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Lorraine A. Strasheim 1930 -1993

Lorraine A. Strasheim died early this year while still at the height of her creative abilities. For teachers throughout the country she had been a source of inspiration and knowledge about foreign language teaching methodology. She had been in great demand as keynote speaker and workshop leader at state, regional, and national conferences, where her incisive comments and quick wit earned her the reputation of a talented and inspiring communicator. Her commitment and pragmatic approach to the needs of classroom foreign language teachers, led to the development of one of the country's most sought-after state curriculum guides in foreign language teaching. As an early advocate for the infusion of culture into all aspects of language teaching, she took seriously her responsibility to create materials through which teachers could actualize this goal. An advocate of goal-driven curricula, Lorraine's realistic insights stemmed from her first hand knowledge of teachers' concerns, classrooms and school systems. Many of Lorraine's innovative ideas have become part of the accepted professional body of knowledge which will continue to guide classroom teachers and foreign language educators.

Born February 5, 1930 in Lincoln, Nebraska, Lorraine Strasheim received her B.S. in Education from the University of Nebraska in 1951 and a MAT in Russian at Indiana University in 1964. She continued graduate studies at the University of Nebraska, University of Minnesota and the American Academy in Rome. She was inducted in Pi Lambda Theta (education honorary for women), and was awarded a University of Nebraska Regents Scholarship. In the summer of 1958 Lorraine received a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the American Academy in Rome and Vergilian School in Cumae. Early in her career, Lorraine taught in the Nebraska and Kansas high schools as an instructor in Latin, German, and Russian. She came to Indiana University in 1965 as Director of the Indiana Language Program and served as a consultant and critic teacher at University High School. In 1968 she became the Coordinator for School Foreign Languages at Indiana University.

Lorraine Strasheim's professional memberships are a testimony to her wide-ranging abilities and commitments. She served on the board of directors of the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association (IFLTA) and was a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Association of Teachers of German, American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages, the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, and the American Classical League.

In recent years, Lorraine shied away from awards, stating that the highest honor had been bestowed upon her when those who counted most, the foreign language teachers of the United States, who had directly voted her to the presidency of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in 1978. There were other awards from numerous state and regional teacher associations for distinguished service and leadership which she quietly prized. As one of the charter members of ACTFL and the

Central States Conference on Foreign Language Teaching, she was a guiding force in shaping the course of the foreign language teaching profession.

She was highly esteemed by her colleges nationally both for her scholarly and in-service contributions. She published many articles and served as editor of several professional publications including the 1992 Report of the Central States Conference on Foreign Language Teaching: Focus on the Foreign Language Learner: Priorities and Strategies. She co-chaired a Taskforce of Modern Language Teachers while serving on the Indiana Department of Education's State Foreign Language Advisory Committee and was principal editor of A Guide to Proficiency-Based Instruction in Modern Foreign Languages for Indiana Schools. She also developed materials to implement this curriculum guide. Lorraine was currently working on a curriculum assessment project entitled An Initiative to Maintain, Improve, and Support Foreign Language Education in Indiana: Through the development of curriculum, the planning of instruction and the designing of assessment. Fittingly, she was in the midst of planning for a national conference with The American Forum for Global Education when she passed away.

Lorraine was admired by her colleagues for her dynamism and abilities as a teacher and teacher educator at Indiana University where she taught several classes in languages and methods of foreign language teaching. International visitors, book authors and students alike sought her out for advice and guidance on how to implement theory in proficiency-oriented teaching applications. Despite her busy schedule, she was fond of saying that her door was always open for students and that she had coffee and Kleenex available for those wanting to confide in her. Her penchant for telling stories and anecdotes was her trademark. Always candid and forthright, Lorraine had a remarkable ability to hone in on paradoxes inherent in methodology and theory while coming to the defense of teachers and professional standards.

Lorraine will be sadly missed by her colleagues and students alike. She was a tireless and articulate champion of the cause of the foreign language educators as she was frequently called upon by governmental policy-makers such as two state governors, Senator Paul Simon and federal commissions to discuss the role of foreign languages in US schools and the global economy. It is a great loss to the profession that she was unable to complete the many projects in which she was engaged. Yet, she never forgot the classroom teacher. She will always be respected for her honesty and deep concern for the practitioners whose job it is to implement ideas emerging from theory. Her input was always valuable, her sense of humor keen, and her warm-hearted helpfulness appreciated by those who worked with her.