organizational staff to make. As Steina
Vasulka, video art pioneer, wrote in her essay “My Love Affair With Art,” her “motivation to make art seems to come from a deep desire to communicate; for some artists, it comes from a desire to communicate on a massive scale” (Vasulka 92). An expansion of this communicative impulse to include foreign language is both easy and effective for an arts organization. Truly speaking to students and the public, creating meaningful experiences for new audiences, and thereby achieving new financial security may be just the innovation needed for arts administration in the 21st century.
CHAPTER FIVE

LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Despite the myriad benefits to both foreign language learners and arts organizations, a foreign language arts outreach program may be difficult to enact. Logistically, finding a staff member in the education department fluent enough in a foreign language to develop a high quality outreach program may be difficult. As discussed in the chapters advocating enhanced foreign language education, American professionals are frequently lacking in linguistic skills. However, making use of the potential for collaboration offered by arts-language fusion may present an ideal solution. An outreach program may be developed in English and then translated as necessary by volunteers, interns, and regional professionals. In the university art gallery setting, a wealth of linguistically fluent students and professors could provide translation and consultation possibilities. College credit may even be offered in exchange for this service, so as to keep the nonprofit budget in mind.

Even more than difficulties in technical execution, financial concerns may inhibit such foreign language arts programs for a number of reasons. The EDG staff desired to bring as many students into the gallery space as possible with an intensely meaningful and engaging experience. For the groups that attended, teacher and student feedback
seems to indicate that the experience was, in fact, meaningful. However, teachers also responded that cultural programs necessitating field trips are difficult to attend, perhaps at a prohibitive level. The pure existence of the program was indeed exciting for the French teachers, Ms. Benson lamenting, “The main obstacle is simply finding things to do. There are not enough opportunities to be found!” (Benson). Teachers were also extremely pleased by the free price of the exhibition and tour, such as Ms. Forrest who commented, “It’s harder to find culture experiences for French. The ones that I have found are also quite expensive” (Forrest). This is certainly true of for-profit events such as the touring production of Les Misérables that recently came to Cleveland. Attendance at the musical for the average high school class would have been impossible.

Even considering the free admission though, the field trip structure of the program was perhaps not ideal. Though Ms. Mathias receives considerable support from Firestone High School’s Visual and Performing Arts Program, she readily admits that bringing arts to students is difficult for any language teacher. She writes that main inhibitors are “accessibility and…the availability of the resources” (Mathias). Two French teachers agreed to attend and had to cancel their reservations due to lack of fiscal support from their administration. One teacher, wishing to remain anonymous, commented, “funding is a huge problem. Languages are being cut and field trips are non-existent. Everywhere we look, we are losing support for our programs.” Nearly every survey respondent answered that funding was a major problem, such as Ms. Lewton, who attended in a group of other teachers on a Saturday, without students, because her district offers no funding for field trips. In fact, only Daniela Archer of Our Lady of the Elms, a private school in Akron, indicated that finding cultural activities was not a problem. This is a
nationwide complaint among school districts, who note that rising fuel costs “essentially cripple their operations” (Woodward). For an arts organization whose mission is to bring culture to as many young people as possible, even the most fantastic program suffers without ease of attendance.

Other financial limitations pertain to the arts organization itself, rather than the budgets of the participating schools. At the Davis Gallery, the authentic nature of the pieces in the exhibition was extraordinarily important to creating a valuable experience for the students. This necessarily required that paintings be shipped from their homeland of Paris, France to Akron, Ohio. Any art exhibition hoping to incorporate authentic cultural products will require similar shipment of artwork. This introduces the difficult question of budget. Art handling is already an expensive processes due to the care that must be taken, not to mention the extended distances for such an exhibition. Furthermore, the large format of the paintings, which was so exciting for the students, resulted in even more expensive shipping. The New York Times published an article in 2006 entitled “The Fine Art of Shipping Art,” in which several dangers are outlined. The author warns, “An oil painting on linen canvas is susceptible to mold in a cold damp warehouse and blistering in an overheated shipping container left on an airport tarmac. Throw a bit of plastic bubble wrap into the equation and the outcome can be catastrophic” (Preston). In order to minimize risk, the Davis Gallery engaged Atelier 4, an art shipping company operating out of New York. However, this meant that shipment became the majority of the budget, leaving little for the outreach program. Happily, there was little to no expense associated with this outreach program, aside from printing of the brochures, as graduate assistants organized and implemented the program.
However, the tight budget did mean that artist residency became difficult to engineer. The cost of bringing an artist from Paris to Akron would have been considerable and the logistics involved in the payment of a foreign national would have been quite complicated. This is not simply an issue for art museums, as performing arts organizations struggle even more intensely with the process. Before 2001, petitions for certain types of visas sought by artistic performers could be processed in as little as fifteen days (Weeks). However, since September 11th, hiring policies have become quite strict and potentially prohibitive. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has made changes that, unless an organization pays a considerable fee, push the processing time to over ninety days (Weeks). Jonathan Ginsburg, a Fairfax, Virginia-based immigration attorney who works with arts groups, stresses the possibility that other countries may perceive the new visa policies as a tax on foreign performers. This may lead them to institute their own taxes on American performers in their respective countries, creating an ever-increasing pattern of restriction on cross-cultural interaction (Weeks). In order to avoid these issues, a larger lead-time in planning for visas may be required, as may creative brainstorming of budget solutions. Recorded Skype conversations and streaming interviews may somewhat replace artist lectures for an art museum. However, performing arts organizations may truly struggle to engage and collaborate with international performers.

Arts administrators looking to take advantage of the wealth of benefits offered by foreign language-arts fusion activities should not let these potential limitations deter them from building a program. The granting opportunities for making such projects feasible are abundant. This may present cost solutions from the organization’s standpoint, such as
shipping and artist travel. However, finding the best solution for fiscally limited school
districts is essential in developing a program. Fortunately, creative solutions to a
program requiring field trips may be possible. Many of the French teachers had
wonderful suggestions for alternative solutions. The EDG staff made sure to publicize
that tours would be available to a group of any size, language level or age, including
informal student groups. A few teachers that could not attend as an official field trip
couraged their students to attend the gallery on their own, outside of school hours. The
bilingual docent was made aware of some of these students and was able to give tours to
small groups to accommodate their needs. Still, it would be ideal to reach entire classes
of French students simultaneously.

In attempting to do so, a few possible solutions present themselves. Some
teachers suggested a program in which the exhibition could come to their students, in
varying incarnations. Ms. Lewton suggested a touring exhibition of sorts in which
“decent sized replicas could be made of the paintings…that could go out into the area
schools… (she) saw something like this available through a teacher catalogue” (Lewton).
A docent could accompany the exhibition to guide discussion and engage students in the
same types of learning activities available at EDG. She suggested that a fee be charged to
cover gas and replication production expenses on the part of the gallery, but this could be
potentially counterproductive in reaching underserved school districts. A touring
exhibition of replicas, though slightly inauthentic, would at least present tangible
products to the students. Perhaps the most practical solution is an activity inspired by the
Krannert Art Museum (KAM) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The
education department at KAM operates a few foreign language tours of their space, but
also accommodates classes in the school setting with a program called “Art-to-Go.”

Functioning as a virtual tour of the gallery, the French version “Art-à-emporter” could reach those school groups unable to attend the tours in person. Using a digital projector, large format images of the works could be reproduced without sacrificing too much quality. Ideally, the tour activities and structure would be almost identical, just without the added benefits of in-person viewing of the works and the chance to get up out of the classroom desks in a new environment. This could conceivably weaken the link created to the arts organization, but would at least provide a cursory introduction for the students.

Another important expansion of the French language tours program would be the inclusion of other Francophone cultures. In the Euro-centric traditions of the American foreign language classroom, it is far more likely for a student to identify a single landmark in Paris than an entire Francophone island in the Caribbean. Many art museums’ collections have work from other Francophone cultures or work that clearly demonstrates the intersection of colonial French and native culture. The paintings of Paul Gauguin, for example, would be a fantastic way to introduce the topic of French relations with colonies such as Tahiti and the various implications of this interaction. The depth and breadth of lesson plans are endless. Furthermore, when the concept of the foreign language arts outreach program is expanded beyond the French language, even more opportunities for culturally rich and thought provoking education present themselves. Though currently not widely taught in the public school systems, non-Western languages such as Mandarin are gaining in popularity. For museums with extensive Asian art collections, a new method of outreach program may soon be possible. If arts
administrators are willing to be creative with both content and format of their foreign language programs, a variety of positive solutions to financial and logistical woes exist.
CHAPTER SIX

PORTRAITS OF OTHER ARTS-LANGUAGE FUSION PROGRAMS

Krannert Art Museum; Urbana, Illinois

The Krannert Art Museum (KAM) operates under the auspices of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The museum’s complex mission statement includes “enriching[ing] the human experience” through “artistic interaction, seeking diverse audience and art groups, and providing life-long learning opportunities for the members of the community” (Mission). The museum has collections from various time periods and geographic regions, generally meeting its goals of diversity. The educational programs reach audiences of all ages. Notably, KAM maintains an extensive school tour program in subjects such as “Stories in Art” and foreign language. All tours at KAM are given not as art history lectures talking at the children, but as a facilitation of discussion and interpretation. KAM’s materials teach art history and French culture through language, while incorporating intensely student-centered activities. A stop at a painting usually starts with the simple question (in the target language) of, “what do you see?” Answers can range from a simple color to a more complex analysis, depending on the comfort levels of the students. When giving a tour, it is the docent’s task to evoke the usage of these important words and encourage students to understand their cultural
context. This format is “perfect for language learners, since it gives them a unique chance to use their new language” (Sautman) and allows conversation to be as linguistically sophisticated as the students wish. KAM offers these discussion-based tours in the two most common high school languages: French and Spanish.

The French tour materials were developed by members of the French-American Student Association at the University of Illinois. Elizabeth Buhe, organization president, worked in collaboration with members of “Museums in Action,” a university course that functions as an internship with the KAM education department. Through this partnership, the department created a bank of various discussion questions and activities concerning all of the museum’s French artworks. In the example of the museum’s Camille Pissarro work *Le Pont Neuf: un matin d’hiver*, the painting description and discussion questions address important aspects of Impressionism and, therefore, French culture. Questions stress emotion words when exploring feelings evoked by the painting, season vocabulary, texture words, and a litany of art terms that students would not normally encounter (Buhe). When giving a tour, it is the docent’s task to evoke the usage of these important words and encourage students to understand their cultural context. This methodology may be applied to a variety of works, as KAM’s French collection is substantial and offers a range of media. Though a tour is generally an hour long and covers four to five French artworks, activities are often necessary to enhance learning.

The success of the foreign language tours has been considerable since KAM enacted the program about four years ago. Many local French teachers bring groups of students every year and have developed a strong relationship with the museum’s education department (Sautman). However, KAM faces the same difficulties as EDG
regarding district funding and permissibility of field trips. Their solution, a program entitled, “Art-to-Go” acts like a museum tour brought to a classroom by museum staff. Though this program currently exists only in English, the Director of Education was quite enthusiastic about the positive potential of a French “Art-to-Go.” The EDG technique was highly informed by the philosophies of the Krannert Art Museum education department at the University of Illinois. The author had interned with KAM and brought with her to EDG this concept of the docent as one who evokes participation, rather than lectures. Much credit is due to the KAM education department, as certain activities, such as the poème en diamant, were directly adapted from their tour program.

*Foreign Language Concert Series; Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Indiana*

Though much of this thesis has focused on a visual arts case study, it should be noted that the performing arts are equally well positioned to reap the benefits of an arts-language fusion. Many of the performing arts already require a base knowledge of a foreign language. Nearly all the vocabulary in ballet is still used in French, while no classical musician can read music without an understanding of at least some Italian and German words. Approximately ten to fifteen years ago, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra decided to create a program that would take advantage of this natural overlap of language and cultural product. The ISO Learning Community’s mission is to “cultivat[e] music's unique ability to connect people, embrace community need and improve the quality of life in Indiana” through “helping schools to reach their educational goals in an engaging and active way” (Learning).
Prompted by a desire to increase and diversify the types of students attending concerts (i.e. not only fine arts groups), the ISO education department created a foreign language club program (Leverton).

The program once included foreign language tours of the orchestra hall as well as a reception with culturally themed pastries. As it has evolved quite a bit over time, Laura Leverton, program manager, described the current structure via an email interview:

We send teachers a classroom lesson plan to begin working with students before the concert; newsletters are translated in both English and the language of study; we no longer offer a tour, but now have a music expert give a pre-concert talk in English--often I hire an orchestra musician who is experienced if not fluent in the language--and the intermission reception still exists (Leverton).

The bilingual teaching materials sent to the foreign language classrooms resemble the materials created by the EDG staff. Translation is provided by “highly skilled volunteers,” who are sometimes musicians in the orchestra itself (Leverton). The brochures contain pertinent biographic information and details about the pieces as well as a fun “saviez-vous que” (did you know) section containing trivia. The French brochure, for example, explains that composer Maurice Ravel loved animals, nature and fairy tales (Indianapolis). The language does appear to be relatively complex and would likely require a fair amount of teacher guidance, depending on the level of the students.

The ISO generally considers this program as a potential revenue-building exercise, as opposed to an effort to fulfill granting requirements or increase foundation application opportunities. Instead, Leverton explains, “while we don’t expect that this will instantly turn these foreign language students into lifetime subscribers, it IS a chance to get them into the symphony hall--often for the first time” (Leverton). While the program’s benefits are clear to the staff members, who design curriculum around the
ACTFL language standards, the ISO program faces some limitations that are unique to the performing arts. For an art gallery, relatively small groups of students are taken through the space at one time. A class of French students would only result in a maximum of twenty to thirty tour attendees, all largely of the same language level. This means that tour content can be personally administered and regulated, with the content adjusted to the needs of the relatively homogenous student group. For the orchestra, an organization that is filling a hall of hundreds of students with widely varying language skills, the creation of a program that engages the entire audience is difficult. Leverton notes that high quality is extremely important in the planning process, so this consideration of language level is a serious one.

The ISO also faces the challenge of programming concerts based on masterpieces of classical music. While an art museum has a variety of collections ranging from African to Asian, the great masterworks of symphonic orchestra repertoire are largely Euro-centric. Currently, this presents a versatility issue. Leverton also notes that the absence of Russian teaching in the American school system is a lost opportunity to present a truly exciting program of Russian classical literature. As language needs in America evolve though, it may be increasingly difficult for programs such as the ISO’s language club to access the students. French and Italian are rapidly fading from prominence in language teaching as Spanish and Mandarin become more popular. The current structure of French, Spanish, and German language concerts may cease to be a good fit with the public school languages in the coming decades. However, the general organization of the program and its guiding principle remains strong.
The arts may also be used to teach English as a Second Language, as in the case of the Associazione Culturale Linguistica Educational (ACLE). Operating out of San Remo, Italy, ACLE began as the brainchild of Italian educator Arrigo Speziali, who was dissatisfied with the inadequacies he saw in English language teaching in the Italian public schools. Rather than promote the traditional “chalk and talk” strategy of vocabulary and grammar drilling, Speziali founded ACLE over twenty-five years ago to teach second language acquisition in a more accessible, enjoyable, and culturally relevant way. ACLE’s teaching methods are endorsed by the Italian Ministry of Education and the organization maintains a three-fold mission statement. The English summer camps across the country provide a full immersion experience for children ages six to seventeen, create enthusiasm and motivation for new multicultural experiences, and stimulate emotion and energy in an entertaining atmosphere (About ACLE). The idea behind using arts and cultural games to teach language is that considering emotional/affective aspects of motivation and interest can enhance learning. Termed the “REAL” approach to student-centered teaching, this philosophy encourages multifaceted language learning. Having taught for two summers with ACLE, the author is very familiar with the background and philosophy of the organization. All descriptions and data not otherwise cited here are her own personal observations.

In using the arts to teach foreign language, the lesson plans provided at camp integrate culturally relevant Anglophone songs, games, and art projects. The average camp day is divided into camp-wide English songs for warm-up, classroom lessons in the
morning, arts/show rehearsal, and camp-wide outdoor games. Though ACLE provides education team-written workbooks for a variety of culturally relevant language points, reliance on these books is discouraged. Supplemental English songs, games, and art activities are used to enhance learning and classroom energy. When teaching ordinal numbers to pre-elementary level students (nine to eleven years old), a tutor may use the “Peanut Butter and Jelly Song.” The lyrics, “first you take the peanuts and you crush ‘em, you crush ‘em. Second you take the peanuts and you spread ‘em, you spread ‘em…” address the language point. At the same time, a discussion of “what is peanut butter?” occurs in the classroom, providing important cultural information, as the average Italian child is unfamiliar with peanut butter. The song is also popular with American children so helps introduce Italian children to the culture of their Anglophone counterparts. The same principles apply to all aspects of the lesson plans.

In using drama to teach, each camp ends with a final show for friends and family of the campers. This summative experience also serves as an important method of communication with parents. The skits are written with collaboration between students and tutors, always using an Anglophone example in the language points and acting. For example, at the Mantova City Camp, July 6-July 10, 2009, various skits blended culture with language acquisition. In demonstrating interrogative questions, campers set a murder mystery at a Miss American Pageant asking, “Who did it? When did they leave? Why did they do it?” etc. More elaborate grammatical structures were also addressed with the arts. For instance, with the present continuous tense of –ing, campers sung and acted “We’re singing, dancing, jumping, laughing….in the rain!” Both of these situations incorporate American cultural icons into dramatic expression of a language point. ACLE
also operates a touring theatre troupe called Theatrino that visits summer camps performing age-appropriate English language short skits. The results of the ACLE programs are substantial, as it is not uncommon for a camper to increase at least half a language level on the ACLE oral comprehension exam in only one week (Bordo). A six-year-old may enter camp with no vocabulary and complete his final show singing “Old MacDonald” and pronouncing, “Hello, my name is Alessandro, I am a horse, I am brown.” The parental and student response for the ACLE approach appears to be very positive, indicating the general success rate of the program as a whole.

If this is the case though, what is to stop the Italian scholastic system from adapting similar methods? It appears as though the same difficulties in finances, teaching training, and classroom planning time that plague American teachers also face those in Italy. Francesca Casarini, camp director for the Casteggio camps and English student herself, explains the difficulties. She believes the ACLE methods require an extra level of time and enthusiasm from the teachers, and arts skills that teachers may not always have to offer their students. It is easier to teach rules and grammar directly from a text, but Casarini worries “they are not always immediately clear for every child. With a game or song every single child can participate and is not left behind” (Casarini). Though an Italian case study, principles of effective education seen with ACLE are valid and applicable in America as well. If Italian educators are struggling to engage their students due to lack of time or skill, one would assume that those in America struggle similarly. In the case of inadequate arts training or time to devote to cultural studies, a blending of the two curriculums offers a solution. An arts organization that offers arts outreach through language enrichment could provide such a bridge.
While this thesis research focuses on the fusion of arts and foreign language teaching to monolingual Americans, there is also the distinct possibility to use foreign language to reach native speakers of foreign language. The Caminos a la musica program of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra does just that. The CSO has been performing in Pilsen, a largely Spanish-speaking community of Chicago, for years with a variety of projects. The Caminos a la musica program is a “community partnership between the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Resurrection Project and the National Museum of Mexican Art” in which members of the Pilsen community “have the unique opportunity to participate in free and low-cost concerts, events and workshops at Symphony Center as well as in their own communities” (CSO in Pilsen). Tania Van Bree, Coordinator of Access Programs for the CSO, described the initiative as much more of a process that a short-term program. Rather than expecting measurable results, Caminos a la musica is about building a relationship with the Pilsen community, one that takes trust and dedication (Van Bree). Bilingual programs that put community members at ease while breaking down stereotypes about the CSO are key in this stewardship process. Van Bree notes that the presence of culturally sensitive and bilingual staff at the CSO that is willing to forge those bonds and create personal connections is essential.

2010 was a special year for the CSO program, as it celebrated the “Year of Mexico” in Chicago, as proclaimed by Mayor Richard M. Daley. In conjunction with the Mexican Consul General, the National Museum of Mexican Art, the Art Institute of
Chicago, and the Chicago Cultural Center, the CSO offered programming embracing Mexican culture. Manuel Rodriguez Arriga, Consul General of Mexico described the event in the official press release saying, “The Mexico 2010 commemorations program gathers more than 70 events presented by 50 institutions distinguished by their excellence, open to all and devoted to the best of culture and intellectual thought” (City of Chicago). Part of this year of events was a concert with the CSO in the Pilsen community on September 16, 2010. The Civic Orchestra, the CSO’s training orchestra, has frequently performed in Pilsen and brings ensembles to present educational outreach classes (Van Bree). However, the September 16th concert featured the full CSO, whose programming choices were selected with the direct aim of being culturally relevant. The program included works for orchestra by Mexican composers José Pablo Moncayo García and Arturo Márquez, while the Mexican conductor and violinist Carlos Miguel Prieto led the concert, often addressing the audience in Spanish (Van Bree).

This blend of familiar and new offered the community members of Pilsen the chance to experience the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at no cost in a non-traditional venue. Van Bree noted that the connection to the audience was made considerably stronger by the presence of the Spanish language. Outreach materials are often translated for events such as this and the CSO has started to publicize in Spanish language publications such as Hoy Chicago (Van Bree). These initiatives not only grow the CSO’s audience bases, comments Van Bree, but they also demonstrate a certain degree of caring on the part of the symphony. Concerts like these communicate recognition of the importance of the Pilsen community by the orchestra and can lead to the formation of a real partnership. The creation of a CSO that is fully integrated into the Chicago
community results in a more relevant, respected, and stable arts organization. This integration would not be possible without the use of Spanish-language programming.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The CSO programs demonstrate an entirely different use of foreign language and arts interaction as a way to reach a new community of native speakers. This expansion of the concept demonstrates the wide array of potential benefits for a fusion of arts and language outreach activities. The linkage of the two fields is so natural that it requires very little artificial manipulation on the part of an arts administrator. The potential for educational programs in dance, theatre, music and visual art enhanced with endless world languages is considerable. The experience of the Heuzé exhibition demonstrates one specific manner in which the French language can strengthen an arts gallery’s community image and finances while creating culturally relevant and linguistically engaging learning for students. Through the reactions of teachers, observations of the gallery staff, and large amount of secondary research supporting these research conclusions, it is evident that arts and foreign language not only can, but also should be blended. For language learning and arts stability, this may be an important solution for the future.

This project has demonstrated the complexity the value of this kind of interaction between the arts and foreign language. Proving this value is difficult and the outcomes nearly impossible to quantify. In fact, purely qualitative feedback surveys were given to the teachers as a direct result of this reflection. The personal and rich reactions from teachers about their students’ experiences provided insight into the benefits of the tour.
program in a way that numbered scales could not. Granted, this does mean that this paper cannot “prove” the voracity of its thesis with quantitative data. However, it is able to demonstrate the nuanced and significant changes that art-language interaction can create both for language learning and for arts organizations. Some of the most valuable aspects of the human experience cannot be measured. Appreciation of the creative process and openness to diversity have intrinsic worth that transcends that which can be measured by test score improvement or increased newspaper coverage. Though foreign language and art programs positively affect those quantifiers of student performance and arts stability, the true measure of success for these programs lies in the depth and density of the experience. Through the detailed results of the Emily Davis Gallery program, as well as through the compilation of expert opinion on the arts and foreign language, I feel confident in stating that a case has been made for the fusion of these two fields in the educational activities in the nonprofit sector.
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APPENDIX A: GENERAL DOCENT AND TOUR GUIDELINES

Utilisez les gestes, les questions directes «i.e. qu’est-ce que ça veut dire ? » pour améliorer la compréhension pendant tout le tour. Autant de collaboration entre vous et l’élève que possible. Encouragez la participation orale, même si c’est seulement un mot. Renforcez l’idée que l’interprétation est personnelle et individuelle. Beaucoup de « répétez après moi » pour rompre l’atmosphère de tension initiale.

Bienvenue, je m’appelle Vanessa. Je suis très contente de vous avoir ici, vous pouvez laisser vos sacs là-bas et cetera. Je vous encourage d’approcher l’art (mais ne les touchez pas!) et cetera.

Discussion de la liste de vocabulaire. Il y a beaucoup de similarités entre les mots de français et ceux d’anglais. Exemples. Dites-moi si vous ne comprenez pas quelque chose.

C’est très facile de regarder une peinture très vite et puis passer. Mais il est important de vraiment voir une œuvre. Donc, prenez une minute et regardez tous les détails, observer tout.

Peinture 1 : Qu’est-ce que vous voyez. (très simple comme « je vois le bleu » ou plus compliqué. Suivez la discussion un peu, montrez les détails, commentez sans juger.

Maintenant, je vais vous dire que le titre de toute la série est « abîmes ». Qu’est-ce que ça veut dire ? Question 1 dans le document : À quoi est-ce que vous pensez quand vous entendez le mot « abîmes » ? Est-ce que ça change votre interprétation ? Et n’oubliez pas que l’interprétation d’une œuvre est personnelle. Suivez la discussion. Commencez à parler des émotions.

Points to hit : profondeur, dimensions, flotter, sensation de…calme ? d’être perdu ? de l’océan ? qu’est-ce que vous vous sentez ? M. Heuzé a choisi le bleu parce qu’il évoque des émotions de mystère. Il a fait quelques peintures d’autres couleurs (i.e. marron, mais c’était trop terrestre).
Discutons sa technique. Avez-vous des idées ? Comment est-ce qu’il le fait ? C’est de la photographie ? De la peinture ? Discussion de sa technique avec les gestes et de la répétition des mots qui sont un peu compliqués.

Peintures 2-4 : Donc, on a dit que cette peinture soit assez abstraite. On se demande « où suis-je ? » Ici, rappelez les élèves de quelques idées du groupe à propos de la première peinture. i.e. John a dit que nous sommes sous l’océan. Mary pense que nous sommes dans un rêve.


Continuons au sous-sol.

Note- tout le texte sur le mur ici est dans le deuxième document (bilingue) que vous avez.

Peinture 5 : Nous avons discuté sa progression de l’abstrait aux éléments plus figuratifs. Ici, nous avec toute une personne.


Avant de continuer, montrez le meilleur lieu dans la galerie pour être dans son monde, là où on est entouré par le bleu. Discutez le mot entouré et le lien avec « entourage » en anglais.

Peintures 6-8 : Maintenant, il commence à jouer avec la couleur un peu. Ici, nous avons bleu-gris, bleu-aquatique, et bleu-violet.

Comment est-ce que vos émotions changent entre les trois peintures ? Donnez quelques exemples. Moi, je trouve ce bleu-gris très inquiétant. C’est comme s’il y a de la fumée qui obscure ma vision, quelque chose de menaçant. Suivez la discussion.

Le bleu aquatique est très différent. Aquarium ? Un bleu plus connu et lumineux. Suivez cette discussion. Comment est-ce que vos émotions sont différentes ici ?


Donc on voit que même les petits changements de couleur influencent les sentiments évoqués par les peintures. La couleur est donc, très importante.

Mais M. Heuzé n’as pas inventé l’idée du bleu monochrome dans l’art français. Il y a d’autres artistes qui l’ont utilisé, mais pour les raisons différentes.


Peinture 9 : par exemple, ici, on revient un peu à l’atmosphère de calme qu’on avait avec la première peinture.

Suivez la discussion. Est-ce que vous partagez l’avis ? Discutons son inspiration un peu. Je suis allée à Paris en mars pour organiser les détails de l’exposition et, M. Heuzé et moi, nous avons discuté la musique. Moi, je suis musicienne, donc c’était un très bon point de contact pour nous.

Musique – DVD

Qui sait quelque chose déjà de l’impressionnisme ? Discussion. Points to hit : émotion, essentielle, l’impression de la chose est plus importante que la chose
elle-même. Monet, si ce nom les aident à comprendre. Il y avait un mouvement plus ou moins parallèle dans la musique classique. Debussy, montrez sa photo.


Écoutez. Vous pouvez vous asseoir devant la télévision, mais il est mieux de circuler devant les peintures. Est-ce que la musique change votre interprétation ? Qu’est-ce que vous en pensez ?

Donc, maintenant que vous avez vu toutes les peintures, et que vous avez vraiment réfléchi, prenez une minute pour choisir une des neuf œuvres qui vous frappe, que vous aimez. Je vais vous dire les instructions maintenant pour une petite activité. Puis, regardez la peinture, réfléchir, et écrire.

Forme du poème. Discussion des instructions. Donnez les crayons (pas de stylos dans la galerie) et les petites tablettes d’écriture. N’oubliez pas que c’est de la poésie. « Correct » n’existe pas, donc pas d’inquiétude. Le guide est là pour faire de la traduction, ou les élèves qui ne sont pas d’un niveau de langue très haut peuvent l’écrire en anglais.

Donnez l’exemple d’un étudiant et demandez (peinture par peinture, plus de volontaires comme ça) pour les personnes qui veulent partager. Commentaires positives. Partager la poésie à haute voix est quelque chose de très personnel, beaucoup d’élèves ont peur de le faire. Heureusement, à la fin du tour, le groupe devrait avoir une atmosphère plus ou moins confortable, conviviale. Néanmoins, il faut être sûr que les réactions sont positives et que les autres montrent du respect.

Vous pouvez rester ici pour regarder le DVD, les images de l’artiste et du directeur Richard. C’est en anglais, mais je suis ici aussi pour répondre à vos questions. Je vous remercie de votre attention et j’espère que vous avez passé un très bon moment ici à la galerie d’Emily Davis à l’université d’Akron.
Poème en Diamant
Kranert Art Museum Education Department and Vanessa Bordo

Ligne 1: Un mot, de votre choix, qui décrit la peinture.

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Ligne 2: Une action que vous associez avec la peinture.

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Ligne 3: Une comparaison entre deux choses (par exemple: couleurs ou sentiment) dans la peinture.

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Ligne 4: Un autre mot, de votre choix, qui décrit la peinture.