

COMPUSERVE'S FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION FORUM (FLEFO)

Reviewed by Read Gilgen

As many of you may know, I'm firmly committed to the age of electronic communications. From Email to bulletin boards, I find it fascinating how much information is available just by using our computers and our telephones.

Recently I became aware of the Foreign Language Forum on CompuServe. The latter is a commercial dial-up service that costs approximately \$12.00 per hour of connect time. With a little practice, and/or with the aid of programs such as TapCIS which allow you to automate much of your connect time, you can glean a great deal of information without spending very much money.

Why should we be interested in this kind of service? Certainly we can personally benefit from an exchange with other foreign language professionals. But we can also provide a useful service and encouragement to our students who sometimes wonder if there really are any jobs for foreign language majors. Thus we can use technology to help promote the study of and interest in foreign languages.

The Forum Administrators are Bette and Jerry Ervin, who both hold Ph.D's in Foreign Language Education from The Ohio State University. Their languages are French, Spanish, German and Russian, and their professional interests include: teacher training, adult learners of foreign languages, inter-cultural communication. Jerry is an Associate Professor of Russian at The Ohio

State University and Bette is an Associate Professor of Spanish and ESL at Ohio Dominican College. The PPN (CompuServe ID number) for the Ervins is: 76703,2063.

The Assistant Forum Administrator is Doug Lacey (PPN: 70010,557). Doug holds a Ph.D. in Classics from Berkeley and is currently an Associate Professor of Classics at The Ohio State University. His interests include the modern languages (specifically French, German, and Italian) as well, literature, linguistics, and foreign language instruction. His primary role is to ensure that the proper balance is struck between the "developing" (i.e., modern) languages and the "established" (e.g., Latin and Classical Greek) languages.

The following description of the forum's purposes and procedures comes from the FLEFO forum itself:

"The purpose of the Foreign Language Education Forum is to provide a network of information and communication for all those with an interest (professional or otherwise) in foreign languages and literatures, linguistics, international issues, and cultural exchange. The membership to this forum is not restricted; all are welcome to share in this network, in which no language is foreign and no one is a stranger."

Joining the forum is easy, and contains no special charges. Those joining are asked to provide information for a membership directory, including specific FL interests, in order to facilitate members finding others with like interests.

The following is from a recent opening log on sequence, which illustrates the type of information available on a regular basis:

Reviews

October 15, 1990

Several new uploads and updates in our Libraries might be of interest to FLEFOlks: in Lib 15 FORLAN.SF5 now joins FORLAN.SF4 (#'s 1-3 of this series are in Lib 0). In Lib 5 a major addition has been made to SOVIET.COM, which deals with e-mail to and from the USSR. And in Lib 14, FORLAN.JOB is starting to catch on, with several new job announcements in the academic sector posted in the past week.

Thanks for your continued interest in FLEFO. Remember, all new uploads go into Lib 15, and we're always interested in new uploads.

—Doug & Jerry, SYSOPs, FLEFO

FORLAN.JOB 10-Oct-90 11036 29

Keywords: JOBS OPENINGS VACANCIES LISTINGS JOBLIST FORLAN.JOB

Information on foreign language (including ESL) vacancies in teaching, translating, interpreting, business, etc. Sections for standing as well as for current postings.

INDEX.14 15-Feb-88(09-Oct-90) 1630 370

Keywords: JOBS CAREERS INDEX FILES DL14

Index of files, with one-line descriptions, for Data Library 14. Updated monthly.

ASSOC.LST 25-Aug-90 10417 32

Keywords: ASSOC.LST ASSOCIATIONS PROFESSIONAL_ASSOCIATIONS ADDRESSES

List of over a hundred foreign language professional associations concerned with teaching, translating, interpreting. Good source of information on membership, careers, what's happening in your state, etc.

GOVERN.JOB 07-Jan-90 7369 99

Keywords: GOVERNMENT JOB PROFESSION PERSONNEL ADDRESSES CONTACTS TELEPHONE

A list of dozens of US Government and government-affiliated agencies (with addresses and telephone numbers) that hire language-qualified personnel.

LANG.ADD 04-Jan-90 3755 103

Keywords: JOBS EMPLOYERS INFORMATION TRANSLATORS INTERPRETERS ADDRESSES

A list of addresses of information sources and/or employers of language-skilled personnel.

There are several conferences (special interest sections) on FLEFO, where one can openly exchange messages, questions, answers, discussion, and computer programs. Among the conferences offered in the FLEFO forum are:

- 0 Potpourri/Polyglot
- 1 Spanish/Portuguese
- 2 French
- 3 German/Germanic
- 4 Latin/Greek
- 5 Slavic/E. European
- 6 ESL/Bilingual Ed
- 7 East Asian
- 8 Esperanto
- 9 Others
- 11 Translators
- 14 Jobs/Careers
- 15 New Uploads
- 16 Using the Forum

For more information on CompuServe, write: CompuServe Incorporated, PO Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220; or call toll-free 1-800-848-8990.

In summary, I must say that I was impressed with the information available and the potential this forum offers. It deserves a look, and if you like what you see, join in on a regular basis.