



WEAVING A TANGLED WEB:
INCORPORATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

ACTFL 2025 | Teaching Culture SIG

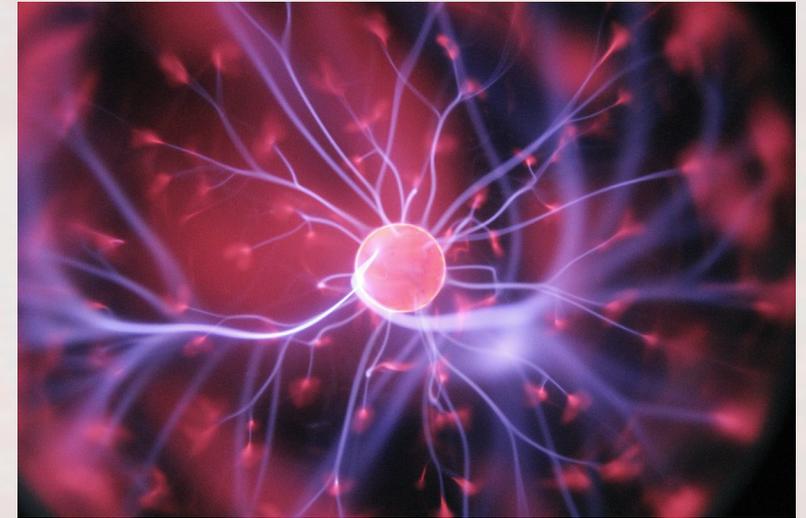
Dr. Amanda Lanier

Michigan State University | Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures
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Weaving a Tangled Web: Incorporating AI into Intercultural Competence

PRESENTED BY
Dr. Amanda Lanier
Michigan State University

ACTFL Convention
November 2025



Although generative artificial intelligence (AI) assistants may offer instant and accurate translation, provide feedback, and even suggest lesson plans, we need not worry that AI will replace language learning or teaching. We cannot ignore AI, but we can take advantage of it for activity design, analysis of output, differentiation, and conversation practice while also encouraging critical thinking about appropriate AI use. Technology offers unprecedented opportunities to cross cultural boundaries, interact with various cultural groups, and indeed to form intercultural communities that transcend national borders and linguistic barriers, but AI can reinforce bias and cause environmental harm, not to mention testing academic integrity. As the activities in this session will demonstrate, intentional and effective interweaving of ICC and technology can promote proficiency while also developing interdisciplinary skills to prepare them for the rapid changes and global challenges ahead.



Something
Old

Something
New

ICE
BREAKER

Something
Borrowed

Something
Blue

DEVELOPING ICC

Cultural or Intercultural?

Culture in language learning is not
an expendable fifth skill...

(Kramsch, 1993, p. 1)



CULTURAL
KNOWLEDGE



CROSS-CULTURAL
EXPERIENCE



INTERCULTURAL
SKILLS

DEVELOPING ICC

Cultural or Intercultural?

How will that experience lead to intercultural skills?

What stimuli will I provide so they can experience that content?

What content will be the foundation?



INTERCULTURAL SKILLS



INTERCULTURAL ATTITUDES

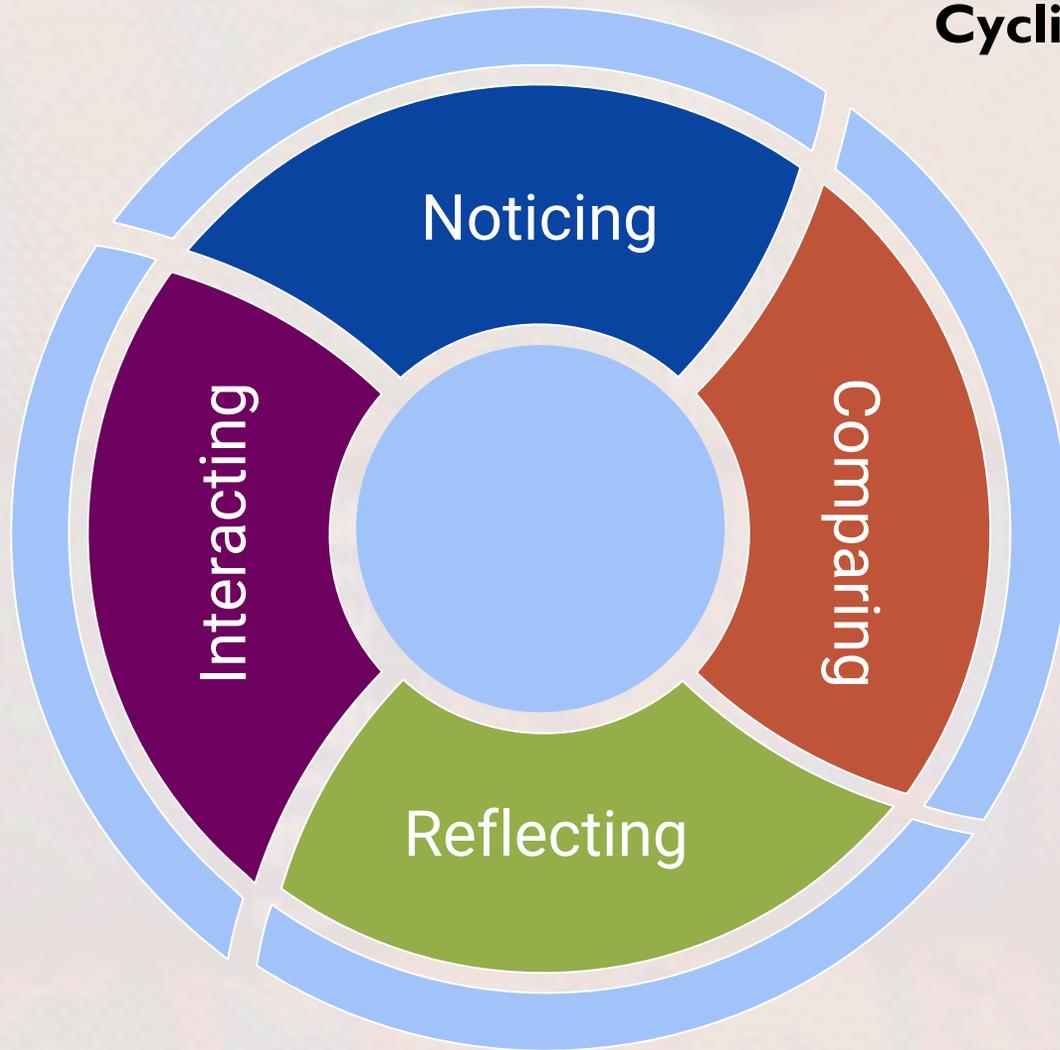
CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE



CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

Are they demonstrating intercultural attitudes?

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE



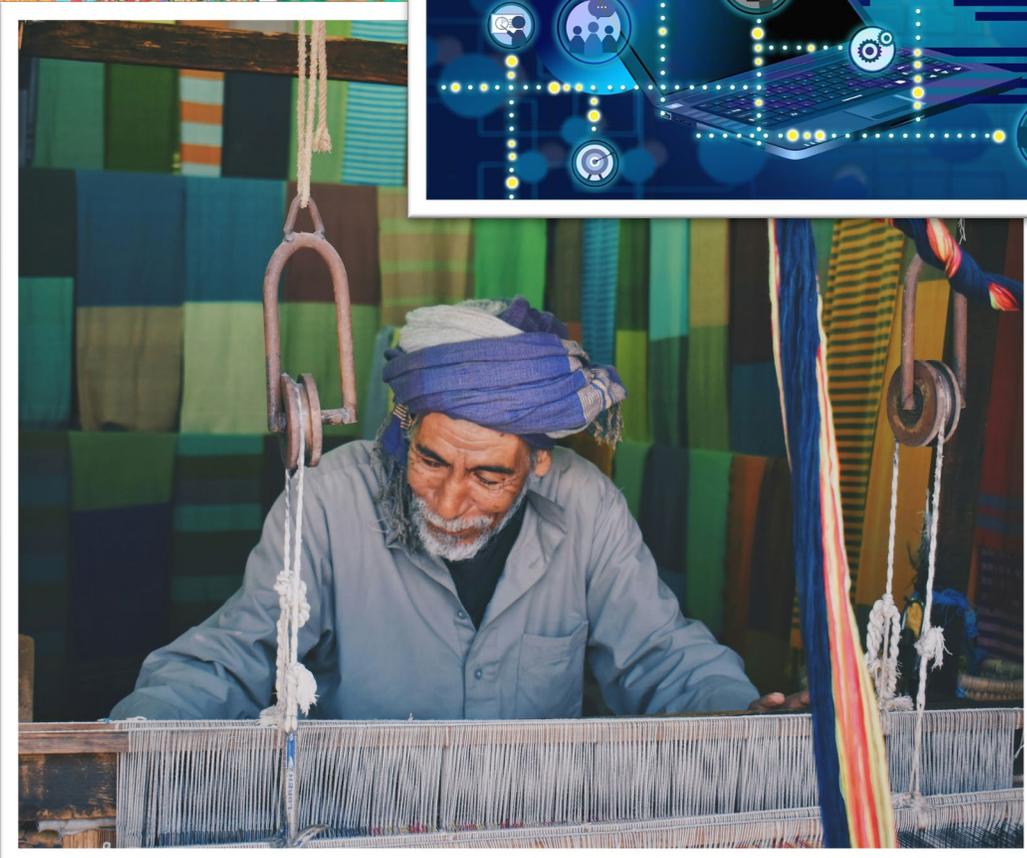
Cyclical process of development over time:

“It is more important to **study culture as a process** in which learners engage rather than as a closed set of information that he/she will be required to recall.”

(Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 23)

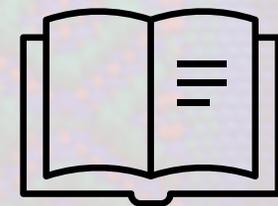
Learning involves “a set of **processes** through which **intercultural learners pass many times** as they develop greater complexity of understanding.”

(Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 59)



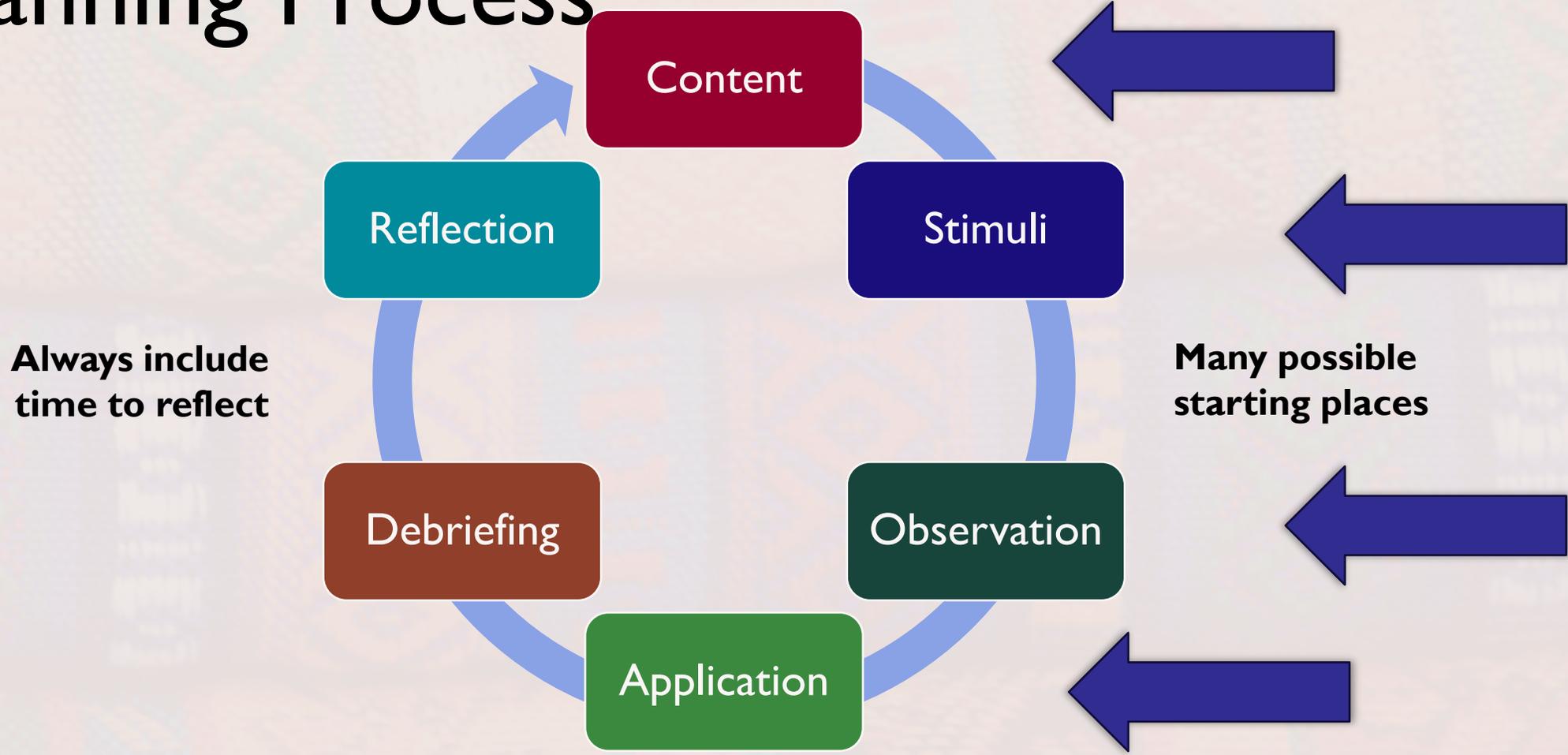
INTERWOVEN

*Teaching Language and
Culture in a Digitally
Connected World*



INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Planning Process



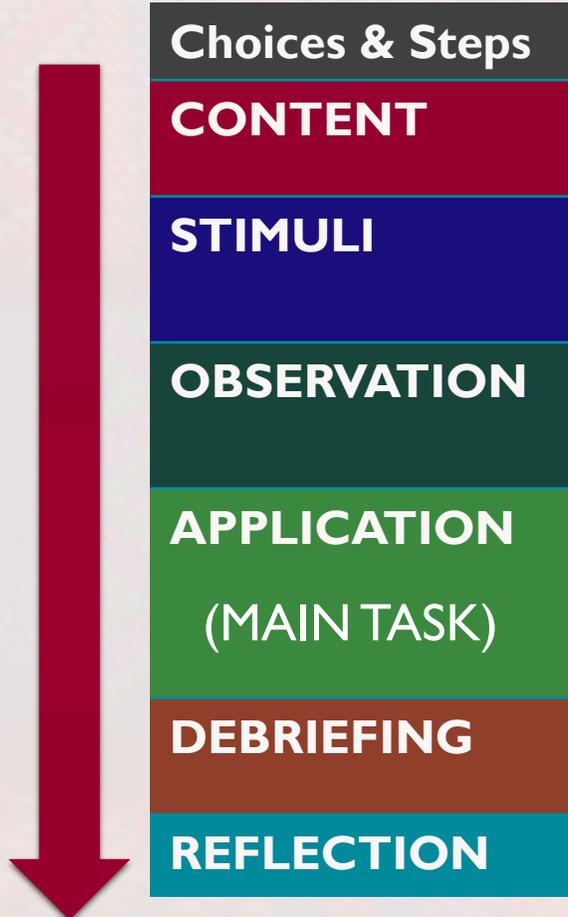
INTERCULTURAL TASKS with Technology

How does technology impact what is possible?



INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Find the Intercultural Potential





CEREMONIAL CLOTH

Activity Ideas for Teaching
Intercultural Competence with Technology

INTERCULTURAL QUESTIONS:
What do people wear for particular occasions or events in other countries?

How are those norms and expectations similar to my culture?
Different from my culture?

MAIN TASK:
Interview an informant (parent or keypal) about a significant item of clothing or outfit and **report** to class

INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Find the Intercultural Potential

CEREMONIAL CLOTH

Choices & Steps

CONTENT

STIMULI

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

(MAIN TASK)

DEBRIEFING

REFLECTION



INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Interpersonal → Presentational

CEREMONIAL CLOTH

| Stages | Activities |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| CONTENT | Clothing and cloth with particular personal or cultural significance |
| STIMULI | Your own images, stories, and actual items of clothing or cloth / Images or videos (with or without sound) of ceremonial clothing / Written descriptions |
| OBSERVATION | Picture description / Comprehension activities – listen to and/or read interviews / Web quests for info on particular costumes, robes, or uniforms |
| APPLICATION (MAIN TASK) | Interview people about significant clothing in relation to moments or roles WHO? Parents, community members, virtual visitors, keypals OUTCOMES? Fill out chart, write report, record presentation, etc. |
| DEBRIEFING | Compile and compare findings from the interviews → use them as basis for more tasks? |
| REFLECTION | When and how will they reflect? What do you want them to gain? |

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS





DRESS TO IMPRESS

Activity Ideas for Teaching
Intercultural Competence with Technology

INTERCULTURAL QUESTIONS:

What do you wear for specific locations, jobs, or occasions?

Do people from other cultures wear the same things for the same types of occasions? Why or why not?

MAIN TASK:

Blog post giving advice about appropriate ways to dress for specific contexts

INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Find the Intercultural Potential

DRESS TO IMPRESS

Choices & Steps

CONTENT

STIMULI

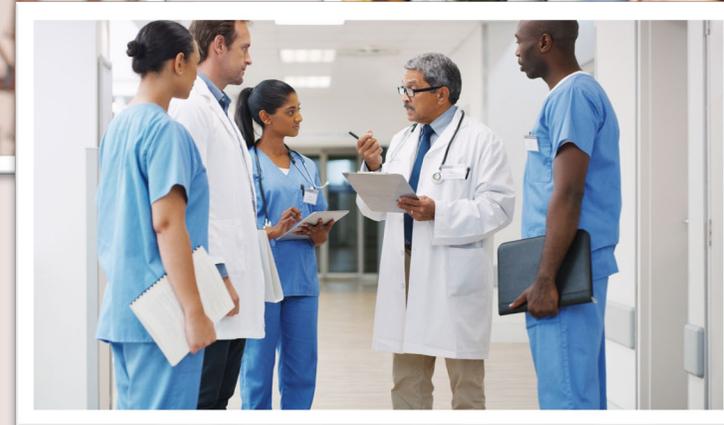
OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

(MAIN TASK)

DEBRIEFING

REFLECTION



INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Interpretive → Presentational

DRESS TO IMPRESS

| Stages | Activities |
|------------------------------------|--|
| CONTENT | Clothing, professions, and interests |
| STIMULI | Images of people on the job, in job interviews, attending special events, etc. / Blogs and videos about “what to wear” / Actual items of clothing (realia) |
| OBSERVATION | Describing images or clothing items / Reading and listening activities with the blogs and videos, such as filling out a graphic organizer or labelling a drawing |
| APPLICATION (MAIN TASK) | Write a blog post that offers advice on what to wear for certain occasions in the target culture (anywhere the target language is spoken) – multimodal, i.e., include images as well as lists / Could do a role play about advice as scaffolding |
| DEBRIEFING | Compile and compare the blog posts, then work with students to publish them on a website or wiki / Consider a peer review phase |
| REFLECTION | When and how will they reflect? What do you want them to gain? |

With AI Assistance

How can generative AI and AI-driven apps make this activity easier and more effective?

List useful words and phrases related to topic and genre

Find texts and images to use as resources and models

Organize and produce instructions and rubrics

Help you and Ss generate ideas for blog post topics

Give students feedback on drafts of their blogs

Collate and compare the students' writing for general feedback

Brainstorming and Planning Activities

Ask Tempo to Design an Interpersonal Activity

Prompt:

- Hi Tempo, I'd like to do an interpersonal speaking activity with my students that has to do with wearing the right clothing for a job or special occasion. They are studying Czech, and their proficiency level is novice-high to intermediate-low.



<https://help.extemporeapp.com/en/articles/10099736-using-extempore-s-task-assistant-ask-tempo>

Authentic Prompt > Authentic Response?



“Inform me about this topic”
prompt

Please tell me how the global fashion industry is impacting the environment.

“Help me teach my
class” prompt

You are an expert pedagogical assistant. I am teaching a class for learners of Italian. They are in high school, and their level is about Novice-High. Please help me come up with several activities that we could do that have to do with clothing and fashion.



DRESSING TO KILL... THE ENVIRONMENT

Activity Ideas for Teaching
Intercultural Competence with Technology

INTERCULTURAL QUESTIONS:
How does the clothing and fashion industry connect people in many countries?

How does the clothing and fashion industry cause harm to the environment, and how can we reduce that harm?

MAIN TASK:
Public service campaign recommending “slow, circular fashion”

INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Find the Intercultural Potential

DRESSING TO KILL... THE ENVIRONMENT

Choices & Steps

CONTENT

STIMULI

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

(MAIN TASK)

DEBRIEFING

REFLECTION

United Nations | International Day of Zero Waste
30 March

Home Messages UN Observances

Bolstering waste management and advancing resource recovery and reuse are key to protecting human and environmental health.
| PHOTO: UNEP

Towards zero waste in fashion and textiles

Humanity's unsustainable production and consumption practices are driving the planet towards destruction. Households, small businesses and public service providers generate between 2.1 billion and 2.3 billion tons of municipal solid waste every year – from packaging and electronics to plastics and food. However, global waste management services are ill-equipped to handle this, with 2.7 billion people lacking access to solid waste collection and only 61-62 per cent of municipal solid waste being managed in controlled facilities. Humanity must act urgently to address the waste crisis.

This year's International Day of Zero Waste emphasizes the need for action in the fashion and textile sector to reduce waste and advance circular solutions with the theme **Towards zero waste in fashion and textiles**.

The rapid growth in textiles production and consumption is outpacing sustainability efforts in the sector, causing severe environmental, economic, and social impacts, particularly in the Global South. Clothing production doubled from 2000 to 2015 and yet, 92 million tonnes of textile waste is produced globally. This equates to a **garbage truck full of clothing** incinerated or sent to landfills every second.

Addressing this challenge requires systemic change through sustainable production and consumption, and circular solutions. A zero-waste approach is key to this transition.

Did you know?

Packed into standard shipping containers and placed end-to-end, municipal solid waste generated in one year would wrap around the globe 25 times.

Increasing resource use is the main driver of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution.

Without urgent action, municipal solid waste generation will balloon to 3.8 billion tons annually by 2050.

Download

**Sustainability and
Circularity in the
Textile Value Chain -
A Global Roadmap**

- Full Report
- Executive Summary (English)
- Executive Summary (Arabic)
- Executive Summary (Chinese)
- Executive Summary (French)
- Executive Summary (Spanish)
- Executive Summary (Russian)
- Brands and Retailers - Annex
- Communication and Consumer Engagement Actors - Annex
- Financial Institutions - Annex
- Innovators and Recyclers - Annex
- NGOs -Annex
- Policymakers - Annex
- Raw Materials Producers and Manufacturers - Annex

Goals for a better world



United Nations
Sustainable
Development
Goals
(SDGs)

INTERCULTURAL TASKS

Interpretive → Presentational

**DRESSING TO KILL...
THE ENVIRONMENT**

| Stages | Activities |
|------------------------------------|---|
| CONTENT | Environmental and economic impact of the clothing and fashion industry |
| STIMULI | Watch videos and read articles from the UN for Zero Waste Day 2025 and other sources / Images / Infographics |
| OBSERVATION | Reading and listening activities / Graphic organizers or handouts where learners compile info they find |
| APPLICATION (MAIN TASK) | Come up with a public service campaign that encourages people to reduce consumption, recycle, purchase responsibly, etc. – can have both written/multimodal and spoken versions |
| DEBRIEFING | Compile and compare findings from the interviews → more tasks? |
| REFLECTION | When and how will they reflect? What do you want them to gain? |

With AI Assistance

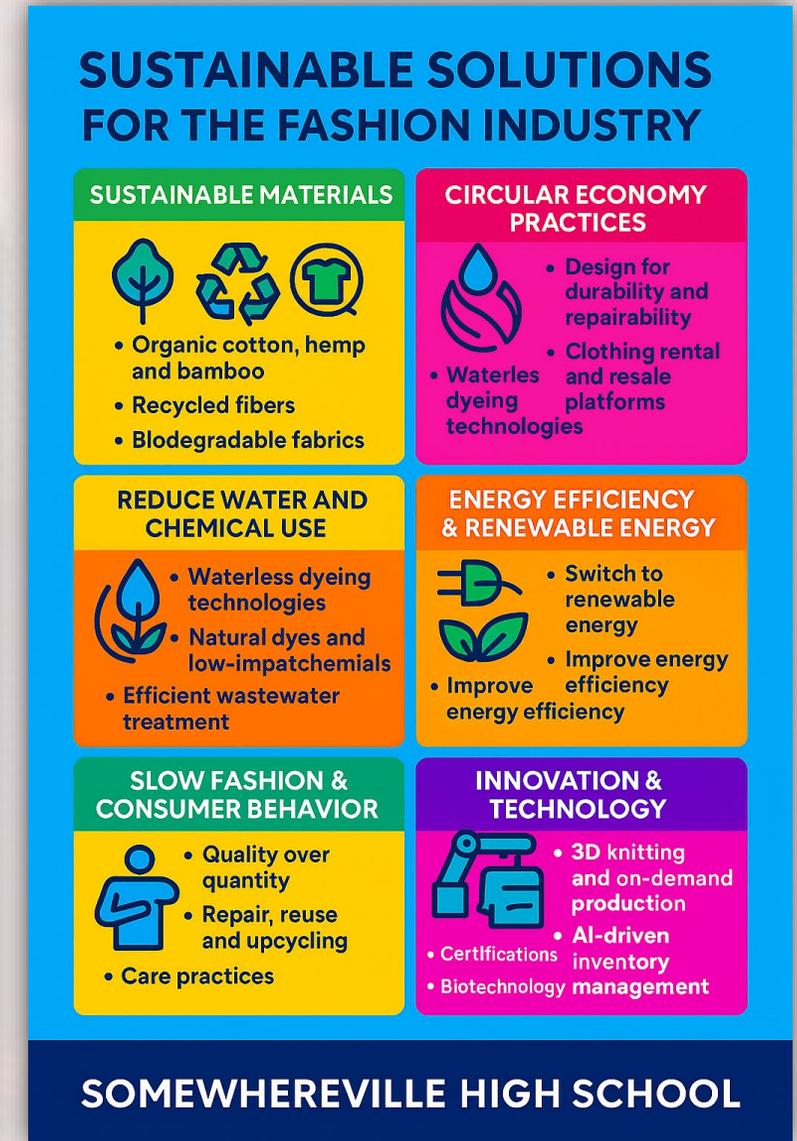
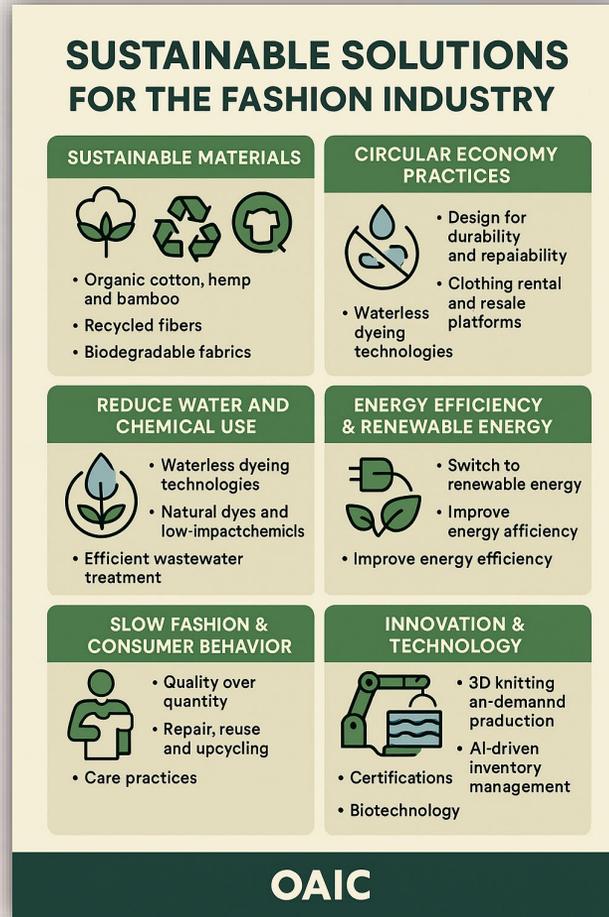
CoPilot prompt:

- What impact does the clothing industry have on the global environment?

Response:

List with 8 domains, summary, and links to sources

“Would you like me to create a visual infographic summarizing these solutions?”



ICC ACTIVITY DESIGNS

Reflecting on the Activity

DEBRIEFING

- In **target language**
- Keep it concrete and specific
- Compile and summarize what the whole class found – help them identify patterns
- Point out connections to culture – what is cultural about this, not random or individual?
- Make them talk, but steer toward the takeaways that you have in mind

VS.

REFLECTING

- In **native language**
- Can ask questions that are too complex or abstract for their TL proficiency
- Use multiple modes over time – speaking, writing, etc.
- Encourage them to identify and describe how they used intercultural attitudes and skills
- Return to these reflections later to show them their progress

KASE Intercultural Reflection Guide

This activity is similar to the traditional KWL chart, but it is designed to put balanced emphasis on the components of ICC as opposed to the teaching of culture as content.



Knowledge

I know more about...



Attitudes

I changed or improved my attitudes about...



Skills

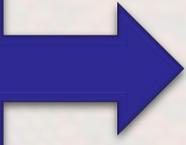
I got better at...



Exploration

I want to explore more about...

Agree /
Disagree?



With AI assistance, you can develop proficiency more effectively.

Agree /
Disagree?



Proficiency is the only goal that really matters in a language course.

Agree /
Disagree?



Incorporating generative AI into your language course can make the course and program more valuable overall.

Guillén & Sawin
(2025) in

The Conversation

“What AI earbuds
can’t replace:
The value of
learning another
language”

Interpersonally, using another’s language fosters both cultural and cognitive empathy.

In addition, the cognitive benefits of multilingualism are equally well documented: resistance to dementia, divergent thinking, flexibility in shifting attention, acceptance of multiple perspectives and explanations, and reduced bias in reasoning.

The very attributes companies seek in the AI age – resilience, lifelong learning, analytical and creative thinking, active listening – are all cultivated through language learning.

<https://theconversation.com/what-ai-earbuds-cant-replace-the-value-of-learning-another-language-264965>

Global Competence

Investigate the World

Recognize Perspectives

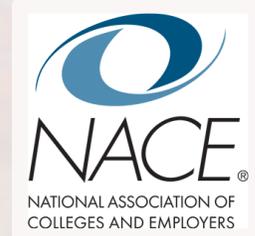
Communicate Ideas

Take Action



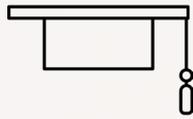
NACE Career Competencies

<https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies>



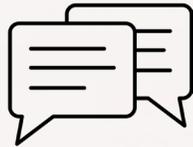
Career & Self-Development

- Awareness of Strengths and Challenges
- Professional Development
- Networking



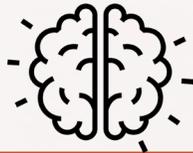
Communication

- Oral communication
- Written communication
- Non-verbal communication
- Active listening



Critical Thinking

- Display situational awareness
- Gather & analyze data
- Make effective & fair decisions



Equity & Inclusion

- Engage multiple perspectives
- Use inclusive & equitable practices
- Advocate



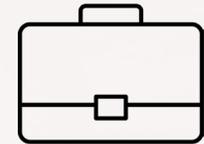
Leadership

- Inspire, persuade, & motivate
- Engage various resources and seek feedback
- Facilitate group dynamics



Professionalism

- Act with integrity
- Demonstrate dependability
- Achieve goals



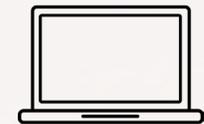
Teamwork

- Build relationships for collaboration
- Respect diverse perspectives
- Integrate strengths



Technology

- Leverage technology
- Adapt to new technologies
- Use technology ethically



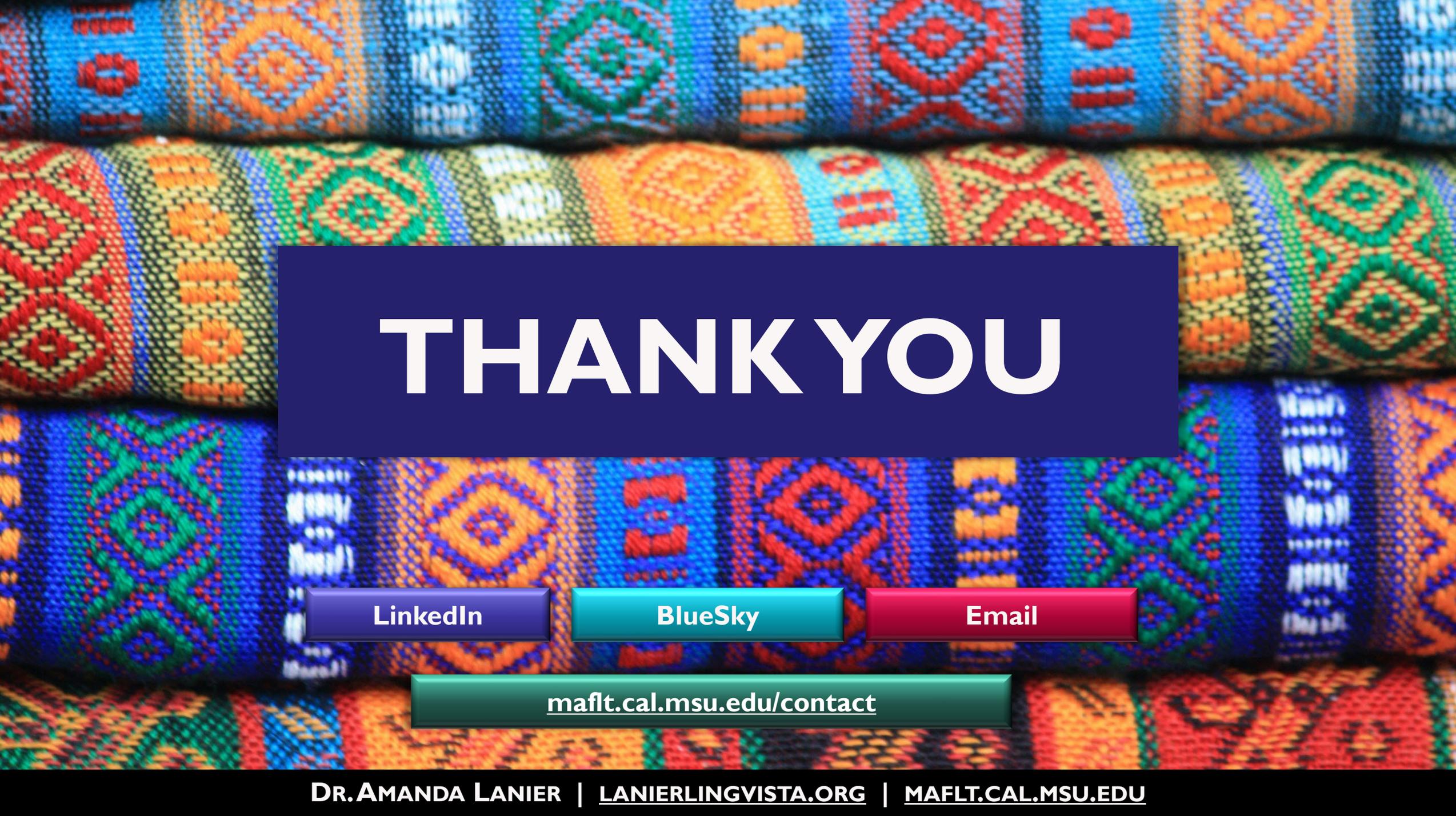
“Attend
unflinchingly...
to the human
beings”

If we are to have a globe
worth inhabiting,
we must attend unflinchingly to
the kinds of human beings
that will inhabit it,
and the ways in which they deal
with one another.

From Howard Gardner's introduction to
Educating for Global Competence
(Asia Society, 2011)



Photo Credit: Engin Akvurt on Pixabay



THANK YOU

LinkedIn

BlueSky

Email

maflt.cal.msu.edu/contact

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USEFUL LINKS

- **On my website: Intercultural Competence in Language Teaching**
<https://lanierlingvista.org/language-teaching/icc-in-flt/>
- **Wakelet Collection: Integrating Culture and Language**
https://wakelet.com/wake/qHVc8WwiO7fpLYIzmp_F
- **NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements**
<https://www.actfl.org/educator-resources/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements> > Intercultural Competence Can-Dos and Reflection Tool
- **LinguaFolio Training Module 5: The Importance of Interculturality**
<https://ncssfl.org/lfmodules/module5-0/>
- **Council of Europe: Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters**
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/autobiography-intercultural-encounters>
- **Global Competence**
<https://asiasociety.org/education/global-competence>

WAKELET COLLECTIONS: <https://wakelet.com/@LanierLingvista>

Wakelet interface showing a collection titled "Integrating Language and Culture" by Lanier, Amanda (@LanierLingvista). The collection includes a QR code and several resource cards.

Integrating Language and Culture
Resources for VIVID Fellows and Language Educators Everywhere

25 items • 2 views • 1

Save Design Share

Paste any web address

MAFLT
FLT 815
Intercultural FLT

Courses in FLT Curriculum
FLT Course Descriptions All courses in the FLT curriculum are fully online and credit bearing. They are asynchronous, but not coveed. You will interact with faculty and peers throughout the 14-week semester. Courses begin in September, January, or May if you...

MAFLT
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Interactions in Virtual Events
Virtual Sessions with Amanda Lanier On this page you will see various ways of interacting during the presentation. Please listen for instructions in the Zoom or Teams meeting, Surveys and Polls | Currently Active Poll Everywhere How to Participate On the...

E LANGUAGE FL
Technology Innovator

The Language Flagship Culture Initiative | Tech Center
The Culture App is a series of online modules based on intercultural scenarios for U.S. undergraduate students of Arabic, Portuguese or Russian. The Culture App modules were designed for use in domestic Language Flagship programs prior to Flagship students' capstone year overseas. They can be used w...

Intercultural Competence in FLT
- lanier.commons.msu.edu

DESIGNING INTERCULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Designing Intercultural Activities | Lanier 2021
This presentation and the ideas behind it continue to evolve.
See: https://lanier.commons.msu.edu/icc-in-flt/Planning/CCAActivities_FLT815_Lanier_5.521.mp4

PDF

Intercultural Attitude Adjustments for Language Learners and Other Cross-Cultural Explorers
A guide to the Attitudes element of the Intercultural Competence framework to support language teachers in guiding learner development over time.

PDF

VALUE

Presenter Bio



Dr. Amanda Lanier is an applied linguist with over 20 years of experience in language teaching and over 10 years in online learning and program administration. She is an instructor in Michigan State University's fully online Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching (maflt.cal.msu.edu) and primary investigator on a multi-year study of collaboration and change in world language programs. Her work as a scholar and educator focuses on the intersections of language, identity, culture, and technology, particularly in regard to critical and heritage languages. She is also trained as an actor, director, musician, and dancer, and she is studying her sixth language. Dr. Lanier shares resources, project updates, publications, and past presentations on her website at: <https://lanierlingvista.org>.

VALUE Rubric for Intercultural Competence

<https://www.aacu.org/value>

Glossary

- **Culture:** All knowledge and values shared by a group.
- **Cultural rules and biases:** Boundaries within which an individual operates in order to feel a sense of belonging to a society or group, based on the values shared by that society or group.
- **Empathy:** "Empathy is the imaginary participation in another person's experience, including emotional and intellectual dimensions, by imagining his or her perspective (not by assuming the person's position)". Bennett, J. 1998. Transition shock: Putting culture shock in perspective. In Basic concepts of intercultural communication, ed. M. Bennett, 215-224. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- **Intercultural experience:** The experience of an interaction with an individual or groups of people whose culture is different from your own.
- **Intercultural/cultural differences:** The differences in rules, behaviors, communication and biases, based on cultural values that are different from one's own culture.
- **Suspends judgment in valuing their interactions with culturally different others:** Postpones assessment or evaluation (positive or negative) of interactions with people culturally different from oneself. Disconnecting from the process of automatic judgment and taking time to reflect on possibly multiple meanings.
- **Worldview:** Worldview is the cognitive and affective lens through which people construe their experiences and make sense of the world around them.

CLAUDE.AI Useful Links

Claude – Start Chatting with Claude AI

<https://claude.ai/>

Claude’s Prompt Library

<https://docs.anthropic.com/en/prompt-library/library>

Claude – Use the Anthropic Workbench API

User Guide: <https://docs.anthropic.com/en/docs/welcome>

Create Account or Log In: <https://console.anthropic.com/>

Claude + Google Sheets

Build with Claude: Google Sheets Add-On

<https://docs.anthropic.com/en/docs/build-with-claude/claude-for-sheets>

Anthropic’s Prompt Engineering Interactive Tutorial

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19jzLgRruG9kjUQNKtCgIZjdD6l6weA6qRXG5zLIAhC8/edit?usp=sharing>

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help

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| | A | B | C | D | |
|----|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | INTERVIEW QUESTIONS > Ask Claude to help you come up with interview questions | | | | |
| 2 | This is a two-step prompt. First, you will ask Claude for ideas for interview questions and edit what you get until you are satisfied. Then, you will ask Claude to translate those questions. You can s is not a bad idea to give the students some suggested questions in the target language and provide translations into their L1. Use these examples to model question format. Ask them to come up questions, try starting with the chatbot instead: https://claude.ai . | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | Prompt Template | Prompt Template | Target Language | |
| 5 | | Hi Claude! I want to interview someone who has had different life experiences from mine. Could you help me come up with some interview questions? {{DETAILS}} | Human: Hi Claude, I'm learning {{LANGUAGE}}, and I need some help translating a text. Please translate this text into {{LANGUAGE}}. | Portuguese | |
| 6 | | | <text>{{TEXT}}</text> | Other Details including Gender and Formality | |
| 7 | | | Assistant: | {{DETAILS}} | |
| 8 | | | | This person is a woman from Brazil, and she is about 30 years older than I am. | |
| 9 | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | |
| 11 | | Prompt 1: Brainstorm Questions | Assembled prompt with input data | Formula to Request Response (and Response) | Edited |
| 12 | | | In order to assemble the prompt, we need to pull the Prompt Template text and replace the | Function is made up of: = CLAUDE (Prompt, Model, Parameters) | Copy the text from Column D to E Column G by adding an equal sign |

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

The *Savoirs* Framework - Council of Europe

Intercultural Competence for All (COE, 2012)

Cultural Knowledge (*savoirs*)

- Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.

Intercultural attitudes (*savoir être*)

- Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own. Willingness to relativise one's own values, beliefs, and behaviours. Ability to "decentre".

Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*)

- Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own.

Skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*)

- Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

Critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*)

- Ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey (2002); Liddicoat & Scarino (2013)

INTERCULTURAL ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENTS

FOR LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND OTHER CROSS-CULTURAL EXPLORERS

Dr. Amanda Lanier | Michigan State University

What does it mean to be intercultural? It starts with a mindset. Whenever you encounter a person from another culture, anyone and anywhere, you try to think like this:

1. One country does not equal one culture.
2. One language does not equal one culture.
3. I have a culture. In fact, I belong to many cultures at once.
4. There are many cultures represented right here in our class.
5. I can find something in common with people everywhere.
6. I will never know enough “culture” to avoid all cross-cultural blunders.
7. Cross-cultural blunders open up opportunities to understand others more and interact with them better.
8. Even if someone else’s cultural belief, value, or practice doesn’t make sense to me, it does make sense to them. If I ask with an open mind, they might explain it to me.
9. Language teachers don’t know everything about the cultures we are studying. They are fellow travelers, not fonts of endless knowledge.
10. Studying culture is not about learning facts. It is about creating skills so I can keep learning.
11. The skills I learn while studying an additional language can help me in many aspects of my life, no matter how proficient I get (or not), where I live, or what I plan to do for a living.

Intercultural Attitude Adjustments (Lanier, 2021)

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