



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

The BluePrint: An Engaging Open-access Digital Language and Culture Curriculum

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Level 1

Digital Humanities Advancement Grant

exploratory and experimental

- Origins (culture, digital era, Generation Z)
- Objectives
- (Backward) Design and Potential Contributions
- What does it look like?
 - (digital) materials; design thinking
 - How to select topics and design tasks/projects?

Origins

Chinese culture vs. American culture

Interesting

Fun

Exciting

How to engage American students who live in a culture different from ours?

Life in the Digital Era

Communicative Approach: 1980s (Irmawati 2012, 91)

The Digital Era

ordering food, booking airbnb, calling Lyft...

- reading? typing? more meaningful conversation?

The Digital Era

Available self-learning tools

- language inputs (texts, multimedia)
- online dictionary and apps (Pleco, Zhongwen-Chrome, Sogou...)
- apps and online courses (Duolingo, edx, coursera, ...)
- self-check on the internet (matching verb.+noun., ...)
- Google translator

Curriculum: Content-driven and Critical thinking driven

Our Targeted Learners: High School or College Students

1. Curiosity about the culture
2. Generation Z:

“regular exposure to the Internet, video games, computers, cell phones and a multitude of other devices facilitates hypertext, interactivity, networking, random access and multitasking”
“relevant” (Ivanova and Ivanova 2009, IV. 2-3)

3. Content/critical thinking abilities create a tension with what they learn at the Intermediate level - everyday conversation - particularly in less commonly taught languages

Objectives:

1. Language
cultivate linguistic-social-cultural competence
2. Content
investigate contemporary trends, phenomena, and issues;
develop disciplinary/interdisciplinary insights;
nurture critical cultural awareness and global citizenship;
3. Thinking
facilitate critical thinking
4. Socialization
build a learning community

by fostering the 21st century skills identified by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

21st century skills: “empowered learner, digital citizen, knowledge constructor, computational thinker, innovative designer, creative communicator, and global collaborator” (ISTE, 2019)

(Backward) Design

Using Web 2.0 technology to achieve our objectives: problems/projects

- co-producers of content and contributors to creating knowledge

1. [Web 2.0 technology](#): Generation Z

communication, interactions, socialization, and collaboration

- user-generated content: Youtube, Padlet, Edpuzzle, Perusall, Bulb, Wix, etc

2. [mechanics](#) could be digested and mastered by learners themselves with the help of digital course materials

3. invite opinions and give choices - active agents

4. community

Potential Contributions

- a curriculum prompted by/suited to the digital era
- a paradigmatic shift in language teaching
- a model for curriculum design not only for other less commonly taught languages but also for language and culture teaching as a whole.

An Engaging Digital Language and Culture Curriculum

- Rich resources in the digital world
 - Chinese podcast
 - Chinese shows/movies/video clips
 - Social media posts/news/trending topics
 - Websites (taobao, xiecheng - ctrip, baidu map, museums, mafengwo.cn, airbnb.cn. etc)
 - Chinese learners' blogs /youtubes
 - News Sources (from the Greater China; BBC Chinese, NYT Chinese, etc)

Why digital materials?

- authentic (- functions)
- easy access
- broad contents
- timely

Tailoring authentic digital materials to be appropriate course materials:

language level appropriate, content appropriate,
age appropriate (in terms of critical thinking)

Principles:

“edit the task, not the text”

(Glison and Donato 2017, Chapter 3)

- Design Thinking

- How to select topics and design tasks/projects?

- relevant
- intellectual challenging
- intriguing

(“functional” is embedded)

- Chinese folklore stories/poetry (Butterfly Lovers, River Snow...)
- contemporary phenomena (pandemic, Taiwan's 7-11, cashier-free market...)
- Generation Z's concerns (phone anxiety, climate, health, environment)
- social/political/cultural observation and comparison

Process:

1. Presenting materials:

- digital visualization (picture, sound, infographics, ...)
- key words/sentence structures

2. Instructor's demonstrations and reciprocal activities:

Web. 2.0 technology

- provide scaffolding
- facilitate interactions
- create a learning community
- solve problems

3. What Web. 2.0 technology are available in 2?

- engagement before teaching
- students' engagement tools

Quizlet, Poll Everywhere, Mentimeter, Edpuzzles (Playposit),

Padlet, Perusall, Voicethread, Flipgrid, etc.

- games, Nearpod, Kahoot, etc.

4. How to design tasks/projects?

- appropriate for learners' level without having a complete comprehension of the course materials
- encourage exposures to authentic language materials in the process
- train skills to search key information using keywords; allow referring back to English sources when absolutely necessary
- relevant; real life applications (problem solving)
- respect individual interests and preferences

- Pedagogy

- flip classrooms: [pre-class activities](#)/in-class.../post-class...
- project (task)-based
- facilitate communications among learners inside and outside classrooms

Our Curriculum's Target audiences

College or High School instructors

Why open-access?

Public money

Educational access

Duolingo, coursera, edx...

Environment Scan

Digital language curricula:

French: *Horizons* (not open-access)

Spanish: *Mi idioma, mi comunidad: español para bilingües*

<https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/idiomacomunidad/>

German: *Grenzenlos Deutsch: an Inclusive Curriculum for German Studies*

<https://grenzenlos-deutsch.com/umwelt/>

Chinese: www.edx.org and www.coursera.org,

by MIT, Peking University, Qinghua University, or MandarinX

Arabic: ?

Existing digital language curricula:

- Pictures and videos
- Interactive quizzes
- Movies and music (*Grenzenlos Deutsch*)
- Projects (*Mi idioma, mi comunidad*)
- Authentic online materials such as Youtube videos and a learning community such as Forums (Chinese curriculum)

Anticipated Outcomes

- Virtual immersive learning environment
- Engagement in content discussion/critical thinking, leaving mechanics for learners to master themselves with the help of digital course materials
- Real-world problems; setting the learning agenda based on their own interest
- Knowledge and skills from peers that reach beyond language learning
 - co-producers of content and contributors to creating knowledge thus active agents

Students' Feedback

What is an Open-access Digital
Language and Culture Curriculum like?

Challenges

- content vs. voc./grammar
- forward-looking vs. traditional
- critically challenging tasks/project vs. language level
- apprehension of Generation Z and critical thinking of issues



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Lack

- after-class activities
- building a learning community
- assessment

Timelines

- Spring semester: digest comments and feedback from the conference
- Summer: write the white paper and build the website
- Fall semester: models, prototypes, workflow ...?

apply for the [Level 2 grant](#)

Human Power !!!

References

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