

Disability in our World Language Classrooms

Adapting Mindsets and Materials

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welcome, introductions & access

- Who's here today? (poll)
- Access in today's session
 - Get comfortable! Let me know what you need.
 - Breaks - 10 minutes around the top of the hour. 11ish and noonish
Chat window monitoring and reading aloud
 - "Raise hand" help please
 - High-contrast color scheme & 18-pt font
 - Image description
 - Pacing & shifting gears
 - Check-ins
 - Circular structure

Small group discussion 1 -10 minutes

Introduce yourselves and chat:

What are your favorite strategies for making sure you connect with every student in your classes?

Plan to bring 1-2 back to the large group to share.

Schematic overview

Introductions poll & accessibility ✓

part 1

Context, Ableism, Allyship

part 2

Universal Design of Instruction ~ Universal Design for Learning (UDI/UDL)

part 3

Integrating disability representations into your classrooms

full circle reflection

part 1

Context, Ableism, Allyship

Context

**“I can’t even get
to the back
of the bus.”**



**“TO BOLDLY GO...
where everyone has already gone.”**

Microaggressions 1 - language - #saytheword

“wheelchair bound” → wheelchair user

“physically challenged” or “mentally challenged” → disabled, intellectually disabled

the “R-word” → intellectually disabled

“crippled” → disabled, mobility impaired

“special needs” → disabled

“deaf and dumb” → hard-of-hearing, non-speaking

“crazy” → mental health struggles

Other examples of language use?

Small group discussion 2

Discuss language use around disability in the
languages you teach:

Acceptable vs. unacceptable use?

Where have you noted language change
towards greater acceptance?

Who's in our classroom?

- Diagnosis
- Experience: 504 Plan & IEP
- Documentation and self-advocacy: 1 in 5
ADAAG & RISE Act (Respond, Innovate, Support, and Empower)
- Persistence gaps at 4-year colleges: 15% vs. 35%

- **Assume disabled people are always in your classroom.**
- **Don't assume we are all the same.**
- **Don't assume we know exactly what we need.**
- **Creative access solutions are developed in partnership.**

Allyship (how do we show up?)

- Research suggests that we can do better!
 - Concern & good intentions
 - Lack of awareness
- Imposition → Disposition
- Microaggressions → micro-affirmations
- Variety and variability
- Be openly average sometimes.
- Place yourself in relationship to us.

Discussion ~ Q&A - 10 minutes

Questions?

Comments

Concerns?

Disability representations I

Because who is perfect?

~Pro Infirmis (Switzerland) [clip](#)

Small group discussion 3 & follow up:

In what ways is this industrial redesign project transformational?

World language classrooms as a normative space

As language teachers, what assumptions do we make about what bodies and minds should **be, think, feel, and do?**

The manner, tempos, and timeliness with which we expect learners to listen, speak, read, and write, and to behave, express, focus, interact, learn, move, reason, relax, retain, think, understand, socialize or be still.

Mindset shift: body → environment

Our classrooms may be the single feature of a student's experience that is redesigned with regular frequency and can be quickly adapted. (DoImage)

part 2

Universal Design of Instruction ~ Universal Design for Learning (UDI/UDL)

What's good for some students supports every student.

What's access? (chat box)

Access is...

- mandate (American federal legislation).
- retrofit (Dolmage)
- the alignment of disability rights with design (Williamson)
- creative design potential anywhere bodies & minds meet the environment (Hendren)
- love (Disability Intersectionality Summit)
- a buffet-style meal (Veal)



UDI

UDL

1. Equitable use
2. Flexibility in use
3. Simple & intuitive use
4. Perceptible information
5. Tolerance for error
6. Low physical effort
7. Size & space for approach and use
8. A supportive community of learners
9. A positive instructional climate

See Scott and Edwards (2019). *Disability & World Language Learning*

&

1. The **WHY** of learning
(affective networks)
2. The **WHAT** of learning
(recognition networks)
3. The **HOW** of learning
(strategic networks)

2 handouts:

[UDI](#) - University of Washington

[UDL](#) - CAST

1. Equitable use

→ Class and all its components can be designed with all learners in mind.

Examples:

- Share as much as you can with every student.
- Adopt textbooks that are available in a variety of accessible formats (audiobooks, screen-reader ready formats)
- Post slide decks and recordings of each class to the course LMS

2. Flexibility in use

→ Provide a variety of means through which learners can interact with the material and demonstrate competence.

Examples:

- 4 modalities - listening, reading, speaking and writing
Give all students the option to drop one modality.
- Due dates
An “extension” vs. spanned due dates for everyone:
”This project is due in week 8”

3. Simple & intuitive use

→ Keep activities simple and intuitive *for every student*

Examples:

- Day 1: parse the syllabus with a slide presentation that highlights key information
- Each class period: create a circular structure, as I am today, in order to demonstrate progress

4. Perceptible information

→ Provide equitable access to all information about a course, things we should do for every student, as well as things we could do.

Examples: see the list of access measures on slide 2 and

- ALT tags (embedded image descriptions)
- Font size and capacity to enlarge
- Captions or full transcripts of all video material (say no to auto-captions)
- Consider accessible Gdocs, MSWord, .pdfs

5. Tolerance for error

→ Create the conditions that minimize student errors, embrace errors as integral to learning, and accept a broad variety in language use

Examples: What are some of your error-correcting strategies (unmute) and

- softening the impact of high-stakes assignments
- dropping lowest exam score
- allowing students to eliminate lowest-scoring section on an exam

6. Low physical effort

→ Aim for equal physical participation for every student. This is highly context dependent and can mean lots of things.

Examples:

- Encourage a student to move
- Request a classroom change that makes getting to class less effortful for disabled students
- Allow a student to move
- Adapt activities to be done in a seated or standing position
- Do not emphasize left-right orientation

7. Size and space for approach and use

→ Make sure you have an adequately-sized classroom and furnishings that make possible the configurations and interactions that you imagine *for all students*.

Examples:

- The left-handed desk
- The presence of adaptive mobility gear (a scooter or wheelchair user) may create a need for a larger space everyone can navigate

8. A (supportive) community of learners

→ Build trust with and among your learners, and remember that diversity makes a difference.

Examples:

- A slide deck featuring all sorts of diversity
- Affirmations gallery
- YOU are also a learner.
 - Try 2-3 new things per semester.
 - Have reasonable expectations.
 - Accept your own mistakes as you do your students'

9. A (positive) instructional climate

→ What are our expectations and how do we convey them to students?

Examples:

- Reward progress as well as mastery.
- Co-construct expectations
 - Start a candid conversation about how participating makes students' feel
 - Develop community guidelines for group work, interaction
 - Develop a variety of ways to demonstrate mastery together
 - Develop rubrics to assess assignments together

Small group discussion 4 (10 minutes)

Discuss your learning edge with these practices:

What feels familiar / comfortable?

What is new to you?

Large group follow up

Disability representations 2

[Faubourg Saint Denis](#)

Paris, je t'aime (France, 2006)

OR

[Oceans Heaven](#) (trailer)

(China- Hong Kong, 2010)

OR

[Mi sento vuoto](#)

Switzerland, 2014 (Italian)

Luisa's song, [En lo profundo/Peso Encanto](#), 2021 (Spanish version)

OR

[Due piedi sinistri](#)

(Italy, 2016)

OR

What can you add to these from the target cultures you teach?

List in chat and we will capture and add to an additional slide

part 3

Integrating disability representations
into our classrooms

Terminology

- Audio descriptions
- Blindness
- Blind/low-vision
- Captions
- Crutches
- Curb cut
- Deafness
- Deaf/hearing impaired
- Disabled
- Learning Disabled*
- Mobility impairment
- Mobility scooter
- Neurodiversity/neurodivergent
- Wheelchair
- ??

Tiny shelf for inspiration (1 of 2)

- Couser, G. Thomas, and Susannah B. Mintz, editors (2019) *Disability Experiences: Memoirs, Autobiographies, and Other Personal Narratives*. 2 vols.
- *Crip Camp* (2020, documentary on Netflix)
- *Deej* (2017 documentary, on PBS occasionally; worth googling)
- Dolmage, Jay T. (2017). *Academic Ableism: Disability and Higher Education*.
- *Fixed: The Science / Fiction of Human Enhancement* (2013 documentary)
- Hendren, Sara. (2020) *What can a body do?*
- Hoft-March, Elaine and E. Nicole Meyer, eds. (2021). *Teaching Diversity and Inclusion: Examples from a French-Speaking Classroom*.

Tiny shelf for inspiration (2 of 2)

- Jollien, Alexandre. (1999, 2017). *In Praise of Weakness*. Translated by Michael Eskin.
- Konyndyk, I.B. Foreign Languages for Everyone: How I Learned to Teach Second Languages to Students with Learning Disabilities.
- Oswald, G. and Webb, T.P., (Eds). (2022). *Universal Design in Study Abroad: Creating Inclusive Educational Opportunities for Students with Disabilities*.
- Scott & Edwards (2019) *Disability and World Language Learning*.
- Veal, P. Differentiation and Accommodations: Buffet Style Learning. *The FLT Mag* (online). March 2016.

Full circle reflection

part 1

Context, Ableism, Allyship

part 2

Universal Design of Instruction ~ Universal Design for Learning (UDI/UDL)

part 3

Integrating disability representations into your classrooms

→ **Jot down something you learned for each of the three parts of today's workshop.**

→ **Commit to something new you would like to try in your class(es).**

