LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING IN A PROJECT-BASED FRAMEWORK

Maria M. Carreira and Claire Chik
National Heritage Language Resource Center, UCLA
WHY THIS SESSION?

• Focus Strand: Equipping the Platform
• Topics:
  – Heritage language (HL) teaching
  – Project-Based Learning
  – Differentiation
  – Mixed classes
SESSION OUTCOMES

• I can identify the main advantages of project-based learning (PBL) for teaching HL learners and, more generally, for classes with diverse populations of students.

• I can explain how the ACTFL Performance Guidelines and Can-do Statements can serve as a roadmap for creating differentiated projects.
How does our story lead to the outcomes?

• The NHLRC offers a blended workshop in HL teaching: 15 hours of pre-workshop supervised online instruction and 35 hours face-to-face at UCLA.

• Instructional focus:
  – Principles and best practices of HL teaching
  – STARTALK Principles
Principles and best practices in HL teaching and STARTALK Principles

• Connecting learning to real-world contexts
• Supporting (1) developmentally-appropriate learning, (2) HL learners’ affective and social needs
• Extending input and output to the HL
• Integrating (1) content, culture, and language, (2) the four skills, and (3) the three modes of communication
• Facilitating differentiation (in HL and mixed classes)
• Instantiating a systematic, standards-based curriculum that responds to HL learners’ needs and builds on their strength
Project-based Learning
What is PBL?

A learner-centered teaching approach in which students work over a period of time on a task which involves engaging with complex issues, solving problems, or meeting particular real life challenges. To communicate their learning, students develop a product (e.g. timelines, blogs, brochures, reports, public-service announcements, etc.).
If you have

• Planned a trip
• Purchased a car
• Applied to college
• Planned a birthday party, wedding, conference

You have engaged in PBL
Authenticity

The project has a real-world context, uses real-world processes, tools, and quality standards, makes a real impact, and/or is connected to students’ own concerns, interests, and identities.
Authenticity connects learning to real-world contexts and supports HL learners
Helmer (2014)

• “It’s just a story to just learn Spanish, it’s not real” (p. 197).

• (This) might serve as an explanation of why students did not engage in the discussion. Because students’ exposure to and use of Spanish had been highly contextualized and communicative, designing curricula that emulate naturalistic, authentic contexts should have been a goal of this class (p. 197).
Sample project (from Masako Douglas)

Genesis of the project: High school level JHL students submitted a proposal to have a dunk tank booth at their school Japanese summer festival.
Driving Question:
Can we create a successful campaign to convince the administration to allow the inclusion of a dunk tank booth in our Japanese summer festival at school?

Project: Dunk Tank for Natsumatsuri (Japanese summer festival)

Level: JHL High School
Proficiency: Intermediate high

Students, not the product
Task sequence

Task 1
• Collecting information and creating hypotheses by interacting with others

Task 2
• Collecting information & creating hypotheses from videos & written texts

Task 3
• Learning effective skills to persuade teachers to include dunk tank or students not to have dunk tank
• Making proposal and preparation for presentation (i.e. final product)
Task 1:
JHL students, Japanese HS students learning English in Japan, and JHL teachers post their word association responses to “Japanese Summer Festival” (Reading, writing)
Task 2: Collecting information from videos and websites and creating hypotheses

Dance

Traditional;

Interpretive mode: Listening

Non-traditional;
Low Budget Games for Pre-school Summer Festivals

**Traditional**
- Yo-yo fishing

**Non traditional**
- Pet bottle bowling
- Bingo game
- Whack-a-mole game
- Flying a paper plane
- Piñata

Interpretive mode: Reading
Task 3: Preparing a persuasive speech

Sample Video 1
How to prepare a persuasive speech
http://ed.ted.com/on/75xFPQ2q

Sample Video 2
The art of persuasion
http://ed.ted.com/on/XPtUNjOOf#discussion

Scaffolding activities to design effective persuasion
Presentational Mode: Speaking
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Why focus on extending input and output?

HL learners’ linguistic experience is characterized by:

- **Interrupted input** to the HL before language acquisition is complete
- **Limited input** to the HL: quantity and quality
- **Limited output**: Opportunities to produce in the language
The typical development of the HL in relation to English
The three phrases of project work

• Collecting information:
  Getting input
• Processing information:
  Studying input
• Presenting information:
  Creating meaningful output
The Dunk Tank Project

**Task 1**
- Collecting information & creating hypotheses

**Task 2**
- Collecting information & creating hypotheses from videos & written texts

**Task 3**
- Learning effective skills to persuade teachers to include dunk tank or students not to have dunk tank
- Making proposal and preparation for presentation (i.e. final product)

**Collecting & processing information**

**Producing information**
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✓ Integrating (1) content, culture and language, (2) the four skills, and (2) the three modes of communication

✓ Extending input and output to the HL

• Facilitating differentiation (in HL and mixed classes)

• Instantiating a systematic, standards-based curriculum that responds to HL learners’ needs and builds on their strength
UNPACKING THE ELEMENTS OF LEARNING
Describe language performance that is the result of explicit instruction in an instructional setting.
• **Accuracy and vocabulary**
• **Context**: The situations in which the learner can function
• **Content**: Topics (food, festivals)
• **Functions** (e.g. ask questions, argue)
• **Text type**: Single words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs
• **Skills**: Reading, writing, speaking, listening
• **Modes of communication**: interpersonal, presentational, interpretive
• **Communication strategies** (rephrasing, requesting clarification)
• **Cultural awareness** (e.g. norms of interaction)
The ACTFL Performance Descriptors in a PBL Framework

- **Connecting** learning to real-world contexts
- **Supporting** (1) developmentally-appropriate learning, (2) HL learners’ affective and social needs
- **Integrating** (1) content, culture and language, (2) the four skills, and (2) the three modes of communication
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  - **Facilitating** differentiation (in HL and mixed classes)
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LET’S START WITH DIFFERENTIATION
Project for **novice level** learners

Same theme different product as the Dunk Tank Project (recall that that was a project for Intermediate-high learners):

Create a website of Japanese Summer Festival activities collected from the web or by asking members of the HL community.

- **Text**: Phrase-level language, pre-formed language
- **Mode of communication**: Interpretive, interpersonal (maybe), presentational
- **Skills**: Listening, speaking, some writing (perhaps)
- **Cultural awareness**

Most unusual activities? Coolest activities?
Tip

Projects that involve information collecting, processing, evaluating, and reporting are both **authentic** and **accessible** to lower-proficiency learners.

Creating a collection (favorite movies, songs, places to visit, foods)

Interviews
Novice

Speaking and writing:

• Short messages, everyday topics that affect students directly, isolated words, memorized phrases, or recombinations of what they hear

• Writing: lists, short messages, postcards, simple notes

• Common elements of everyday life
Novice

Speaking and writing:

• Short messages, everyday topics that affect students directly, isolated words, memorized phrases, or recombinations of what they hear

• Writing: lists, short messages, postcards, simple notes

• Common elements of everyday life

Intermediate

Speaking and writing:

• Can create with language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life

• Sentences or strings of sentences

• Topics of personal interest and social needs

• Use primarily the present tense (but at Intermediate-high, they can narrate and describe in different time-frames)
Project at the Intermediate-high level

Students create digital stories portraying a memorable experience of a family member with this festival
A twist on the old family tree
Project at the Intermediate-high level

Students create digital stories portraying a memorable experience of a family member during this festival

• **Text**: Connected sentences, some creating with language

• **Functions**: Narrating

• **Mode of communication**: Interpersonal, interpretive presentational

• **Skills**: Listening, speaking, Some writing (perhaps), some oral
USING THE ACTFL PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS TO DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION

Activity
• **Accuracy and vocabulary**
• **Context**: The situations in which the learner can function.
• **Content**: Topics (food, festivals)
• **Functions** (e.g. ask questions, argue)
• **Text type**: Single words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs
• **Skills**: Reading, writing, speaking, listening
• **Modes of communication**: interpersonal, presentational, interpretive
• **Communication strategies** (rephrasing, requesting clarification)
• **Cultural awareness** (e.g. norms of communication)
Focus: Presentational, writing

• Vocabulary and grammatical structures
• Functions (e.g. thanking, inviting)
• Text type: (e.g. Single words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs)
**Novice**

**Writing:**
- Short messages, everyday topics that affect them directly, isolated words, memorized phrases or recombinations of what they hear.
- Writing: lists, short messages, postcards, simple notes

**Intermediate**

**Writing:**
- Can create with language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life
- Sentences or strings of sentences
- Use primarily the present tense (but at the Intermediate-high, they can narrate and describe in different time-frames)
Thank you so much for the ______. I really ❤️❤️❤️❤️ it!

from ___________________
**Novice**

**Writing:**

- Short messages, everyday topics that affect them directly, isolated words, memorized phrases or recombinations of what they hear.

- Writing: lists, short messages, postcards, simple notes

**Intermediate**

**Writing:**

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Dear Shelley,

Thank you so much for the bracelet. I love it and every time I wear it I will think of you.

Love,
Dear Garret,

It was such a delight to receive a bouquet of flowers on my birthday. Tiger lilies are my favorites. Thank you so much for remembering! I may not have the greenest of thumbs, but I'll do my best to keep them radiant and healthy for your visit next week.

Love,
Mary
Novice

Writing:
• Short messages, everyday topics that affect them directly, isolated words, memorized phrases or recombinations of what they hear.
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Intermediate

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• Can create with language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life
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Inviting

**NORTH CERNY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**CHRISTMAS FAIR**

**SAT 28TH NOV**

11 AM - 1 PM

NORTH CERNY VILLAGE HALL

TEA CAKE RAFFLES SILENT AUCTION

AND MUCH MUCH MORE

**Spring Fayre**

**Saturday 21st March 2015**

10am - 1pm

North Cerny Primary School

NO ENTRY FEE

ALL WELCOME

Lots of Stalls

Tea and Cakes

**Big Race Night**

Friday 23rd January 2015

At the Cirencester Golf Club

Price: £10 per person (includes Curry)

7.30pm start

7.45pm 1st Race

Opportunity to own a race horse for the evening for only £3!

To raise funds for the North Cerny Big Project

Book your space and buy your race horse in advance from:
Jenny Forde - jenniferford@hotmail.co.uk or 07778 355970
Peter Knight - pknight18@yahoo.co.uk or 01285 833072
Kate Turner @ School or the School Office

charity number: 1125459
Novice

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Inviting

To:
Mr. Ben Folder,
Sales Supervisor,
Royal Ace Ltd.,
Heinley Avenue,
UK.

13th June, 2009,
Dear Mr. Folder,

We would like to invite you to attend the (inauguration of our business) located at (Lispher Bldg.) on (September 12, 2009) at (8:00AM). It is our honor to have you as our loyal customer in our other businesses. We are hoping that we will get the same support from you. We have been in this business for quite some time now yet we have always managed to stay on top of our competitors. This is not possible if not with your support to our business. We have prepared something for you as our patrons as a way of saying thank you. Please come early so that we can find a comfortable seat for you and so that you will be there as we acknowledge our loyal customers and you are definitely in the list.

Please let us know if you are attending the said event or not by (September 2, 2009).

Hoping for your presence on that day. We are looking forward to more fruitful business deals with you.

Sincerely Yours,

Signature
(Larry House)
(General Manager)
(Metro Services Corp.)
**Novice**

**Writing:**
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**Intermediate**

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PRESENTATIONAL: SPEAKING
Pablo Picasso

- Painter and sculptor
- Born 1881, died 1973
- DREAMS!
- "Weeping Woman"
- "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon"
- "Guernica"
- "Old Guitarist"
- "The Blue Room"
- "Weeping Woman"
- "3 Musicians"
- "War"
- "Guitarist"
- "La Cigale"
- "Lunette" (Musee d'Orsay, Paris)
LEVEL?
Presentational: The ACTFL Can-do Statements

Novice
I can present information on both very familiar and everyday topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences.

Intermediate
I can communicate information, make presentations, and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences.
Topic: Who is family?
Presentation on the family

Novice
I can present information on both very familiar and everyday topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences

Intermediate
I can communicate information, make presentations, and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences
Advanced Presentational Mode

I can deliver detailed and organized presentations on familiar as well as unfamiliar concrete topics, in paragraphs and using various time frames.

Topics:
Evolving concepts of family
The family in the HL cultures v. the family in American culture
Question

• If your students are at an Intermediate level, do you want to give them Intermediate-level content and products?

• Zone of Proximal Development Vygotsky (1962)
  What learners can do with assistance from a “more Knowledgeable other”

• Bottom line: Aim higher and scaffold!
The Dunk Tank Project: Giving a persuasive speech

Intermediate-high students

Scaffolding activities

Word clouds
Websites
Videos

Advanced level product
What about a debate?
Superior: Presentational mode

I can participate fully and effectively in spontaneous discussions and debates on issues and ideas ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, including supporting arguments and exploring hypothesis.

Intermediate-high students?

With careful scaffolding: Advanced-level product ➔ Superior-level product
In sum: The Performance Descriptors facilitate

**Differentiation**

**At the class level:** Students work on projects that match their level of levels of performance (e.g. some do a digital family tree, others do a digital story)

**Curriculum design**

**At the program level:** Projects systematically target the development of skills of increasingly higher levels of performance
MIXED CLASSES
In terms of the four skills

• What are HL learners’ strengths? Needs?

• What are L2 learners’ strengths? Needs?
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretive</th>
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## Modes of communication

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# Modes of communication

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This gives us a framework for creating projects for mixed classes

Have products that challenge both types of learners and create opportunities for collaborative learning:

- Reading a short story about a family
- Watching a YouTube presentation
- Interviewing native speakers
- Writing a report or a reflection

Harder for the HL learner
Harder for the L2 learner
Harder for the HL learner
Harder for the L2 learner
Returning to: SESSION OUTCOMES

• I can identify the main advantages of project-based learning (PBL) for teaching HL learners and, more generally, for classes with diverse populations of students.

• I can explain how the ACTFL Performance Guidelines and Can-do Statements can serve as a roadmap for creating differentiated projects.
CHALLENGES

• The sheer amount of content knowledge and skills that teachers must have in order to instantiate these ideas

• Adapting these principles to different languages, level, instructional contexts, etc.
Our story illustrates the value of frameworks

- PBL

- ACTFL Framework and Tools (Performance Indicators + Can-do statements)
Principles and best practices in HL teaching and STARTALK Principles

PBL:
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- **Extending** input and output to the HL

ACTFL Framework and tools:
- **Facilitating** differentiation (in HL and mixed classes)
- **Instantiating** a systematic, standards-based curriculum that responds to HL learners’ needs and builds on their strength
Also: The blended format + another framework

- **Framework:** Acquire – apply – adapt - reflect
- **Online portion of the workshop:**
  Acquire and begin to apply
- **Face-to-face portion of the workshop:**
  Adapt and reflect
Lessons Learned?

Something old is new again:

Rediscovering the ACTFL resources in the context of PBL, Differentiation, and HL teaching
THANK YOU

Maria.carreira@csulb.edu
Chik@International.UCLA.edu
CONCLUDING