Getting Out of the Foreign Language Classroom: Using On-Campus and Community Resources to Develop Translingual and Transcultural Competence in Thai/Lao & Other Languages

Sixth Annual CLAC Conference

“Exploring approaches to Cultures & Languages Across the Curriculum”

March 9-10, 2012
The University Hotel Minneapolis
Minneapolis, MN

Poster exhibit by John Hartmann, Northern Illinois University & Itsarate Dolphen, Mahidol University, Thailand
Getting Out of the F L Classroom:

*Using On-Campus and Community Resources to Develop Translingual and Transcultural Competence in Thai/Lao & Other Languages & Other Languages*
Abstract

The majority of students taking a foreign language, especially those in non-elite schools, will never have the opportunity to go abroad. Nevertheless, they can be proffered a global experience using resources close at hand: libraries, museums, concerts, lectures, festivals, restaurants, markets, gardens, places of worship, sports areas, karaoke clubs, and immigrant enclaves. These many local resources excite and motivate students and afford them the realization that they do not necessarily need to go abroad to use their classroom language or to experience the culture. Such opportunities are close at hand and are waiting to be exploited.
Getting Out ...

Campus resources:

- SE Asia Library collection
- Museums
- Lectures
- Asia-American Month activities
- Movies

Community resources:

- Local garden with Asian plants
- Buddhist Temples
- Asian food stores
- Thai/Lao restaurants
- Karaoke & Media

Entrance to Lao Temple-Burlington, IL
Two Thai language students interview the abbot of a local Lao temple – 20 min. from campus
Southeast Asia Collection Curator Hao Phan orients Thai language class.

Comment: Many students do not even know how to use a library, let alone a special collection.

Task:
Find a book, an article, a newspaper, or a dvd, with call numbers.
Thailand and Burma share a common lacquerware tradition

Comment: Students have a cross-border experience in knowing that Thailand and Burma, two Buddhist countries, share many cultural traditions, the art and craft of lacquerware being just one.
Thai language students listen to lecture
by Art History Professor, Dr. Catherine Raymond

In preparation, they are given guide questions they will need to find answers to as they explore the museum exhibit.
Exhibits:

Burmese Body Tattooing

Gold covered bamboo text pages

Note black design of tattooed legs and waist of male.
Visit to a Thai garden within walking distance from campus

Task: Identify Thai herbs and other plants

- Kaffir lime
- Thai basil
- Yard-long beans
- Jasmine
- Lemon grass
- Chili peppers
Food

Garden lunch with Thai FLTA (Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant)

Task:
Students learn to make a Spicy Green Papaya Salad -Som Tam- from garden chili peppers, yard-long beans, Lao tomatoes, and store-bought green papaya.
Glass noodles with beef and veggies
Bananas in coconut crème

Task:
Students read recipes in class; cook them at home; share photos and pictures on Face Book.
Thai class lunches at the Thai Pavilion restaurant in downtown De Kalb
Finis