

# RIFLA CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Sat. Sept. 26, 2020

8:00-8:30 Registration

8:30-9:30 Announcements and Keynote Presentation

Keynote Speaker: Jessica Haxhi

**Connecting Communities through Languages: What, Why, and How**

Let's develop a shared definition of what we mean by this theme, why it's essential now more than ever, and how we can prepare our students for success when they connect in the target language.

**Sponsored by: Rhode Island College Committee on College Lectures and Voces Digital**



9:30-10:30 Concurrent sessions 1

Session 101 Good to Great: Reading Workshop in a Heritage Classroom (HL)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 102 Creating an Anti-Racist Comunidad (HL/ SJ)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 103 National Spanish Exams: Contests and Assessment (TP)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 104 Get in the Right Frame of "Mindset" to Teach Grammar Inductively (TP)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 105 Getting Them Talking: Engaging and Empowering Novice Learners (TP)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 106 TBLT (Task Based Language Teaching) in the Portuguese Classroom (TP)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 107 Expanding Their Horizons in a Post-COVID World (Tech)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 108 Promoting Student Voice and Creativity in the WL Classroom (Tech)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

10:30-11:00 Exhibits

11:00-12:00 Concurrent sessions 2

Session 201 Advocating for Language Diversity in Our Public Libraries (HL)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 202 Increasing Portuguese Heritage Learner Cultural and Linguistic Awareness (HL)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 203 Adopting Language Classroom Practices to Embrace the LGBTQ+ Community (SJ)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 204 Action! Using Drama to Build Communicative Skills (TP)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

Session 205 Eight Best Practices to Take the Plunge into Proficiency (TP)

[Description](#)

[Bio](#)

- Session 206 Making the Global Connection (Tech)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 207 Instagram à la Mode (Tech)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 208 Using the Can-Do Statements to Plan for Proficiency: Communities-Focused Units  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)

12:00-1:00 Lunch/ Exhibits

1:00-1:30 Awards/ Raffle

1:30-2:30 Concurrent sessions 3

- Session 301 Teaching Heritage Learners Through a Language Arts Approach (HL)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 302 Latinx Voices: Agents of Change, Policy Makers (SJ)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 303 How Can We Promote Social Justice? A Critical Evaluation of Goals for Spanish Heritage Speakers (SJ/ HL)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 304 Mindfulness for More Productivity in the WL Classroom (TP)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 305 Teach Big Ideas, Even with Small Words (TP)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 306 Building Reading Competency in Advanced Language Class (TP)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 307 Café y Conversación: Creating Spaces for Unhurried and Informal TL (TP)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 308 Online Teaching During COVID and Beyond: Building Community Online (Tech)  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)
- Session 309 Effective Instructional and Assessment Practices that Lead to Proficiency  
[Description](#) [Bio](#)

3:00-6:00 Post-Conference Workshop

Speaker: Jessica Haxhi

**Connecting your Units to the Communities Standard**

This workshop will outline a process for revising your existing units to include essential questions, theme, and summative assessments driven by a Communities-standard focus. Participants are encouraged to bring a unit that that would like to revise; time will be allotted for individual or group work and feedback from the presenter.

**Sponsored by: Avant Assessment**



## SESSION AND PRESENTER DESCRIPTIONS

### **Session 101: Good to Great: Reading Workshop in a Heritage Classroom**

Looking for ways to more intentionally teach transferable literacy skills and instill a love of reading in your heritage students? In this presentation, hear about how implementing a reading workshop transformed one teacher's classroom and students, and ideas for how it might work in your own classroom.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Adrienne Brandenburg teaches Spanish and Spanish for heritage speakers at Poudre High School in Fort Collins, Colorado. She presents regularly at state and national conferences. She is passionate about deepening connections among heritage teachers, and she is committed to pursuing social justice.

### **Session 102: Creating an Anti-Racist Comunidad: Lessons for Centering the Voices & Experiences of Latinx Students**

This session will examine the books *En Comunidad* and *This Book is Anti-Racist* within the context of a Heritage Spanish classroom. Both of these books have a series of lessons, and these will be adapted for the secondary level. Both dedicated heritage courses and mixed-level classes with Latinx students will be addressed.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Michaela McCaughey is a high school Spanish and Spanish Heritage teacher in Providence, Rhode Island. Her students are creative artists who push and inspire her. Within her educational philosophy she focuses on social justice issues, culturally responsive pedagogy, arts-integration, and (bi)literacy.

### **Session 103: National Spanish Exams: Contests and Assessment**

This session will focus on the content, administration and awards available from the National Spanish Exam (NSE) for secondary students and the new National Spanish Challenge (NSC) for elementary students. The session will also detail the role of the National Spanish Assessment (NSA) in predicting a student's proficiency level and informing instruction.

#### **Presenter bio:**



As Assistant Director of the National Spanish Exam, Salvatore Muffoletto has presented at state, regional, and national conferences. It is important to regularly present on this topic due to (1) the large national constituency and (2) the changes that take place each year.

### **Session 104: Get in the Right Frame of “Mindset” to Teach Grammar Inductively**

Change the way you think and you’ll change the way you teach. A growth mindset is essential in the shift to teaching grammar inductively. Participants will engage in a demo of an inductive grammar lesson and review steps to creating these types of grammar lessons for their own classes.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Dr. Carolyn Taylor has devoted her career to language education and advocacy. She has taught French, English, and EFL in secondary and postsecondary settings and has been a language teacher educator. A former state supervisor for world languages education, she has held leadership roles in several national, regional, and state language organizations.

### **Session 105: Getting Them Talking: Engaging and Empowering Novice Learners**

How can we get novice learners exchanging information in the target language when they don’t know enough yet? 90%+ target language use is challenging with novice learners. In this session, participants will explore specific activities to scaffold interpersonal speaking and build circumlocution skills with novice language learners of all ages.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Rebecca Aubrey, President-Elect of CT COLT and the 2019 ACTFL World Language Teacher of the Year, teaches Spanish at Timothy Edwards Middle School in South Windsor, CT. An avid traveller, she views language learning as essential for 21st century citizenship, and is passionate about sparking student passion for engaging with our globalized world.

### **Session 106: TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) in the Portuguese Classroom** ***Ensino por Tarefas na sala de aula de Português***

This session explores Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and why it is much more than activities and drills. It is very important to consider the learning phases of this model (pre-task, task and post-task). Teachers should plan the activities in light of the students’ current competencies, students’ ideas and production, and the feedback / evaluation activities, so that the learning is significant and reflects real progress. The planning should also reflect linguistic and non-linguistic skills and student interaction. We will focus on concrete Portuguese language materials that explore TBLT and we will reflect and put into practice this learning model.

*\*Please note: This presentation is conducted in Portuguese.*

#### **Presenter Bio:**



Nuno Marques holds a B.A. in Modern Languages and Literatures - Concentration in Portuguese Studies from the University of Lisbon (2003) and a Master’s in Educational Training (U of Lisbon, 2005). He taught Portuguese as a Foreign Language in public and private high schools in Portugal. Between 2008 and 2010, he was responsible for the Intercultural Education Department of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS Portugal) where he developed national and international projects for the integration and advocacy on behalf of refugees and migrants. Currently, he is the pedagogical advisor of LIDEL - Edições Técnicas,

where he promotes events of dissemination and debate around teaching materials mostly of Portuguese as a foreign language.

### **Session 107: Expanding Their Horizons in a Post-COVID World**

This session will equip you with tools to connect your students to the global community. It includes activities that encompass art, geography, current affairs, music, and the culinary arts. Reading, writing, listening and speaking - will be covered, as well as all five of ACTFL's World-Readiness Standards for language learning.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Kevin Quigley had already been teaching for several years when he stumbled across Comprehensible Input, which changed his life and the lives of his students almost overnight. His zeal for CI has led him to share it with fellow-educators at conferences, and with his students on TikTok @kevidemment.

### **Session 108: Promoting Student Voice and Creativity in the WL Classroom**

Are you looking for ways to promote creativity and student voice in the world language classroom? In this session, participants will explore various ways that students can share their understanding on the content in creative ways using technology. Participants will leave this session with ideas for both spoken and written communication in the target language for all levels. Bring a device and get ready to create and to share your voice.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Heidi Trude has 13 years experience teaching all levels of French. She is the President-Elect of FLAVA, serves on the AATF-VA Board, and serves on the SCOLT Board of Directors. Heidi is the 2017 FLAVA Teacher of the Year, the 2018, SCOLT Teacher of the Year, and a 2019 ACTFL Teacher of the Year Finalist.

### **Session 201: Advocating for Language Diversity in Our Public Libraries**

Most public libraries only have 10-40 books for YA in Spanish or any other languages besides English. These books are typically translations of things like Harry Potter, and the amount of authentic literature for our young adults is very small. In this presentation you will walk away with tangible tools to present to your public library to help increase the language diversity of books. I will provide book lists, research templates, and power point templates along with ways to contact and engage your local libraries.

#### **Presenter Bio:**

Stephanie Metzger is a dual language educator for middle school in Alexandria Virginia. She has taught in Colombia, Costa Rica, Spain, and the Dominican Republic. She is passionate about advocating for dual language programs and for ELLs. She is presented at ACTFL in 2019, and hopes to share simple ways to advocate and make change for our students.

### **Session 202: Increasing Portuguese Heritage Learner Cultural and Linguistic Awareness**

#### ***Fomentar a consciência cultural e linguística dos falantes de herança***

It is well known that the HL classroom must offer discussion on cultural and ethnic identity (Carreira, 2004). But in the classroom the learner often shows incomplete language acquisition and grammar attrition (Polinsky, 2011). Through the process of learning more about culture, this presentation highlights best strategies to create an interculturally competent HL (Schenker, 2012) and use these topics to present strategies that validate the use of regionalisms; cultural representation in the community; linguistic variation; and address grammar attrition and incomplete acquisition. *\*Please note: This presentation is conducted in Portuguese.*



**Presenter Bio:**

Maria Teresa Valdez received her B.A. and M.A. from Universidade de Lisboa in Portuguese language and Culture: Portuguese as a foreign language/second language, and Ph.D (in Luso-Afro-Brazilian Studies & Theory) from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She is Director of the Language Center and Portuguese Program Head and Advisor at the University of Rochester, where she coordinates all language programs. Besides teaching her courses, Dr. Valdez teaches seminars in Teaching and Learning Languages and trains exchange Graduate Teaching Assistants. Her current research interests include textbook development for heritage and foreign language, heritage language acquisition, forms of address in Portuguese, technology in the foreign language classroom.

**Session 203: Adopting Language Classroom Practices to Embrace the LGBTQ+ Community**

Schools can be challenging environments for LGBTQ+ students, and the world language classroom is no exception. Participants will link research on the experiences of LGBTQ+ students to classroom practices that promote acceptance and engagement for all students and will consider potential challenges in language classes.

**Presenter Bio:**

Joseph Parodi-Brown focuses on teaching for proficiency and through the lens of social justice. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on the experiences of LGBTQ+ students in Catholic high schools. Joseph serves on the board of CT COLT and as the Secretary of the ACTFL Critical and Social Justice Approaches SIG.

**Session 204: Action! Using Drama to Build Communicative Skills**

Whether using live skits or recorded videos, drama can help students feel comfortable speaking. This fun format lowers the affective filter of the students which leads to increased retention of language and greater proficiency. Drama techniques are excellent for building communicative skills for students of all ages from PreK-college. Participants will learn to make green screen videos, write skits, and showcase learning through plays or film festivals.

**Presenter Bio:**

Rebecca Klassen has a Master's of Foreign Language Education/ TESOL from the University of South Florida. She has taught French, Spanish, and ESOL to students from PreK-college level in FL, MA, and RI. Now Rebecca is employed as an Assistant Professor at the Henry Barnard Elementary Lab School on the campus of Rhode Island College in Providence, RI where she teaches Spanish to students in grades PreK-5th. She also runs after-school programs in French and Portuguese for students in Kindergarten-5th grade. She has presented on a variety of topics locally, regionally, and nationally at various world language conventions. She is a member of the RIFLA Board and has advocated for a multilingual RI in a variety of ways.

**Session 205: Eight Best Practices to Take the Plunge into Proficiency**

Just starting to dip your toes in the proficiency pool? Come learn more about eight ACTFL-aligned best practices for teaching for proficiency and how to start incorporating them into your practice: authentic resources, grammar in context, can-do statements, performance assessments, and more!

**Presenter Bio:**



Dr. Carolyn Taylor has devoted her career to language education and advocacy. She has taught French, English, and EFL in secondary and postsecondary settings and has been a language teacher educator. A former state supervisor for world languages education, she has held leadership roles in several national, regional, and state language organizations.

**Session 206: Making the Global Connection**

Are you looking for ways to incorporate target language and culture into your classroom? In this session, participants will examine the process of setting up and participating in a Mystery Hangout all while staying immersed in the target language. In addition to Mystery Hangouts, participants will learn other ways to connect their students with native speakers and how to create collaborative projects with those connections all while building community. Get ready to have some fun and learn how you can bring the world into your classroom!

**Presenter Bio:**



Heidi Trude has 13 years experience teaching all levels of French. She is the President-Elect of FLAVA, serves on the AATF-VA Board, and serves on the SCOLT Board of Directors. Heidi is the 2017 FLAVA Teacher of the Year, the 2018, SCOLT Teacher of the Year, and a 2019 ACTFL Teacher of the Year Finalist.

**Session 207: Instagram a la Mode: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational Communication, Comprehensible and Organized**

If only there were a way to streamline thematic units, open-ended tasks, authentic resources, and comprehensible input in a visually engaging forum... oh wait, there is! Instagram! Go beyond just utilizing Instagram for pictures and see how you can recycle resources (repeatedly!), organize favorite finds, and push students interpretively, interpersonally, and presentationally while keeping content simple, accessible, and comprehensible. (All resources shown, including further instructional reading, are provided!)

**Presenter Bio:**



Meredith White earned her B.A., B.S., M.Ed., and Ed.S. all in World Language Education from the University of Georgia. Her focus on novice learners works to ingrain proficiency, authentic resources, genuine tasks, student-guided thematic units, and making language learning enjoyable.

**Session 208: Using the Can-Do Statements to Plan for Proficiency: Communities-Focused Units**

Unpack the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements document to identify what learners need to demonstrate to reach higher levels of proficiency. Then look at specific examples of how to use the Can-Do Statements to generate your unit and daily learning targets. We will use specific examples from Communities-focused units and lessons.

### Presenter Bio:



Jessica Haxhi is the Supervisor of World Languages for New Haven Public Schools, a mid-size urban district with 90 world language teachers and six languages taught. Previously, she spent 20 years teaching Japanese in an elementary magnet school in Waterbury, CT. She has been teaching world language methods courses at Southern Connecticut State University for 15 years. Jessica has served on the Board of the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (NECTFL) and has been President of the National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT) and Co-President of the American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ). She worked with CT COLT to advocate for Seal of Biliteracy and served on the the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements Revision Committee. Jessica is ACTFL President-Elect for 2021.

### Session 301: Teaching Heritage Learners Through a Language Arts Approach

This session is for teachers of heritage Spanish speakers who would like to include more language arts methods in their classes. Presenter will model reading and writing activities and teachers will leave with multiple resources, both to implement immediately and to explore for further learning.

### Presenter Bio:

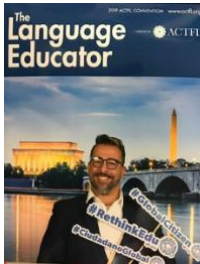


Jen López is a licensed Spanish teacher and has been teaching high school Heritage Spanish courses for nine years. She has worked to move her program from one focused on memorizing grammar vocabulary to one that focuses on literacy skills that transfer. Her Heritage 1 classes include daily independent choice reading and writing activities.

### Session 302: Latinx Voices: Agents of Change, Policy Makers

The Latinx community has endured 528 years of struggle to understand our identity and the impact of implicit biases in our cross-cultural community. Today's classroom must interrogate our practice, our curriculum, and our schools to understand how the world language classroom is serving its community. Let's empower students to enact change now.

### Presenter Bio:



William Yepes-Amaya has been teaching for 26 years, first in Colombia, and now in the U.S. where he immigrated to be his full self in and out of the classroom. As diversity facilitator, he knows the important role that identity plays in how we navigate each space we inhabit.



Abelardo Almazán-Vázquez is in his 10th year teaching Spanish, coaching an all-gender soccer team, and teaching Latin Dance at The Putney School. From Cuernavaca, México and 18 years as an immigrant, he is truly devoted to building bridges, not walls. He finds room for meaningful and positive dialogue across the divide.



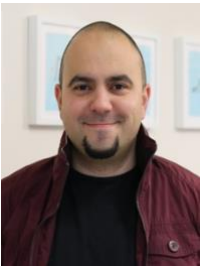


Marialuisa DiStefano is an Assistant Professor in the Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies Department at the University of Massachusetts – Amherst. She works with educators, leaders, and researchers on the development of culturally sustaining praxis, transformative apprenticeship, and ethical mentorship in STEM and bilingual and dual language settings.

### **Session 303: How can we promote social justice? A critical evaluation of goals for Spanish heritage speakers**

In this presentation we critically evaluate goals that have been proposed for heritage language education. We will discuss how to work towards which goals and how to best promote social justice in the classroom. We will bridge theory and practice, providing practical applications for the implementation of strategic goals.

#### **Presenter Bio:**



Dr. Jorge Mendez Seijas is a Spanish Preceptor in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University.



Dr. Le Anne Spino is an Assistant Professor of Spanish and the Proficiency Coordinator for the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures at the University of Rhode Island.

### **Session 304: Mindfulness for More Productivity in the WL Classroom**

In this workshop, teachers will work on mindfulness strategies that they can use for themselves and their students. This interactive workshop will allow teachers to begin or deepen their own skills and share those techniques with their students in the target language. By helping students to settle and be in the present moment, we are giving them valuable life skills to be more effective learners. These self-care techniques will help to build the community in your classroom.

#### **Presenter bio:**



Jennifer Schwester, a.k.a. jennyzenyoga, has been providing yoga services and trainings to many underserved populations for almost two years, including special needs adults, senior citizens, first responders (Police, Fire, EMS, and Dispatchers), and her high school French classes. Jennifer brings her 20 years experience as a French teacher (BA, Montclair State University) to the mat. She has been practicing yoga for the past 6 years and expanded her practice by becoming a Registered Yoga Teacher (RYT-200). She is also an Ambassador for Yoga For First Responders.

### **Session 305: Teach Big Ideas, Even with Small Words**

By reframing units with essential questions and powerful key words, teachers can maintain target-language instruction while inviting deeper learning. Even beginner-level classes can explore topics such as having vs. being and luxury vs. necessity. Students can engage in conversations about identity and diversity, as well as global and social issues.

#### **Presenter Bio:**



Chela Crinnion teaches Spanish at The Nightingale-Bamford School, an independent school in New York City. Her passions as an educator include girls' empowerment, fostering critical thinking, and teaching about global and social issues in the context of target-language instruction. Chela also works as a freelance photographer and travel guide.

### **Session 306: Building Reading Competency in Advanced Language Class**

This session will discuss developing reading proficiency for advanced language learners, with a focus on how to integrate extensive reading into an advanced language curriculum and the benefits of doing so. This session will be a roundtable discussion with a 15-minute presentation to start off.

#### **Presenter Bio:**

Wenhui Chen is a Chinese lecturer at Brown University. Before she joined Brown IN 2013, she worked at Harvard University as a drill instructor for four years. Wenhui Chen holds a master's degree in Curriculum and Pedagogy.

### **Session 307: Café y Conversación: Creating Spaces for Unhurried and Informal TL**

This session will discuss strategies to create a successful out-of-class foreign language conversation club. The presenter will share what works and what doesn't and offer tips to build a club where authentic and meaningful peer-to-peer practice can take place. How-to materials, sample exercises, and weekly plan schematics will be shared.

#### **Presenter Bio:**



Kaitlin Thomas completed her Ph.D. in Hispanic Studies at the University of Birmingham (U.K.). She holds an M.A. in Spanish Language & Literature and B.A. in Hispanic Studies. Dr. Thomas completed non-degree studies in Argentina, Spain, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Cuba. She teaches all levels of Spanish language.

### **Session 308: Online Teaching During COVID and Beyond: Building Community Online**

How do you show your online students you care about their success? By bringing in the human touch through a few simple strategies that build community and lead to higher rates of student success. Come and learn effective practices to keep your students engaged and logging in the entire semester.

#### **Presenter Bio:**



Zenaido Ramos is an assistant professor at Sierra College.



Valentina Morello is a current PhD candidate at the University of Wisconsin Madison and she is also pursuing her Doctorate of Modern Languages from Middlebury College". She received her M.A. in Italian Literature and Culture at Boston College. The focus of her dissertation is the representation of Southern Italy, specifically analyzing the passage from the "southern question" to the "pensiero meridiano" in literature. Her interests also lie in the representation of labor in Italian cinema and literature and in Second Language acquisition.

### **Session 309: Effective Instructional and Assessment Practices that Lead to Proficiency**

As language teachers across the country are striving to help learners and programs focus on proficiency outcomes, how are we ensuring they are inspired and prepared to continue their learning and growth in the language? In this interactive session, participants will explore and examine best practices that lead to proficiency, and examine national assessment data from programs where students are successfully reaching levels of proficiency, allowing them to attain the Seal of Biliteracy and inspiring them to continue their journey and growth in proficiency beyond the classroom. Participants will engage in the session using effective virtual instructional strategies and other integrated technology to share their input, thoughts and reflections on their own practices and language goals. Each participant will have access to the recorded session, slide deck and all materials used in the interactive session through a shared collection of resources on the Avant MORE Learning Wakelet. **This session is sponsored by: Avant Assessment**

#### **Presenter Bio:**



Dawn Samples is the Director for Professional Learning for Avant MORE Learning. She works with teachers and colleagues in the field of world languages, immersion and assessment to provide learning professional learning opportunities that will support strong instructional practices and increase proficiency levels for language learners.