Over the past two decades, postsecondary foreign language programs have experienced a shift away from an emphasis on oral communication toward more text-based curricula and the development of students’ multiple literacies. This “literacy turn” prioritizes overlapping language modalities, interpretation and creation of multimodal texts of various genres, and linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions of learning. Numerous curricular and course-level models of multiliteracies curricula exist and empirical research documents the feasibility, linguistic outcomes, and perceptions of multiliteracies approaches (e.g., Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010; Maxim, 2002, 2006; Paesani, 2016, 2017; Warner & Michelson, 2018). Nonetheless, many language programs are slow to embrace the literacy turn, clinging instead to familiar curricular structures and pedagogical practices. In this talk, I explore the what, why, and how of the multiliteracies framework and identify implications for 21st century language programs and the faculty working within them. In addition to overviewing previous research, I discuss applications of the multiliteracies framework to organize curriculum and instruction at the University of Minnesota, as well as teachers’ understanding and use of multiliteracies principles in classroom materials and practices. I conclude by outlining future directions for supporting language faculty wishing to use the multiliteracies approach as a curricular and pedagogical framework.

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