A session of the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ICTFL) October 1995 conference dealing with Internet resources for second language teachers is summarized, and in extension of that information, World Wide Web resources for language teachers are enumerated. In the conference session seven types of Internet resource are described: news groups (topical bulletin boards); electronic mail; Internet relay chat (online conversation); TelNet (a service allowing the user to connect with any other computers on the Internet); file transfer protocol; gophers (Menu-based indexes to Internet resources); and the World Wide Web, with its use of browser programs. A source for further information about Internet use workshops is included. The list of Web sites that give language teachers access to language-related Web resources includes descriptions and addresses for 14 general Web-search sites, 29 general language-related sites (most related to specific college or university programs), and 8 sites of general interest to teachers. (MSE)
Resources for the Internet
Applications for Foreign Language Teachers
Resources for the Internet

Applications for Foreign Language Teachers

By MICHAEL D. FINNEMANN
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At the I.C.T.F.L. Fall Conference in October, Mark Davies continued his campaign to inform Illinois foreign language educators about the Internet and the types of resources it makes available. Dr. Davies, an assistant professor of Hispanic linguistics at Illinois State University, presented a session titled “Exploring Foreign Language Resources on the Internet.”

Internet is a collection of several different types of resources accessible over telephone lines via modem. These resources include News Groups, E-mail, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), TelNet, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Gophers, and World Wide Web (WWW). Each resource requires a different type of program for access and use. Certain parts of Internet are doubling about every four months in number of users and amount of available information.

No one manages the Internet, which, unlike U.S.-based services such as Compuserve and America Online, puts the user into contact with users around the globe. Users, however, must gain access by subscribing to an Internet service provider for a fee. Subscribers receive all posted messages on a listserv. They can ask questions, share information, and generate group-wide discussions. Mark Davies emphasized that listserv permits teachers to escape the confines of their particular schools or districts to communicate with other interested professionals. FLTEACH is one well-established listserv for foreign language teachers. Subscription is easy, usually amounting to a one-line E-mail message to the listserv address.

2. E-mail allows the user to address a message specifically to another user anywhere in the world. An obvious pedagogical use of E-mail is penpals. Users can subscribe to a wide assortment of organized topical discussion groups (listservs) that communicate via E-mail. Subscribers receive all posted messages on a listserv. The user can log-on to the host computer and pay for the software later. It is possible to search for specific software by means of a program called ARCHIE.

3. Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is an online conversation via the computer keyboard. According to Mark Davies, there are 400-500 channels open at any one time. Special software is required to participate. It is possible for a user to set up a private channel at a specified time to interact with other interested parties. Screen conversation can be confusing because messages are sent and responses from various individuals appear in the order transmitted. “This [the IRC channels] is where 90% of the garbage on the Internet is found,” says Dr. Davies. He emphasized, however, that the media have unfairly sensationalized the content of the Internet in general.

4. TelNet is a service that allows the user to connect with any other computers on the Internet. Through TelNet a university library catalogue can be consulted, for example. TelNet access often requires permission and an access code. One interesting development on TelNet is the FL MOO (Multiple-User Object Oriented). Based on the game Dungeons and Dragons, registered players create a character linked to a screen object and enter a virtual world composed of various places called “rooms.” The character-objects can communicate with each other, move together, and, in game versions, overcome obstacles. A number of foreign-language MOOS have appeared which emphasize conversational interaction.

5. File Transfer Protocol (FTP) enables the user to download software and files (text or graphic) from any computer on the Internet. In most cases the user can log-on to the host computer as “anonymous.” There is a large amount of “shareware” available via FTP. Shareware is software that is available free on a trial basis. The adopting user registers and pays for the software later. It is possible to search for specific software by means of a program called ARCHIE.

6. Gophers are menu-based indexes to Internet resources. Since no one runs the Internet, no one was organizing access to the resources until about three years ago when the University of Minnesota—hence the name “gopher”—began to develop a searchable menu. Since then other gophers have appeared.

7. World Wide Web (WWW), the most recent development on the Internet, began to emerge about two years ago. The Web is a redundantly-linked web of “home pages” or “sites” created by private individuals or organizations. A site contains any information the individual creator wishes to make available to other Web users, including graphics, sound, and video. Site developers can link their pages to other pages of interest producing a "web" of links that lets other users eventually get anywhere by multiple routes. This linking is what allows the user to "surf" the Web.

newsgroups, for example) are of interest to foreign language teachers, according to Dr. Davies. Every country of the world has newsgroups. A substantial number of the messages, which stay posted for about three days, are in the language of the country, which affords both reading and writing practice. Many country-based newsgroups produce news releases for the day, a source of authentic reading texts.

1. Newsgroups are giant topical bulletin boards where users post and respond to messages. There are currently about 4,000 newsgroups featuring just about any topic. Of these, about 100 culture
The Web is accessed by means of a program called a "browser," one of the best-known Web-browsers is Netscape. The browser gives the user access to various menu-driven search programs called "search engines." One very popular and comprehensive search engine of use to foreign language teachers is "Yahoo," which allows search by subject matter, as well as geographically.

Two other common features of browsers are: 1) the ability to tag favorite sites (or place "bookmarks") in order to return at a later session, 2) logging a history of sites visited during a session so that the user can page forward or backward through the sites visited. The major online service is that Web gives language teachers access to many foreign news sources in the target language. Mark Davies suggested. The German news magazine Der Spiegel, for example, can be read on-line at its Web site. Pathfinder is a program giving users on-line access to a number of U.S. magazines. Deutsche Welle offers extended audio segments over the Web. In the not-too-distant future, real-time conversation over the Web will be possible, according to Dr. Davies.

Mark Davies conducted eleven introductory Internet workshops in 1995 at Illinois State University, as well as three follow-up workshops in October, November, and December, all sponsored by I.C.T.F.L. Illinois Council will sponsor additional Internet workshops on May 4 and 11, 1996. Participants receive a disk with all the necessary software for accessing the Internet. ISU has also developed a "bookmark" file for foreign language teachers—that is, a compendium of useful "sites" in a software program that links the user directly to the site. Mark Davies informed participants that the Illinois State Board of Education provides a free Internet connection for K-12 teachers. Teachers must write to the Board requesting the connection and will receive a password and a 1-800 number.

Web Resources for Foreign Language Teachers

Compiled for Accents by Michael D. Finnemann

Mark Davies's introduction to the Internet at the I.C.T.F.L. Fall Conference and a new computer have given me an impetus and the wherewithal to attack the World Wide Web (WWW) in earnest. My first project has been to pull together a list of useful Web resources from the point of view of a foreign language teacher.

I want to share a list of some of the sites that I think give language teachers comprehensive access to language-related resources on the Web. These sites are not language specific, but will serve language teachers as starting points for finding language-specific sites of interest to them. Although I focus primarily on the Web, there are a number of references to information available via other Internet resources.

To get started, you have to be connected to the Internet through your school, the Illinois State Board of Education, "Prodigy," "America Online," or some other private Internet provider. Further, you have to have access to the World Wide Web via a software program called a "driver"—for example, Netscape or Mosaic. The Web driver will allow you to access any site on the Web by typing a URL, a Universal Resource Locator, which is a fancy name for an "address." Web URLs generally take the following form: http://[specific site address]. Be careful to type a URL exactly as listed because some of them are sensitive to the upper or lower case of characters.

Although this list aims to give language teachers comprehensive access to Web resources, the list itself is by no means comprehensive. I have grouped the sites into three categories: 1) general Web-search sites, such as web browsers and indexes to content of the Web, 2) general language sites of interest to all foreign language teachers, and 3) a few sites of interest to teachers in general. Within each category, the list is numbered and basically alphabetical.

General Web-Search Sites

The general search sites are major indexes to Internet/Web information. Sometimes called "search engines," they take a number of forms: 1) some search all Internet resources (Telnet, FTP, gophers, newsgroups, mailing lists, etc.), some only search the Web; 2) some provide searchable category listings, others simply allow the user to type in search terms; 3) some are manually maintained, some are automatically updated by computer programs called "robots" or "web crawlers"; and 4) some are selective and offer ratings, while others list everything. These sites generally "link" to each other—that is, they include each other as menu choices. Here are a few I have checked out:

1. EINet Galaxy: http://galaxy.einet.net/

A guide to worldwide information and services. It permits search by keywords (WebSearch) and also has a subject tree with categories and subcategories. The subcategory "World Communities" gives a searchable list of regions and countries and a lot more. The subcategories "Travel" and "Education" will be of interest to language teachers. Among other things, the latter gives on-line access to ERIC resources and has a subcategory on "K-12 curriculum-instruction." The item "Other Searchable Reference Materials and Directories" provides links to a large number of general indices such as Yahoo and WebCrawler, Whole Internet Catalogue, etc.

2. GNN Global Network Navigator:

http://www.ora.com/gnn/GNNhome.html

Features general access to the Internet via the Whole Internet Catalogue (2a): http://ncarnet.gnn.com/gnn/wic/index.html, which is based on Yahoo and WebCrawler. Of particular interest to foreign language teachers is the GNN Travel Center (2b): http://ncarnet.gnn.com/me/a/travel/index.html.

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3. Infoseek: http://www2.infoseek.com/
   A commercial site, but it offers a comprehensive WWW search engine. You can type your search item in plain English. There is no content index, but clicking on “Cool sites” brings up a large menu of other well-recognized search tools, such as Virtual Tourist and CityNet. The Infoseek page also features information and support for people who want to create and advertise their own personal Web page.

4. The Lycos Home Page: http://www.lycos.com/
   The Lycos index is built by a robot. It is claimed that Lycos acquires 5,000 documents per day and has so far indexed about 91% of the Web. You type in search terms and Lycos will scour the Web by document title, headings, links to other sites, and coded keywords located in the documents.

5. The McKinley Internet Directory: http://www.mckinley.com/
   The McKinley directory is a meta-index giving access not only to the Web, but to other Internet resources. The resources are rated by an editorial team. You can search text or browse categories. If you do the latter, the most productive menu paths are 1) Education → Language Acquisition and 2) Humanities/Social Sciences → Languages.

6. Mosaic: http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/
   Mosaic, developed by the National Center for SuperComputing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois-Urbana Supercomputing Center, is a meta-index of the various resource directories and indices available on the Internet. It has no subject categories to browse but does link to subject category trees at several universities.

   Netscape, some say, is the most popular Web browser. It offers both search by terms and an index of categories to peruse.

   WebCrawler, another robot that collects documents from the Web, searches document titles and content. It permits flexible search with key words, and you can set the number of items of “hits” you want returned. There is no subject index to browse but its “Top 25” category links you directly to most of the general search tools listed here and many more.

   Yahoo, based at Stanford University, probably gives you all the access to Web resources you will ever need. It is one of the oldest, largest, and most useful indexes to the Web. It is an edited directory, not all sites are accepted. You can search by terms or by browsing the hierarchical subject index. The most productive subject index paths for language teachers are 1) Society and Culture → Cultures, 2) Regional → Countries, and 3) Education → Languages.

10. W3 Search Engines: http://euwww.w3.org/index.html
   A topically-organized list of search engines covering a wide variety of subjects. W3 Catalog, a searchable catalog of WWW resources at CUI Geneva. Submit buttons for various catalogues.

11. Virtual Tourist: http://wingsbuffalo.edu/world/
   Presented by SUNY Buffalo, this site features a clickable map-based interface to almost the same information as the World Wide Web Consortium (#12 below), which is a geographical directory of WWW servers in the world. Virtual Tourist does not itself contain information about countries, states, and regions.

   A megalist of registered WWW servers organized alphabetically by continent, country, and U.S. state.

13. Virtual Tourist II: http://wingsbuffalo.edu/world/vt2
   This is a geographical map-based interface with CityNet (#14 below). Select region from clickable map.

   CityNet provides quick access to information on about 100 countries and 1,100 world cities. Categories include travel, entertainment, local business, government, and community services. There are pointers to world maps, city- and country-specific WWW pages, etc.

General Language Sites

This is a collection of non-language-specific sites of particular interest to foreign language teachers. It is basically composed of sites representing language organizations, language pedagogy, university-based foreign language centers, foreign language department home pages, etc.

1. ACTFL HOME PAGE: http://www.infi.net/~actfl/
   Briefly-stated information about proficiency-based instruction, oral proficiency testing, annual meeting, publication, professional development programs, national standards, membership, special interest groups, related organizations of interest. ACTFL has not yet added links to Internet resources for foreign language teachers.

   This site offers an “Index of Languages Taught at CMU” with a fair number of links to Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish.

   CEILIA (The Computer Enhanced Language Instruction Archives) appears to be the main index to non-Web Internet resources for foreign language instruction. It is indexed by language with the following categories: Chinese, English, Esperanto, French (Francais), German (Deutsch), Italian

5. EUROPEAN UNION HOMEPAGE: http://www.chemielu-berlin.de/adressen/eu.htm
   This is the home page of the (former) European Common Market. It offers individual homepages for each of the member-nations. Among the other menu choices are "European (European Forum)," "HAEC (Historical Archives of the European Communities)," "OneEurope Magazine," "European Home Page," "European Country Maps," "EURO-LINK (A Pan-European Index)," "World Home Page," and "Europe in the Internet."

   FLTEACH is a page devoted to language teaching methodology. It combines three Internet resources: a Web page, the FLTEACH@UBVM LISTSERV (an E-mail discussion group), and the FLTEACH Gopher located at SUNY Cortland.

   Updated daily, this site has pointers to software, literary texts, and other useful WWW sites. It features a "Personal language tutor for the Mac," a "fully functional and stand-alone authoring system and tutoring application for the Mac which allows students and teachers to design and implement personalized activities for virtually any language."

8. Foreign Language Resources on the Web: http://www.itp.berkeley.edu/~home/HumanResources.html
   A quality index including only the best of the foreign language ("foreign" for native speakers of English) Web sites that exist. It is categorized by language. A special feature is an authoritative compendium of information on general and foreign language MOOS, MUDS and MUSHES.


   World Wide Web Virtual Library: Languages: http://www.willamette.edu/~tjones/language/WWW_Virtual_Library_Languages.html

   *The Boss.* As you can see, it goes by two names. A link to this site is featured on just about every language-oriented page on the Web. Its one-stop shopping for foreign language professionals featuring a comprehensive: index to information on most of the world's languages. The language resources range from dictionaries to language tutorials to spoken samples of languages. The quick access categories include "Job announcements," "Multilingual resources," "Books/literature archives," "Linguistics labs and institutions on the Net," "Linguistics Resources," "Commercial Resources," and an A-Z alphabet to target specific languages. So much information makes it a bit cumbersome; but the author, Tyler Jones, is updating the search mechanism.

10. Internet Resources for Foreign Language Teachers: http://www.cltl.hull.ac.uk/langsite.htm
   An excellent resource. Main categories are "New links," "Email discussion lists and newsgroups," "Language-related newsgroups and discussion lists," "Fonts for languages and phonetics," "General Sites devoted to languages and linguistics in general," "Multilingual language sites" devoted to and/or written in the following languages: Eastern European Languages, French. Gaelic, German. Italian, Hispanic Languages, Languages of the Low Countries. Oriental Languages, Scandinavian Languages; "Products Commerical sites selling language products"; "TEFL/TEL;" "Translation and interpreting."

11. The Language Acquisition Center - University of Texas at Arlington: http://www.langlab.utexas.edu/
   Menu choices provide links to sites for Austria, Brazil/ Portugal, France, Germany, Japan/Asia, Mexico/Span/Latin America, and Europe. It features, among many other things, a page of links to "Foreign Press" sites. This site also gives direct access to the major World Wide Web search engines—that is, Yahoo, Lycos, WebCrawler, and others.

12. Language Links: http://www.marshall.edu/~jmullens/lang.html
   This is a general listing of foreign language and language arts sites including Chinese. Classics, English language and literature, Language arts (language arts news groups. K-12 curriculum discussion, writing support), French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish.

13. LINGUA@NET: http://ncet.csv.warwick.ac.uk/WWW/randd/ML/linguanc1/index.html
   UK's one-stop shopping for language teaching resources with pointers to individual languages, language courses materials and careers, resources for teachers and trainers, using technology for language learning, general (CD-ROM software etc.), the Internet, methodology-management-teaching materials, language and culture of the UK, products-support, principal UK Web sites, sites around the world, and NCET Directory of Web sites. It also features a service called "Ask a linguist," which handles questions about languages and linguistics and language teaching.

   An outstanding resource for foreign language teachers. Just substitute the string "lang-Japanese.html" (or any other language) for the string "teachers.html" in the URL above and you have a very useful access page to Web resources for that language.

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15. Swarthmore College Language Lab on the Web:
http://www.english.swarthmore.edu/language/
Its categories include Chinese, French, German, Japanese,
Russian, Spanish, Newspapers and Magazines, Satellite
Broadcast Information, and Links to Other Language Re-
sources. It offers an especially large number of links for
German.

16. Skidmore College Resources For Foreign Languages:
http://scott.skidmore.edu/dept/fll.html
You can click on maps to reach a wide selection of resources
listed by country or continent. Featured languages are Chi-
inese, German, French, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Span-
ish.

17. Southern Methodist University Foreign Language Learning
Center:
http://fllc.smu.edu/
Access information by clicking on one of eleven areas—that
is, France and Francophone, Spain, Mexico, India, Latin
America, Asia, Germany/Austria, Russia/Eastern Europe,
Italy, Denmark, and Other interesting sites.

18. University of Arkansas Language Learning Center:
http://www.uark.edu/depts/laninfo
Lots of useful information from other web sources across the
globe. Select the language you are interested in and then
peruse through the lists available on the network, which
includes Arabic, Chinese, Classics, French, German, Italian,
Japanese, Russian, and Spanish. The menu choice “Other
Neat Information” includes ACTFL Home Page, Agora,
Human Languages, GNN Travel Service, Low cost travel,
intercultural E-mail, Technology as an aid to teaching,
WWW resources for the Humanities, etc.

19. University of Cincinnati College of Arts & Sciences
Language Laboratory:
http://ucunix.xan.uc.edu/~wilsonc/language.html
This site offers a very large number of links to Spanish,
French, German, as well as a substantial number of links to
Russian and Italian, and a few links to Hebrew and Chinese.
A useful feature is the large number of pointers to Language
Center sites, many of which are listed in this article.

20. University of Oklahoma (foreign-language link page):
http://www.tcom.ohiou.edu/OU_Language/teachers.html
An essential stop for foreign language teachers because of its
pedagogical emphasis. It offers the following categories of
links: language-related web sites, general resources for teach-
ers of any language, testing resources, technology and teach-
ing, Web development resources for making Web pages,
software resources and reviews, linguistics for language
teachers and employment resources for language teachers.
This is in addition to a series of language-specific resource
categories featuring English, French, German, Indonesian,
Italian, and Spanish.

21. University of Oregon Language Hotlists:
http://babel.uoregon.edu/yamada/guides.html
This is the home of the famous Yamada WWW Language
Guides, yet another one-stop Web shopping site. You can
browse languages geographically and by family. The guides
contain information about 103 languages as well as an
abundant number of pointers to other WWW sites. Yamada
has four special features of interest: 1) links to sites of
interest to more than one language, 2) an annotated list of
language-related news-groups (an E-mail Internet resource),
3) a Font Archive with 112 fonts for 40 languages which can
be downloaded, and 4) an Interactive Language Resource
Guide which provides information necessary for designing
interactive language teaching units on the Web.

22. University of Sussex Language Centre:
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lang/welcome.html
Its informational categories includes EFL, French, Spanish,
German, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Less Com-
monly Taught Languages, General Language Links, and
Other Useful Internet resources. A special feature of the
Sussex site is an archive of computer-aided language learn-
ing software for DOS and Windows users, most of which is
shareware and is downloadable. Shareware is software that
you use now on a trial basis and pay for later, if you adopt it.
The URL for the The Virtual Call Library is:


24. University of Toledo Foreign Language WWW Site:
http://131.183.82.151/home.html
Features a page of pointers to interesting Foreign Language
Home Pages. You can click on the flag related to one of the
following categories: Classics, French, German, Japanese,
Russian, Spanish, and Global.

25. University of Washington: Foreign Languages:
http://www.speakeasy.org/~dbrick/Hot/foreign.html
The table of contents includes any language you can think of.
There are many pointers for each of the commonly taught
languages. Its category of “General Foreign stuff” includes
items such as on-line translation programs, CIA World
Factbooks, European databanks, the European Home Page,
Foreign Languages for Travellers (with sounds), Human
Languages Home Page, IECC (Intercultural E-Mail Class-
room Connections), Usenet News Groups (pages of gener-
ally foreign “cultural” discussion groups), Transword Cross-
word Puzzles, Voice of America Internet Audio, World-
Wide Web Servers by Geographic Location, and Yale Uni-
versity Language Consortium Gopher, to name a few.

26. The University of Wisconsin - Green Bay Language Page:
http://gbvaxa.uwgb.edu/fierank/language.html
This site features links to French, German, and Spanish sites
with a section for other languages. You can also access all the
major Internet search tools from this page.

27. Virginia Commonwealth University Foreign Languages:
http://www.fln.vcu.edu

The site offers useful pointers to various languages. Its distinctive feature is access to a compendium of information on creating Web Forms to make home sites "interactive"—that is, present language information, store student input, give feedback, etc.


This page features full-on-text of the journal Modern Language Notes as well as links to many of the sites listed in here. Some of the links we have not listed are Summer Institute of Linguistics (a comprehensive catalog of languages and ethnic groups with many links to additional language and linguistics resources), Netlink Language and Literature Resources, Language articles from the Wiretap gopher.listservs (E-mail discussion groups) about languages, Dictionary Resources for Various Languages. Pdxd's Online Writing Lab, and links to French, German, and Spanish sites.


Provides travel guide information to Austria, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and the British Virgin Islands, as well as links to other information at each language site. The categories for Spain, for example, include general information, city/region information, travelogues, transportation, language/literature/culture, general tips for tourists. European Union Homepage, GNN travel guides. Yahoo hotlists for region, City Net, and Virtual tourist.

Sites of General Interest to Teachers

1. ERIC On-Line: http://ericir.syr.edu/

Maintained by Syracuse University, teachers have on-line access to the ERIC database of article abstracts (ERIC Documents and CIJE, the Cumulative Index to Journals in Education), as well as other information provided by the ERIC Clearing House such as ERIC's Lesson Plans, ERIC The Discovery Learning Community, Civnet, Quality Education Data, Newton's Apple, AskERIC Toolbox, AskERIC Honors Best of the Net Award, and Top 5% of all Web sites.


WEB66 maintains the Internet's oldest and most comprehensive list of K-12 WWW servers. It uses the romantic U.S. Route 66 as a metaphor. For one thing it includes an "International Registry of K-12 Schools on the Web." The developers say, "we see the World Wide Web as a catalyst that will integrate the Internet into K-12 school curricula. The WEB66 project is designed to facilitate the introduction of this technology into K-12 schools." The stated goals of this project are: 1) to help K-12 educators learn how to set up their own Internet servers, 2) to link K-12 WWW servers and the educators and students at those schools, and 3) to help K-12 educators find and use K-12-appropriate resources on the WWW.


If you want to get an idea of what one particular school is doing with the World Wide Web, check out this site. It is a tri-lingual student magazine soliciting contributions from all over the world.


St. Olaf College provides IECC mailing lists as "a free service to help teachers and classes link with partners in other countries and cultures for E-mail classroom pen-pal and project exchanges." There are several lists with different objectives. Participants communicate via E-mail, not the Web. The Web site, however, provides subscription information.

5. Teaching with the Web / Laura Rosen: http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/lss/lang/teach.html

An article with suggestions for using the Web to teach foreign language. It has links to other sites.


A subject listing of sites useful for student activities on the Web.

7. Internet Foreign Language Study Workshops: http://www.uncg.edu/Aix1purc/publications/Internet_Workshops.html

Primarily oriented to German, this site is a window to interesting pedagogical uses of the Web.


This site is the best source of information on starting your own Web page.

This list barely scratches the surface. Three times this amount of information was compiled but left out of the article. But it's a start. Happy surfing!

"Exploring the Internet" Hands-On Workshops for Teachers of Modern and Classical Languages May 4 and 11, 1996 Illinois State University Sponsored by I.C.T.F.L. Full Details and Registration Form, pages 38-39 Advance Registration Required
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