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# NECTFL Review

**A Journal for K – 16+ Foreign Language Educators**



Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

# 68th Annual Northeast Conference



***Classroom Roots, Global Reach***

**February 10–12, 2022  
New York Hilton Midtown**



Christopher Gwin  
Conference Chair



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NECTFL is proud to announce that the NECTFL *Review* is now included in the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) of the U.S. Department of Education.

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## From the 2022 Conference Chair

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Dear World Language Education Colleagues,

Thank you for your commitment to the learners in your classrooms and programs across the Northeast region. The promise of better tomorrows sustains educators and motivates the learners to gain proficiency in languages. A second academic year during the global pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus has deepened the anxiety and uncertainty felt by many in the educational sphere, last year. But — you press on, driven to maintain quality and inclusivity in the world language classroom, pivoting in an instant to face all kinds of challenges that this new reality thrusts upon the world. Your level of dedication is profound, and I recognize and honor you for the impact this has on the learners and our communities.

Last year's virtual conference, *"Finding Your Voice, World Languages for Social Justice,"* offered a smorgasbord of professional growth opportunities and we had the chance, under Michael Bogdan's adroit leadership, to continue to grow despite the extraordinary challenges of the time. Let us continue this journey and embrace new possibilities for learning and teaching. The 2022 conference theme, *"Classroom Roots, Global Reach,"* seeks to build on the strength of the last several conferences. On the NECTFL board, we believe language learning is a lifelong journey. Educators strive to help learners see the value of the aspirational pursuit of multilingualism. A strong start in the classroom can lead to vast horizons of opportunities and a life of quality, pursuing knowledge and purpose in the global community. The conference is scaffolded around pre-conference workshops to offer more depth and focus on a theme, over one hundred one-hour sessions to inspire the next curricular innovation, presentations focused on the Mead Fellows as well as our tech-lab and research-focused opportunities for learning. The entire program is dedicated to your professional growth.

The conference is the signature event of NECTFL in each academic year, but we also offer various professional development opportunities across the year in virtual platforms. Each can connect us to each other through more enduring understandings of pedagogy and propel our programs forward. This learning is available to you thanks to the indefatigable leadership of John Carlino, the Executive Director and the entire NECTFL Board of Directors, each of whom brings unique wisdom and meaningful insights to the work. I am honored to have the chance to build intellectual capacity, inspired by their creativity and collegiality. I'd like to make special recognition of the NECTFL Review Editor, Bob Terry, for his sage intellect in guiding NECTFL forward through the continued publication of the journal and Materials Editor, Tom Conner, for his passionate dedication to sharing new materials reviews with our community.

I hope you find sustenance for the rest of this academic year, and I look forward to learning with you at the 2022 NECTFL Conference.

Christopher Gwin  
2022 Conference Chair



## *In Memoriam*



On Tuesday January 19, 2021, Gladys C. Lipton of Bethesda, MD passed away. Beloved wife of the late Robert Lipton, devoted mother of Judy Ackerman (Michael) and Nancy Carlson (Ted Miller), cherished grandmother of Lorrie, Jeremy, Seth and Rachel, and adored great-grandmother of five. Funeral services were private. Memorial and Shiva was observed on January 25, and Shiva on January 27. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, Commission on FLES\* of the American Association of Teachers of French, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, or Six Degree Singers. Arrangements were by Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home, Inc. under Jewish Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington Contract.





The Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages serves educators in all languages (including classical, less commonly taught, and ESL), at all levels from kindergarten through university, in both public and private settings. In existence since the late 1940s, NECTFL is the largest of five regional associations of its kind in the United States, representing educators from Maine to Virginia but exercising leadership nation-wide.

NECTFL has expanded its outreach, professional development and advocacy efforts through publications, workshops, research projects and other initiatives. Its prestige has been reflected in its singular ability to bring together the profession's most prestigious leaders for world-class and ground-breaking programs while sustaining an organizational culture that is interactive, welcoming, and responsive.

Through representation on its Board of Directors, through its Advisory Council, through conference offerings and refereed journal articles, NECTFL maintains a commitment to the individual foreign language teacher, to collaborative endeavors, to innovation and to inclusionary politics and policies.

#### **What We Do:**

**We serve world language teachers by**

- **listening to them**
- **representing their diverse views**
- **bringing them together**
- **nurturing their growth as newcomers and veterans treating them as caring friends and respected professionals**



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## NFMLTA SUPPORT GRANTS

As part of its outreach activities, the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (NFMLTA), the governing organization of the *Modern Language Journal* (MLJ), in cooperation with other professional organizations, particularly ACTFL and the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL), supports several award and grant opportunities. Please familiarize yourself with these opportunities and submit your applications and inquiries to the organizations and contact persons handling the competition.

If you have questions about the grants and/or the application process, please contact [nfmlta.director@gmail.com](mailto:nfmlta.director@gmail.com)

### **NFMLTA/MLJ Dissertation Writing Support Grants (\$2500)**

Instituted in 2013 by the NFMLTA and the MLJ, this grant supports graduate students in the fields of applied linguistics and language education at the dissertation writing stage. These grants can provide resources at any stage of dissertation writing, e.g., data gathering, data transcription, data analysis, or write-up of the findings.

### **NFMLTA/MLJ Conference Presentation [virtual or on-site] Support Grants for Foreign Language Professionals (including Graduate Students) (\$1000 limit)**

Instituted in 2017, this grant is intended to help defray the costs of conference attendance by foreign language professionals during an academic year. A maximum of 20 awards with a limit of \$1,000 of reimbursable expenses per recipient will be made. Earlier submissions are encouraged, as conference acceptances and cost information become available to applicants.

### **The NFMLTA/NCOLCTL Graduate Students Research Support Grants (\$2500)**

Instituted in 2014 by the NFMLTA and the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL), this grant supports graduate student research in the fields of applied linguistics and language education with small grants focused on the teaching and learning of less commonly taught languages (all languages except English, Spanish, French, and German). The grants provide resources at any stage of dissertation writing, e.g., data gathering, data transcription, data analysis, or write-up of the findings.

### **The NFMLTA/MLJ Learning and Teaching Priorities Grants**

The NFMLTA shall bestow one \$7000 conference panel grant or workshop organization and three \$1000 webinar grants to address learning and teaching priorities. While any topic will be considered, ideas related to improving second-language learning and teaching by introducing practical solutions to concrete problems.

Use the QR code to visit the NFMLTA website (<https://nfmlta.org/grants-and-awards/>) for more complete information and deadlines.





## What Happens When the PD Is Over? A Year Inside Teacher Classrooms

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Catherine Ritz, *Boston University*

### Abstract

*Although standards for world language education have brought forth a needed shift in instructional practices—moving from traditional to communicative, proficiency-based methods—research suggests that many teachers have yet to modify their practices. This study follows three teachers at the K-12 level who attended a summer professional development event, intending to implement proficiency-based practices when returning to their classrooms. Teachers were observed and interviewed throughout the course of the school year to examine their experience when attempting to implement the proficiency-based practices, and the factors that propelled them toward or discouraged them from implementing these practices. Results showed that concrete, surface-level practices were more easily implemented than those that required deeper understanding. School and program leadership emerged as an important factor in each teacher’s likelihood of experiencing success.*

### Key Words:

proficiency-based instruction, standards-based instruction, professional development

### Introduction

The paradigm shift in world language education has been widely discussed (e.g., Kaplan, 2016; Kissau & Adams, 2016; Moeller, 2018; Swanson & Mason, 2018). With the establishment of standards in world language education (Lafayette, 1996) and expanded

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research into second language acquisition beginning in the 1970s and 80s (Mitchell et al., 2019), world language teachers have been asked to adopt new methods and practices that better support the development of communication skills in the language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). While various methods have come and gone (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), contemporary approaches (VanPatten, 2014) ask teachers to adopt communicative/proficiency-based instruction to best reflect the national standards and support their learners' language development. ACTFL (2020a) has additionally outlined guiding principles for teaching that identify specific practices considered “core” and “high-leverage,” including the use of the target language by teachers and students, backward design planning, and integrating communicative tasks, to name a few. Communicative/proficiency-based instruction, however, has not been widely or universally integrated into teaching practices (Glisan, 2012; Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011).

While research has looked at ways in which the standards and communicative/proficiency-based instruction is or is not being implemented (Glisan, 2012; Troyan, 2012), there is a need to understand the experience of teachers who are attempting to shift their practice from more traditional, grammar-based approaches to communicative/proficiency-based instruction, as well as the contextual factors that may contribute to or undermine their success. This study follows three teachers at the K-12 level who attended a summer professional development event with the intent to implement communicative/proficiency-based practices when returning to their classrooms.

... there is a need to understand the experience of teachers who are attempting to shift their practice from more traditional, grammar-based approaches to communicative/proficiency-based instruction, as well as the contextual factors that may contribute to or undermine their success.

## Background

### Communicative/Proficiency-Based Instruction

The shift toward communicative world language teaching began in the 1980s (Omaggio Hadley, 1986) and was followed by the development of *National Standards in Foreign Language Education* in the 1990s (Lafayette, 1996), which were given the sub-title “a Catalyst for Reform.” Early on, researchers noted the “general confusion about, and even resistance to, reform in classrooms and programs” (Whitley, 1993). In a review of how the standards have impacted teacher practice, Glisan (2012) noted that “[t]eachers and administrators may be growing too confident that their programs are Standards-based when in fact all they have done is attach new labels to existing curricula and classroom practices” (p. 521). Indeed, a national survey of teacher programs and practices (Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011) found that only 36% of teachers use the target language for at least 75% of classroom time (p. 266), and other studies (Glisan, 2012) note that teachers believe they are developing Interpersonal activities for their students when there is in fact an “absence of oral interpersonal communication” in their classroom (p. 517). Forty years of reform have not resulted in the widespread adoption of communicative, proficiency-based methods by world language teachers (Glisan, 2012).

### Professional Development (PD) Event

The Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA) launched the MaFLA Proficiency Academy in 2015 with the goal of training its members in proficiency-based world language teaching methods. This PD event is a four-day summer training that includes a focus on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (2012); designing proficiency targets and using can-do statements for lesson and unit objectives--such as including “I can describe my family” as a lesson objective, modeled after the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements

## What Happens When the PD Is Over? A Year Inside Teacher Classrooms

(ACTFL, 2017)<sup>1</sup>—backward design unit and lesson planning; performance tasks; Integrated Performance Assessments (IPAs); assessment rubrics; and teaching for proficiency using the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning framework (Tell Project, 2019). Each afternoon, participants work in small groups to apply learning and prepare materials to use when they return to their classrooms in the following school year. In the five years that the event has been run (2015-2019), over 550 world language teachers and administrators have attended. The aim of the MaFLA Proficiency Academy has been to equip teachers to implement a shift in their practice, moving away from more traditional methods toward proficiency-based instruction.

Although this event is designed to reflect best practices in professional development (PD), including a clear content-focus, active learning on the part of participants, collective participation in which teachers work collaboratively to develop material for their own classes, and coherent goals in the focus and outcomes (Desimone & Garet, 2015), it is time-limited and therefore does not meet another important criterion: sustained duration, meaning that professional development is ongoing throughout the academic year. Nevertheless, research

... research has shown that professional development can have an impact on teacher learning, even if it occurs during a summer learning program ..., particularly when the focus is on explicitly developing subject-matter knowledge.

has shown that professional development can have an impact on teacher learning, even if it occurs during a summer learning program (Borko, 2004), particularly when the focus is on explicitly developing subject-matter knowledge. Professional development that holds a close “proximity to practice,” (Penuel et al., 2007, p. 928)—meaning it directly prepares teachers to implement new practices in their own classroom environment—is also shown to be effective. Ultimately, professional development must result in implementation of learning in the teacher’s own classroom. Changing teacher practices is a complex and multifaceted process that involves not only teacher knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (Martel & Bailey, 2016; Brown, 2017; Heyd-Metzuyanin, 2019), but also intensive work by teachers, financial and administrative support, and the existence of policies and structures within the teachers’ school (Boudah et al., 2001; Buczynski & Hansen, 2010).

### Conceptual Framework

Coburn (2003) argued that in order for innovations to be adopted or school reform to take place—in this case the reform of shifting from traditional to proficiency-based world language instruction—it is insufficient simply to look at the number of schools or programs that report adopting the reform.<sup>2</sup> Rather, to measure the true scale of innovation adoption, four “interrelated” qualitative dimensions must be considered: “depth, sustainability, spread, and shift in reform ownership” (Coburn, p. 4). Depth refers to a real and significant change in classroom practices and teacher beliefs. This can range from lack of adoption of new practices to “surface manifestations” of change to “deeper pedagogical principles” where the teacher has developed a deep understanding of and ability to implement the practice (Coburn, p. 4). Sustainability refers to long-term continuation of reforms, particularly when the initial supports put in place to implement the innovation have ended. Sustainability reflects a shift in school culture upon broad adoption of the reform, as well as “mechanisms” within the school structure that support implementation of the reform (Coburn, p. 6). Spread may initially be conceived of as the innovation or reform spreading beyond one

1. The “can-do” statements referenced throughout this article refer to teacher-made student learning outcomes developed for their own classes.

2. Coburn’s (2003) work focuses on implementing reform in the K-12 context.

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classroom or school, but in Coburn's conception, spread additionally includes spread of the innovation or reform *within* one classroom. When teachers adopt an innovation, they also adopt the underlying principles that drive its design, which may then be applied to other aspects of teaching. Spread may occur to other classrooms in a school, within the district, or be codified in school policies. An innovation or school reform may be initiated by "external actors" and be controlled by a "reformer;" shift in reform ownership occurs when those who implement the innovation (e.g., teachers, school leaders) take on its responsibility. This conception of innovation adoption encompassing depth, sustainability, spread, and shift in reform ownership provides a meaningful framework for measuring adoption of new practices in a more holistic way than simply numerically counting the number of schools that report adoption of the innovation.

### Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following questions:

1. After participating in a professional development (PD) event and returning to their own classrooms, how do teachers experience a school year in which they attempt to shift their teaching practices?
2. What types of proficiency-based instructional practices are challenging for world language teachers to implement?
3. What propels world language teachers toward or discourages them from implementing intended shifts in teaching practice over the course of a school year?

## Methods

### Participants

Teachers were selected as candidates for participation in this study after an initial screening survey. All teachers who had enrolled in the PD event for the first time (approximately 71 teachers) were sent a survey inviting them to participate and to determine their level of familiarity with the topics presented at this professional development event. Teachers of any modern world language who were attending this event for the first time were invited and considered for participation in the study. Twelve teachers responded to the initial screening survey. Some were screened out since they had already attended the event, and another was located in a different geographic region making it difficult for in-person observations on the part of the author. After the initial screening, four teachers were selected for participation, including one middle school French teacher, two high school Spanish teachers, and one high school Mandarin teacher. These teachers were then interviewed prior to attending the PD event. Permission to observe teachers in their schools was obtained over the summer for all but one teacher (one of the high school Spanish teachers) who was then removed from the study. The remaining three participants included (pseudonyms used for privacy) were

- Pat: A middle school French teacher in an urban school district
- Daniel: A high school Spanish teacher in a suburban school district
- Yiting: A high school Mandarin teacher in a suburban school district

Pat is in her seventh year of teaching middle school French in an urban school district near Boston, having taught science for 20 years before switching to language teaching. Acknowledging her "training was a little bit different than the person who majored in languages in college and kind of went that route kind of thing," Pat explains that her undergraduate degree was in environmental interpretation, which meant training to be a



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guide. She holds a master's degree and, despite the change in subject-matter, has always taught at the middle school, an "age level I'm very comfortable with and I enjoy." Pat's middle school serves grades 6, 7, and 8, and enrolls approximately 300 students. The student body is comprised of 57.9% high needs students, 31.8% economically disadvantaged students, 21.7% students with disabilities, and 58.9% non-white students of color (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2019). The world language program is overseen by a district world language director (K-12) who is responsible for evaluating the world language teachers. In Pat's school, there are only two world language teachers: she and a Spanish teacher. There is also a district world language instructional coach.

Daniel is a high school Spanish teacher who has taught for three years and is a self-described "nerd" who is "obsessed with this profession." He is beginning his first year in a new school district, which he applied for specifically because "they are one of the biggest people right now in the proficiency movement." He holds a master's degree and has a background in foreign language education. His previous school district was beginning to shift its practices toward teaching for proficiency but having "seen some of the stuff they've done" in his new district, he was motivated to switch schools. His new high school enrolls approximately 1,500 students in a suburb of Boston, comprised of 23.2% high needs students, 5.6% economically disadvantaged students, 16% students with disabilities, and 29.8% non-white students of color (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2019). In the high school, the world language program is led by a department head who is responsible for evaluating the 12 world language teachers. The program offers courses in French, Spanish, German, Mandarin Chinese, and Latin.

Yiting is a native of China who has been teaching Mandarin in her current high school part-time for seven years. Before teaching, Yiting had been a guidance intern in the school, intending to become a guidance counselor. It so happened that the school was looking for a Mandarin teacher and, "because I was the intern and they interviewed me and they thought it's a good fit," she was hired to teach Mandarin. Although it wasn't Yiting's original plan to be a language teacher, she feels it "really helped me to connect with students," which was her goal in working in education. The high school is a regional school serving two neighboring towns in the suburbs of Boston. The regional high school enrolls approximately 675 students, comprised of 18.1% high needs students, 4.6% economically disadvantaged students, 14.5% students with disabilities, and 17.7% non-white students of color (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2019). In the high school, the world language program is led by a department head who is responsible for evaluating the nine teachers. The program offers courses in French, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and Latin.

### Instruments & Procedures

#### *Teacher Interviews*

Each teacher was interviewed five times over the course of the year, for approximately 30-60 minutes each time. The first interview was conducted prior to attending the MaFLA Proficiency Academy. Interviews two, three, and four were each conducted immediately following a classroom observation, once in the fall, once in the winter, and once in the spring. The final interview was conducted at the end of the school year.

Interview guidelines were developed for each interview using a "semistructured life world interview" approach. "This kind of interview seeks to obtain descriptions of the interviewees' lived world" following "an interview guide that focuses on certain themes and that may include suggested questions" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 31-32). In the

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preliminary interview, the interview guidelines focused on discussing their background, teaching style, goals for attending the professional development event, and their vision for an ideal world language class. In interviews following classroom observations, the interview guidelines included asking teachers to reflect on the lesson they had just taught, discuss successes and challenges that teachers were experiencing as they attempted to implement new practices, as well as additional information on the world language program (such as program leadership, teacher evaluation, collaboration). The final interview guideline asked teachers to reflect on their growth over the course of the year, successes and challenges they faced, and their overall experience in attempting to implement new practices. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The researcher additionally recorded analytical memos after each interview to record observations and reflections in relation to the research questions.

**Teacher Observations.** The three teachers were observed in their own classroom for a full class period three times over the course of the school year: once in the fall, once in the winter, and once in the spring. Narratives of each observation were written during each observation and were then reviewed after the observation to ensure that no salient points were omitted. The narratives were written as objectively as possible and attempted to record significant details about the lesson. Particular attention was taken in the narratives to record language use by teacher and students, student learning outcomes and lesson structure, types of activities related to mode of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, or presentational), checks for understanding, and closure of lesson. While these areas of focus were intended to ensure that pertinent aspects of the lesson were recorded, the narrative guidelines were not overly prescriptive to capture the actual events in the classroom.

### *Data Analysis*

**Teacher Interviews.** First cycle coding involved a combination of attribute and initial coding. Attribute coding was used to note “essential information about the data and demographic characteristics” of the participants and their teaching context (Saldaña, 2016, p. 82). Attribute coding focused on background information about each teacher as well as significant features of their school and language program. Initial, or open, coding was used to begin data analysis and to look for emerging themes. Following guidelines for initial coding, any “proposed codes during this cycle [were] tentative and provisional” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 115).

Second cycle coding led to a categorization of the initial codes. Categories were then further analyzed by placing them within the four categories of Coburn’s (2003) framework for innovation adoption: depth, sustainability, spread, and shift in reform ownership.

**Teacher Observations.** Observations were coded by specific practice within three categories: Lesson Structure & Implementation (lesson objective, previewing agenda, checking for understanding, closing the lesson); Language Use (teacher target language use, teacher English use, student target language use); and Activity Type (interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational). These codes were determined prior to beginning the observations and were selected to reflect essential practices within the context of communicative/proficiency-based instruction. Codes were then further analyzed using magnitude coding, which Saldaña (2016) defines as adding a “subcode...to indicate its intensity, frequency, direction, presence, or evaluative content” (p. 86). Each code was assigned a sub-code of weak, developing, or strong, according to an evaluative determination regarding the practice.

Prior to assigning these sub-codes, a determination of *weak*, *developing*, and *strong* was determined for each code. When looking at lesson objectives, for example, lack of a

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lesson objective (either written or orally presented to the class) constituted a rating of weak. If the teacher had a lesson objective, but it was either only written on the board but not presented, or it was orally stated, but not written, this constituted a *developing* rating. If the lesson objective was both written and orally reviewed with students, this constituted a *strong* rating. When a practice was not present in the observation but should have been following standard practices in proficiency-based instruction, this was noted in the observation narrative and coded. One such example would be the lesson objective, which should be present in every lesson. However, if the practice was not present but was also not a required part of the lesson—such as using activities that focus on the various modes of communication, which may or may not be included in a given lesson—this was not recorded in the observation narrative and was also therefore not coded.

**Researcher Memos.** Immediately following each observation and interview, the researcher recorded an analytical memo reflecting on the experience of the teacher and connections or contrasts between the observation and how the teacher described the experience during the interview. These memos were reviewed during data analysis to assist the coding process.

## Results

### Starting Points

Despite their different backgrounds in education and experiences as world language teachers, Pat, Daniel, and Yiting expressed common goals, challenges, and vision for their classes before attending the MaFLA Proficiency Academy. Each teacher had general familiarity with communicative language teaching, being aware of essential practices such as teaching in the target language, some familiarity with the modes of communication, and student-centered instruction.

Two specific instructional challenges were shared among all three teachers that connected to their goals and motivation for attending the MaFLA Proficiency Academy: teaching in the target language and getting students to use the target language. Pat, Yiting, and Daniel were all aware of the 90%+ target language use expectation prior to the event but reported that the realities of the classroom often made this difficult to implement. According to the participant's self-reported levels of confidence, Daniel was the most confident teaching using the target language, but when students were put in groups he acknowledged that they "want to speak in English." Pat and Yiting expressed more of a struggle to use the target language themselves, with Pat sharing that she "[got] the thing on immersion, but [didn't] do it very well." "I feel I break into English to give instructions, key instructions, and stuff like that." Yiting acknowledged that she was "half/half" English and target language use. "I'm struggling," she shared. "Parents always talk about the target language. When I speak English...I feel really ashamed." The struggle to teach in the target language corresponded to a goal for each teacher in what they hoped to achieve by attending the MaFLA Proficiency Academy, with Yiting stating, "I really hope I can achieve the target language...90% using the target language, even [starting in] level one."

Each teacher also expressed other specific challenges that they hoped they would be able to overcome through their learning at the MaFLA Proficiency Academy. Daniel expressed doubt on how to integrate interpretive tasks and rubrics, effectively use can-do statements, and advance students from one proficiency level to the next. Pat shared her concern about spending too much time presenting information to the class and not engaging her students in using the language enough, as well as trying to integrate more authentic resources, and do more writing, reading, and listening activities. Yiting felt that her background as a counselor put her at a

disadvantage since she lacked training in world language pedagogy, and she wanted to attend this event to learn more. She was unsure if the activities she was designing for her students were engaging for them since students are learning basic language skills but are high school age.

Although the teachers sought to learn how to address their teaching challenges at the MaFLA Proficiency Academy, only Daniel expressed no fear or nervousness about shifting his instructional practices: “I actually kind of love change,” he said. For Pat and Yiting, however, the thought of changing their practices revealed some real fear about what they may lose. Yiting’s background in counseling came through as she repeatedly expressed worry that she would “lose the connection” with her students if she only spoke Mandarin with them. She was also worried about the lack of collaboration opportunities for herself in her school district. As the only Mandarin teacher, she felt she had no one to work with and share the burden of developing new instructional materials. The perceived amount of work required with proficiency-based instruction was also shared by Pat, who worried about the need to “throw your whole curriculum out and start from scratch.... I’m a little anxious about that. But maybe that’s what needs to happen.”

Regardless of each teacher’s specific fears and challenges, their vision for an ideal world language classroom was consistent: it would be one in which students were spontaneously and naturally using the target language with each other and the teacher. Yiting shared: “What may be the perfect class? Like even when I talk about their feelings, ‘Did you break up with your boyfriend or girlfriend?’ I can talk to them in Chinese.... I can communicate on a deeper level in the target language, that’s my goal.” Daniel shared a very similar sentiment, stating, “Ideally, it’s everybody just like speaking at all times in Spanish. For some reason, I have this image of even the jokes, like when they’re talking to each other, are in Spanish. That would be ideal for me.”

### **Depth vs. Surface Manifestation: Target-Language Use & Learning Objectives**

Classroom observations and interviews revealed a number of proficiency-based practices that were adopted with varying ranges of depth by the three teachers. Target-language use—by teacher and students—is an easily observable practice, while often being challenging for many teachers to implement. Using the target language comprehensibly and facilitating target language use among learners is considered both a core practice by ACTFL (ACTFL, 2020a) and a high-leverage teaching practice for its impact on student achievement (Glisan & Donato, 2017). Across Daniel’s three classroom observations and interviews, his own target-language use consistently remained high, and he increased the level of student target language use in each of the observations. Interviews revealed a lack of concern about his own target language use; it had become a normal and deeply integrated part of his practice. His focus on target language use shifted more to his students, and he was attempting to raise their level of Spanish to close to 100%. Daniel began the year by establishing expectations that his students speak Spanish in class, and as he began to implement this new strategy, he was invigorated: “I love those moments where they ask: ‘¿Puedo hablar inglés? [Can I speak English?]. And then I say no. And then they explain to me what they wanted to say in Spanish anyways and they say it perfectly fine.... Those moments are so cool for me.”

For both Pat and Yiting, however, target language use remained problematic. Although Yiting achieved close to 90% teacher target language use in her first observation, she expressed frustration and struggle that remained with her throughout the year:

I don’t think it’s 90%. For me, it’s maybe 70%, but from 90, it’s so hard to achieve 90%, I think especially when they are last period, like Friday. They don’t have the

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motivation and maybe other classes, they had a very low score and they were very depressed. That's really hard to engage them, to model with them, if using target language. That's my challenge and sometimes I really just use English to connect to, like inspire, to recharge them. High school is so stressful.

Yiting was able to use a number of strategies to maintain the target language while teaching (particularly the use of body language and gestures), but her students' use of Mandarin was very limited during observations. Her concern about connecting to students in the target language presented a real challenge for her that she found difficult to overcome. Despite evidence in each of the three observations of her ability to deliver a lesson in the target language that was comprehensible to students, she switched into English in every class at times that appeared unnecessary. The struggle to maintain the target language and encourage student target language use came from her worry about being unable to connect with students on a personal level, as well as her concern for the discrepancy between the student's cognitive and linguistic abilities: "This is really a challenge for their intelligence. But the speaking is so basic vocabulary. It's their level of intelligence. Not like the Mandarin. Doesn't match. I need to find the balance between the two." Yiting demonstrated an understanding of the essentials of teaching in the target language in her classes but lacked a deeper understanding of how to achieve the expectation while maintaining rich relationships with her students and engaging them on a cognitive level.

Pat's experience in target language use was largely different from both Daniel and Yiting. In her first classroom observation, the researcher estimated approximately 90% English use during class time, with French only used by Pat when reading scripted conversations which the students then repeated. Increasing target language use had been one of Pat's goals in attending the MaFLA Proficiency Academy, and when she was asked about this after the observation, she expressed minimal concern: "I still feel like I need better tips on giving directions and staying in the language. Some of it's just the finessing, finding different ways of getting kids to talk." The second and third classroom observations revealed a more concerted effort to use the target language, though it would be best categorized as a "surface level manifestation" (Coburn, 2003, p. 4) rather than a deep understanding of the practice. In the second observation, Pat had established a classroom contest to get students to use French in class. This was a specific practice discussed at the MaFLA Proficiency Academy, where each class is given a certain number of points each week, and when anyone in the class uses English, the class loses a point. This leads up to a reward at a certain point if the class keeps a given number of points. In the second observation, Pat maintained the point system for approximately 30 minutes during class, after which she told the students they would switch into English. Although Pat applied this new practice in one of the observations, her implementation of it and quick return to English demonstrated a superficial understanding. Students used the target language minimally in each of her classroom observations. Later in the year, Pat shared her need for more support in target language use, particularly with regard to classroom management, which was a consistent issue in her classes: "Some of these things like classroom management techniques ... something like that, I still feel like I need better tips on giving directions and staying in the language."

The teachers' adoption of the practice of using student learning outcomes in their classes also represented a range in their depth of understanding. The MaFLA Proficiency Academy had focused on the use of can-do statements for lesson and unit objectives. Each teacher showed a different level of depth in applying can-do statements in their own classes. Daniel consistently used can-do statements. In his first observation, his lesson objective was "I can describe my ideal vacation." Although in his first observation, the objective was only

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written on the board and not reviewed with students, in the second and third observation, Daniel reviewed the objectives with students at the beginning of class, although he did not return students' attention to the objectives to check for student learning at the end of the classes. He described being able to write objectives that were measurable as well as the conscious choice to use English for the objectives so that all students would understand: "I used to write ones where I was like, 'I can talk about vacations,' and now I get that you can't measure just *talk*. If you talk, you just spoke.... And I used to write my objectives in Spanish or French or whatever I was teaching. So I know I totally missed a few kids, that just didn't know what the purpose of it was or anything like that." Daniel exhibited clear understanding of the rationale behind the practice of writing student learning outcomes and how to apply it in his classroom, although had yet to incorporate student reflection on the attainment of the objective at the end of the class.

Pat also adopted the practice of using can-do statements. In her first observations, she had a number of these objectives presented to students: "I can introduce myself when I meet someone (at different times of day). I can greet and take my leave in a polite way. I can tell someone my nationality and what language(s) I speak. I can tell someone whether I understand them or not." Pat additionally used the strategy of having a student read the goals in English while she (initially) tried to remain in French. Pat was consciously using these objectives in her practice: "I've also tried to do a lot more with the learning goals. ... I used to kind of do it but I'm doing a much better job ... putting them up there every day." Like Daniel, she did not ask students to reflect on the goals at the end of her classes. Where she struggled more, however, was connecting the lesson activities to the lesson outcome. There were often activities that directly connected to the objective, although she got off topic when classroom behavior became challenging, as it often did in her classes.

Yiting did not use explicit learning objectives in any of the classes observed by the author, and despite prompting during interviews, did not mention can-do statements. When asked what her objective was for the first lesson that was observed, she responded "What's your name? How old are you? Where do you live? Which school do you attend? Which grade are you? That's the conversation." She gave a similar response to the same question in the third observation, saying that the objective was "Just for the students to be able to talk about their daily routines with time, because Chinese they mentioned the subject and then time and then the verb."

### **Spread vs. Lack of Spread: Within and Beyond the Classroom**

Neither Pat nor Yiting exhibited evidence of the spread of proficiency-based practices within their own classroom beyond those focused on at the MaFLA Proficiency Academy. Rather, both teachers attempted—with varying degrees of success—to implement practices such as teaching in the target language, using learning objectives, increasing speaking activities for students, and using performance assessments, particularly those that assessed student speaking. Pat, however, worked throughout the year to spread these practices beyond her own classroom. The other language teacher in her school (a Spanish teacher) had attended the same event the previous summer, and both teachers initially planned to collaborate in re-writing curriculum following the model from the MaFLA Proficiency Academy. Due to personal reasons, however, the Spanish teacher was unable to continue this work and Pat "just kind of had to move on, on my own." Pat had pushed her department head to invite the presenter from the MaFLA Proficiency Academy to come and do a one-day workshop in her district. Although Pat felt this was more "revisiting" material for herself, "everybody [in her district who attended] was really excited," which encouraged Pat. Additionally, Pat was "after [her] department head" to use an external assessment



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measure to look at student proficiency, and she volunteered her students to take it. Her lobbying was successful, and she was able to convince him to test her 7<sup>th</sup> grade French class using the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) (ACTFL, 2020b).

For Yiting, being the only Mandarin teacher, she felt restrained to her own classroom and felt that she lacked opportunities to collaborate: “As a Chinese teacher, it’s not only me, a lot Chinese teachers.... And it’s so hard. It’s very hard. And then most, like my age, we didn’t grow up here. And the culture difference, the environment, and how to handle colleagues....” At department meetings, the focus was generally on more logistical topics rather than pedagogical practices, except for one workshop for world language teachers that had focused on the teaching of culture, which Yiting said was the first of its kind. There was no evidence that proficiency-based practices were adopted at Yiting’s school based on interview data.

Daniel’s experience was very much the opposite. He had specifically chosen to work in his school due to their reputation for teaching for proficiency. He therefore joined a school where the spread of proficiency-based practices was already underway. Daniel sought to expand his practices and apply proficiency-based practices across his curriculum, and when he wanted to learn more, was able to access other teachers in the school who had more expertise in areas such as encouraging student self-assessment and self-reflection. Daniel began exploring and learning more about approaching grammar in the classroom, using flipped-learning videos (videos that provide direct instruction on the grammar for students to watch at home rather than using class time), “invitational grammar” (which provides students with a reference guide to the grammatical structure without an in-class explanation and students can choose to use on their own), and the PACE Model (Adair-Hauck & Donato, 1994; Glisan & Donato, 2017).

### **Sustainability & Challenges to Sustainability**

The spread of reform, or lack thereof, within the school where each teacher worked was directly linked to questions of the sustainability of implementing proficiency-based practices in each context. The data demonstrated that sustainability was observed according to two overarching categories: a professional community of colleagues or teachers engaged in the same reform, and school leadership and alignment between school or program policies and communicative/proficiency-based practices.

#### ***Professional Community of Colleagues***

For Pat, she initially was able to collaborate with another teacher on revising her curriculum, but when this teacher was unable to continue the work, she quickly became overwhelmed: “In the fall, I was working off units [we had designed together]. I had lots of time to design in the summer. And now all of a sudden, basically all three classes have kind of finished at the same time and I am really scrambling.” Pat had initially feared that the level of work required to sustain teaching for proficiency would be a concern, and the reality of losing her collaboration partner made this fear a reality. For Yiting, as discussed above, she felt there were no opportunities for her to collaborate with colleagues as the sole Mandarin teacher, and her district did not have collaborative structures in place, such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that she could turn to for support. She did reach out to other Mandarin teachers on the internet who were sharing resources and was able to use some material from them. Daniel, on the other hand, was given a mentor to work with in his school, and they collaborated on curriculum. Daniel also had access to a shared folder with curriculum materials so did not need to create his own curriculum from scratch. The

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curriculum had been developed by small groups of teachers in his department, who then brought it to the full group for feedback before it was finalized. Daniel was expected to follow the curriculum and use common assessments but had “freedom” to create his own activities in how the lessons were delivered.

### ***School Leadership & Alignment***

In each of the three teacher’s schools, there was a world language department head who was designated as the “primary evaluator” of the world language teachers. Despite this, the school leadership varied significantly in terms of the number of evaluations and types of feedback teachers received on their teaching as well as the overall expectations for their teaching. Yiting felt there were expectations about target language use for teachers, though they were not followed up on. She shared mixed feelings about the level of autonomy she received: “I’m so grateful and full of freedom. But the other side is, I don’t have colleagues. I don’t have someone to really give me specific, like, guidance or suggestions here.” She received three observations each year, one from the department head and two from the assistant principal. She received feedback from the department head about including peer conversations in class, which she agreed was important, but she did not feel she knew how to include them effectively. From her assistant principal, she had received comments on classroom management. Although Pat’s department head was also her primary evaluator, he did not observe her during this school year, and she was observed only once by her principal, and she wondered aloud “if he knows what’s going on right now.” Regarding expectations for her teaching, she felt there were none. Rather, “I feel like the expectations that are being set are set by me.” During her one official observation, Pat reported that the principal was “pretty happy,” and the only feedback she received was that a few students were not focused during an activity. Despite this, she “didn’t get any practical ideas about how to do something better or improve.” Pat’s school was unique in having a district world language coach, who came more regularly into Pat’s classroom and was “the person who I feel is my support.” In Daniel’s case, as a first-year teacher in his school, he was observed more regularly by his department head and his mentor, both of whom he felt “[give] you good feedback, and...stuff you should work on.” There were clear expectations for his teaching and practice that came through in a number of ways, for example, his department has a grading policy that 75% of the grades must come from performance assessments, and the remaining 25% could be decided by each teacher. The department head also instituted a new practice during this school year in which teachers were asked to conference individually with their students mid-way through the year, looking through and reflecting upon students’ work from the beginning of the year. These mid-year conferences replaced the traditional mid-year assessments and took teachers two full days to complete. This process led Daniel to realize that students wanted to engage in more conversations in Spanish during class time, since this is “what they felt like they lacked,” and in his third classroom observation, there was a corresponding increase in interpersonal activities.

### **Shift in Reform Ownership vs. Lack of Shift**

It was clear that for Pat and Yiting, they owned the decision to make a shift in their own instructional practices, and there was an apparent lack of shifting ownership of the reform to their program’s leadership. While Pat was successful in lobbying her department head to include some new initiatives, such as bringing the presenter from the MaFLA Proficiency Academy to do a workshop in her district, and provide funding for using standardized proficiency assessments, she continued to work mostly independently in her attempts to implement proficiency-based practices. Yiting reported little to no interaction



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with her colleagues on instructional practices, little feedback from her department head, and few learning opportunities within the structure of her program on proficiency-based instruction. Daniel's experience was in stark contrast, where the ownership for shifting toward proficiency-based instruction was led by the department head as well as teachers within his department who were leading curriculum revision task forces. Daniel had also begun presenting on proficiency-based practices at the state world language conference, providing evidence of his ownership of these practices and interest in sharing them beyond his own classroom.

### Discussion

The experience of attempting to implement a shift in teaching practices from more traditional to communicative proficiency-based practices for the teachers in this study varied in large part due to the structural circumstances of their school, in particular the variability in the world language program leadership. Whereas Pat lost her curriculum collaboration partner for personal reasons, the mentoring structure and curriculum task forces established in Daniel's school made his transition to implementing proficiency-based thematic units more achievable. Daniel experienced a break-through in shifting his practice to integrate more interpersonal activities after a student conferencing session that was established by his department head. And the feedback, or lack thereof, that each teacher received on their practice in formal or informal observations either supported or undermined their attempts to implement change. While this study revealed the importance of program leaders in creating structural systems that contribute to the sustainability of innovation adoption, there exists little research on world language leadership in the K-12 context, its role, its impact on teacher quality, or its impact on student learning (Rocque, Ferrin, Hite, & Randall, 2016; Allen, 2018).

Implementing communicative, proficiency-based instruction remains a challenge for teachers, and the lack of leadership may result in too large a hurdle for an individual teacher to overcome.

Implementing communicative, proficiency-based instruction remains a challenge for teachers, and the lack of leadership may result in too large a hurdle for an individual teacher to overcome. While widely understood and accepted as an important practice in world language education, target-language use by teachers and students—particularly in the interpersonal mode—that meet the 90%+ expectation remains a significant challenge to implement (Glisan, 2012). While some research (Glisan, 2012) has pointed to a possible low proficiency level on the part of the teacher in the language as a reason for this struggle, this was not the case for the three teachers in this study, one of whom was a native speaker. There are many reasons teachers may use the L1 during classroom time (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009). Based on the observations and times when English was used, it appeared that a lack

of depth in pedagogical knowledge may have undermined their attempts to use the target language themselves and support student target language use. When compounded with a lack of feedback or coaching on their instruction, it is not surprising that two of the teachers in this study encountered challenges that at times discouraged them from continuing.

Some surface-level and concrete proficiency-based practices were more easily implemented by the teachers in this study, including using student learning outcomes (except for Yiting) and incorporating authentic resources. However, the deeper understanding needed to successfully incorporate these two elements remained problematic. Authentic resources, for example, can be used to develop interpretive tasks that are then connected to interpersonal discussion, followed by presentational speaking or writing tasks. Selecting

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and deciding to use an authentic resource is a concrete and more easily applied strategy but designing a series of tasks connected to the resource across the three modes of communication requires more from the teacher and is therefore more difficult to adopt, findings that have been supported in other research (Glisan, 2012; Troyan, 2012).

### Conclusion

This study investigated teachers' experiences when attempting to implement a shift in instructional practices—moving from more traditional methods toward a communicative, proficiency-based approach—following a professional development event. The results indicate that structural supports in each teacher's school due to program leadership impact teachers' abilities to successfully change their practice. Classroom practices that are more concrete, such as using a student learning outcome or selecting an authentic resource, may be more easily adopted by teachers. Practices that require deeper understanding, including teaching in the target language, supporting student target language use in interpersonal tasks, and designing tasks across the three modes of communication remain more problematic and require larger levels of support within the teachers' individual educational context.

Communicative/proficiency-based instructional practices have been linked to stronger student outcomes (Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Tedick, 2012; Vynm Wesely, & Neubauer, 2019) highlighting the importance of understanding impediments to teacher implementation. Future research that investigates structural aspects of world language programs in which teachers have successfully moved toward proficiency-based instruction would help illuminate specific leadership practices that could support teachers elsewhere. This study also brings to light the need for additional guidance and professional development to show teachers how to implement more complex practices successfully, as well as how program leaders can provide more support to teachers seeking to shift their practice.

Communicative/proficiency-based instructional practices have been linked to stronger student outcomes ..., highlighting the importance of understanding impediments to teacher implementation.

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## Teaching for equity and inclusion in the community college world language classroom

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### Abstract

*This paper explores the implementation of student-centered and social justice-based teaching methods that promote a classroom atmosphere of equity, inclusion, and positivity by prioritizing students' emotional and psychological well-being in relation to the course content. This paper argues that creating a classroom atmosphere in which students feel safe and included lowers the collective affective filter and establishes a positive relationship with the target language(s), increasing students' linguistic competence. This, in turn, benefits our programs by encouraging students to continue in the language sequence(s), and in higher education in general. The methodologies explored here are holistic pedagogy, culturally responsive pedagogy, and constructivist pedagogy—instructional models that embed support and flexibility into courses to enhance social-emotional learning, in addition to academic growth, by acknowledging and addressing the unique and diverse background, strengths, and needs of each student. This paper will give several examples of these student-centered pedagogical practices in the community college context.*

### Keywords:

constructivist pedagogy, culturally responsive pedagogy, educational equity, holistic pedagogy, inclusive learning, social-emotional learning, student-centered teaching

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In recent years, community college demographics have become more diverse and attending community colleges before transferring to four-year higher education institutions has become increasingly common. With these changes, students' choice to attend community college must also become destigmatized and recognized as an option that is elected for financial and practical reasons rather than as a result of academic shortcomings. Studies show that on average, seventy-five percent of community college students in the northeastern United States remain in college between their first and second years. Nearly fifty percent of community college students graduate with Associates degrees and go on to four-year institutions—sometimes even Ivy League institutions—to earn bachelor's degrees and beyond. These statistics prove that many students complete their first two years of higher education at community colleges due to factors such as financial strain, underprivileged backgrounds, excessive outside responsibilities, and a general unfamiliarity with the university system, often as a result of an immigrant or English-Language-Learner (ELL) status. These data also reinforce the fact that students' choice to attend community college is rarely based on academic deficiency but rather on less privileged circumstances than those of the average American college student. It is important to note that community college students are rarely those whose families pay for their tuition, expensive school supplies, such as laptops, or transportation to and from campus. These are students whose families often need the students' help to remain financially stable, placing stresses and responsibilities on the students that far exceed those of a "traditional" American university student.

... students' choice to attend community college must ... become destigmatized and recognized as an option that is elected for financial and practical reasons rather than as a result of academic shortcomings.

According to Love (2021), "we need to validate community college as a real, authentic, pathway to higher education, not treat it as a stumping ground for the undesirable. It is the job of the college to provide direct pathways to four year institutions." This may seem like administrative work but valuing the students that come to two-year colleges and making them feel worthy of being in higher education begins in the classroom. As language professors, whose personal backgrounds and course content arguably contain one of the largest components of humanity of any discipline, we possess the unique capacity to tap into a genuine compassion and empathy for our students and to create a classroom space with a sense of community and belonging. We must recognize the responsibility that we have to do so and adapt our teaching to the needs of our student demographic. In this way, we can set an example to other disciplines, and even to our administrators.

As language professors, whose personal backgrounds and course content arguably contain one of the largest components of humanity of any discipline, we possess the unique capacity to tap into a genuine compassion and empathy for our students and to create a classroom space with a sense of community and belonging.

We can create a safe, equitable, and inclusive classroom space in several ways, which will be explored here. First, we can simply check the way in which we approach, speak to, correct, and grade students, making sure that each student is treated equally, regardless of her/his background or circumstances. We can also be mindful of the way in which we offer feedback to students—both in-class and on graded assignments—being sure that it is done with compassion and encouragement, rather than severity, so that students do not lose morale. Furthermore, we must represent and validate each student's identity and background in our curriculum by creating course materials that are



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inclusive and representative of each student's ethnicity, religion, linguistic background, self-identification, physical and intellectual ability, and socio-economic status. These steps not only ensure students' comfort and well-being in the classroom but can also affect retention by playing a large role in their decision whether to remain in college after the first semester.

### **The Community College Demographic**

A recent study on New Jersey community college demographics provides the statistics that approximately 49% of our students are experiencing some form of basic needs insecurity at [a given] time (homelessness, food insecurity or housing insecurity)—33% of respondents experienced food insecurity in the prior 30 days, 35% of respondents experienced housing insecurity in the previous year, [and] 11% of respondents experienced homelessness in the previous year. Moreover, 34% of survey respondents cannot afford to eat balanced meals and 31% worry about running out of food before they have money to buy more (Hope Center Research Team, 2020).

These statistics are already striking, but even more so is the news that “in comparison to the rates for all survey respondents at two-year institutions nationwide in 2019, [the colleges in this study have] a lower rate of food insecurity, a lower rate of housing insecurity, and a lower rate of homelessness” (Hope Center Research Team, 2020). This means that on average, community college students nationally experience even greater hardship than that which was reported in this study. It is also common for most community college students to work several jobs to support not only themselves but also their families, in addition to taking a full course load.

This is why it is so important to “receive students’ distress in a way that meets them where they are, [and] validates what they’re going through” (Teaching Tolerance Staff, 2020). In all interactions with students, but especially in cases such as the examples mentioned earlier, it is important to treat students with the deepest possible compassion. We never know what hardships they are enduring outside of school, so it is important to provide them with a safe and positive atmosphere within the classroom. We may not realize that this could be the only safe or positive atmosphere in their current lives.

In fact, “given that emotions and relationships strongly influence learning [...], a positive school climate is at the core of a successful education experience. School climate creates the physiological and psychological conditions for productive learning. Without secure relationships and supports [...], student engagement and learning are undermined” (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). It has in fact been proven that “neurobiologically, students can’t learn if they don’t feel safe, known, and cared for within their schools” (Aupperle et al., 2012, as cited in Minahan, 2020) because “the brain’s capacity develops most fully when [...] youth feel emotionally and physically safe” (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). These data prove that providing students with a positive, inclusive, and equitable classroom space is not only an admirable endeavor, but one that is supported by the science of human development. Furthermore, the data thoroughly debunk the claim that it is our job only to teach students, but not care about them. If neurobiological studies are proving that part of teaching students is nurturing them, then caring is objectively and scientifically very much part of our job.

It is also the fulfillment of the mission statements of most community colleges, which usually declare commitment to “providing a secure, supportive environment responsive to the needs of students [...] regardless of financial, academic, educational or physical challenges” (County College of Morris Mission Statement, 2020). A classroom space must not only feel safe to a select few students, but to all students. For this reason, it is important

to treat each student with equal attention, compassion, and kindness, which will be further explored below.

### Equity, Inclusion, and Holistic Pedagogy

Holistic pedagogy, or the whole-student approach, is defined as a teaching methodology that “recognizes the complex interplay between the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning and calls on faculty to address ‘the whole student’” (Achieving the Dream Staff, 2021, p. 2). Most world language instructors are likely already implementing this pedagogy precisely because of our acute awareness of factors such as the affective filter—the affective, or emotional factors, such as self-image, or anxiety, that can affect the language learning process and language production in front of peers and native speakers of the target language (Krashen, 1982). Because of our own training in the affective factors involved in language acquisition, we may precede our colleagues in other fields in our realization that students’ emotional well-being is the key to their interest and success in our course content and to a positive classroom atmosphere. Our familiarity with factors such as the affective filter, and how these can affect the way in which students absorb and process information, equip us to share with our colleagues who teach other disciplines that students have the best opportunity to learn when the instructor practices inclusion and equity in the classroom, making students feel represented in the curriculum, connected to their peers and the instructor, valid in what they bring with them to the classroom, and important in the learning process.

Holistic pedagogy, or the whole-student approach, is defined as a teaching methodology that “recognizes the complex interplay between the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning and calls on faculty to address ‘the whole student’”

The mission statements of several community colleges in the northeastern United States share these ideals. The Raritan Valley Community College Mission Statement (2020) aims to “foster diversity by developing and maintaining curricular and social programs that infuse the contributions of all people, and by preparing students to excel in a global society.” The mission statement of County College of Morris (2020) includes three points that go hand in hand with these ideas:

1. Commitment to providing a secure, supportive environment responsive to the needs of students.
2. A commitment to diversity that respects individual differences and upholds the dignity of every person.
3. A commitment to providing access and services to all regardless of financial, academic, educational, or physical challenges.

One of the most basic ways to create a sense of positivity and security in the classroom is to make a conscious effort to treat each student equally. An example may be something as simple as greeting every student in the exact same way when they enter the classroom; greeting students who arrive late in the same way as students who arrive on time or early. It does not disrupt the class to smile and say a friendly *ciao* or *hola* to students who enter after class has begun. In fact, this creates a better classroom environment than the toxic atmosphere that is created by becoming visibly frustrated when students arrive late. At times, the argument that we should be preparing students for “the real world” arises here. To this, Garth-McCullough et al. (2021) question, “are we preparing them for the real world or prison?” What Garth-McCullough et al. of course mean is that the reality, based on the previously cited statistics, is that most community college students do not need a lesson in



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responsibility. Most of them are already bearing burdens that people their age should not have and may arrive late due to hardships such as not being able to afford their own vehicle or a reserved parking space. It is more important in these cases to establish a caring and trusting environment for these students by not scolding them or treating them differently when they are late but greeting them with kindness and making them feel as though they are wanted in the classroom. “In schools where students encounter punitive discipline tactics rather than supports for handling adversity, their stress is magnified” (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018), also magnifying any behavioral issues related to adversity outside of school. In colleges with underprivileged student demographics, the caring environment, rather than the lesson in responsibility, is what the student needs. “It is important to ensure students have structure and to hold high expectations. But students will fare best if they know their teachers care about their well-being just as much as their behavior and assignment compliance” (Teaching Tolerance Staff, 2020). In fact, “studies have found that a positive school climate improves academic achievement overall and reduces the negative effects of poverty on achievement” (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

To maintain equity and impartiality, it is important to keep in mind that “students may not have [equal] access to [materials]. [...] They may be forced to work to help their families financially. They may have to look after younger siblings. They may not have a safe place to live off campus” (Head, 2020). If student tardiness to class, late submission of an assignment, or similar occurrences are due to a challenging situation in their home life, we should offer them the same types of accommodations that we would be required to offer students with physical, intellectual and learning disabilities, such as extensions and waived penalties. This type of practice demonstrates fairness and inclusivity in the classroom and goes hand in hand with the idea of not making college an elitist experience, but one that is truly available to all qualified students, regardless of their circumstances. This includes not only treating students of diverse ethnicities, abilities, religions, and gender identifications equally, as we are taught to do in our sensitivity trainings, but also treating students of all cultural-linguistic backgrounds and socio-economic strata equally. This is the equity “regardless of financial, academic, educational or physical challenges” (County College of Morris Mission Statement, 2020), that “values all aspects of diversity including but not limited to race, sexual orientation, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, socioeconomic status, and political and philosophical perspectives” (Raritan Valley Community College Mission Statement, 2020), to which our colleges’ mission statements express a commitment. Anything else would be favoritism, discrimination, and even elitism.

Far too often, “university policies and practices can exacerbate social difficulties that cause structural exclusion: pushing poor [or minoritized] students to the margins, thereby reminding them of their difference—often in ways that connect to racial inequalities on college campuses and in the nation. The cumulative effect is that to disadvantaged students, [the campus] feels like a place that—both intentionally and unintentionally—works against affirming them as full members of the college community” (Jack, 2019, p. 135). If professors attempt to uphold these policies out of “concern for our positions in our colleges, we decenter our students” (Wood, 2021). Moreover, “many institutions of higher education attempt to provide students with tools or strategies to succeed in college but fail to consider the influence that such outside factors as financial means and parental education have on success. This is a mistake. Rather, institutions should consider class-based variables” (Siegel & Ward, 2012, p. 70). If we want to make college accessible to everyone, as is the goal and mission of community colleges, we must treat every student with equal inclusivity. This is certainly not to say that there should be no policies or standards to maintain order but

that we must find a greater flexibility and empathy within the confines of college policy, not only making accommodations for select groups of students, but for all students that find themselves in extenuating circumstances, whether these are physical, intellectual, or learning disabilities, linguistic barriers, systemic exclusion, or socio-economic disadvantage.

### **Feedback, Error Correction, and the Affective Filter**

All instructors and professors have administrative requirements, policies, procedures, and standards to which we are to expect our students to adhere. It is easy for us to allow administrative pressures, or even our own insecurities, to cause us to become overly focused on policies and disciplinary actions, and to become overly corrective in our feedback to students, to demonstrate to administrative supervisors that we ourselves are meeting standards. However, becoming overpowered by policy, procedure, and disciplinary or corrective attitudes toward students can be detrimental to students' psyches, and in turn, to the classroom atmosphere. An overly corrective attitude on the part of the instructor runs the risk of creating a punitive rather than inclusive environment, causing students to feel scrutinized, detached, dehumanized, and unimportant in the learning process. Jack (2019) affirms that "students who do not feel welcome at a college [...] tend to underperform and give up more easily" (p. 28). This statement reinforces the ideas that "students will fare best if they know their teachers care about their well-being just as much as their behavior and assignment compliance" (Teaching Tolerance Staff, 2020), "if we are more worried about our positions than about our students, we will decenter our students" (Wood, 2021), and "students' sense of belonging [affects] all aspects of their college experience" (Jack, 2019, p. 30), including their academic performance and their likelihood to re-enroll in future terms. The type of support and feedback that we offer students truly matters to their psychological motivation to continue, or not, with the language after the first course, and in extreme cases, whether to remain in college. If we can set them up for success rather than failure to begin with by providing them with affirmative supports, their relationship with the target language and with higher education in general will be more positive.

Correction is an integral component in the learning process that helps students stay on track and meet the learning outcomes, however, it must be well thought out and delivered with compassion rather than severity to avoid it damaging students' psyches and causing them to relinquish learning the language prematurely. It is important to offer timely feedback on exams and assignments in a way that makes students feel heard and supported in their efforts, especially in online courses. We must not only be sensitive to students' time expectations, just as we expect them to respect our deadlines, but also offer them feedback during class in a way that raises their confidence and makes them feel supported rather than causing them to feel ashamed or embarrassed of any errors made in front of their peers. Classrooms that allow for maximum language learning to take place are spaces that "affirm [students'] competence, sense of self-worth and feelings of safety" (Teaching Tolerance Staff, 2020). It has in fact been proven that "negative emotions-such as fear of failure, anxiety, and self-doubt," which can be caused by improperly delivered corrective feedback, "reduce the capacity of the brain to process information and to learn" (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

It is important that corrective feedback be implicit and "unobtrusively provided so as not to disrupt the flow" (Kim, 2003, p. 2) of the student's ideas. "Nativists such as Krashen have dismissed any perceived benefits from corrective feedback based on their belief that prolonged exposure to [...] comprehensible input [...] is the driving force behind Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Krashen even believes that corrective feedback

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is [...] potentially harmful, since it interrupts the flow of discourse that could provide comprehensible input” (Kim, 2003, p. 2). Additionally, Krashen (1982) argues that “error correction has the immediate effect of putting the student on the defensive” (p. 75) and is thus “a serious mistake” (p. 74).

As Krashen warns, the affective and psychological effects of corrective feedback on students must be taken into careful consideration. “Corrective feedback [in the form of explicit error correction] constitutes [a] type of negative feedback” (Ellis, 2009, p. 3). Ur (1996) suggests that “negative assessment is to be avoided as far as possible since it functions as ‘punishment’ and may inhibit or discourage learning” (p. 203). When employing corrective feedback, instructors must be aware of the necessary balance between “acknowledging the cognitive contribution it can make while also [heeding] warnings about the potential affective damage it can do [...]. Teachers should monitor the extent to which corrective feedback causes anxiety in learners and should adapt the strategies they use” (Ellis, 2009, p. 3). Adapting feedback strategies is especially important to consider from a holistic pedagogical perspective, since many students may come from cultures or families in which being corrected is synonymous with failure and can cause previous trauma and psychological damage to resurface.

As affirmed by Ur (1996), corrective feedback is not necessarily synonymous with negative feedback. There are many ways to deliver positive corrective feedback to students. If correction is necessary for comprehension during class, it may be best to offer corrective feedback not in the explicit, “input-providing” form of the “giving the answer strategy,” but in the implicit, “output-prompting” form of the “prompting the answer strategy,” or “indirect correction.” In this implicit corrective feedback style, the instructor poses key questions to guide students to recognize their own error(s) and make the necessary correction(s) themselves. It allows students and their peers to re-evaluate what was said and helps students speaking in class get the sense that they are not being patronized but that the effort in arriving at the correct linguistic structure is collective. A similar corrective scaffold that instructors can offer is “negotiation of meaning,” where comprehension gaps are filled by the interlocutor—the instructor or classmates—asking the speaker key questions that help her/him reformulate the original utterance with greater clarity. In cases in which a student seems particularly self-conscious, it may be enough for the instructor to simply paraphrase what the student said, but with the correct grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation, in an effort to acknowledge the correct form without demoralizing the student. Each of these examples of positive corrective feedback and scaffolding offers an opportunity for a growth mindset (Dweck, 2016)—framing errors or difficulty as opportunities to learn rather than as obstacles or failures—and gives the language learning process a participatory and collective component, rather than allowing it to be hierarchical, punitive, or patronizing.

Furthermore, feedback does not need to be corrective at all. Ur (1996) reports that students respond better to positive reinforcement than to any type of corrective feedback. According to Ur (1996), it is more beneficial to students for the instructor to place a greater emphasis on and attribute more explicit praise to what students have uttered correctly than to dwell too much on imperfections in their speech, also keeping in mind the difference between accuracy and fluency (Harmer 1983). While it is our job to point out errors in order to perfect students’ oral and written production of the target language, it is equally imperative to their proficiency to offer congratulations and encouragement for what they say and write correctly in the target language. “Assessment should be positive or non-judgmental [in order to] promote a positive self-image of the learner as a person and language learner” (Ur, 1996, p. 203). Moreover, “when giving negative feedback [or making

corrections] teachers can use the positive sandwich approach—starting and ending with a positive comment” (Minahan, 2020) so that the overall message of the feedback comes across as positive and congratulatory, rather than negative or corrective. This practice cultivates a psychologically constructive atmosphere in the classroom by significantly lowering students’ affective filters, as well as establishing mutual support among students and a trusting relationship with the instructor. Through a blend of sensitive, implicit correction and positive, encouraging feedback, students become more comfortable making mistakes and find space to grow and improve within what they know to be a supportive classroom community.

### **Empathetic Grading**

Just as a compassionate attitude that takes into consideration students’ humanity and emotional well-being is necessary when giving in-class feedback, it is also necessary when grading written assignments and assessments. Sykes (2020) speaks about “human-centered” teaching and research that factors humanity into all academic interactions. She emphasizes the importance of treating our students and colleagues as the humans that they are, rather than being rigid and unrealistic with deadlines and expectations. She argues that too much rigidity damages the human psyche and leads to the mental depletion of the other party. Moreover, she argues that the world languages field is in a position to “set an example of human-centeredness to other disciplines” (Sykes, 2020).

When grading, just as with the other topics already discussed, professors should take into consideration students’ humanity—weighing their entire set of circumstances—and be flexible when necessary. This practice is a component of holistic pedagogy. When we speak about maintaining flexibility in grading, it is certainly not to say that there should be favoritism or leniency in grading but that the student’s whole story matters in the process of determining such things as whether to accept and/or take off points for late work. Sykes (2020) argues that far too often, “grading is only about compliance. Moving past compliance [such as submitting assignments and assessments on time and in the correct format], shifting focus away from mistakes, and focusing on pointing out what students are doing well helps teachers push students toward proficiency and motivates them to want to do better. It also facilitates self-reflection and self-correction in students.”

Here, a greater consideration for the student’s circumstances must come into play, remembering that “education transcends test scores and curricular continuity” (Collins, 2020). For instance, a student may live at home to save money and have to share technological resources with parents and siblings or may not have access to a reliable Internet connection or a personal computer due to such issues as the housing insecurity that many community college students face. Especially in times when campuses and facilities that would provide these resources are closed, “traditional grading policies will not be a true gauge of student progress. They will more likely be a reflection of a family’s income and resources” (New Jersey Educator’s Association [NJEA] Review Staff, 2020). To maintain equity, it may be necessary to allow students with extenuating socio-economic circumstances extra time—within reason—to submit online assessments and assignments without penalty. This is not dissimilar to the accommodations that we are required by our colleges to make for students with physical, intellectual, and learning disabilities.

We must maintain the perspective that students may not only lack technological resources but also “may lack access to a quiet and supportive environment” (NJEA Review Staff, 2020) in which to study. Some first-generation college students may even be faced with “parents, siblings, and friends who have no experience with college or understanding

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of its benefits [and] may not be supportive of a student's decision to go" (Siegel & Ward, 2012, p. 73). These students may be "criticized for devoting time to school rather than to family responsibilities" (Siegel & Ward, 2012, p. 73). Such cases are in fact quite common in community colleges where many students are economically disadvantaged, first-generation college students, or both. Thus, it is important to view students through a holistic lens, see students' entire set of circumstances, and preserve a flexible and supportive attitude toward all students. "It would be unethical to maintain [...] policies and practices" (NJEA Review Staff, 2020) that cause us to ignore the extremity of some students' realities. "Integrating empathy and compassion into our courses is [...] a critical part of the work we must do" (Head, 2020) and can begin with the way in which we offer feedback and distribute grades.

### **Validating What Students Bring: Constructivist and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy**

Siegel and Ward (2012) pose the questions, "How [can] faculty and staff validate [...] students' experiences and the attributes they bring to the institution? How do we create environments that engage [...] students intentionally and frequently? How do we create [...] learning opportunities that [...] have a welcoming presence that mitigates [...] students' fear of engagement?" (pp. 69-70). Perhaps students' sense of belonging, community, or validation begins in each individual classroom, giving professors a greater responsibility than they may realize in student morale, and in turn, academic success, and retention.

Studies show that "the elements of school climate contributing most to increased achievement are associated with teacher-student relationships, including warmth, acceptance, and teacher support" (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). Moreover, Field (2020) affirms that "decades of research show that relationships with professors play a key role in students' retention." Siegel and Ward (2012) argue that "the degree to which students feel they fit into the fabric of the institution is a crucial component of their decision to stay or leave when they are faced with vexing challenges [...] and] students who drop out of college often indicate the feeling that they do not belong at the institution" (p. 75). If a student "decides to stay or leave largely based on his or her [level of] integration into the academic and social life of the campus, [...] intentional efforts designed to create a [...] safe space for students are imperative" (p. 80). Jack (2019) echoes that "to provide more effective help for the most disadvantaged undergraduates, colleges need to take into account the diversity of cultural resources they bring with them to campus" (p. 128).

Integrating students' backgrounds and home cultures into classroom and campus life is linked to constructivist and culturally responsive pedagogy. These teaching methodologies acknowledge that "students bring [valid and useful] pre-existing knowledge and attitudes with them" to the campus and to the classroom and "emphasize the social capital and cultural knowledge that diverse students bring to the learning experience [to prioritize] the message that everyone can learn and succeed" (Achieving the Dream Staff, 2021, p. 2). CdeBaca-Cruz (2021) reiterates that we must "get away from deficit views of students' cultures and rather incorporate their home cultures into the learning environment."

Keeping the characteristics of constructivist and culturally responsive pedagogy in mind, we can go even further than to practice the previously discussed compassionate attitude, implicit feedback, and empathetic grading to help students succeed. We can tailor our course materials and supplementary resources to help students feel included and represented in the curriculum. Burkett and Sherrow (2019) describe that "you're not the problem for not being represented in the curriculum; the curriculum is the problem for not representing you." Noguera (2021) adds that "in order to engage students of color, teachers

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must adapt their teaching to the way in which those students learn rather than the reverse.” A significant component to an inclusive and social justice-driven classroom is to ensure that all religions, ethnicities, family types, gender identifications, socio-economic strata, and abilities are represented in the materials that we use to teach our target languages. Glynn, Wesley, and Wassel (2014), describe that “social justice [...] may very well be as simple, yet profound, as incorporating marginalized voices into the classroom space” (p. 34). They sustain that representing your students also extends to classroom procedures and activities. For example, if most exams of cultural products, practices, and perspectives are Eurocentric or only representative of able-bodied people, the topics will have less meaning and relevancy for students of color or students with disabilities. Including themes and activities that represent students’ interests, abilities, and backgrounds is a principal method of affirming your students’ identities. (p. 33) Examples of such affirmations of all students’ identities could be endless. Some possible strategies that could be implemented in world language classrooms are discussed below.

### Identity-Affirming Pedagogical Practices

One way to make students feel valued and included starting on the first day of an introductory world language course is to ask them to share words in the target language that they already know. In the cases of Spanish and Italian in particular, students often come to us with a significant amount of prior knowledge. This activity proves to students that the professor values and acknowledges what they bring. Even if students’ shared words or phrases are dialectical or mispronounced, this activity establishes self-confidence for students, especially heritage language learners, by proving to them that they are all showing up with some legitimate prior knowledge of the subject and sets the tone for the rest of the semester that any contribution they make in class is heard and is valid. Instead of focusing on how their shared words that day may not be uttered in the standard variety of the language or pronounced perfectly, the instructor can, while still correcting those things, emphasize how much knowledge students are bringing into the class.

As we more frequently find students of diverse linguistic backgrounds in our language courses, a major way to validate their linguistic identity is to acknowledge that the target language of the classroom may not always contain a cultural equivalent of all words in a students’ native language. In these cases, we can avoid cultural appropriation of students’ first language (L1) and allow students to preserve the cultural autonomy of their home languages by permitting the use of the native language when there is no cultural equivalent in the target language. García and Solorza (2020) share an example of this practice with the words *dough* and *masa*.

Recently a fourth grade bilingual Latinx student in a classroom that García was observing did not comprehend the phrase in a practice test: “She worked all day preparing the dough.” But when the Latina teacher paraphrased it as, “She worked all day preparing the masa,” her face lit up! She knew about masa to make tortillas, something her mother prepared often, although her mother never used dough to make cookies. When Latinx authors use words such as “masa” when writing in English, educators often say they are “code-switching” into Spanish, viewing English and Spanish as separate autonomous languages. But for Latinx bilingual children, even for those rendered proficient in English according to school records, “masa” is simply a word from their repertoire. (p. 10)

Allowing students to use words “from their repertoire” at all levels validates both them and their native languages. Although this example comes from a K-12 environment, it can be



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applied to the college level and can take place in any world language or English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom.

From a multilingual education perspective, we should always allow students to use their knowledge of grammar, morphology, and lexicology in their first or second language (L1/L2) to bolster their learning of the target language, rather than expect them to suppress their existing linguistic knowledge to learn the target language. This is especially true in 100-level courses, in which full immersion cannot yet be expected, and in cases in which the students' known languages are particularly like the target language, as in the case of bilingual Spanish and English speakers learning a new Romance language.

There are many arguments for this type of multilingual education at the high-school level and in higher education. The shift from the full-immersion mentality in 100-level courses is largely viewed by professors and researchers as a positive evolution that “transcends our more narrowly defined initial approach” (Muller, 2015, p. 185), “distances itself from the classic division ‘one course=one language’” (Bonvino, 2015, p. 36), and allows students, “no longer confined by imposed hierarchies of the ‘ideal’ speaker [to] establish a friendly relationship with languages, rather than a punitive one” (Donato et al., 2019, p. 3).

Moreover, this is yet another example of allowing students to use elements from their own “repertoire” in a constructive and culturally-affirming way and viewing students' pre-existing skill sets through an additive lens as academic assets, rather than treating the skills that students bring to the classroom as deficiencies. As discussed previously, it is in fact true that the college system risks upholding inequity as well as class and race divides. Practices such as strict adherence to a full-immersion rule in introductory language courses without allowing students to use their home languages (i.e., Spanish, Arabic) to help them learn the target language (i.e., Italian, French) risk becoming Eurocentric because they minoritize students' native languages (García & Solorza, 2020). The methodology described above is thus not only an effective teaching practice, but a true practice of equity to allow space for students' native languages in the world languages classroom.

Another practice of inclusion in a Spanish class—although this example could translate to any world language—is simply writing words such as *mezquita* [mosque] and *sinagoga* [synagogue] on the board, and presenting different places and styles of religious worship in authentic videos in the target language, when the textbook only teaches the vocabulary word, *iglesia* [church] in the unit on religion. A similar example, translatable to other Romance languages, could be adding nationalities to the limited list in the textbooks that students use with the verb *ser* [to be] to describe themselves and others, and depicting individuals of various ethnic origins speaking in the target language and living in the countries where the target language is spoken. This exercise could then lead to an in-depth unit on various diasporas in different historical periods.

A further practice that can take place when teaching adjectives in level-one courses is to add adjectives surrounding mental health and mental illness, so that students experiencing these conditions feel as though they have the vocabulary in the target language to describe their authentic emotions and can gain the sense that the space is inclusive of them, rather than feeling even more isolated and excluded than they likely already do. Examples of this practice in an Italian course could be to add adjectives such as *depresso/a* [depressed] and *ansioso/a* [anxious] to the limited list of emotions such as *contento/a* [happy] and *triste* [sad] that the textbooks provide. This could be a good supplement to including images and videos of individuals of a varying physical, intellectual, and learning abilities to the course curriculum.

Further examples of original supplementary handouts to substitute for less inclusive textbook activities are as follows. In introductory Romance language courses, it may help

students feel more included for the instructor to provide them with images of blended and non-traditional families to describe instead of only using the “traditional” family photos in the textbooks to practice family vocabulary and possessive adjectives. Similarly, in second-semester Romance language courses, in which students are often asked to describe couples to practice grammar points such as reciprocal action verbs, we may opt to project onto the screen images of same gender and interracial couples as options for students to describe instead of only offering the option of describing the opposite gender, non-interracial couple that the textbooks often provide with this activity, still giving students the option of using the textbook photo if they prefer to do so. This not only fulfills our colleges’ mission statements that strive for inclusivity and equity, but based on student feedback and evaluations, the student response to this in the author’s own courses has been overwhelmingly positive, especially for students who do live “non- traditional” realities, whether in their family life, their self-identification, or their choice of partner. As a result of these more inclusive activities, particularly LGBTQ+ students have opened up and felt comfortable being themselves in front of their classmates, who, as far as has been observed, have offered them full acceptance and support. It is incredible how something so seemingly simple as the choice of image for open descriptions in the target language can transform the classroom into such a safe space where this type of openness can take place.

Another way to help LGBTQ+ students feel represented in the curriculum, as well as educating all students on LGBTQ+ sensitivity, is to teach inclusive adjective endings and gender-neutral pronouns in our target languages. Parodi-Brown (2019) argues the importance of teaching gender-neutral noun and adjective endings in Spanish, such as ‘x’, ‘e’, and ‘@’, using common examples such as *Latinx*, as well as the gender-neutral pronoun options, such as *elle* [gender-neutral third-person singular subject pronoun] and *elles* [gender-neutral third-person plural subject pronoun]. He reports that students usually accept these forms without hesitation as a way to be inclusive and to respect the preferences of gender non-conforming individuals.

It may be opportune to mention to students that while not all varieties of Spanish have equally adopted these gender-neutral options, the forms are in fact widespread in some of the most prominent Spanish-speaking populations, such as that of the southwestern United States, particularly Southern California, and much of Spain, in spite of the fact that the forms are not yet included in the *Diccionario de la Real Academia de Español* [Dictionary of the Royal Academy of Spanish]. This could also be an opportunity to point out to students how often widely-used terms in certain varieties of Spanish do not appear in the *Diccionario de la Real Academia de Español*. Parodi-Brown (2019) in fact mentions that it is important that students know the difference between “real Spanish”—that which is actually used in everyday speaking, even if only in certain varieties of the language—and “Real Spanish”—that which appears in the *Diccionario de la Real Academia de Español* and excludes common phrases of many Central and South American regional varieties of the Spanish language.

In fact, Ramos (2020) argues that the gender-inclusive noun, *Latinx*, creates a space not only for LGBTQ+, non-binary, and gender non-conforming Hispanics, but “for all the people in the Latino community who have ever felt left out [...]. That ‘x’ is simply an invitation for every one of those people that can’t fit into one identity, [...] that want to challenge norms” (p. 250). The use of *Latinx* instead of *Latino/a* “help[s] everyone be seen” (p. 198). By teaching these more inclusive pronoun and adjective forms in Spanish as normal parts of grammar, and equally valid options as the traditional pronouns and adjective endings, we are creating classroom environments where students do feel seen, and where they feel comfortable and safe being themselves.



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*Words and Actions: Teaching Languages Through the Lens of Social Justice*, quoting *Toolkit for the Tongue-Tied*, states that “social emotional learning, respect, and safety are as important as literacy [...] and students need to feel both physically and emotionally safe to learn. This includes safety from stereotype, threat, harassment, and exclusion” (Israel, 2014, as cited in Glynn, Wesley, & Wassel, 2014, p. 33). Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018) echo that it is imperative to provide “a caring, culturally responsive learning community, in which all students are well-known and valued and are free from social identity or stereotype threats that exacerbate stress and undermine performance.” Representing and validating students’ backgrounds and identities in the curriculum gives them the message that the course material is accessible to them, to people that look like them, and to people with their linguistic, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic background. Finally, Breen (2020) supports these positions in her statement that “fluency waxes and wanes [...] I mainly hope that [students] remember to appreciate all kinds of diversity [...] and to always respond with kindness, a universal language.” If students can begin by cultivating kindness and acceptance toward classmates who may be different than them but with whom they forge bonds over the course of an academic term, they may become more open to displaying these inclusive attitudes toward people of diverse backgrounds on a larger scale.

### Recognizing What Students Do Not Bring

A further step that can be taken to protect students from stereotype, exclusion, marginalization, and similar negative experiences, while setting the examples of diversity appreciation and the universal language of kindness, is not only to value what students bring but also to acknowledge what they do not bring with them when they begin college. For instance, many first-generation college students may be unfamiliar with academic settings and the unspoken etiquette and protocol that accompanies these environments. International students and English Language Learners (ELLs) may lack knowledge of the American university system in addition to struggling with a potential language barrier. Students beginning college may also lack knowledge of the vocabulary we use to describe college practices, such as “office hours” and “academic integrity.”

This is highlighted by Jack (2019), who explains that the fact that some students do not even know what office hours are “represents more than just a simple miscommunication [and is] a roadblock to inclusion and belonging, one that impedes access to places where connections are made, bonds are forged, and information is shared” (p. 93). One of Jack’s interviewees explains that many first-year students do not even realize that they are allowed to advocate for themselves or go to office hours for extra help, giving the example of one student who states that, “when you’re poor and you’re homeless, you get used to taking what is given” (Jack, 2019, p. 93). Because of this mindset and a general lack of preparation for college life, Jack (2019) reports that some of the neediest students feel “guilty asking for extensions” (p. 94) in circumstances so extenuating as homelessness. Another example could be that of the international student who may not only be unfamiliar with the American school system but also may be suffering from a general feeling of isolation and struggling to find a sense of belonging, even outside of the college. This type of student could also come from a background where it is not socially acceptable to advocate for oneself or to share personal circumstances with authority figures.

This lack of self-advocacy on the part of disadvantaged students and students who are unfamiliar with the college system, either as a result of being new to the United States, a first-generation college student, or both, as many of our colleges’ ELLs are, results in professors potentially never becoming aware of students’ circumstances outside of college.

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It is not easy for students to admit that they are struggling with situations beyond college, so we must create a space that allows them to feel more comfortable doing so to ensure that the proper accommodations are made for them. Tragically, Jack's interviewees share that some "professors don't necessarily make it all that easy to meet with them" (Jack, 2019, p. 96), in turn limiting students "from taking advantage of the full range of resources their college offers them" (Jack, 2019, p. 98).

Thus, it is of utmost importance to define academic terms and make students feel welcome in our classrooms and in our syllabi. Only then will they feel as though they are allowed to approach us as understanding, humane listeners and openly describe to us their circumstances, which may merit accommodations of which we would not otherwise be aware. In order to accomplish this, we must equally recognize and value what students bring and do not bring with them to campus so that we do not unwittingly marginalize them by assuming that they know more than they do about how college works. "The assumption that all students come with a general understanding of the collegiate world unintentionally places some students even farther out on the margins of the institution" (Jack, 2019, p. 75).

Cull and Norelli (2021) state that "as our students have become increasingly diverse, our policies and practices have not" and suggest adding a diversity statement to the course syllabus, so that students know immediately upon beginning a given course that the professor supports, accepts, and will make accommodations for their diverse backgrounds and life circumstances. Including a diversity statement in course syllabi gives students the necessary reassurance that our classrooms and offices are safe spaces for them, even before we have the opportunity to actively demonstrate this during the academic term. An example of a diversity statement from University of Iowa College of Education (2020) is

Respect for Diversity: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you.

It is also important to list the resources that the college makes available to students in the syllabus. In addition to the commonly-included services such as library and accessibility services, it is important to include resources such as counseling services, subsidized meal services, technology borrowing services, and childcare services directly in the course syllabus. The students who are most in need of these services often are not aware of them. Professors share in the responsibility of guiding students to understand and take advantage of the college's resources and meet the college's expectations, and part of this responsibility includes explaining to them what these resources and expectations are. In this way, we also ensure that students' experiences at our colleges are effectively preparing them for success at the four-year universities where they will transfer.

Validating students' backgrounds and identities in the classroom helps create a sense of community and belonging throughout the campus. If we can create an environment that makes students feel comfortable being themselves, they will become more open and more supportive of each other, taking our cue that it is the classroom and campus culture to empower others in who they are and what they bring. We must make all students feel as though they belong, because

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if we are upholding the mission statements of our community colleges, everyone truly does belong; there is truly space for everyone. Again, classrooms and campuses should be spaces “that affirm [students’] competence, sense of self-worth and feelings of safety,” where “students should feel valued and welcome regardless of their background or identity” (Teaching Tolerance Staff, 2020). The classroom community and the larger college community should not in any way feel to students like an elitist experience that causes them to have the slightest sense of inadequacy for anything that they do or do not bring with them. Creating this sense of comfort, acceptance, and belonging for students in turn yields the benefit of increasing the likelihood of student retention and fortifying our programs.

Applying the above-mentioned practices, and any other equitable and inclusive student-centered teaching models that prioritize the emotional and psychological well-being of our students, should always prove to be a worthwhile endeavor. While schools may sometimes impose mandates that do not necessarily align with our compassionate teaching styles, we can consciously choose our students’ well-being, self-image, and self-worth enough to find flexibility within the policies. Such actions within our classrooms as the above-mentioned examples—treating all students equally and compassionately, grading and giving feedback in a way that heightens their confidence, providing supplementary materials that create more inclusion, and validating students’ identities and what they bring, in an effort to practice holistic, constructivist, and culturally responsive pedagogy—should all be obvious choices on the part of any truly student-centered educator.

We may not be able to do anything about students’ physical well-being—about whether they go home to adequate housing, nutritious meals, or safe living spaces—but their social-emotional well-being for the three hours per week that they are in our college classrooms is well within our reach. As new studies on community college demographics similar to the ones previously cited continue to emerge, and as professors and administrators are made more aware of what students’ circumstances and needs are, it will become increasingly possible to prioritize the social-emotional well-being of community college students. This type of shift toward a greater awareness of students’ emotional and psychological needs in our policies and pedagogy will make education a more positive and accessible experience for students beginning college, rather than an intimidating or punitive experience, resulting in a higher probability of students choosing to continue in higher education.

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## Reframing professional development: Creating a faculty learning community for world language educators

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### Abstract

*This article examines the development, delivery, and outcomes of a year-long, collaborative, professional development (PD) program for 33 K-16 world language educators who taught in the State of Delaware. This work was prompted (in part) by Delaware's publication of its World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (Delaware Department of Education, 2016), as well as the author's growing recognition of the various teacher-training pathways, both traditional and nontraditional, that teachers/educators took to secure their role in the classroom. The author worked to discover whether these teachers/educators from dissimilar backgrounds fully understood how to integrate the World-Readiness Standards, a proficiency-oriented approach, into their own curricula, and whether they recognized the importance of collaboration between K-12 teachers and university-level educators to ensure that they were working toward the same instructional outcomes. Prior to the development of this program, the author and colleagues debated the efficacy of current practices in professional development. Recognizing the importance of continuing education for teachers/educators, they took steps to ensure that their program would meet participants' learning needs by reframing the conventional PD program into a faculty learning community, which is a highly collaborative forum that enables K-16 teachers/educators to learn together. At the end of the program, post-program data revealed the degree to which the participants had increased their knowledge of teaching for proficiency. The data also provided evidence of how important it was for participants to experience proficiency-oriented language instruction as learners.*

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## Introduction

According to a 2017 report published by the Office of Post-Secondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education, Delaware has been struggling since 2003 with extensive teacher shortages in K-12 content areas such as science, reading, math, music, art, foreign language, and English as a second language. Some of those areas, in fact, are considered critical need, including foreign language, and state education administrators have felt the push to fill those empty teacher slots (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Historically, a good number of world language educators in this state had arrived at their profession via traditional teaching programs (i.e., a four-year undergraduate degree in education with a specialty concentration). However, to meet the critical need for teachers of foreign language, Delaware supported a dramatic increase in educators coming to the profession through an alternative process that allows individuals with at least bachelor's degrees to teach without going through a college campus-based teacher education program (Cartwright et al., 2015).

In the Evaluation of Delaware's Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification (ARTC) report (Cartwright et al., 2015), it was noted that novice ARTC candidates teach a higher proportion of foreign language classes than traditionally trained novice teachers in this state. Similar parallels occur at the state's university level: the number of non-tenure-track faculty members has increased in recent years, and some reports claim that they now account for 79% of all faculty at four-year institutions (Barnshaw & Dunietz, 2015).

While this author does not intend to debate the wisdom of hiring one type of teacher over another, this distinction in teacher training pathways—traditional vs. nontraditional—gives sound justification for the need for substantial and sustainable professional development in the state to ensure that teachers at all levels and from all training backgrounds are keeping pace with best practices in their field.

[... the] distinction in teacher training pathways—traditional vs. nontraditional—gives sound justification for the need for substantial and sustainable professional development ... to ensure that teachers at all levels and from all training backgrounds are keeping pace with best practices in their field.

## Background

In 2012, Delaware adopted the Common Core State Standards for K-12 teachers (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). Because these standards do not explicitly include world languages, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) created a type of crosswalk called Aligning the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core Standards that outlines how and where each standard supports the other (ACTFL, 2012).

In 2013, ACTFL revised its Standards for World Language Learning, renaming them World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (ACTFL, 2013). Delaware likewise published its own World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages in 2016, reflecting a shift in instruction from learning about the language to engaging with the language (Delaware Department of Education, 2016).

This shift (might we call it a sea change?) to a proficiency-oriented approach has opened the gates to a new set of expectations for K-16 teachers to prepare students to use language in meaningful, real-world contexts. This change, which reframes the view of the student as a learner of language to one in which the student is a creator of language, is no small task for our teachers, who are now called upon to find and master new methodologies to meet these expectations.

[The shift ...] to a proficiency-oriented approach has opened the gates to a new set of expectations for K-16 teachers to prepare students to use language in meaningful, real-world contexts.

## Reframing Professional Development

### Proficiency-Oriented Language Instruction

The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) describes proficiency-oriented language instruction as more of a general framework for organizing instruction, curriculum, and assessment rather than a method or a theory. Within this framework, language learners practice the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and the three modes of communication (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) to communicate in the target language. Learning activities consist of meaningful and real-world purposes for use of the language. Proficiency-based instruction is student-centered and focuses on what students can already do and what they need to do (ACTFL, 2013; CARLA, n.d.).

Several characteristics of proficiency-oriented instruction have been identified by Tedick (1997, pp. 9-23), Hadley (2000, pp. 2-27), and CARLA (n.d.):

- Emphasize meaningful language use for real communicative purposes
- Help students learn to use the language rather than learn about the language
- Integrate the use of all four skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing
- Include the use of authentic foreign language texts and materials
- Integrate language and content
- Organize language learning around themes, topics, and other content areas
- Incorporate authentic assessment of student performance
- Encourage students to be actively involved in the learning process

If we expect teachers to implement these changes in their classrooms, they will need varying levels of support in which they can observe teaching strategies being modeled, receive ongoing coaching, and receive ready-made materials to use.

We are, in fact, asking students and teachers alike to move away from methods that were once considered fundamental in language teaching and learning and to move toward proficiency-oriented instruction. If we expect teachers to implement these changes in their classrooms, they will need varying levels of support in which they can observe teaching strategies being modeled, receive ongoing coaching, and receive ready-made materials to use.

### The Evolution of Professional Development

Historically, the support teachers might receive would be some type of professional development, which could be any type of formal or informal continuing education effort (conference, course, seminar, retreat, and/or workshop) to help educators improve their skills with the ultimate goal of boosting student outcomes. And yet, there are many indications from research and literature that those traditional modes of professional development have failed to deliver meaningful experiences of the kind that might enhance teachers' competencies. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2009), more than 90 percent of teachers participate in workshop-style training sessions during a school year, yet the workshop model has a poor record for influencing teachers' practice. When professional development merely describes a skill to teachers, very few teachers transfer it to their practice; however, when teachers are coached through the awkward phase of implementation, many can successfully use the new skill (Ermeling, 2012; Joyce & Showers, 2002). Based on their review of research, Schlager and Fusco (2003) conclude that conventional professional development, organized at the school and district levels, is "disconnected from practice, fragmented and

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misaligned. Many of the programs lack key pedagogical, content, and structural characteristics of effective professional development that are needed by the teachers they serve” (p. 205).

Educators at all levels recognize that professional development should not simply mean the learning of new information, facts, or teaching methods. Professional development should engage teachers in learning cycles that are dynamic. These experiences should help teachers gain a new understanding of current situations and contexts and enhance their awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. Garet et al. (2001) noted, “The success of ambitious education reform initiatives hinges, in large part, on the qualifications and effectiveness of teachers. As a result, teacher professional development is a major focus of systemic reform initiatives” (p. 916). Teachers who participate in meaningful professional development experiences are “better prepared to make the most effective curriculum and instructional decisions” (Vrasidas & Zembylas, 2004, p. 326).

### Options for Alternative Professional Development

One example of that type of reform is a Faculty Learning Community (FLC), a community of educators who engage in “a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by colleagues, with an intention of getting things done” (McGill & Beaty, 2001, p. 11). McGill and Beaty (2001) describe FLCs as groups that have voluntary membership and meet for a period of at least six months at a designated time and in an environment conducive to learning. These groups should develop empathy among members, operate by consensus, develop their own culture, engage with complex problems, energize and empower participants, and have the potential of transforming institutions into learning organizations (Cox, 2004). Cox (2004) further states that the qualities necessary for community in FLCs include safety and trust, respect, collaboration, challenge, enjoyment, and empowerment. A successful FLC should include a mission and a purpose, curriculum topics, scholarly process assessment, and rewards. Researchers have observed how FLCs promote professional development through collaboration and reflective practice, how they strengthen collegial relationships, and how they develop faculty into better educators through a deeper understanding of pedagogy (Gabelnick et al., 1990; Layne et al., 2002).

... a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) [is] a community of educators who engage in “a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by colleagues, with an intention of getting things done”

In the fall of 2017, the author began working with the members of the Advocacy Committee of the Delaware Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (DECTFL), which hoped to establish a relationship with the University of Delaware (UD) to benefit world language (WL) education in the state. Because of recent changes to WL standards, the Advocacy Committee saw an opportunity to work with UD to address issues such as helping students reach higher levels of proficiency, promoting continued language study at the university level, and inspiring students to become language teachers in the state. The author met with the DECTFL Advocacy Committee several times during the fall of 2017 and with the curriculum specialist from the Delaware Department of Education. All agreed to work on the proposal of a professional development program that would enable K-12 educators to work side-by-side with the UD faculty who teach languages at the introductory level.

As part of this effort, a survey was distributed to all WL educators in the State of Delaware who were members of the DECTFL, as well as UD faculty who regularly taught languages at the two introductory levels (see Appendix A). The survey was created by the author in concert with the executive board members of the DECTFL and the director of

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the teacher preparation program at UD. The author's intent was to gather input from the members of this target audience regarding their interest in learning about several topics related to language education; therefore, the survey items were designed to be mindful of the most common challenges in language teaching, as determined by the DECTFL executive board and the ACTFL Core Practices for World Language Learning (ACTFL, n.d.). The survey presented topics related to proficiency-oriented language teaching. In the survey, participants were asked to rate the topics using a Likert scale. The results (78 K-12 language educators and 14 UD faculty completed the survey) would inform a collaborative professional development opportunity for this community. The author analyzed the survey results by calculating the frequencies of responses for each item to determine the topic(s) that generated the most interest.

Table 1 presents the responses from K-12 educators. The responses showed that an overwhelming 76% of respondents indicated a desire ("very interested") to learn about designing lessons that facilitate 90%+ use of the target language. The need to learn about planning a proficiency unit came in second place, with nearly 67% of respondents indicating a rating of "very interested" for this topic.

**Table 1.**  
*K-12 Responses to Survey Regarding Educator Needs*

Topics of need	Very Interested		Interested		Not Interested		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Goal-setting and assessment; planning with backward design and aligning the curriculum with standards	30	38.4	37	47.4	11	14.1	78
Planning a proficiency unit; designing task-based activities and promoting cultural competence	52	66.6	25	32.0	1	1.3	78
Project-based learning in the foreign language classroom	24	31.6	39	51.3	13	17.1	76
Teaching grammar in context (PACE model)	27	36.5	35	47.3	12	16.2	74
How to write an integrated performance assessment to promote growth	27	35.5	38	50.0	11	14.5	76
Designing lessons that facilitate 90%+ use of target language	57	76.0	15	20.0	3	4.0	75
Using technology in the foreign language classroom	33	43.4	32	42.1	11	14.5	76
Teaching the four language skills in a proficiency-driven classroom	43	56.6	26	34.2	7	9.2	76

*N* = 78

Table 2 presents the responses from the UD language faculty, whose responses mirrored those of the K-12 educators. The largest percentage of respondents, 64.3%, indicated a rating

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of “very interested” in designing lessons that facilitate 90%+ use of the target language. The desire to learn about planning a proficiency unit again came in second place with 57% of respondents indicating a rating of “very interested.” Surprisingly, the results indicated a lack of understanding or knowledge surrounding the proficiency goals the state had adopted in its World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages.

**Table 2.**  
*University of Delaware Faculty Responses to Survey Regarding Educator Needs*

Topics of need	Very Interested		Interested		Not Interested		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Goal-setting and assessment; planning with backward design and aligning the curriculum with ACTFL standards	6	46.1	6	46.1	1	7.7	13
Planning a proficiency unit; designing task-based activities and promoting cultural competence	8	57.1	5	35.7	1	7.1	14
Project-based learning in the foreign language classroom	5	38.5	7	53.9	1	7.7	13
Teaching grammar in context (PACE model)	5	35.7	7	50.5	2	14.2	14
How to write an integrated performance assessment to promote growth	2	14.3	10	71.4	2	14.3	14
Designing lessons that facilitate 90%+ use of target language	9	64.3	4	28.6	1	7.1	14
Using technology in the foreign language classroom	5	35.7	7	50.0	2	14.3	14
Teaching the 4 language skills in a proficiency-driven classroom	6	42.9	7	50.0	1	7.1	14

N = 14

**Researching a Solution to Educators’ Professional Development Needs**

Armed with this insight, the author and the Advocacy Committee embarked on a research project to design an instructional guide for K-16 instructors to enable them to help their students engage with the target language.

**Research Questions**

To ensure they were not making assumptions about their participants’ knowledge, the author and Advocacy Committee started with two questions:

1. What do participants know about proficiency-oriented language instruction and how to implement its strategies?
2. What will participants learn by engaging in this type of teacher education program?

By starting with a question to assess participants’ existing knowledge, the author and Advocacy Committee could effectively scaffold the instruction by systematically building on the participants’ experiences and knowledge as they learned new skills. By asking a question about

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anticipated outcomes of the program, the author and Advocacy Committee would be able to focus on their desired outcomes and learning objectives.

### Methodology

The purposes of this study were twofold: to assess participants' knowledge about current professional standards and core practices for language teaching and to evaluate their level of understanding of teaching for proficiency at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels as appropriate to each teacher/educator.

### Sample

The participants (n=33) were comprised of eight UD faculty and 25 K-12 WL teachers. The UD faculty participants by language consisted of three Spanish, three French, one Italian, and one Japanese. The K-12 teachers by language consisted of 14 Spanish, seven French, two Chinese, one Italian, and one Japanese. Participants were (29) 88% female and (4) 12% male. A total of 33 participants completed the pre- and post-surveys for the two summer sessions. Because of schedule conflicts, attendance at the year-long sessions varied greatly; therefore, only 15 participants completed the year-end survey.

### Instruments

The instruments for this survey included a pre- and post-program survey for the initial two-day session in August 2018 and a final year-end program survey in May 2019. This survey was designed in concert with the Advocacy Committee and the State's director of Language Acquisition. The pre- and post-surveys given during the two August sessions were identical, with the post-survey containing an additional five items pertaining to the participant's level of satisfaction with the organization and content of the program. The final year-end program survey expanded upon the pre- and post-surveys with an invitation to visit a colleague's classroom to observe, as well as open-ended responses to aid in the planning of the next year's collaborative professional development program (see Appendices B, C, and D for the pre-, post-, and final surveys).

### Program Detail

Prior to the program's start, participants were assigned readings to complete, including the ACTFL Performance Descriptors (ACTFL, n.d.) for each of the three modes of communication and the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements (Bott VanHouten et al., 2017).

On August 14, 2018, participants met on the UD campus for the first session of the program, called Path to Proficiency, which was facilitated by the author and two members of the Advocacy Committee. The day began with a brief networking opportunity and breakfast, followed by an introduction of the facilitators and planned speakers and a presentation of the goals of the program. Participants then engaged in small-group discussions of the ACTFL Performance Descriptors (ACTFL, n.d.) with an interactive activity aimed at providing examples of language production in the various ranges. During breakout sessions, participants discussed what types of proficiency-oriented teaching activities were currently being practiced in their own teaching environment. Following a short break for lunch, participants attended two presentations. A Spanish teacher at Cape Henlopen High School spoke about the State's curriculum alignment, and an assistant professor of German from UD gave a demonstration of how she teaches for communication in introductory levels of German. For the remainder of the first session, participants joined various cohorts (based on language and levels taught) to create proficiency-oriented lessons.

The second day of the program again took place on the UD campus. After a brief networking breakfast, the session began with a whole-group discussion of the prologue and chapter 1 of VanPatten's *While We're on the Topic: BVP on Language, Acquisition, and*

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*Classroom Practice* (2017). Participants then posted products and thoughts from the first day’s work and were given time to explore the various groups’ postings. The facilitators led a brief discussion of the importance of comprehensible input. The remainder of the day was dedicated to working in language groups to develop materials for the classroom.

During the two days, framed with a book study of VanPatten’s *While We’re on the Topic* (2017), participants engaged in discuss 2 2019 session, participants shared outcomes of the comprehensible input strategies they adopted, and a participant shared ways to collect authentic resources. At the end of each session, materials and resources were posted on the program’s Schoology site.

**Data Collection and Analysis Procedures**

The author’s first step was to determine the validity of the pre-program survey (Appendix B). There were seven questions designed to measure the degree of understanding and use of key concepts in language instruction with the following four response options: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. The distribution of each variable was measured in the pre- and post-survey to ensure that there were no distribution problems. The author found the distributions to be reasonably behaved and represented a full range of responses: there were no extreme distributions or single responses where everyone agreed.

Participants were asked to complete three surveys during the duration of the year-long program. The first pre-program survey was completed on August 14, 2018, at the beginning of the first day’s session to gauge participants’ level of understanding of key concepts in language instruction. The post-survey, completed on August 15, 2018, at the end of the second day’s session, measured changes in participants’ understanding of the key concepts. The final year-end survey was completed on May 4, 2019. The author analyzed the survey results by calculating the frequency of response for each item to measure the percentage of participants’ agreement with each item. The author collected and coded qualitative data for themes. Tables 3 and 4 present the responses.

**Table 3.**

*Professional development participant responses to pre-assessment 9:00am August 14, 2018*

	Strongly Agree 4		Agree 3		Disagree 2		Strongly Disagree 1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. I am familiar with the principles of backward design and can apply them to unit and lesson design.	8	24.2	20	60.6	3	9.0	2	6.0
2. I understand what it means to teach for proficiency.	13	39.3	18	54.5	2	6.0	0	0.0
3. I understand how to set learning targets based on the ACTFL/NCSSFL can-do statements.	9	27.2	20	60.6	4	12.1	0	0.0



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4. I provide opportunities for students to demonstrate competence in the three communicative modes.	10	30.3	18	54.5	5	15.1	0	0.0
5. I plan opportunities for students to reflect on their attainment of unit performance objectives and their own learning goals.	5	15.1	18	54.5	10	30.3	0	0.0
6. I use the target language at least 90% of the time and have a rationale for when first language use is appropriate.	5	15.1	16	48.8	12	36.3	0	0.0
7. I understand the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.	13	39.3	15	45.4	5	15.1	0	0.0

$N = 33$

The responses showed that prior to the two-day launch of the program, approximately 40% of respondents indicated a rating of “strongly agree” for understanding what teaching for proficiency means. The same percentage of respondents understood the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development. Roughly 25% of respondents reported familiarity with using backward design to plan units and lessons and understood the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.

**Table 4.**

*Professional development participant responses to post-assessment 3:30pm August 15, 2018*

	Strongly Agree 4		Agree 3		Disagree 2		Strongly Disagree 1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. I am familiar with the principles of backward design and can apply them to unit and lesson design.	25	75.7	8	24.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
2. I understand what it means to teach for proficiency.	27	81.8	6	18.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
3. I understand how to set learning targets based on the ACTFL/NCSSFL can-do statements.	25	75.7	8	24.2	0	0.0	0	0.0

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4. I provide opportunities for students to demonstrate competence in the three communicative modes.	12	36.3	15	45.4	5	15.1	0	0.0
5. I plan opportunities for students to reflect on their attainment of unit performance objectives and their own learning goals.	7	21.2	16	48.4	10	30.3	0	0.0
6. I use the target language at least 90% of the time and have a rationale for when first language use is appropriate.	10	30.3	12	36.3	11	33.3	0	0.0
7. I understand the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.	26	78.7	7	21.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
8. This professional learning opportunity increased my ability to design and/or refresh units and lessons to align with proficiency targets.	17	51.5	16	48.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
9. The activities (presentations, group exercises, etc.) were relevant for my job-related needs.	20	60.6	13	39.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
10. The peer collaboration was helpful in making my units and lessons more proficiency-focused.	21	63.6	12	36.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
11. The organization of the learning environment (facilities, materials, participant groupings, etc.) met my learning needs.	20	60.6	13	39.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
12. Overall, I am satisfied with this collaborative professional development experience.	21	63.6	12	36.3	0	0.0	0	0.0

*N* = 33

The responses showed an overwhelming increase in understanding what it means to teach for proficiency, from 39% to 81% (see Table 5, next page). Understanding the role of comprehensible input in a proficiency-oriented classroom also increased, from 39% to 78%. Increases from 25% to over 75% were also seen in the number of respondents who reported familiarity with using backward design to plan units and lessons and understanding the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.

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**Table 5.**

*Professional development participant responses to FLC year-end assessment May 4, 2019*

	Strongly Agree 4		Agree 3		Disagree 2		Strongly Disagree 1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. I am familiar with the principles of backward design and can apply them to unit and lesson design.	9	60.0	6	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2. I understand what it means to teach for proficiency.	8	53.3	7	46.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
3. I understand how to set learning targets based on the ACTFL/NCSSFL can-do statements.	5	33.3	10	66.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
4. I provide opportunities for students to demonstrate competence in the three communicative modes.	5	33.3	9	60.0	1	6.6	0	0.0
5. I plan opportunities for students to reflect on their attainment of unit performance objectives and their own learning goals.	1	6.6	11	73.3	3	20.0	0	0.0
6. I use the target language at least 90% of the time and have a rationale for when first language use is appropriate.	1	6.6	7	46.6	8	53.3	0	0.0
7. I understand the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.	8	53.3	6	40.0	1	6.6	0	0.0
8. This professional learning opportunity increased my ability to design and/or refresh units and lessons to align with proficiency targets.	6	40.0	9	60.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
9. The activities (presentations, group exercises, etc.) were relevant for my job-related needs.	5	33.3	10	66.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
10. The peer collaboration was helpful in making my units and lessons more proficiency-focused.	9	60.0	6	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
11. The organization of the learning environment (facilities, materials, participant groupings, etc.) met my learning needs.	7	46.6	8	53.3	0	0.0	0	0.0

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12. The opportunity to visit a colleague’s classroom to observe their teaching practice was valuable.	5	33.3	5	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
13. Overall, I am satisfied with this collaborative professional development experience.	8	53.3	7	46.6	0	0.0	0	0.0

N = 15

The responses showed a decrease in the percentage of respondents who chose “strongly agree” in their identification of understanding what it means to teach for proficiency and understanding the role of comprehensible input in a proficiency-oriented classroom. This can be explained by the very low number of responses; only 45% of the total respondents who completed the pre- and post-program surveys in August 2018 completed the final year-end survey. The final year-end survey housed two open-ended questions seeking to understand specific value participants found in the program (see Table 6). All respondents expressed overall satisfaction with the professional development program.

**Table 6.**  
*Professional development participant open-ended responses*

Theme	Sub-topics
Example lessons	seeing strategies in action
	sample lessons / lesson plans
Networking	cross-language connections
	peer-to-peer interaction
	K12-UD counterpart interaction

Note: N = 11

The following findings summarize the qualitative data collected from participants in two major areas: example lessons and networking.

**Example lessons**

Many participants noted the value of seeing lessons in action. Being able to experience instruction firsthand through languages like German and Polish facilitated participants’ understanding of strategies in action. One participant noted, “I really enjoy seeing lessons in a language I don’t know as a means of modeling certain strategies.” Others also noted that participating as learners seemed to really “hit home” in terms of putting themselves in their students’ shoes. Seeing lessons in action also sparked new ideas for participants. One stated, “I have gotten so many new ideas for ways to increase comprehensible input in my classroom.” Another commented, “I not only learned strategies for [curriculum and instruction] but I learned about new platforms and resources.”

**Networking**

Eight of the 11 participants (73%) commented on the benefits of making cross-language connections and connecting with UD faculty. The ability to work together and understand the scope, sequence, and constraints of a variety of language instruction programs shed light on the two greater issues at hand: that of increasing language proficiency in students and encouraging continued language study. According to one participant, “For me, the

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opportunity to network with other language teachers in the state has been invaluable. I love talking about different activities and approaches that people have found success with and thinking about ways to incorporate these into my classroom.” A UD faculty member stated, “This has been a fantastic PD experience, and I am greatly appreciative to have gained some new understanding of the K-12 language classroom.”

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The results of the data analysis reveal that participants’ understanding and learning evolved through the collaborative approach of this professional development FLC program. Participation increased the shared understanding of what proficiency-oriented language instruction entails and provided opportunities for colleagues to collaborate on the creation of teaching materials. UD faculty increased their understanding of the language curriculum in the K-12 programs, and K-12 participants indicated a further desire to connect with and work with UD faculty to continue on a path of shared collaboration.

The FLC approach contributed to and aided in the creation of an active learning environment that supports the goals of professional development and WL education in the State of Delaware. By contextualizing the learning and having topics that are important to everyday teaching concerns and struggles, the author and Advocacy Committee leveraged participants’ enthusiasm, interest, and desire to increase the dissemination of new research in the field.

### Limitations

The author recognizes two important limitations of this study. First, the sample population is too small to be representative of the larger group of WL educators in the state.

Second, the study does not take into account other factors that may prevent teachers from utilizing the recommended teaching approach (for example, district or school policies on course materials, such as whether teachers are required to use a specific textbook or whether common exams are mandated).

### Recommendations

Based on the author’s and Advocacy Committee’s analysis of this program, several areas present themselves for recommendations moving forward:

- Collect qualitative data during the program
  - To enhance this professional development program, it is important to understand how learning takes place throughout the program at regular intervals.
- Involve pre-service teachers
  - The involvement of pre-service teachers should strengthen the language education program at the UD and entice more WL teachers to become clinical educators.
- Provide support for language clubs and honor societies
- Increase the motivation of K-12 educators to facilitate activities specific to language learning and teaching, such as the Educators Rising initiative in their schools

Due to the success of this first year, a second year-long program launched in August 2019.

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### Appendix A Survey of Educator Needs

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Goal setting and assessment; planning with backward design and aligning the curriculum with ACTFL standards. |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 2. Planning a proficiency unit; designing task-based activities and promoting cultural competence.              |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 3. Project-based learning in the foreign language classroom.                                                    |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 4. Teaching grammar in context (PACE model).                                                                    |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 5. How to write an integrated performance assessment to promote growth.                                         |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 6. Designing lessons that facilitate 90%+ use of target language.                                               |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 7. Using technology in the foreign language classroom.                                                          |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |
| 8. Teaching the 4 language skills in a proficiency-driven classroom.                                            |                        |                   |                       |
|                                                                                                                 | <i>Very Interested</i> | <i>Interested</i> | <i>Not Interested</i> |



**Appendix B**  
**Pre-program survey**

**Path to Proficiency 2018-2019**  
**FLC pre-assessment 8/14/2018**

1. I am familiar with the principles of backward design and can apply them to unit and lesson design.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
2. I understand what it means to teach for proficiency.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
3. I understand how to set learning targets based on the ACTFL/NCSSFL can-do statements.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
4. I provide opportunities for students to demonstrate competence in the three communicative modes.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
5. I plan opportunities for students to reflect on their attainment of unit performance objectives and their own learning goals.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
6. I use the target language at least 90% of the time and have a rationale for when first language use is appropriate.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
7. I understand the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

**Appendix C**  
**Post-program survey**

**Path to Proficiency 2018-2019**  
**FLC post-assessment 8/15/2018**

1. I am familiar with the principles of backward design and can apply them to unit and lesson design.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
2. I understand what it means to teach for proficiency.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
3. I understand how to set learning targets based on the ACTFL/NCSSFL can-do statements.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
4. I provide opportunities for students to demonstrate competence in the three communicative modes.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

## Reframing Professional Development

5. I plan opportunities for students to reflect on their attainment of unit performance objectives and their own learning goals.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
6. I use the target language at least 90% of the time and have a rationale for when first language use is appropriate.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
7. I understand the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
8. This professional learning opportunity increased my ability to design and/or refresh units and lessons to align with proficiency targets.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
9. The activities (presentations, group exercises, etc.) were relevant for my job-related needs.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
10. The peer collaboration was helpful in making my units and lessons more proficiency-focused.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
11. The organization of the learning environment (facilities, materials, participant groupings, etc.) met my learning needs.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
12. Overall, I am satisfied with this collaborative PD experience.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

Additional comments:

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## Appendix D Final post-program survey

### Path to Proficiency 2018-2019

#### FLC Final year-end assessment 5/04/2019

1. I am familiar with the principles of backward design and can apply them to unit and lesson design.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
2. I understand what it means to teach for proficiency.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*
3. I understand how to set learning targets based on the ACTFL/NCSSFL can-do statements.  
*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

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4. I provide opportunities for students to demonstrate competence in the three communicative modes.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

5. I plan opportunities for students to reflect on their attainment of unit performance objectives and their own learning goals.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

6. I use the target language at least 90% of the time and have a rationale for when first language use is appropriate.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

7. I understand the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition and proficiency development.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

8. This professional learning opportunity increased my ability to design and/or refresh units and lessons to align with proficiency targets.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

9. The activities (presentations, group exercises, etc.) were relevant for my job-related needs.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

10. The peer collaboration was helpful in making my units and lessons more proficiency-focused.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

11. The organization of the learning environment (facilities, materials, participant groupings, etc.) met my learning needs.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

12. The opportunity to visit a colleague’s classroom to observe their teaching practice was valuable.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

13. Overall, I am satisfied with this collaborative PD experience.

*Strongly agree*                      *Agree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

14. What new ideas or instructional strategies did you learn from the professional learning series that you have used to develop your teaching practice?

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15. If you are considering participating in the collaboration next year, what would make it most interesting and valuable to you?

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# Reviews

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***Edited by Thomas S. Conner, St. Norbert College***

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The Northeast Conference makes available in its *Review* evaluations of both products and opportunities of interest to foreign language educators. These evaluations are written by language professionals at all levels and representing all languages. The opinions presented by reviewers and by respondents (publishers, tour operators, webmasters, association leaders, etc.) are their own and in no way reflect approval or disapproval by the Northeast Conference.

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We will accept reviews of

- Software
  - Videos and films
  - Textbooks, instructional packages, and ancillaries
  - Websites
  - Grant opportunities
  - Programs of study, both abroad and in this country, targeting both educators and students
  - Reference materials
  - Other
- 

## Arabic

**Esseesy, Mohssen. *Al-Munjiz: Advanced Business Arabic*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781626166820. Paperback or ebook.**

Arabic teachers have long been in need of a good textbook for Business Arabic. Mohssen Esseesy's *Al-Munjiz* is a major contribution in this field. While the few previous textbooks on Business Arabic have been little more than collections of letters or word lists, *Esseesy* offers a fully developed curriculum covering some of the most important and timely issues in Arab commerce, such as currency markets, Islamic banking, electronic commerce, and oil production. *Al-Munjiz* also teaches practical skills, such as how to write a resume in Arabic. The author developed the book based on an actual course in the subject, and the results are evident. Rather than having to figure out how to incorporate the book into a course, instructors can build a course around this book.

*Al-Munjiz* is targeted at advanced Arabic students. The text is almost entirely in Arabic; even definitions of terms and phrases are given in Arabic. This approach will facilitate running an Arabic-only classroom but will require students to meet the appropriate level of proficiency. Likewise, the texts and videos that accompany the book are at the advanced level. Therefore, this text is most appropriate for students in at least the fourth year of Arabic, or independent learners at the advanced proficiency level.

Each of the six chapters opens with clearly stated goals (usually about five per chapter). Then, students are asked to express in writing what they already know about the subject through general questions. This technique will give students and teachers a clear focus as they progress through the lesson. Students are next presented with a general reading on the topic of about 1-2 pages in length, followed by explanations of key (mostly technical) terms in Arabic. A series of comprehension questions follows,

and then students are asked to figure out the meaning of important expressions in the text, based on the context in which they are used. The lessons then usually proceed to another text on a specific issue or controversy, or in some cases, practical exercises (such as writing a cover letter or resume). Each lesson concludes with a video and comprehension questions. Most of the videos are interviews by the author with experts on the subject matter, such as corporate or government officials. Only in the case of the third chapter was it unclear which video was to be used. The interviews are extremely timely and relevant and good sources of classroom discussion. Each chapter ends with resources for further study.

The lessons are also noteworthy for the level of detail and depth of exploration of the topic. Most students will learn facts about the petroleum industry or currency trading that they have never encountered and terms they likely couldn't have defined in any language.

The downsides of this textbook are largely with its layout. It feels like the publishers were trying to save space—this is a tiny book for \$49.95. The same fonts used in other Georgetown Arabic textbooks are unfortunately used here (some people may like those fonts, but I have never met one of those people), but here, the font size is so small and there is hardly any spacing between lines, making the text hard to read. If the headings and text are not exactly the same size, they are so close I could not tell the difference. This all seems odd given that the content and organization of the book are clearly first-rate.

There is really no comparison between this book and anything that has preceded it on the topic. As long as students are at the appropriate proficiency level, this is the obvious choice for a Business Arabic text. Maintaining currency will be important as years pass, and I hope that a second edition will expand the physical size and quality of the book. Moreover, it would be good to see the format and approach of this book applied to other subjects in Arabic.

David DiMeo  
Professor of Arabic  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green

### **Publisher's Response**

We would like to thank Professor DiMeo for his kind review of *Al-Munjiz: Advanced Business Arabic*. We are grateful that he points out that this book fills an important gap by offering a fully developed curriculum with practical applications. His points about the layout of the book are well-taken, and we appreciate that he also notes that the content and organization of the book are first-rate. Should instructors wish to preview this textbook, they can request an exam copy at <http://press.georgetown.edu> or by emailing [gupress@georgetown.edu](mailto:gupress@georgetown.edu).

Stephanie Rojas  
Georgetown University Press

## Chinese

**Bryan W. Van Norden.** *Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners.* Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-62466-821-0.

*Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners* is an engaging introduction to Classical Chinese language. Learning Classical Chinese and Classical Chinese literature can be intimidating for Chinese learners but, thanks to this textbook, the author makes learning Classical Chinese easier and more accessible by introducing readers to basic Classical Chinese vocabulary and grammar. It also illustrates to learners how to use a Chinese language dictionary and classical commentaries. This textbook is unique insofar as readers are assumed to have no previous experience with spoken or written Chinese. In addition, the author has chosen to use authentic Classical Chinese philosophical texts as the basis for instruction in each lesson, and these texts are clearly sourced and annotated for easy reference.

Each lesson in the volume consists of four sections: the readings, the vocabulary, the grammar notes, and supplemental discussions. The readings are organized in a traditional Chinese manner, and are read from top to bottom, and from right to left. The vocabulary lists the new words in each lesson using traditional Chinese characters, while the simplified character, if significantly different from the traditional form, is included in parentheses. The pronunciation of each character is also provided using *Pinyin* romanization. Finally, the meaning of each new character or vocabulary word used in the lesson is explained. Grammar notes are used to introduce the text from which the reading selection is taken and to explain any new grammatical constructions that may be found in the selection. Finally, supplemental discussions explain historical or philosophical aspects of the text and describe differences in the reading between Classical and Modern Chinese.

In *Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners*, Chapter 1, *Reading: Analects 17.2*, the author introduces students to a collection of sayings and dialogues attributed to Confucius and his disciples. It also addresses philosophical issues and explains the differences between the Indo-European and Sino-Tibetan language families. Chapter 2, *Reading: Analects 12.11*, discusses honorific titles in Classical Chinese, provides a series of grammatical insights, and addresses the Confucian philosophy of “role ethics.” In the next chapter, *Readings: Analects 12.22, Analects 4.2, and Analects 6.23*, students learn about Chinese naming conventions and the importance of cultivating the Confucian virtues of wisdom and benevolence.

In Chapter 4, *Readings: Analects 2.17, Classic of the Way and Virtue 33*, students learn about Chinese names, gain insight into Classical Chinese pronoun usage, and discuss how Classical Chinese and English differ when asking questions, along with other significant grammatical points. Chapter 5, *Readings: Analects 12.11, Analects 6.20*, introduces language learners to additional grammatical insights, as well as to the Confucian philosophical distinctions among knowing something, liking something, and delighting in something. The following chapter, *Readings: Classic of the Way and Virtue 1, Analects 5.1*, provides language learners with insight into the origin of the *Classic of the Way and Virtue* (道德经). It also discusses textual variants that exist,

considers differences in translation styles and philosophical approaches to translating Classical Chinese, and reviews alternative translations of the *Classic of the Way and Virtue 1*, along with providing explanations of additional grammatical points.

Students read and discuss the history and usage of the Sexagenary Cycle in ancient China, a counting system that has existed for thousands of years, in Chapter 7, *Readings: Analects 8.7, Analects 4.5*, and consider alternative translations of *Analects 4.5* by a variety of accomplished translators. Chapter 8, *Readings: Analects 15.3, Analects 15.24, and Analects 4.15*, addresses a variety of grammatical insights essential to understanding the readings and introduces some interesting interpretive puzzles with respect to the meaning of the “one thing” referred to in *Analects 15.3*. The next chapter, *Readings: Analects 5.13 and the Commentary by Zhu Xi*, discusses Zhu Xi’s development of a new Confucian educational curriculum centered around the *Four Books: Great Learning, Analects, Mengzi, and Mean*, and his *Collected Commentaries on the “Four Books,”* which subsequently formed the basis for Imperial China’s civil service examinations.

In Chapter 10, *Readings: Zhuangzi and Huizi Debate by the River, Hao*, students learn more about how to use a Chinese dictionary and are introduced to some common Chinese character radicals. In addition, learners gain insight into the “Debate by the River Hao” as Zhuangzi attempts to teach Huizi that even though all things in the world are different and have their own distinct natures, the common pattern they all share can be understood if effort is made. Chapter 11, *Readings: Two Poems by Li Bai: “Thoughts on a Still Night” and “Expressing My Feelings When Waking Up from Being Drunk on a Spring Day,”* introduces students to Li Bai, one of China’s greatest poets, and to his famous poem “*Thoughts on a Still Night.*” Students learn that this poem may be the single most famous poem in China and is one which is still memorized today by nearly every literate individual in China. The next chapter, *Readings: Mengzi 2A6, 7B3 (Edited)*, discusses Mengzi, the “Second Sage” of Confucianism, and introduces learners to his philosophy that “human nature is good.” Students also learn that although Mengzi was very influential, he had many critics who opposed his philosophy, teaching instead that “human nature is bad.” Finally, in Chapter 13, *Reading: The Butterfly Dream from the Zhuangzi*, the author introduces the philosophy of skepticism wherein Zhuangzi celebrates the fact that while we cannot always tell what the truth is, we can embrace this “ambiguity of identity” as the ancient sages did, “for whom everything is one.”

*Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners* is unique among Classical Chinese language textbooks in that it is designed for individuals with no previous coursework in Modern Chinese. Using the textbook’s *Introduction*, the author lays a foundation for the language study that will occur in subsequent chapters by describing the purpose and function of Chinese characters. He then explains the sounds, tones, and *Pinyin* romanization system used to properly pronounce Modern Chinese and provides additional resource suggestions to assist students with further study of the spoken language. The proper way to use a Chinese dictionary and the role of the 214 Chinese character radicals is then detailed, and the correct method of writing Chinese characters is described. The author also provides a *Glossary* section in which all of the vocabulary words from each lesson, along with their definitions, are listed. “Nerd Notes,” another unique and interesting contribution to the textbook,



are included in the detailed footnotes in each chapter. These “Nerd Notes” provide fascinating philosophical, historical, cultural, and grammatical insights that enrich student learning and enhance student motivation. Furthermore, students are offered practice and study enrichment materials, including quizzes and additional readings, at [www.hackettpublishing.com/chinese-for-everyone-support](http://www.hackettpublishing.com/chinese-for-everyone-support).

*Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners* is a unique and valuable introduction for novice learners of Classical Chinese. Its uniqueness lies in the author’s extraordinarily detailed and thorough explanations of the selected texts that serve to significantly minimize the intimidation factor that beginning Classical Chinese learners may anticipate. Learners are provided with easily accessible, step-by-step guidance through clear and concise explanations of the readings, as well as through the detailed commentaries that expound upon the circumstances in which they were written. This book will also stimulate language learner interest in furthering students’ understanding of Classical Chinese and Chinese literature, as well as motivating them to become serious students of Chinese language, culture, and history.

Haning Z. Hughes  
Professor of Chinese  
United States Air Force Academy  
Colorado Springs, CO

#### **Publisher’s response**

We are grateful to Dr. Haning Hughes for her thoughtful, detailed, and positive review of Bryan Van Norden’s *Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners*. We are pleased that Dr. Hughes has pointed up the utility, accessibility, and appeal of the book to learners with no prior experience with the language, and that she appreciates—as we do—Van Norden’s ability to introduce his readers to actual Chinese philosophical texts in a non-intimidating and supportive manner. If instructors would like to request an examination copy of this or any other Hackett title, they may do so at [Hackettpublishing.com](http://Hackettpublishing.com).

Brian Rak  
Hackett Publishing

**Cheng & Tsui Company. *Go Far with Chinese, Level 1A*. Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, Inc., 2020. Includes: Textbook. ISBN: 978-1-62291-476-0 (Textbook - \$44.99), and Workbook. ISBN: 978-1-62291-478-4.**

*Go Far with Chinese, Level 1A*, is an innovative and effective Chinese language textbook that is particularly valuable for low novice Mandarin Chinese language learners in middle schools and high schools. The Cheng & Tsui curriculum development team designed the *Go Far with Chinese* to assist beginning Chinese language learners with developing confidence in their own ability to learn Chinese and in stimulating student interest in further Chinese language and culture studies. *Level 1A* is intended to support a one-year instructional program, especially one in which the number of contact hours programmed is limited. This new approach to Chinese language learning is informed by current second language acquisition research into

best teaching practices and employs authentic Chinese language materials to provide robust support for both learners and instructors. *Go Far with Chinese* is fully aligned with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (ACTFL) World-Readiness Standards. The curriculum development team includes additional materials in each chapter that highlight one or more of the World-Readiness Standards of Language Learning's "5Cs": Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Each chapter's Language Practice activities are categorized by the interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes of communication.

The textbook is divided into three units, each consisting of three chapters. The first unit, *First Impressions*, introduces students to the fundamentals of the Chinese language and teaches learners how to introduce themselves to others. The second unit, *Exploring a New Place*, explores cultural connections through individual backgrounds, sports, and music. The third unit, *Celebrating Special Occasions*, discusses birthdays, holidays, and other special occasions, as well as gift-giving and Chinese foods.

Each of the nine chapters is organized according to a coherent, tiered instructional approach that enables students to progress from instructor-provided input to short semi-independent exercises to fully independent assignments. Furthermore, in order to manage instructional pace, the first three sections in each chapter introduce new target language vocabulary and new grammar principles, while the fourth section uses these new concepts to create a comic story to reinforce the lessons learned. Section four also provides additional projects that enhance student learning.

In *Go Far with Chinese, Level 1A*, Chapter 1, *Getting to Know Chinese*, the lesson addresses the challenges of a family moving to China and studying Chinese for the first time. It also discusses how to be polite, make a request, and introduce oneself. Chapter 2, *What's in a Name*, introduces students to Chinese names, explains how to ask for someone's name, how to respond to "what" or "who" questions, and how to express whether you have a particular item. In the next chapter, *Tell Me about Yourself*, students learn to describe their families, ask and answer questions about families, understand and discuss likes or dislikes with others, and gain insight about the use of various measure words when talking about people or animals.

In Chapter 4, *Goodbye America, Hello China*, students learn how to describe what they have in common with others, learn how to ask for directions, describe their current location, as well as explain where one will be in the future, ask individuals to make a choice between two options, and use "this" and "that" to describe things if they do not know those words in Chinese. Chapter 5, *Sports in the Neighborhood*, introduces popular sports in China, discusses which sports the students enjoy playing, addresses which sports others can and want to play, and explains how to ask whether individuals are interested in playing or watching specific sports. The following chapter, *Appreciating New Sounds*, provides language learners with insight into traditional Chinese musical instruments and their sounds, explains how to talk with others about their musical interests, and explain yours, addresses how to offer to teach others a musical instrument, and considers how the use of "呢 (Ne)," "啊 (A)," or "吧 (Ba)" may alter the tone or meaning of a sentence.

Students discuss how to share the day and date of a future activity in Chapter 7, *Do you Have Plans*, and learn how to ask and answer questions about birthdays, understand

numbers larger than 10, and discuss buying a gift based on someone's interests. Chapter 8, *Shopping for the Perfect Gift*, addresses how to understand people describing their activities, disagreeing or agreeing with others, using appropriate telephone etiquette, purchasing a gift, and giving descriptions of books, clothes, or other things. Finally, in Chapter 9, *A Birthday Dinner*), students learn about certain Chinese foods and how students can describe the foods they enjoy, understand how to recognize certain Chinese holiday foods, discuss how to order food in a restaurant, address how to provide reasons for their individual opinions.

Each chapter, in addition to the questions and topics previously mentioned, also integrates sections such as *Can-Do Goals*, *Culture Connection*, *Language Model*, *New Words in Conversation*, *Puzzle it Out*, *Language Reference*, *Using the Language*, *Put the Pieces Together*, *Language Challenge*, *5Cs*, and *What a Character*. *Can-Do Goals* set student learning expectations for each chapter. *Culture Connection* highlights aspects of contemporary Chinese culture. *Language Model* is a teacher's resource provided to instructors that includes a PowerPoint presentation that can be used to guide a class discussion on new vocabulary and grammar structures. *New Words in Conversation* is a dialogue developed from the lesson's new words and grammatical structures. *Puzzle it Out* is a series of exercises provided to evaluate student learning. *Language Reference* enables language learners to strengthen their understanding of how to properly use new words, phrases, and grammatical patterns. *Using the Language* activities provide students with a genuine need to spontaneously communicate that encourages interaction. *Put the Pieces Together* encourages students to employ all three communicative modes through a variety of tasks and activities. *Language Challenge* provides instructors with additional language learning challenges to differentiate learning for more motivated or advanced students. The *5Cs* feature assists instructors with integrating the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards incorporated in each chapter. Finally, the *What a Character* section provides students with greater insight and understanding into common Chinese character radicals and components. Beyond these chapter-specific language-learning enhancements, the textbook also includes downloadable dialogue audio recordings, vocabulary words, stories from the end of each chapter, and Teacher Resources.

The workbook chapters correspond specifically to the chapters in the textbook and provide linguistically and culturally authentic activities and exercises that encourage students to interact with each other and their instructors in a very natural manner. Sections 1-3 of each workbook chapter are divided into five subsections that focus attention on different language skills: *pinyin* and tones, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Section 4 in each chapter, *Put the Pieces Together*, provides student with a vocabulary chart to track new words, a lengthy reading dialogue with comprehensive questions to consider, and a writing exercise with a variety of tasks that invite students to respond according to their personal experiences. The workbook also includes relevant audio recordings and a PDF file of the Character Workbook to facilitate student Chinese character writing practice. Moreover, the *Go Far with Chinese* series, beginning in August 2020, will also be featured on the Cheng-Tsui Web App, which provides students and instructors with a variety of interactive multimedia content to enrich the second language acquisition experience.

In summary, *Go Far with Chinese, Level 1A* provides low-novice Mandarin Chinese language learners with an abundant resource of authentic Chinese language and culture materials, interesting scenarios, and integrated activities that motivate students to develop communicative skills in the target language. The communicative

tasks do not rely on rote memorization or repetitive exercises, but instead focus on encouraging students to express ideas, concepts, and opinions, simply at first, and then gradually, with steady progression, to more complex expressions. *Go Far with Chinese* also encourages Chinese literacy and character learning by providing supplemental word banks throughout the textbook, introducing each new word with its associated *pinyin* and tones, and then phasing out the *pinyin* as students move through each section. In order to enhance student character recognition, *Go Far with Chinese* also emphasizes the stroke order and character components of recurring characters, and provides open-ended questions that encourage thoughtful student written or typed responses. Overall, the new *Go Far with Chinese, Level 1A* textbook and its associated workbook are enviable in that they encourage novice language learners to develop real-world communication skills that ultimately enable students to actually use the language they have learned.

Haning Z. Hughes  
Professor of Chinese  
United States Air Force Academy  
USAF Academy

### **Publisher's Response**

Cheng & Tsui would like to thank Professor Hughes for her very comprehensive review of *Go Far with Chinese*. We are grateful that she highlighted so many of the program's outstanding features, and we would like to offer the following comments.

Professor Hughes notes that *Go Far with Chinese* is available in both print and on our online learning platform, ChengTsui Web App™. The ChengTsui Web App supports hybrid and remote learning with interactive versions of the textbook and workbook, enhanced with streaming audio and video, flashcards, extra interactive exercises, and auto-feedback. The Web App is not just for students: with an Educator subscription, instructors can access all of the files included in the Teacher Resources file pack, assign exercises from the auto-graded workbook to their students, and view auto-graded score reports, saving time and hassle.

We would also like to note that *Go Far with Chinese* is a three-level program. Level 1A is the first volume in the split edition of Level 1, and, together with Level 1B, provides suitable pacing for the middle school level.

As of April 2021, Levels 1A, 1B, 1, and 2 are available, with Level 3 scheduled to be published in fall 2021. We encourage all interested educators to visit our website ([cheng-tsui.com](http://cheng-tsui.com)) to request a sampler or to contact their account representative for a product demo.

Liz Hanlon  
Marketing & Communications Coordinator  
Cheng & Tsui

## French

Anover, Véronique and Rémi Fournier Lanzoni. *On Tourne! French Language and Culture Through Film*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-62636-737-7.

For the last twenty years or so I have used film in all of my classrooms, in first- and second-year language courses as well as in General Studies courses taught in English. However, in the beginning I had to develop my own teaching materials. No more. Thankfully, publishers now provide us with pedagogically well-designed texts.

The volume under review here contains no fewer than thirteen film modules likely to appeal to an undergraduate audience. Very few of the films included in this volume made it to our shores. Among the exceptions are *Yves Saint-Laurent* and *Les Héritiers*. But rest assured that all films selected for inclusion in this volume are quality productions that most viewers are sure to appreciate for bringing out the diversity of the French and Francophone experience.

All thirteen films were released between the years 2010 and 2016. They include (themes included in parentheses):

1. *Comme un chef* (la gastronomie)
2. *Samba* (l'immigration)
3. *L'Arnacoeur* (l'amour)
4. *Le Prénom* (la famille)
5. *La French* (le polar)
6. *Intouchable* (l'amitié)
7. *Yves Saint-Laurent* (la mode)
8. *Made in France* (le terrorisme)
9. *Les adieux à la reine* (l'histoire)
10. *Bienvenue à Marly-Gomont* (la France des villages)
11. *Rock the Casbah* (la Francophonie)
12. *Cloclo* (la musique)
13. *Les Héritiers* (l'éducation nationale)

The presentation of each film follows the same basic order and is divided between a few short sections providing information about the film and far more numerous sections soliciting a wide variety of student input. The authors' approach is practical and pedagogical almost to a fault.

Each chapter contains the same subsections, which is not to say that teachers cannot pick and choose and perhaps supplement each module with a handful of individually tailored exercises. The text is billed as appropriate for an intermediate or advanced course but could be tweaked for use already at the first-year level.

According to the author's introduction, *On tourne!* can be used either as a stand-alone textbook for an advanced French conversation or film course or, alternatively, as "an accompaniment in an advanced conversation course, a composition course, or a contemporary culture course." The text adopts a communicative approach to maximize the use of the target language in all activities and includes technology to complement more traditional modes of teaching. TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning)

allows students to create visuals and audiovisuals to express themselves. The goal is to convey an in-depth understanding not only of language but also of culture and to invite students to make cross-cultural comparisons.

As the authors' Preface makes clear (vii-viii), *On tourne!* directly addresses ACTFL *World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* for the intermediate level by:

- Strengthening students' communication skills (interpersonal, interpretative, and presentational) and enabling them to effectively, appropriately, and sensitively interact with native speakers and texts in a variety of contexts.
- Deepening students' understanding of French speakers and their cultures through a cross-cultural approach
- Actively engaging students in real-life situations based on the themes presented in the films in order to foster a better understanding of culture.

Each module is approximately fifteen pages in length and follows the same format:

- **Synopsis:** The introduction to each film is focused and detailed and provides viewers with enough information to engage critically with the film.
- **Avant le visionnement du film:** Here students are prepped for what they may encounter in the movie and are asked inductive questions about the plot and the main characters. Vocabulary, including synonyms, is presented in context.
- **Pendant le film:** Comprehension exercises are intelligently designed and user-friendly.
- **Après le visionnement du film:** Here students are asked to engage critically with the film and to analyze specific scenes and specific forms of speech
- **Notes grammaticales:** This section focuses on a particular grammar topic or thematic vocabulary.
- **Pas de faux pas!:** This innovative section examines language as it is used in everyday communication and sets out to avoid miscommunications and cultural faux pas. The vocabulary notes are especially helpful.

A "Chapitre préliminaire" provides a list of technical vocabulary, invites students to submit a personal profile, including their likes and dislikes in cinema, and concludes with a fun quiz on famous French movies, actors, and directors.

There is also a very helpful Instructor's *Manual* that includes annotations, teaching tips, answer keys to the activities, and strategies, a list of modern French lexicon and slang, as well as links to websites to use with activities in the main text.

To give readers a flavor of the book I will now look at one of the selections, *Made in France* (2015). I try to include a new film every year and selected this film because it draws attention to terrorism in France but situates it in context. Also, it is an action-packed thriller, which students appreciate at the end of the semester.

The film is about Franco-Algerian journalist, Sam, who is working to map the activities of militant Islam in a Paris suburb. He discovers a plot to unleash an unparalleled wave of terrorist violence. Interestingly, the film was produced just before the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks in 2015 and the decision was made to delay its release for three months because of its obvious shock value.

First, the authors are to be commended for choosing such as a controversial film in the first place and for including so many hotly debated topics in the activities section. After completing vocabulary and comprehension questions, students are asked to weigh in on the ethics of *Charlie Hebdo*; several of the controversial cartoons are even included. The essay topics are exemplary by their far-reaching and insightful character and are sure to provide students with a better understanding of the complex issues at hand.

*On Tourne!* is an overall excellent introduction to French and Francophone film. The content-based approach to teaching language through film will help students to improve their language skills and intercultural comprehension.

Tom Conner  
Professor of French  
St. Norbert College  
De Pere, WI

### **Publisher's Response**

We would like to thank Professor Conner for this kind and thorough review of *On Tourne! French Language and Culture Through Film*. We particularly appreciate Professor Conner highlighting the engaging nature of the films covered in the book, the variety of activities included in each chapter, and the fact that a content-based approach to teaching language through film will help students to improve their language skills and intercultural comprehension. For instructors wishing to preview the textbook, exam copies can be requested at <http://press.georgetown.edu> or by emailing [gupress@georgetown.edu](mailto:gupress@georgetown.edu).

Stephanie Rojas  
Georgetown University

**Coursaget, Catherine and Micheline Myers. *Breaking the French Barrier*. Groton, MA: Breaking the Barrier, Inc., 2019. Level One Beginner. ISBN: 978-0-9903122-0-8. Level Two Intermediate. ISBN: 978-0-99031221-5. Level Three Advanced: ISBN: 978-0-99031221-5. Includes: Answer Key Booklet; Teacher Test Packet; Electronic version of Teacher Tests on Microsoft Word Editable Disc; and Double Audio CD set.**

Having previously reviewed the first edition of *Breaking the French Barrier* for the NECTFL *Review* in 2013, I was eager to see the new edition. The most immediately visible change is the new cover. Taking the original design, created by a Groton School student who won the art prize that year, the cover was reimagined to be bolder and more elegant. But the most significant change regards cultural content. For example, the authors double checked and updated all populations of Francophone countries as well as all current heads of state, rendering this information accurate as of July 2019. As *Breaking the French Barrier* is reprinted every couple of years, Breaking the Barrier, Inc., is one of the few publishers with print books who make a point of including this kind of information. More subtle changes are the inclusion of a new film, political leader, sports event, current song, Broadway show, or television program in some of the more topical exercises.



Moreover, *Breaking the French Barrier* will be available in a digital format in 2021. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic and its dramatic impact on education, quality options for instructional delivery in remote environments is naturally at the forefront of everyone's mind. The goal is for the digital textbooks to combine the best features of the Apple books that Breaking the Barrier, Inc., has done, but the newest improvement is that the *Breaking the French Barrier* series will work on all devices. The digital textbooks will be available through subscription at [www.tobreak.com](http://www.tobreak.com).

*Breaking the French Barrier* has maintained its consistent straightforward format and good-size font with enough open space for student notes. Eye-catching graphics also have remained unchanged. Each level consists of twelve chapters, verb charts, a French-English dictionary, an English-French dictionary, and an index. With the exception of the "First Steps" chapter of the Level One text, each chapter presents thematic vocabulary, grammar concepts with sample sentences highlighting structures, multiple practice exercises, a different francophone country map with timely national, cultural facts, and culminating "exercices de révision." The "First Steps" chapter of Level One also includes *Exercices de prononciation* and initial vocabulary building exercises.

Level Two continues with a strong emphasis on irregular verbs, the verbs *avoir* and *être* in the *passé composé*, and a close examination of the *passé composé* vs. the *imparfait*. New Level Two grammar topics include stem-changing verbs, the conditional, pluperfect, and future perfect verb tenses, the present subjunctive, relative pronouns (*qui, que, dont, où*), clauses with *si*, the present participle, uses of the infinitive, expressions with *faire* and idiomatic reflexive verbs. Level Three features a table of contents written entirely in French and ideally suited for third or fourth year of high school or the 200-300 level of college/university French programs and carefully examines both future and conditional verb tenses, the subjunctive mood, the passive voice, cardinal, and ordinal numbers, *il est opposé à c'est*, *passé simple*, indirect discourse, time expressions and a comprehensive final examination, *Briser la barrière!*

The *Breaking the French Barrier* series addresses all the rules of French grammar that a student needs to know in an engaging manner. It is appropriate for both secondary and post-secondary students of French, the Advanced Placement (AP), SAT II, International Baccalaureate (IB), and college/university placement examinations. Students are exposed to relevant and contemporary information on the Francophone world with maps presented for Francophone countries in Europe, Africa, the Pacific-rim, and the Caribbean. As I noted in my review of the first edition of *Breaking the French Barrier*, the only recommendation for future editions would be to include maps of the Francophone regions in North America beyond Quebec (e.g., the New Brunswick Acadian peninsula, Newfoundland, northern Maine, Massachusetts, and the multiple Francophone parishes of Louisiana) so American students of French develop a greater appreciation of the relevance of French not only in today's interdependent global economy but also of the cultural pride and heritage of Franco-Americans in modern-day U.S. society. Moreover, as the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically restricted travel, instructors will want to emphasize even more that one does not have to travel far in order to experience Francophone culture.

Eileen M. Angelini  
SUNY Empire State College  
Saratoga Springs, New York

### **Publisher's Response**

We are tremendously gratified that Professor Angelini was willing and available to review our series once again. Her comments and suggestions made us smile as she pointed out the salient features of our approach to learning language.

We are particularly proud of our new digital version, accessible now on all platforms. It will help greatly to make the language come alive for students, whether they be physically in the classroom or at home. Our audio recordings, photographs, video sequences, interactive exercises, and innovative flashcards truly enhance the philosophy of our original print textbooks. Our mission has always been to help the world better communicate by offering the best materials available for mastering a new language.

In today's world, speaking a foreign language helps tremendously to break many barriers. We are so thankful that Professor Angelini has so eloquently offered support for our vision of how language is best learned.

John Conner  
Breaking the Barrier

**Flatau Ross, Jane. *Two Centuries of French Education in New York: The Role of Schools in Cultural Diplomacy*. New York: TBR, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-947626-47-8.**

This book is recommended reading for educators, parents, heritage language community leaders, stakeholders in business and government, indeed for anyone who cares about languages and language learning.

As its title suggests, the book under review here provides a history of French schools in New York from the early nineteenth century up until the present time. This narrative history is viewed through the lens of the author's family history as a Franco-American and her professional background as a long-time teacher at the Lycée français de New York. Linking the story of French education in New York to her own personal family history as the descendant of a French doctor who supported the American cause during the Revolution, a teacher for 30 years at the Lycée Français, the parent of Lycée Français students, and the spouse of a former board member, Dr. Ross tells a compelling story from the early days and the Economical School, founded in 1810, to the thrilling story of the Bilingual Revolution taking place today and bringing dual language education to New York City public schools.

In successive chapters, Dr. Ross provides an overview of the creation of French schools around the world and their relationship to cultural diplomacy, a short history of French education in New York, the role of the traditional French *mission civilisatrice*, and a few concluding thoughts on the future of French education in New York City and in a globalized world.

Using the iconic Lycée Français de New York as a nodal point, Dr. Ross skillfully tells the story of French identity and education for global citizenship, weaving in insights on French government policy, the business aspects of private education in New York City, and considerations of social class and affluence among families choosing French education.

According to Dr. Ross, the Lycée Français and other schools like it in the New York City metropolitan area practice immersion and the use of authentic language which are highlighted in the development of proficiency within the framework of a multidisciplinary curriculum.

The discussion of the role of schools, language, and language learning in cultural diplomacy is especially relevant and timely in light of then newly elected French President

Macron's announcement of the French Dual-Language Fund in an address given at CUNY (City University of New York) during his 2017 visit to New York to address the UN General Assembly. Macron followed up with an announcement of a worldwide campaign to promote French. Dr. Ross discusses both initiatives in detail.

France is a global leader in terms of “soft power” or cultural influence, Paris being the most popular destination for international tourists; French art, culture, and lifestyle are renowned around the world, and the French language has long been synonymous with great literature, logical thought, and elegance and refinement. This appeal of French language and culture has not been lost on the New York elite and has drawn a significant number of students without French family background to French education in general and to the *Lycée Français* in particular.

As Dr. Ross points out, thanks to independent private schools in the US like the *Lycée Français*, there is a worldwide network of French language schools, which receive French government support to offer a French curriculum, including the highly recognized OIB (*Option internationale du baccalauréat*).

The most important message of the book is that a bilingual and bicultural education, in French or in any other language, for that matter, does not take away from a student's cultural identity but rather adds the dimension of another language and culture as well as the development of a global citizen mindset and values. In reading Dr. Ross' description of the value of a bilingual and bicultural education, it is difficult not to think that this kind of international education should be part of our public schools and freely available to all interested students, as advocated by the Bilingual Revolution movement.

Based on its scope and the many interesting topics covered, *Two Centuries of French Education in New York* appeal to the specialist and non-specialist alike—to French language, foreign language, and international educators, but also to Francophones and Francophiles in the New York City area and beyond, and especially to parents considering immersion education for their children.

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**Ghillebaert, Françoise. *Face-à-face: conversation sans frontières*. Third Edition. Boston: Vista Higher Learning, 2021. ISBN: 978-1-54330-894-5. Includes: student textbook, Supersite Plus Code (w/ WebSAM + vText). The supplementary materials for teachers include an instructor's annotated edition of the textbook and an instructor Supersite pass code.**

The third edition of *Face-à-face*, an advanced-level French conversation program, continues to be one of the best and most popular programs on the market today. The textbook features a flexible lesson organization and seamlessly integrates speaking, writing, reading, listening comprehension, and culture. It is specifically designed to meet the needs of diverse teaching styles, institutions, and instructional goals. Accompanied by a variety of up-to-date ancillary materials and supported by Vista's multifaceted and user-friendly Supersite, *Face-à-face* offers a wide variety of reading selections, such as

essays, stories, poems, excerpts of novels and articles, which, combined with authentic films, are an excellent tool to stimulate conversation. The language introduced and practiced in the textbook is not only embedded in Francophone cultures, but also representative of situations similar to those encountered in real life. Thematic vocabulary and grammar are fully contextualized to help students enrich their lexicon and improve their communicative skills.

There are six lessons in the textbook. Each lesson focuses on a different theme: *Les Relations Personnelles*, *Les Médias et La Technologie*, *Les Générations*, *Les Voyages et Les Transports*, *La Nature et L'environnement* and *La Société*. The lessons are divided into four sections, which follow a similar format. The first section, “*Court métrage*,” contains a short film by a contemporary filmmaker from a French-speaking country. There are eight different movies included in the program: *Manon sur le bitume*, *Reality+*, *Il neige à Marrakech*, *L'Autostoppeur*, *Bang Bang*, and *L'Accordeur*. Pre-viewing and post-viewing exercises as well as a variety of excellent vocabulary practice exercises accompany each movie. The next section, “*Structures*,” is designed to help review and practice grammar points linked to a video still from the lesson’s film. The “*Lectures*” section provides selections from both well-known and lesser-known French and Francophone authors in various genres and from various historical periods. Students will get to know Marie de France, Michel de Montaigne, Birago Diop, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, and Colette, among others. Each reading is accompanied by well thought-out pre-reading and post-reading exercises which serve as a springboard for conversation. Reading comprehension is further enhanced in the “*Bande dessinée*” section, which highlights cartoonists from various French-speaking countries and presents excerpts of their work. Each comic strip offers thought-provoking insights into various themes as well as comprehension questions. The “*Rédaction*” section gives students the opportunity to use their critical thinking skills and express themselves in writing while synthesizing the lesson’s vocabulary and grammar. It is designed to guide them through the writing process with pre-writing, and post-writing activities, and expose them to a variety of text types ranging from a comparative and analytical essay to an analysis of a poem. The last section, “*Conversation*,” pulls the entire lesson together with a lively discussion. Students have an opportunity to improve their speaking skills in a variety of topics and types of discourse. At the end of the textbook, the author included a conjugation table of French verbs, a map of the Francophone world, and a French-English glossary.

There are a number of important new features in the third edition. Two new short films have been added in the “*Court métrage*” section: *L'Autostoppeur*, in lesson 4, and *Bang bang!* in lesson 5. The “*Lectures*” section now includes five new readings: two literary excerpts, “*Les loyautés*” by Delphine de Vigan in lesson 2, and “*La petite fille de la cité sans nom*” by Maïssa Bey in lesson 6, two essays “*Virtuel, mon amour*” by Serge Tisseron in lesson 4 and “*Devant la beauté de la nature*” by Alexandre Lacroix in lesson 6, and a story, “*Le voyage est un révélateur d'âmes*,” by Claudia and Clément Le Pape in lesson 4. The newly revised “*Bande dessinée*” section encourages students to use the comic strip for conversation. New activities have also been added to the video Virtual Chat feature and the *Fiches de Grammaire* repertory has been supplemented with eighteen new grammar topics with explanations and activities. Lastly, the Vocabulary

Tools feature now includes not only customizable word lists and flashcards, but also a French definition for every word.

The Supersite, with many resources available for every lesson, is an integral part of the *Face-à-face* program. It allows students to record and submit their recordings for oral assessments, access the online virtual workbook, watch a complete film collection and listen to textbook and lab manual audio files. For instructors, the Supersite offers a variety of useful teaching and planning resources including exams and quizzes, grammar PowerPoint presentations, lesson plans, audio and video scripts, answer keys as well as online course management tools. Additionally, it features Virtual Chat and Video Partner Chat for interpersonal communication activities in which video and outside resources can be added and existing content can be modified with personalized notes.

The Supersite makes *Face-à-face* an excellent program for unexpected situations, like the recent COVID-19, in which many of us taught our courses either partially or fully online. It can be tailored to fit each individual student's needs and adapted to synchronous or asynchronous instruction. Students can work individually or in groups on various activities both during virtual class time and at home. Furthermore, the integration of the Supersite with the Canvas LMS, which many schools now use, helps make a smooth transition between face-to-face and online instruction. In case of any technical glitches or issues, the Vista technical team addresses them quickly and efficiently. While managing my course online, I found it easy to administer online quizzes, customize course settings, copy content from previous semesters and create a gradebook.

The third edition of *Face-à-face* is an innovative, original, and flexible program. Its unique magazine-like format and highly structured graphic design, as well as a wide variety of oral and written activities no doubt will motivate French students and inspire instructors by providing a unique and compelling learning experience.

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Professor of French  
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh  
Oshkosh, WI

### **Publisher's Response**

I am pleased to respond to Professor Andrzej Dziejdzic's review of Vista Higher Learning's Advanced French program *Face-à-face: Conversation sans frontières*, Third Edition. I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Dziejdzic for his generous praise of *Face-à-face* and for highlighting so many of what my fellow editors and I, as well, consider to be the program's major strengths.

Of special significance is Professor Dziejdzic's reference to *Face-à-face*'s seamless integration of the five language skills (writing, reading, listening, speaking, culture) and its corollary use of authentic materials. This authentic content, encompassing multiple genres and sourced from across the Francophone world, stimulates engaging class discussions on topics of relevance to a wide student audience. Indeed, the goal of the *Face-à-face* author and developers across the program's three editions has been to instill in students the desire to express themselves often and in French. As Professor Dziejdzic notes, the carefully scaffolded pre-/post-viewing and pre-/post-reading activities are a key catalyst for providing the support students need to practice their language skills in

ways that are meaningful to their reality and trigger critical thinking. I was also pleased to read Professor Dziedzic's recognition of the variety of writing genres and types of discourse integral to the *Rédaction* and *Conversation* strands, respectively.

Finally, I sincerely appreciate that Professor Dziedzic mentions the flexibility and robustness of the *Face-à-face* Supersite and its opportune usefulness during the difficult COVID-19 circumstances. All Vista Higher Learning Supersites were designed from their inception to accommodate a variety of course formats and teaching styles, including compatibility with hybrid and remote learning. I was therefore thrilled to read Professor Dziedzic's corroboration of the Supersite's role as a valuable asset in asynchronous language teaching and learning that furthermore supports LMS integration. Of great importance to the online environment, as well, is the responsiveness and efficiency of Vista Higher Learning's Technical Support team, who, as Professor Dziedzic attests, is on hand at every turn to assist students with their technology queries.

Armando Brito  
Managing Editor  
Vista Higher Learning

**Grangier, Claude and Nadine O'Connor Di Vito. *Comme on dit 1: Première année de français*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 2019. Paper Student Edition ISBN: 978-1-62616-415-4. <http://press.georgetown.edu/book/languages/comme-dit-0>.**

**\_\_\_\_\_. *C'est ce qu'on dit 2: Deuxième année de français*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 2019. Paper Student Edition ISBN: 978-1-62616-592-2. <http://press.georgetown.edu/book/languages/cest-ce-quon-dit-0>.**

Designed for post-secondary level French courses, both *Comme on dit 1: Première année de français* and its companion text, *C'est ce qu'on dit 2: Deuxième année de français*, offer a student-centered method enabling students to communicate effectively on topics relevant to them. Supported by the [CommeOnDitTextbook.com](http://CommeOnDitTextbook.com) website, the texts provide a plethora of authentic spoken (over 1,000 audio and video files) and written French that is rooted in a methodology of inductive learning via the analysis of authentic discourse. Over the course of a twenty-five-year period, the authors, Claude Grangier and Nadine O'Connor Di Vito, amassed an impressive collection of unscripted interviews with university-age and university-educated native speakers from multiple regions in France as well as from Quebec, Belgium, French Guyana for the first-year text and from Congo, Haiti, Morocco, and Senegal for the second-year text. The authors' goal was "to find the grammatical and lexical patterns underlying everyday interactions and discussions. Together with the communicative needs of students and the analysis of their most pervasive transfer errors from English, these everyday speech patterns form the linguistic backbone of the method" (XVI). Moreover, with a balanced focus on reading, writing, listening, speaking that incorporates a solid grammatical and lexical base, upon completion of *Comme on dit 1*, the objective is that students will reach the competency level of Intermediate-Mid to Intermediate-High on the ACTFL scale. Upon completion of *C'est ce qu'on dit 2*, the aim is that students will



be at the Advanced-Low level on the ACTFL scale and the B1 level on the Common European Framework scale.

Important to note is the fact that *Comme on dit 1* and *C'est ce qu'on dit 2* are not simply to be defined by their extensive collection of audio and video files. Both texts also provide an intriguing range of selections of 250 written samples of authentic discourse, such as book titles and proverbs. Furthermore, the ancillary instructor's resources, specifically, instructor's manual, quizzes, and sample midterm and final exams, are well structured. Particularly appealing is the clean layout of text and graphics (that have the added bonus of whimsical characters). For example, each chapter's *table des matières*, indicates succinctly for students "What You Will Learn to Do in This Unit" and "The Tools You Will Need" in the areas of *vocabulaire*, *grammaire*, and *culture*. Equally attractive is the scaffolding of grammar exercises that are directly linked to authentic sources. For example, in *Unité 15*: "*Je cherche la poste...*," *Exercice 1* asks students to "observez les noms de rue, puis barrez les combinaisons incorrectes et remplacez-les par les formes correctes pour compléter le *Rappel*" (250). Then, in *Exercice 2*, students listen to an authentic audio source to complete the transcription and, in addition, are asked to imitate the intonation of the recording. In *Exercice 3*, students complete the conjugation table of the verb *sortir* based on the *Exercice 2* transcription and in *Exercice 4*, working with partners, students conjugate verbs like *sortir* (*dormir*, *partir*, *sentir*, *servir*, and *mentir*). The next three exercises expand upon the acquired grammar as students use more student-relevant authentic sources. In short, the exercises are not "drill and kill" but creatively designed ones that foster student mastery of the necessary skills for meaningful interactions. In conclusion, *Comme on dit 1* and *C'est ce qu'on dit 2* reflect a well-designed purposeful program. Along with post-secondary educators, AP French Language and Culture instructors will want to consider them as an integrated part of their curriculum.

Eileen M. Angelini  
SUNY Empire State College  
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### **Publisher's Response**

We are grateful for the opportunity to thank Professor Angelini for her wonderful review of *Comme on dit 1* and *C'est ce qu'on dit 2*. This language program relies on a companion website, a wide selection of audio and visual files, authentic written discourse, and instructor resources to engage students in the learning process using an inductive methodology centered on guided observation and rule discovery. We particularly appreciate that Professor Angelini notes the clean layout of text and graphics and the scaffolding of grammar exercises that are directly linked to authentic resources. Instructors wishing to preview the language program may request an exam copy at <http://press.georgetown.edu> or by emailing [gupress@georgetown.edu](mailto:gupress@georgetown.edu).

Stephanie Rojas  
Georgetown University Press



**Gueldry, Michel, and Armelle Crouzières-Ingenthron, eds. *La France contemporaine: unité et diversités, polarisations et solidarités*. Marion, IL: American Association of Teachers of French, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-7339360-3-3.**

This comprehensive and up-to-date collection of essays exploring contemporary French society and culture is a godsend to everyone in the profession who teach that fascinating but challenging course still called “French Civilization” or maybe “French Society and Culture.” Many, if not all, practitioners teach “French civ” as a general studies overview of a medley of oftentimes contradictory topics ranging from political institutions and parties and the educational system to literature and the arts. It is never clear how they neatly fit together.

The *manuel de civilisation* has undergone a much-needed facelift of late, suggesting a changing awareness of the field as a whole and the realization that we need a new curriculum with a new set of teaching materials. However, I know of very few pedagogically oriented and practical titles such as the one under review here. But, just to be clear, the text under review here is limited to contemporary French and Francophone culture; there is only scant mention of any preceding historical period.

The quick turnaround of this volume makes it possible to discuss Michel Houellebecq’s controversial novel *La Soumission* (2015) and the Gilets Jaunes movement but also the beginnings of the Corona pandemic and the relevance in France of Black Lives Matter and to do so using “le français inclusif (e.g., “les étudiant.e.s) throughout as well as neologisms such as “afropeens” (175) and “intranter” (393).

*La France Contemporaine* complies with the World Readiness Standards (2015) and the five Cs, especially in the areas of Communication and Comparisons. Moreover, the implementation of ACTFL’s Can Do Statement empowers learners to combine linguistic mastery and intercultural competence to make comparisons between their own culture and other, Francophone cultures. This volume aims at nothing less than transforming the way we teach French and Francophone culture to American students. Ideally suited for intermediate and advanced culture courses each essay of the volume also includes a follow-up section with comprehension questions, discussion topics and activities, as well as an up-to-date bibliography. A useful Glossary explaining important terminology is provided in an appendix. But there is no Index, which would have been helpful given the complexity of the topics covered. A reader looking for, say, the alleged sexual assault of a hotel maid in New York City by former finance minister, Chair of the International Monetary Fund and early frontrunner in the presidential election of 2012, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, will have to review relevant chapters to find a reference.

In an introductory essay co-editor Michel Gueldry sets the tone: the French republican monolith inspired by the revolutionary slogan *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* began to unravel after the oil crisis in the early 1970s, exposing “la tension fondamentale entre l’unité et la diversité contemporaine en France, entre le centre (ou la norme) et les voix discordantes” (2-3). Since then, France has been forced to become reconciled with the existence of diversity in its midst and to begin to acknowledge its many shortcomings. The US is no different in this regard and many chapters invite students to make valuable intercultural comparisons.

The book is divided into five sections, each examining a different subject matter from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives: *Être femme en France; Les Minorités et les religions*

*en France; Sexualité/s et générations; Langues et cultures centrales et périphériques; and La France en Europe et dans le monde.*

It would be impossible here to fully account for the complex analysis and wealth of information provided in the altogether seventeen rather lengthy essays of the volume, but I will attempt a short overview.

Figuring prominently in the first section, “*Être femme en France*,” is an essay on “rethinking Marianne,” looking at the changing fortunes of the famous French allegorical figure, which provides a stepping stone for looking at a host of other issues ranging from French feminism (which is quite different from its American counterpart, though they have always been in a symbiotic relationship) and images of women in the French media to French women politicians and the controversial gender-inclusive writing aka as “*l’écriture inclusive*.”

The next part of the book, “*Les Minorités et les religions en France*,” leads off with an essay examining recent immigration patterns; the image of Islam in France; the head scarf affair in 1989 and its many sequels leading up to the 2004 law banning the wearing of any “ostentatious” religious articles in public schools; the *Marche des beurs* in 1983 (altogether four cross-country marches modeled on the American freedom marches during the Civil Rights movement); the French NGO *SOS Racisme*; and a trenchant discussion of the social and political challenges involved in the French concept of *laïcité*.

As one of the following essays argues, the French state’s inability to resolve the thorny relationship between the state and religion contextualizes the rise of radical Islam, the menace of terrorism and the risks posed by the so-called “revenants” (ex-IS militants and their families returning home) as well as the rise of the far right, and the author suggests that the French state relax its draconian interpretation of *laïcité* (“*moderniser ou assouplir*” [159]). This is an enormously controversial proposition in light of the century or so it took for the French state to negotiate a *modus vivendi* with the Church and its implications have caused an uproar among the mainstream white population at large whose belief system has been badly shaken by the recent debate on national identity. On the other hand, a fresh new look at *laïcité* might achieve increased social harmony as well as a reduction of terrorism. Tempting as this solution may seem it obviously does not address another core question, namely that fundamental social inequalities are more likely to affect minority populations. France must come to a reckoning with all these issues. One starting point might be to follow the example of Alsace where Napoleon’s concordat survived German annexation after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and French reintegration after World War I, making it possible to maintain a measure of religious freedom in the educational system to this day.

A subsequent chapter examines the history of Jews in France and ends on a somber note, reminding readers that thousands of French Jews emigrate every year because they no longer feel safe in France after the number of anti-Semitic hate crimes has risen sharply in recent years.

The next chapter looks at Asians living in France. But is the one-million+ strong Asian community really well integrated? To be sure, Asians have fared better economically and, since the days of Voltaire, have enjoyed an overall positive image in society because they are perceived to be law-abiding, hardworking, and ambitious. But they, too, are diverse. For example, Vietnamese are better integrated than Chinese.

The essay on the LGBT+ community in the next section, *Sexualité/s et generations*, provides a much needed primer on homophobia in France and the introduction of legislation to protect the rights of sexual minorities. Despite the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2013 discrimination and homophobic attitudes persist. Moreover, reproductive technology is not yet easily available to gay and lesbian couples.

In 2020 French youth feels more than just a little bit alienated, as the next few chapters on education and unemployment make abundantly clear. They confirm many cultural stereotypes about the French in general: the French are pessimistic, do not believe in God, support the welfare state but don't necessarily like any government for long and resent reform of education, labor laws, and pensions; they still value the family but divorce at a high rate. Moreover, French youth enjoy the same privileges and suffer the same discrimination as youth in the rest of the Western world: entrenched socio-economic privilege explains why children of the well-to-do educated middle classes always do better than children of the working class and why they are less likely to face permanent unemployment or social alienation.

The following part of the book, *Langues et cultures centrales et périphériques*, leads off with a fascinating look at linguistic diversity in France and reviews the various regional languages and dialects (e.g., Alsatian, Basque, Breton, Catalan, Occitan, Picardien, and Provençal, to name only the most prominent). In 1900, a majority of people living in France had a language other than French as their mother tongue. But the French state has always combated linguistic diversity and since at least Francis I's decree of Villers Cotterets in 1539 promoted French as the national language. This intransigence has not stopped linguistic diversity to take other forms and the authors of the next few chapters explore *verlan*, hip hop as well as the impact of social media on the emergence of a new ungrammatical French which the Académie Française does its best to combat. Social media and music are changing the French language in unimaginable ways. Rap music is very popular and evidently has had a profound impact on the French language, in no small part because, unlike their American counterparts, French rappers are more ethnically diverse. Any living language (the French rightly call foreign languages "*langues vivantes*"), evolves, and French is not alone in this respect.

The last section, *La France en Europe et dans le monde*, reflects on trends in popular culture, drawing on the last essay of the previous section, on the changing fortunes of the French language. "Beur literature" has given way to a new term, "*littérature urbaine*" and the term "étranger," interestingly, is gradually being replaced by a neologism: "*intrananger*," i.e., a person born in France but who due to discrimination is a de facto "*intrananger*" or "*étranger*" of the interior. The debate on the merits and sins of colonialism encouraged by Sarkozy cannot deny the fact that colonialism perverted the civilizing mission of the French by justifying the exploitation of native populations in the name of a superior Western civilization.

The next chapter reviews the history of French colonialism and the goes on to examine what might be called a French identity crisis, laid bare after the 2005 riots that erupted across France after yet another "*bavure policière*" that left two Maghrebin youths dead. At first sight France appeared to acknowledge social change underway for decades: for example, President Sarkozy's government oversaw the creation of the *Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration et de l'Identité nationale* and introduced a French version of affirmative action called "*discrimination positive*"; it also initiated a national debate on Islam in France which

did more to polarize existing differences than anything else. But it turned out to be too little too late.

French nonchalance about an underlying racial divide in France is reflected in the meager offerings in postcolonial studies in France, which might shed some light on what is happening today. It obviously began with colonialism which, like slavery, is akin to original sin and is still playing out in France today in myriad ways. The Algerian war of independence, finally, exposed the wound but the pain on all sides has not gone away. In 2010 then Paris mayor inaugurated a plaque on the Pont Saint-Michel commemorating the October 17, 1961, massacre of possibly hundreds of Algerians. Colonialism is not well taught in French schools (but then again neither is the Holocaust which many instructors in the *banlieues* choose to ignore so as not to offend the sensibilities of the predominantly Muslim student body). This book is as up to date as any book can be but for obvious reasons does not include mention of the October 2020 tragic beheading of a schoolteacher who dared to show the now infamous *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons of the prophet Mohammad in a civics class on the freedom of speech.

The last two chapters deal with the rise of the populist right and the declining fortunes of President Macron. He wants to be more liberal yet at the same time continues to support the traditional welfare state. This is “social liberalism.” Incidentally, his initials, E.M., are also the initials of the movement he created (En Marche) and Macron has taken a “Jupeterian” approach to power, following in the footsteps of de Gaulle and Mitterrand. As I write, however, it is clear that Macron, this “*authentique libéral de gauche*” (469) and defender of social justice also is an inveterate globalist and Europhile who has misjudged the extent of the “*fracture sociale*” (481) he has no choice but to acknowledge. Whether it be the Gilets Jaunes or growing concerns about race and social justice Macron does not always appear to be in charge. Going back to what Gueldry wrote in his introduction: “*le projet national français est en crise*” (483) and what the future holds is highly uncertain.

In 1997 longtime Gaullist minister Alain Peyrefitte published a remarkable essay titled *Le mal Français* in which he argued that France lagged behind the other great powers because it suffered from a deep rooted cultural malaise. Centuries of social conflict had led to an unstable status quo where every side held on to its entrenched privileges and refused to see the common good. Moreover, France was “*bloquée*,” refusing to reconsider a given way of doing things, whether it be in bureaucracy, business, or education, leading to an inevitable decline vis-à-vis other world powers.

Even though great progress has been made thanks to globalization and continued integration within the EU the “*mal français*” persists today because of a reluctance and perhaps a systemic inability to take seriously the great divides in French society which are only growing bigger and continue to chip away at that elusive idea of national identity which still lies at the heart of the French Republic.

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### Publisher's Response

Given the length of this book, the analysis in this review of *La France contemporaine: unité et diversité, polarisations et solidarités* is both thorough and weaves together the various strands of contemporary culture examined in the chapters. Tom Conner provides a clear description of how this work could be used as a manual for teaching a contemporary French civilization course and how it relates to current methodological trends. As an association founded on promoting the study of the French language and Francophone cultures, we are interested in how current events and social issues impact our work in the classroom. Although this book deals only with France, the comparisons fostered with the U.S. and potentially with other Francophone countries can deepen readers' understanding of the issues facing contemporary societies.

Jayne Abrate  
Executive Director  
American Association of Teachers of French

### Italian

**Bisello Antonucci, Daniella, and Paola Nastri. *Spazi riflessivi in passeggeri notturni*. London and New York: Routledge, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-138-34698-7 (hbk); 978-1-138-34699-4 (pbk); 978-0-429-43714 (ebk).**

**Carofiglio, Gianrico. *Passeggeri notturni*. Torino: Einaudi, 2020. ISBN: 978-88-06-23567-3.**

Literature offers a particularly useful tool to teach a language and culture in all its dimensions, but if we exclude some titles dedicated to beginners, it is difficult to find recent textbooks of Italian literature fulfilling this function. The solution to this problem comes with Daniela Bisello Antonucci and Paola Nastri's *Spazi riflessivi in Passeggeri notturni*, a project which stems from the authors' interest in unpacking Gianrico Carofiglio's recent collection of short stories, *Passeggeri notturni* (Torino: Einaudi, 2016-2017). An award-winning and best-selling author, Gianrico Carofiglio is also a former prosecutor who specialized in organized crime and for many years served as advisor of the anti-mafia commission in the Italian parliament. Best known for his crime series, Carofiglio sold millions of copies of his novels, including *Involuntary Witness*, *A Walk in the Dark*, *Reasonable Doubts*, *Temporary Perfections*, and *A Fine Line* (Bitter Lemon Press). His work has been translated into twenty-four languages worldwide.

With *Passeggeri notturni*, however, the former prosecutor and parliamentarian has chosen the format of the short story to wittily examine, as he writes in his introductory note, *Forma breve*, "other people's business." The short story is a distinctly Italian genre, rooted as it is in a literary tradition that dates back to Boccaccio and his *Decameron*. In *Forma breve*, Carofiglio points to the elements that make this format uniquely suited to provide compressed yet captivating slices of life, as aphorisms, sketches, apologues, portraits, and quick exchanges, while exploring a society in all its idiosyncrasies. The textual limits imposed by the short narration are for Carofiglio a rather motivating feature, as they give authors both freedom to experiment and space for their creativity.

On the other side, that of pedagogy and second language acquisition, selecting *Passeggeri notturni* for an Italian textbook on literature is quite an original choice. Generally, in fact, in the past such textbooks have been collections of stories by different authors, covering in most cases many centuries of Italian literary production. This was the rather conventional yet most popular editorial choice. With *Spazi riflessivi*, Daniela Bisello Antonucci and Paola Natri have decided to focus instead on one author with a distinct literary voice and an ironic narrative style, the result of many years of experience and careful examination of people, events, and moments in contemporary Italy. With approachable and engaging stories, *Passeggeri notturni* invites students to see the many interesting angles from which to delve into relevant issues confronting Italian society. Elegantly written and yet accessible, the brief texts address topics such as bullying, discrimination, violence, generational and gender relations, helping students as they reflect on history, culture, memory, identity, and imagination.

Gianrico Carofiglio's paperback collection is thus essential for students to purchase together with the *Spazi riflessivi* textbook. The thirty short stories are couched within the thirty units of the textbook. The *Index* at the beginning of the volume lists the topics, related activities, discussion points, and the grammar exercises instructors can utilize to approach each text from a thematic, stylistic, and linguistic point of view. The flexibility of *Spazi riflessivi's* short units allows for it to be used either as the main text or as an ancillary one, for a one- or two-semester course, or for an AP course at the high school level. As the authors note in their *Introduzione* (Introduction), *Spazi riflessivi* was conceived with the objective of providing intermediate-advanced students of Italian with stimulating themes that are also very close to their own lives and experiences. Familiarity with the topics will animate class activities while also furthering the students' understanding of contemporary Italian life. Pre-reading activities provide the necessary historical context and additional information is accessible through films, songs, and other cultural products. Post-reading debates and individual research help students hone their knowledge of Italian reality and a final grammar review with a variety of level-appropriate exercises supports them as they reflect on the various elements of the Italian language.

Consistent with a comprehensive and effective pedagogical experience, one of the main strengths of *Spazi riflessivi* is its multidisciplinary approach. Bisello Antonucci and Natri have taken great pains to connect each topic with other disciplines, among them cinema studies, the visual arts, music, philosophy, history, and comparative literatures. This is one of the most salient aspects of *Spazi riflessivi*, whose structure provides instructors with the necessary support to expand students' learning through the connection with the humanities and a strong focus on out-of-class activities and individual research online and in the library. As an example, in Unit Three, the text elicits reflections on the topics of memory, scents, the senses, and gastronomy. Students will read Carofiglio's story, *Aria del tempo* (Air du temps), focusing on the memory of the senses. Prior to the reading, students are encouraged to see *Profumo di donna*, a famous Italian movie recently released as a Hollywood production (*Scent of a Woman*). Activities help students reflect on their own experiences and perceptions regarding the senses and their impact on memory formation. Several oral and written vocabulary building activities guide students as they contextualize new words in



effective communicative exchanges. From the sense of smell, they are led to discuss other senses, such as taste, which quickly moves them to the memory of food in their respective cultural backgrounds. Further readings invite them to research Italian traditions, such as local holidays and festivals, which students can explore through individual research. Final presentations of their research constitute the moment of synthesis of their linguistic and cultural exploration.

Much space is given to the students' reflective mode after the reading of each text. In particular, activities are dedicated to the comprehension of both content and style, to the analysis of each text and its meta-language. Students are guided through the various dimensions of the literary product with activities that proceed from group and class discussions to writing and creative exercises. Individual research is the focus of the section *Approfondimento e Riflessione* (In-depth Analysis and Reflection) at the end of each unit, where the authors encourage both individual work and collaborative projects.

If the text contains many activities and stimuli for class work, discussions, and research, it could take advantage of a more visually engaging format, through the addition, in each unit, of drawings, pictures, interactive maps, games and crossword puzzles. Similarly, and it is something to look forward to in future editions, the volume should be accompanied by its own website, where students would find interactive activities to stimulate their out of class explorations of Italy's contemporary reality.

In sum, *Spazi riflessivi in Passeggeri notturni* constitutes an original and effective tool for the teaching of contemporary Italian language and culture at the intermediate and advanced level. Consistent with the 5 Cs and proficiency levels established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), with each short story *Spazi riflessivi* offers students a slice of Italian reality that will captivate and intrigue them, while instructors will have a plethora of stimulating activities to engage them with in-and-outside of class projects.

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## Spanish

**Muñoz-Basols, Javier, Nina Moreno, Inma Taboada, and Manel Lacorte. *Introducción a la lingüística hispánica actual: teoría y práctica*. New York: Routledge, 2019. ISBN: 9781138209213 (hardback), 9780415631570 (paperback), 97880203096758 (eBook).**

*Introducción a la lingüística hispánica actual: teoría y práctica* is a volume conceived and designed to introduce students to the field of Hispanic Linguistics. This is a vast undertaking considering that the Spanish language is spoken by close to five hundred million speakers in more than twenty countries. As the authors state in the introduction, their goal was to write a broad and stimulating introduction to the field of Hispanic Linguistics. Students who approach the study of linguistics for the first



time may have very different motivations and goals, but the authors are aware of this and, therefore, their book can be used for different purposes. The authors want their audience not only to learn about the field of linguistics from a theoretical standpoint but also reflect about the mechanisms and structures of the language.

The book is written entirely in Spanish, and it includes clear and concise explanations. It is best used in upper-level undergraduate Spanish courses or introductory courses in graduate programs. As the authors point out, the book is intended for “students of Spanish with little or no linguistic background who need to understand the key concepts and constructs of Hispanic Linguistics.” The ultimate goal is to provide students with a comprehensive foundation in the field of Hispanic linguistics.

*Introducción a la lingüística española actual* is divided into eight chapters. The first five chapters cover formal and functional aspects of the field. The opening chapter is devoted to key linguistic concepts, different theories of language, and the main areas or fields of study. The next four chapters focus on the more formal aspects of Hispanic linguistics: phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. The last three chapters delve into historic and social aspects such as the history of the language, linguistic variation, and language acquisition. Each chapter follows a similar structure. The chapter opens with an introduction to the topic or field of study at hand and progressively presents key concepts and ideas. Activities are interspersed throughout the chapter. This allows students to reflect on and put into practice what they have learned. At the end of each chapter, there is a list of possible research projects, additional readings, a list of key concepts and terms, and a specialized bibliography. At the end of the book, there is a glossary of bilingual terms and a thematic index.

Introducing undergraduate students of Spanish, who may still be in the process of learning the language, to the field of linguistics is always a challenge. Most students have never approached the study of Spanish from a theoretical perspective and may find the content too challenging or abstract. *Introducción a la lingüística española actual*, nonetheless, finds the right balance: its explanations are concise, clear, and easy to follow. The book presupposes no prior knowledge and students learn key concepts and ideas about the different components of the language (phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics) methodically. As already indicated, activities are introduced at different points in the chapter. Students can focus on different concepts or aspects at a time, and they are given ample opportunities to work and reflect on these aspects before moving onto more complex ideas. Another unique feature of this volume is the use of drawings and figures. These are simple drawings that help students grasp key concepts. Some are even funny, and this humorous aspect makes it easier for students to relate to the concept. For example, in Chapter 2, the authors include several figures explaining how strong and weak vowels are combined in diphthongs; or in Chapter 3, students can easily understand how compound words such as *sacacorchos* (corkscrew) and *correvedile* (gossipmonger) are formed. These drawings are well designed, funny, and they definitely help students understand key ideas and concepts.

At the end of each chapter, *Introducción a la lingüística española actual* includes valuable sources for both the instructor and students. Instructors will have no difficulty assigning research projects as four or five possible research projects are included in each chapter. Some of these projects require students to do their own research; other times, students have the option of consulting different sources in order to come up with their own theory or explanation. These are interesting and thought-provoking projects that will be

appealing to students with different interests or goals. Moreover, a list of additional readings is provided. These readings provide students who want to learn more about a certain topic with valuable resources.

It is worth mentioning that *Introducción a la lingüística española actual* can be used in combination with *Lingüística Española actual: Guía didáctica y materiales de apoyo*, written by Muñoz-Basols and Lacorte, and published by Routledge. This guide can be a great asset as it provides instructors with instructions on how to plan, design, and teach an introduction to linguistics course. The guide can be useful to students too. The volume includes, among other things, the answer key to the activities found in the textbook, additional activities, which can be used in the classroom or assigned as homework, essay questions, and additional research projects.

*Introducción a la lingüística española actual* affords instructors and students a great deal of flexibility. This textbook is appropriate for undergraduate courses that introduce students to the field of Hispanic linguistics for the first time. Undergraduate students majoring in Spanish should have no problem with the content material and will have ample opportunities to conduct basic research. Given the additional materials and more in-depth research projects, the book can also be used in introductory courses at the graduate level. Many undergraduate students do not study linguistics in college so they might need a true introductory course to linguistics as they start their graduate education.

Throughout my career as a Spanish instructor teaching undergraduate students, I have taught this introductory course using different textbooks and *Introducción a la lingüística española actual* clearly stands out. It approaches each field of study in a very matter-of-fact fashion. The explanations are easy to follow, and the learning process is supported by clear charts, examples, figures, and tables. The large number of activities included in each chapter gives instructors flexibility while it provides students with opportunities if they want to practice outside class time. If instructors want a more applied and first-hand approach to linguistics, the essay questions, research projects, and additional readings will help them achieve this goal. *Introducción a la lingüística española actual* is sure to provide students with a strong foundation in the field of Hispanic Linguistics.

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### Technology

**Blake, Robert J. and Gabriel Guillén. *Brave New Digital Classroom: Technology and Foreign Language Learning*. Third edition. Washington, Georgetown University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781626167391 (hardcover: print); ISBN 9781626167407 (paperback: print); ISBN: 9781626167414 (ebook)**

*Brave New Digital Classroom: Technology and Foreign Language Learning* is an insightful and comprehensive guide aimed at helping foreign language educators use technology to support second language (L2) learning. The book is intended for pre-service and in-service language teachers and applied linguistics interested in leveraging

digital tools that enhance language learning experiences and lead to multilingualism. This book consists of an introduction, six chapters, and an epilogue. Each chapter culminates with a section on recommendations for further reading followed by discussion questions and activities. In addition, a glossary of terms and list of references are provided at the end of the book.

Blake and Guillén organize the book chapters around six inherent qualities that all learners possess. Learners are: (1) speakers of tongues, *homo loquens*; (2) both conscious and intuitive analyzers, *homo analyticus*; (3) social beings, *homo socius*; (4) tool users, *homo faber*; (5) game players, *homo ludens*; and (6) storytellers, *homo fabulans*. In Chapter 1, “Can Technology Help with L2 Learning?,” the authors begin by discussing the differences between first language (L1) and L2 learning. Employing an interactionist framework, they then make a strong case for purposeful, goal-oriented technology in the L2 curriculum. The distinction between tutorial and social computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is addressed, as are misunderstandings about technology and second language acquisition (SLA). The chapter concludes with an excellent discussion of various SLA theories in relation to technology (e.g., Generative approaches, Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, Usage-based approaches, Interactionist approaches, Sociocultural theory, and Swain’s Output Hypothesis).

Chapter 2, “What is the Right Technological Fit for L2 Learning?,” focuses on providing language teachers with a framework for CALL evaluation. The authors discuss how learners use CALL tools and activities while at the same time offering suggestions for developing CALL pedagogy that is closely aligned with local circumstances. In their discussion of the assessment of learning outcomes, the authors provide an overview of the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* and the *Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR)* and then highlight several computer adaptive language exams: the ACTFL web-based oral proficiency interview (OPIC) the AVANT Standards-Based Measure of Proficiency Test (STAMP) 4S online exam, and VERSANT. Task-based language teaching, autonomous learning, and online L2 learning are also discussed.

In Chapter 3, “How Does the Digital World Shape Our Social Interactions?,” the authors focus their attention on social interaction and language development. The aim of this chapter is to present to readers an overview of social CALL. The authors begin with first-generation web tools, such as email, electronic mailing lists, and asynchronous discussion forums. Second-generation tools include blogs and wikis. Next, synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) and intercultural CMC are described. The methodological principles that language teachers should follow when implementing SCMC tasks are provided. The authors follow this up with a case study of SCMC with text and audio. The case study provides the reader unfamiliar with SCMC an excellent example of how to draw learners’ attention to language features in context. The chapter concludes with social CALL and language learning social networks. Several websites, offering free and premium services, are provided.

Chapter 4, “What Digital Tools Work for L2 Learning,” focuses on tutorial CALL. Tutorial CALL involves the use of computer programs, websites, and other applications to practice the L2. Digital dictionaries, CALL for vocabulary practice, video and audio tools, authoring tools, and CALL for reading are reviewed. Suggestions are provided for making informed and thoughtful choices about CALL that will enhance L2 learning. In Chapter 5, “Games for Language Learning,” the authors turn to gaming and the notion of play as a way

to promote L2 motivation and language learning both in the classroom and outside of class. Games for L2 learning such as *Second Life* and *World of Warcraft* are discussed. Mobile apps are also described. LingroToGo is an app jointly developed by the Center for Applied Language Studies at the University of Oregon and the language learning start-up, Lingro Learning. Targeting all four skills through game-like activities, LingroToGo motivates users by an internal coinage reward system based on time on task, accuracy, speed, and problem-solving abilities. A unique feature of this app is the special attention it gives to providing students with support in the learning of pragmatic speech acts (e.g., refusing and inviting)—an area of language competence that unfortunately remains absent in most beginning Spanish textbook programs.

Chapter 6, “Digital Literacy and L2 Identity”, highlights the affordances digital storytelling provides to L2 learners who can experiment with and develop their emerging bilingual/bicultural identities. Corrective feedback tools, automated writing evaluation, online collaborative writing programs, social or collaborative reading, digital storytelling, and fan fiction are examined in the context of L2 digital literacies. The authors situate digital storying telling and digital writing tools as opportunities for L2 learners to gain new insights into the L2 while simultaneously helping them develop a new sense of self. In the Epilogue, “Brave New Digital L2 Classroom, Revisited”, author revisits the core knowledge and performance bases of the language teacher in relation to the effective use of technology: instructors need to know about their respective content areas and the linguistic structure of the L2 and its culture; they must also understand how to design effective L2 tasks and activities; and they must develop a sense of when and where to tap into digital tools to enhance L2 learning.

Written by experts in the field, this authoritative, well-written book is an outstanding and necessary reference for language teachers, methods instructors, and curriculum designers.

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### **Publisher’s Response**

We are grateful to Professor Hernández for this thoughtful and thorough review of the Third edition of *Brave New Digital Classroom: Technology and Foreign Language Learning*. We are especially appreciative of his recognition that this book is a necessary reference for language teachers, methods instructors, and curriculum designers. The recommendations in this book provide a guide for leveraging digital tools in the L2 classroom. Instructors interested in previewing this book can request an exam copy on our website at <http://press.georgetown.edu> or by emailing [gupress@georgetown.edu](mailto:gupress@georgetown.edu).

Stephanie Rojas  
Georgetown University Press

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## Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts NECTFL Review

Below, you will find a summary of the Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts and the Checklist for Manuscript Preparation. The complete documents for both in PDF format can be downloaded at <https://www.nectfl.org/nectfl-review/>

All articles submitted will be evaluated by at least two, normally three, members of the Editorial Review Board. Elements to be considered in the evaluation process are the article's appropriateness for the journal's readership, its contribution to foreign language education and the originality of that contribution, the soundness of the research or theoretical base, its implications for the classroom, and finally, organization, focus, and clarity of expression.

As you prepare your manuscript for submission to the NECTFL *Review*, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

We use the most recent APA [American Psychological Association] Guidelines (<http://www.apastyle.org/>), and not those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. **Please use the latest edition (7<sup>th</sup> ed., 2020) of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association or the Concise Guide to APA Style as your guide.** For models of articles and references, examine The NECTFL *Review*, recent issues of the *Modern Language Journal*, or *Foreign Language Annals*. These journals follow the APA style with minor deviations (and those being primarily changes in level headings within articles). Citations within articles, bibliographical entries, punctuation, and style follow the APA format very closely.

1. For an article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers, please follow these guidelines carefully to expedite the review and publishing process. Submit your article electronically to NECTFL at <https://nectfl.wufoo.com/forms/authorarticle-information-form-nectfl-review/>, uploading it using the **Author/ Article Information Form**.
2. Please think carefully about the title of your article. It should be brief, preferably without subtitles, and **no longer than 12 words**.
3. **We require an abstract of your article.** See p. 13 [Section 1.10] in *Concise Guide to APA Style* (2020) for clear guidelines for writing an abstract.
4. Articles will not be accepted if they appear to endorse or sell software, hardware, books, or any other products.
5. **Do not include the names of the author(s) of the article on the first page of the actual text.**
6. Include a short biographical paragraph (this will appear at the bottom of the first page of the article, should it be published). Please include this paragraph on a separate page at the *end* of the article. This paragraph should be **no longer than 4-5 lines**.
7. Please note that the typical length of manuscripts averages approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages, including notes, charts, and references. This does not mean that a slightly longer article is out of the question.

8. Authors should read the manuscript very carefully before submitting it, verifying the accuracy of the citations (including the spelling of names, page numbers, and publication dates); the accuracy of the format of the references; punctuation, according to the APA Guidelines; spelling throughout the article.
9. Please consult the **Checklist for Manuscript Publication** <https://www.nectfl.org/nectfl-review/> Promising articles have been rejected because authors did not spend enough time proofreading the manuscript. Proofreading includes not only reading for accuracy but for readability, flow, and clarity.
10. Remember: Authors must complete the **Author/Article Information Form**, which is found at <https://nectfl.wufoo.com/forms/authorarticle-information-form-nectfl-review/> for the article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers. This form matches the author's description of the article with the appropriate reviewers according to (1) instructional level; (2) areas of interest; (3) the type of content; (4) relevant language(s); (5) keywords that best describe the article content [no more than four should be indicated].

## Checklist for Manuscript Preparation

Here are a few reminders, many of which are taken directly from the **APA Guidelines, 7<sup>th</sup> edition**. **Please use the links provided to access the major changes in this 2020 edition of the guidelines.**

- Please remember to use the spell check and grammar check on your computer before you submit your manuscript. Any portions of text in a foreign language must be followed immediately by an English translation in square brackets.
- Do not submit an article that includes tracking in Word.
- Remember that in the APA guidelines, notes (footnotes or endnotes) are discouraged.
- Do not use your word processor's automatic footnoting or endnoting.
- Do not use automatic page numbering.
- Please double-space everything in your manuscript.
- Use left justification only; do not use full justification anywhere in the article.
- The required font throughout is either Times New Roman 12 pt. or Minion Pro 12 pt.
- There should be only one space after each period.
- Punctuation marks appear inside quotation marks.
- In listing items or in a series of words connected by *and*, *but*, or use a comma [the Oxford comma] before these conjunctions.
- When providing a list of items, use double parentheses surrounding the numbers or letters: (1), (2), or (3) or (a), (b), and (c).
- All numbers above nine must appear as Arabic numerals ["nine school districts" vs. "10 textbooks"]; numbers below 10 must be written out.



- Page number references in parentheses are not part of the actual quotation and must be placed outside of the quotation marks following quoted material.
- Use standard postal abbreviations for states in all reference items [e.g., NC, IL, NY, MS], but not in the text itself.
- Do not set up automatic tabs at the beginning of the article (i.e., as part of a style); rather you should use the tab key (and *not* the space bar) on your computer each time you begin a new paragraph. The standard indent is only ¼ [0.25"] inch.
- Please reflect on the title of the article. Quite often titles do not give readers the most precise idea of what they will be reading.
- According to APA guidelines, the References section contains only the list of works are cited in your article. Check all internet addresses/hyperlinks before submitting the manuscript.
- Be judicious in using text or graphic boxes or tables in your text.
- Please makes certain that the components you submit are in the following order:
  - First page—with the article title, names and titles of authors, their preferred mailing, addresses, home and office phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and the name of the primary contact person [also, times in the summer when regular and E-mail addresses may be inactive].
  - First page of the manuscript—containing the title of the article and the abstract
  - The text of the article
  - Notes; References, Appendices—in this order
  - A short, biographical paragraph (no more than 4-5 lines).
- Authors must complete the **Author/Article Information form**, uploading the submission via this form: <https://nectfl.wufoo.com/forms/authorarticle-information-form-nectfl-review/>

