

# Teaching Languages Online

Janet Eckerson, Ed.D.



Anticipating challenges  
and planning for more  
effective instruction

# ¡Hola!

**I am Dr. Janet Eckerson, Ed.D**

Assistant Professor of Spanish

Modern Languages

UNK

[eckersonjm@unk.edu](mailto:eckersonjm@unk.edu)

# Credits

- Presentation template by [SlidesCarnival](#)
- Center for Applied Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA) – Transition to teaching language online (TTLO)
- Outstanding instructors: **Marlene Johnshoy** (CARLA TTLO Director); **Ritu Jayakar** (UPENN); **Frances Matos** (UofMN), **Shannon Spasova** (MichState)



# Objectives

## We can:

use effective strategies for planning and organizing online language learning.

## We can:

“transition” face-to-face instruction online by choosing appropriate technology supports, within an LMS or based in the web.

## We can:

anticipate and respond to challenges inherent to the online environment



# 1. Planning for effective language instruction online

- It's a lot like planning for ANY effective instruction online





# To “Zoom” or not to “Zoom”?

Should instruction be synchronous or  
asynchronous?

## Some basics

- Repetitive, predictable structure and due dates
- Defined and manageable number of activity types/technology tools
- Lots of low-stakes practice, interaction, feedback
- A first module that teaches procedures and tools while building community and defining expectations – this IS the content
- Less is more



# Example instructional sequence

- **DUE Tuesday:** Read/view input source(s):  
Teacher lecture, reading, video etc.  
Complete comprehension activities
- **DUE Friday:** Interactive or individual practice with feedback, practice “quizzes”, exercises, discussion board, Flipgrid, etc.
- **DUE Sunday:** Individual formative/summative assessment, oral or written performance, quiz, etc.

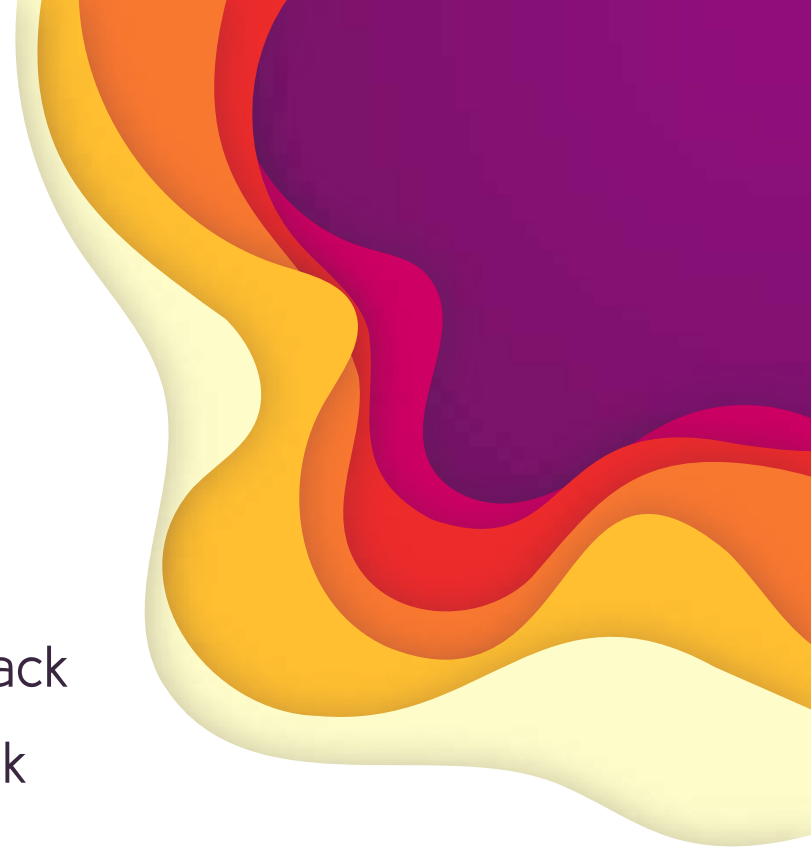
It helps students to know:

I will have something due every Tuesday and Friday.



# ACTFL Lesson Sequence

- Gain attention – activate prior knowledge
- Provide input
- Elicit performance – provide feedback
- Repeat input/performance/feedback as necessary
- Closure



## 2. Transition our face-to-face instruction online

- Choose the tools that best suit OUR instructional purposes





“

What does a typical lesson in YOUR face-to-face classroom look like? How could you do the same online? Which tools can help you? Which parts transition well, which don't?

# Example of a transitioned lesson

- F2F – Warm – up

Do now on paper, pair-share

Online – Padlet or my LMS

- F2F – Provide input

Slideshow with images introducing new vocabulary

– circling to provide repetition

Online – PearDeck Or Edpuzzle or my LMS

- F2F – Elicit performance/Provide feedback

Info-gap activity

Online – (S) Zoom breakout or (AS) Flipgrid

- F2F – Exit ticket – formative assessment

Online – Google forms quiz or my LMS



# Tools for the communicative modes

- **Interpretive (reading/listening/viewing)**

Embed questions in a video: Edpuzzle, HP5, Playposit

Add questions to a text: Actively learn, Google Forms, Pear deck

Your LMS?

- **Interpersonal (spoken or written exchange)**

Host live conversation: Zoom, Google hangouts

Asynchronous verbal exchanges – Flipgrid, Padlet, VoiceThread

Asynchronous text exchanges – Padlet, Chatzy

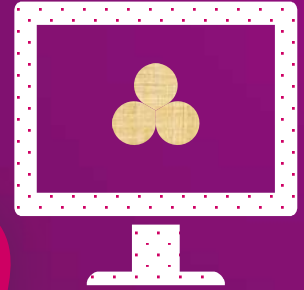
Your LMS?

- **Presentational (speaking/writing)**

Record speech – Flipgrid, Vocaroo, VoiceThread, Screencasitfy, Vidgrid

Writing – Google Docs/slides, Edublogs, Padlet

Your LMS?





**Defined and  
manageable  
number of  
tools**

### 3. Anticipate and respond to challenges

- keeping students engaged
- giving feedback
- opportunities for interpersonal communication
- assessment
- academic dishonesty



# Engagement

## Relationships

Frequent communication from instructor

Opportunities to interact with peers and be known

## High expectations/high support

Challenging, but not overwhelming – resources to support performance at high levels (models, multiple attempts, instructor AND peer-to-peer “help”)

## Content

Quality, novelty and matched to student interest





# Feedback



**Plan the feedback as  
you plan the  
unit/lesson/activity**

## Automatic/ immediate

Provide auto feedback on practice activities and allow multiple attempts, encourages self-correction or “uptake”

## Peer to peer:

Use structured peer review or gallery-style sharing to give feedbacks on drafts or steps in larger products

## Vary types

Whole class,  
“common errors”  
“final thoughts”  
Individual  
Criterion referenced  
(language of the rubric)  
Small group  
Most effective is immediately applied



# Interpersonal communication

## Context

What is possible?

Accessible?

Feasible?

Age, language level  
and institutional  
expectations

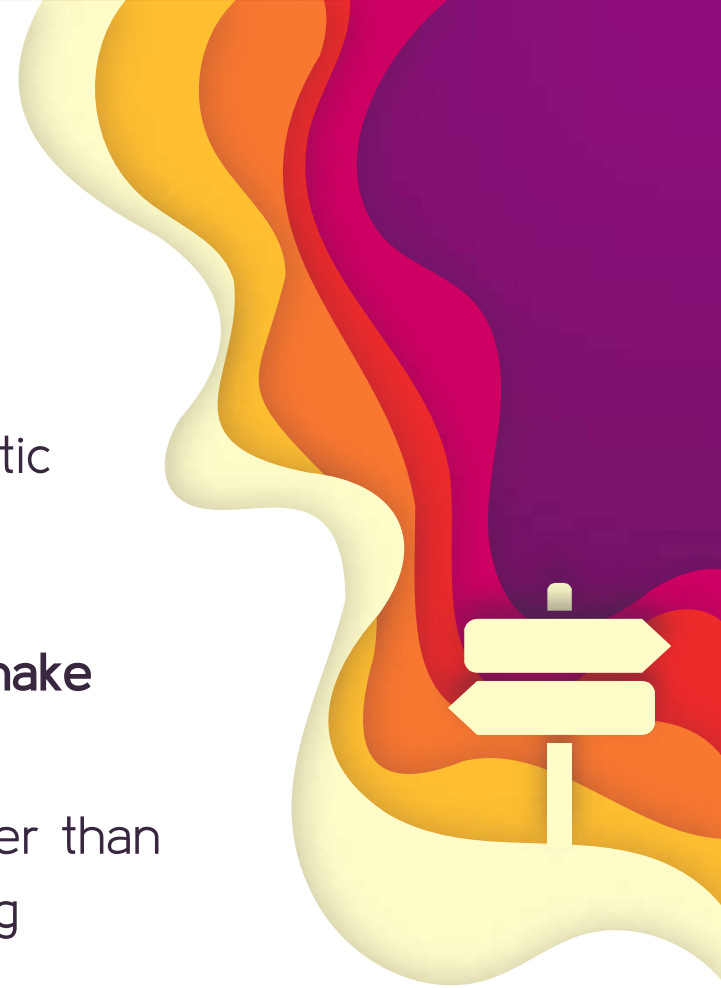
## Plan

Establish structure and  
schedule of synchronous  
participation and  
communicate in advance

Keep partners/groups static  
longer

**STRUCTURE** tasks to make  
them purposeful

Student reflection rather than  
teacher review/grading



# Assessment and Academic Honesty

## Hard to copy or “Google”

Reference course content, experiences, personal reflections/connections. JPEGs of text aren't selectable, Create a time limit. for assessments.

## Teach and reteach policies

Remind students continuously about academic honesty expectations.

## Performance tasks

Are better measures of learning AND harder to “cheat” on – listening and speaking tasks, in particular.

## Have realistic expectations for performance

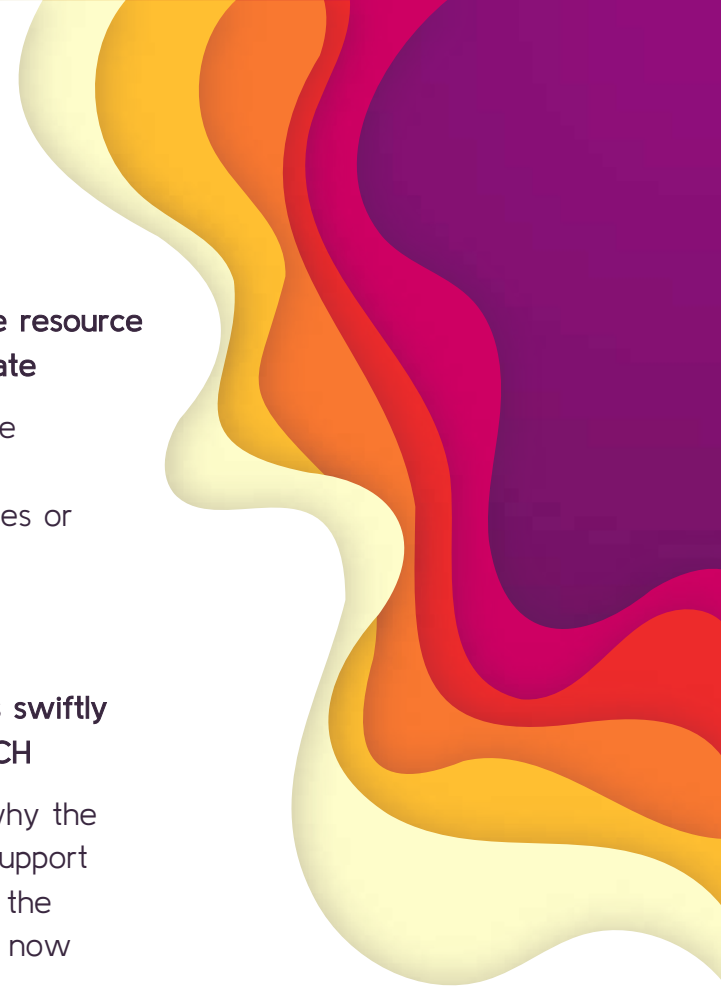
Use a rubric and make clear that perfection is not required. Develop student understanding of realistic expectations.

## Clarify appropriate resource use vs. inappropriate

Provide appropriate resources – word banks/lists, examples or model responses.

## Address offenders swiftly and clearly – TEACH

How you know, why the behavior doesn't support learning and what the consequences are now and in the future.



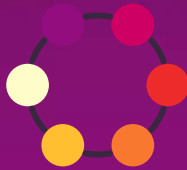


# Final thoughts:

It is possible to deliver quality language  
instruction online

# Your questions?

And experiences...



# iGracias!

**Let's keep talking:**

Contact me:

Janet Eckerson, Ed.D

[eckersonjm@unk.edu](mailto:eckersonjm@unk.edu)