

Making the Language Curriculum More Inclusive

Sara Mattavelli, Ph.D.
smattavelli@wm.edu

Lecturer of Modern Languages
STLI Teaching Innovation Fellow
William & Mary

Goals

- Rethink teaching practices and design a more inclusive curriculum
 - How to make our materials more inclusive, accessible, and engaging
 - How to make our assignments more inclusive, accessible, and engaging
- Discuss sample materials/assignments and/or share experiences

Workshop Overview

1. Diversity & Inclusion
2. Designing the Curriculum
3. Discussion of sample materials and assignments

What are some barriers to inclusivity in language classes?



[Jamboard](#)
Slide 1-2

Student Diversity

In 2016-2017: **9.6%** of all public schools students were English language learners

In 2017-2018: **13.7%** of students between 3-21 years old received special education services

19.5% of all students in postsecondary contexts reported some type of disability

Report “[The Condition of Education](#)” (2019)

TABLE 1:

Types of Disability Among PK–12 and Postsecondary Students

STUDENTS AGES 3-21 (13.7% received special education services)



- Specific learning disability – 34%
- Speech or language impairment – 29%
- Other health impairment – 14%
- Autism – 10%
- Developmental delay – 7%
- Intellectual disability – 6%
- Emotional disturbance – 5%
- Multiple disabilities – 2%
- Hearing impairment – 1%
- Orthopedic impairment – 1%

Source: McFarland, et al., 2019, p. 60

POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS (19.5% reported some type of disability)



- Mental illness/depression – 40%
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) – 26.4%
- Orthopedic – 5.9%
- Specific learning disability – 3.5%
- Visual – 4.2%
- Hearing – 3.9%
- Speech – 1.3%
- Other – 14.7%

Source: Campbell & Wescott, 2019, p. 132

Diversity & Inclusion in World Language Education

“[ACTFL](#) believes strongly in **equal access** to world language study and **equitable opportunities** for all individuals to develop linguistic and cultural competence and pedagogical knowledge. No individual should experience marginalization of their contributions or talents because of their unique attributes. Among others, these attributes include age, belief system, disability status, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language identity, national origin, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and any other visible or non-visible attributes.”

Diversifying Language Educators and Learners

Uju Anya and L.J. Randolph, Jr., *The Language Educator*, Oct-Nov 2019

“we think of diversity in terms of equitable, meaningful representation and participation. This notion of diversity, as described by Fosslien and West Duffy (2019) is the difference between saying that everyone has a seat at the table, versus saying that everyone has a **seat**, a **voice**, **opportunity**, and **enough time to speak**.”

Representation matters in language education:

“to assure equity and meaningful participation of language educators and learners from minoritized racial backgrounds, **we must openly address race and racism in language education policies, instructional practices, and curriculum**, regardless of the argument that some make alleging that such discussions court controversy or are “political,” and thus have no place in language education.”

How to create an inclusive classroom (1/2)

❑ **Examine our beliefs on language learning and how we think about diversity**

This can reveal possible barriers, challenges, or biases we might have about diverse language learners. “This introspective exercise is vital for educators who seek to be inclusive and equitable in their practice” (Cobe & Grahn, TLE feb/mar 2020, p.28).

- Have a growth mindset: “believe that all learners can acquire a functional use of another language and therefore view themselves as facilitators for all students.” (Cobe & Grahn, p.28)
- Examine how we think about meaningful representation in our classrooms, instructional materials, and practice

How to create an inclusive classroom (2/2)

- ❑ **Question our assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs that contribute to the inequitable status quo and strive to adopt perspectives of equity and inclusivity**
- How do we self-identify?
- How do we choose our course content?
 - Reflecting students interests and experiences > increase engagement;
 - Representing the perspectives of diverse groups;
 - Acknowledge the limitation of texts/textbooks or other materials used in class
- How we differentiate instruction? What teaching methods and strategies do we use to serve different learning styles and needs?
 - Provide choices & scaffold for success;
 - Cost of textbooks;
 - Outside of class requirements
- ❑ **Create a safe and supportive learning environment & establish ground rules on day 1** (ideally created by the learners)

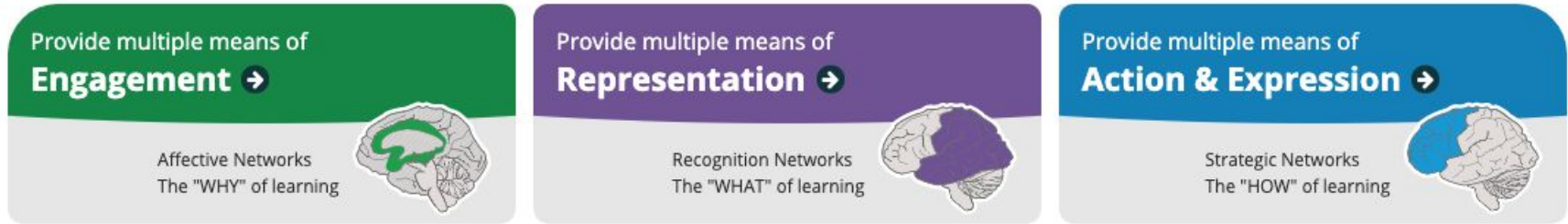
Designing our Curriculum (1/2)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Framework to design instruction to make sure a wide audience can access and use it.
Anticipate barriers to learning and design accordingly

- Three principles to create flexible paths:
 - Multiple Means of Engagement
 - Multiple Means of Representation
 - Multiple Means of Action and Expression

UDL [Guidelines](#) & [Course Accessibility Checklist](#)

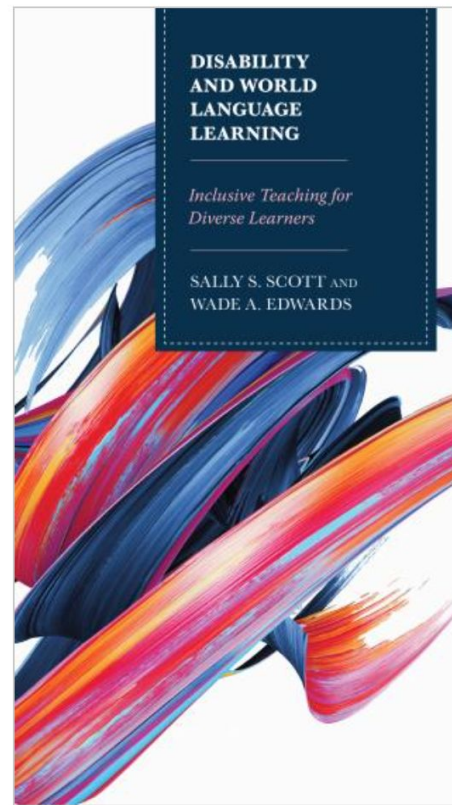


Designing our Curriculum (2/2)

Universal Design for Instruction (UDI)

Framework similar to UDL and “is based on a social model of disability, rather than on the deficit-based medical model that views diversity as the exception” (Hildebrandt, *Universal Design for Instruction: Inclusive Teaching Practices for the World Language Classroom*, TLE Feb/Mar 2020 p.32)

Diversity is considered the norm among learners. Instead of relying on individual accommodations, the framework removes roadblocks in the physical space, curriculum, and pedagogy.



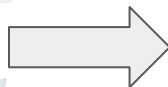
Disability and World Language Learning. Inclusive Teaching for Diverse Learners by Scott & Edwards (2019)

TABLE 2:
The Principles of Universal Design for Instruction

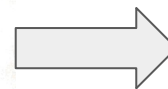
PRINCIPLE	DEFINITION
PRINCIPLE 1: Equitable Use	Instruction is designed to be useful to and accessible by people with diverse abilities. Provide the same means of use for all students: identical whenever possible, equivalent when not.
PRINCIPLE 2: Flexibility in Use	Instruction is designed to accommodate a wide range of individual abilities. Provide choice in methods of use.
PRINCIPLE 3: Simple and Intuitive	Instruction is designed in a straightforward and predictable manner, regardless of the student's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level. Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
PRINCIPLE 4: Perceptible Information	Instruction is designed so that necessary information is communicated effectively to the student, regardless of ambient conditions or the student's sensory abilities.
PRINCIPLE 5: Tolerance for Error	Instruction anticipates variations in individual student learning pace and prerequisite skills.
PRINCIPLE 6: Low Physical Effort	Instruction is designed to minimize nonessential physical effort in order to allow maximum attention to learning. <i>Note: This principle does not apply when physical effort is integral to essential requirements of the course.</i>
PRINCIPLE 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use	Instruction is designed with consideration for appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulations, and use regardless of a student's body size, posture, mobility, and communication needs.
PRINCIPLE 8: A Community of Learners	The instructional environment promotes interaction and communication among students and between students and faculty.
PRINCIPLE 9: Instructional Climate	Instruction is designed to be welcoming and inclusive. High expectations are espoused for all students.



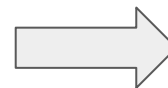
#1 Provide the class syllabus, materials, links in advance.



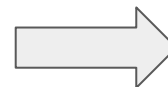
#2 Use varied instructional methods (verbal & visual, individual & group activities, etc.) to provide different ways of learning. Switch activities every 10 min



#4 Consider the readability of written documents (easily readable font, clear labeling, spacing, colors, etc.)



#6 allow use of computer/tablet for writing/editing. Chairs/desks in semicircle.



#7 Consider mobility needs of all students

Universal Design for Instruction (UDI)

Let's rethink our teaching practices

How can we make our materials more inclusive, accessible, and engaging?

How can we make our assignments more inclusive, accessible, and engaging?

- ❑ Share some examples that require modification to be more inclusive.
- ❑ Share some examples of inclusive materials or assignments

[Jamboard](#) (slide 3-4)

2nd semester Italian



Video

Italia autentica

Lo Zapping: L'angolo dello chef



Preparazione Dai un'occhiata al testo e guarda l'immagine. Secondo te, quale ricetta sta per preparare lo chef? Scegli gli ingredienti che pensi userà per la salsa, per la decorazione e per la pasta.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ___ acciughe (anchovies) | ___ cime di rapa (broccoli rabe) | ___ peperoncino |
| ___ aglio | ___ olio | ___ prezzemolo (parsley) |
| ___ basilico (basil) | ___ pane | ___ semola di grano duro (semolina) |

La cucina italiana è profondamente influenzata dalle tradizioni regionali. La preparazione di un piatto come la pasta può cambiare notevolmente (a lot) da regione a regione. Le orecchiette con le cime di rapa sono uno dei piatti tradizionali della cucina pugliese.



Nel frattempo (In the meantime),
assembliamo la salsa.



azioni

RICCARDO Un pizzico di sale
nell'acqua.

VIOLA Basta un cucchiaino, Riccardo.

RICCARDO Viola. I grandi cuochi sono
tutti uomini.

VIOLA Ma tu non sei un cuoco,
Riccardo. Usi troppo pepe e aglio.
I veri cuochi rispettano i sapori.

RITRATTO

Antonino Cannavacciuolo

Antonino Cannavacciuolo,
nato in provincia di Napoli
il 16 aprile 1975, è un
pluripremiato° chef e
personaggio televisivo.

Antonino inizia la sua carriera a
Sorrento nel 1992. Dopo varie
esperienze lavorative tra nord
e sud, nel 1999 diventa chef
patron° e gestore°, insieme
alla moglie, del lussuoso°
Ristorante Hotel "Villa Crespi"
a Orta San Giulio, in Piemonte.
Nel 2003 riceve la prima stella
Michelin e 3 anni dopo arriva la
seconda. Nel 2013 esordisce°

in televisione con *Cucine da
incubo*, versione italiana del celebre programma di Gordon Ramsey,
che conduce° ancora oggi. Nel 2015 si aggiunge° alla conduzione°
di *Masterchef Italia* insieme a Bruno Barbieri, Joe Bastianich e
Carlo Cracco. Oltre a cucinare, presentare programmi tv e gestire°
i suoi ristoranti, Cannavacciuolo è anche autore di vari libri di cucina.

pluripremiato award-winning chef patron executive chef gestore manager lussuoso luxurious
esordisce debuts conduce presents si aggiunge joins conduzione presenting gestire to manage



Ideas & Recommendations

- Day 1 Questionnaire:
pronouns/name
what would make this class feel inclusive to you?
what do you need to succeed academically in this class?
- Activities to reflect on stereotypes (biased statements in teaching material, gender and professions, etc.)
- Discuss language and gender and non-binary options
- Double check your material: pictures, relationships represented, identities, groups, beliefs, etc.
- Use think-pair-share activities to help reflection and those who need extra time

Sample Note to Students:

Dear students,

Today we discussed how nouns in French are classified into two possible categories, which is traditionally referred to as grammatical gender. You may have thought to yourself “Why is a marker, a desk, or a notebook masculine while a pencil eraser, a window, or a table feminine?” Your intuition is spot on! Grammatical gender can align with social gender, such as when we talk about *un homme* or *une femme*, but social gender and grammatical gender are **not** always going to overlap. Most of the time, this classification will feel arbitrary.

You may have also noticed that there are only two categories for grammatical gender in French – masculine and feminine – unlike some other languages like Ngun’gityemerri, which has 15+ genders or Zulu, which has 16 noun classes. You may also have thought about the fact that there are people who identify as neither exclusively male nor exclusively female, for whom we can use the umbrella term non-binary. In French, we use the term *non-binaire*. French can sometimes be tricky for expressing non-binary gender identities, but throughout the semester I will be presenting information about how non-binary identities can be expressed in French that your textbook doesn’t cover. Though the singular they is more and more commonly used in English, this is still an area that is developing in French. As a part of being an inclusive classroom community, remember to ask your classmates what pronouns they use (Quel(s) pronom(s) utilisez-vous?).

As always, if you have any questions, please reach out to me. I’m always here and happy to help.

[Un-Boxing Gender: Toward Trans-Affirming L2 Pedagogies](#)

Kris Knisely, Assistant Professor, French and Intercultural Competence, University of Arizona

Sample Twitter Web-Quest Activity: [*English gloss*] (see also Knisely, Forthcoming 20201a)

French, as a language, presents some linguistic challenges to non-binary speakers (individuals who are neither exclusively male-identified nor exclusively female-identified) due to its traditional binary grammatical gender. However, we know that social gender and grammatical gender are distinct constructs – since experiences of gender can fall far outside of a traditional binary paradigm. Because the language forms used by non-binary speakers of French are neologistic (new, rapidly evolving, and not always known outside of queer communities), they tend not to find their way into traditional classroom materials. To attend to this missing information, you will, with a partner, complete a Twitter Web-Quest activity to observe the ways in which queer speakers are manipulating and subverting the French language in order to create the necessary conditions for congruent self-expression. First, do a hashtag search for the following terms: #nonbinaire #transgenre. Next, identify a few users who clearly note being non-binary or agender in their user profiles. Using this data, respond to the following questions:

1. What, if any, pronouns are being used by TGNC speakers? Are there patterns that you can observe (e.g. frequency, selection factors)? If so, what are these observable patterns?
2. How are trans and non-binary speakers subverting traditional agreement structures (binary grammatical gender marking of verbs, adjectives, etc.)? Are there patterns that you can observe (e.g. frequency, selection factors)? If so, what are these observable patterns?
3. Can you notice other strategies to avoid misgendering? (Be mindful of individual words, sentence structure, and larger discourse-level patterns.)

[Un-Boxing Gender: Toward Trans-Affirming L2 Pedagogies](#)

Kris Knisely, Assistant Professor, French and Intercultural Competence, University of Arizona

Resources

- ❑ ACTFL [Resources](#) on Issues of Race, Diversity, and Social Justice
- ❑ [The Language Educator](#) (ACTFL publication), vol.14 & 15
- ❑ COERLL [Blog](#) on Inclusive Pedagogy
- ❑ [Resources for Social Justice and Anti-Racism in the L2 Classroom](#), Diversity Resources from COERLL
- ❑ [Building Inclusive Classroom](#), Center for Teaching Innovation, Cornell University
- ❑ Scott Sally, and Wade Edwards. *Disability and World Language Learning : Inclusive Teaching for Diverse Learners*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2019 (available online via Swem library)

Thank you!
smattavelli@wm.edu