

AZLA Fall 2025 Conference Presentations (DRAFT)

September 13, 2025

Professional Learning Center/TUHS

Teaching Language and Culture Through Innovation

Conference registration: <https://tinyurl.com/azlafall25>

Room	Presenter(s) Link	Session Title	Session Description	
	Dr. Yuli Asención-Delaney	Trying digital tools in the classroom - Action research in a language program.	This interactive session explores how action research can empower teachers to experiment with digital tools, assess their impact, and refine their practice. Drawing on real examples from a Spanish program, the presenter will share instructors' projects that range from enhancing student engagement to improving assessment and feedback. In this session participants will discover the stages of action research and how to apply them in their own teaching contexts and set hands-on with digital tools currently being used or piloted in the program.	Dr. Yuly Asención Delaney holds a Ph.D. degree in Applied Linguistics from Northern Arizona University. She has taught English and Spanish as a foreign language since 1989 in Venezuela and the United States. She is currently a Professor of Spanish at the Global Languages and Cultures Department in Northern Arizona University where she coordinates the Spanish lower-division courses and is the co-coordinator of the master's program in Teaching Spanish. Her research interests include language teaching and technology, corpus linguistics and Spanish acquisition, Second language reading and writing, Spanish Heritage language learning, and Second language assessment. She has published her research in journals such as Applied Linguistics, Language Learning, Hispania, and Foreign Language Annals, and presented at national conferences such as the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese and the American Association of Corpus Linguistics.
	Sara Lee Melanie Mello	25 students, 25 levels - how to address heterogeneity	This session highlights effective classroom strategies for addressing diverse proficiency levels present within a single class. Participants will learn to differentiate and scaffold activities using shared materials, ensuring equitable access and appropriate challenges for all learners. The session emphasizes inclusive instruction, tailoring methods to individual	

			abilities, and fostering engagement, providing practical ideas for creating a supportive, effective learning environment.	
	Nallely Morales	Language in context: Teaching communication, culture and critical consciousness.	How can language teaching foster critical thinkers, not just fluent speakers? This workshop will center in communication and culture, in order to help educators design lessons that challenge linguistic hierarchies and center authentic meaning-making. In this session you will learn how to move beyond grammar rules in order to teach authentic language use. We will examine how to teach communication as a context-dependent practice and rethink culture beyond superficial stereotypes to create critical thinkers in our classrooms.	
	Dr. Nicole Teyechea and Dr. Francheska Figueroa *Exhibitor Session Finita	From Policy to Practice: AZTESOL's Handbook Preview	AZTESOL is launching a statewide English Learner (EL) Handbook to support educators, administrators, and advocates working with multilingual learners in PreK–12 settings. This session introduces the draft version and invites feedback to ensure it reflects classroom realities across Arizona. Participants will review sample sections, share input in small groups, and contribute ideas to strengthen this practical resource ahead of its official release in October 2025.	
	Michelle Gonzalez	Refining Our 8th Grade Biliteracy Award of Distinction: A Practical Journey Guided by AZLA	The Biliteracy Award of Distinction recognizes our 8th-grade dual language students who demonstrate high levels of academic proficiency in both Spanish and English. In this session, we'll share how last year's AZLA conference informed meaningful changes to our process, including revised rubrics, parent communications, and scoring guides. We'll highlight collaboration among teachers and AZLA presenters, offering practical resources for schools working to implement or strengthen bilingual recognition for promoting their middle school students.	
	Dr. Audrey Chery	Making languages relevant and preparing students for the global workplace	This presentation will provide a brief definition of the field of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) and its current pertinence. Then, it will explore why and how to integrate LSP principles into K-20 general language courses in order to make languages relevant to students and best prepare them for a global workplace. Finally, participants will be	

			presented with resources that include ready-made lesson plans that can be adapted to any language and different levels.	
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	Jersus Colmenares	Planning with intelligence: Practical AI tools guided by world language teaching expertise	This practical session empowers pre- and in-service world language teachers to critically integrate AI tools into lesson planning. Emphasizing foundational teacher knowledge, the session underscores teacher agency over tool use. Participants will explore theoretical underpinnings, sample resources, and structured steps for using AI as an assistant, not a replacement. Demonstrations include lesson prompts for any language, SLO checks, and scaffolded activities, with implications for ethical, reflective, and informed decision-making in AI-supported planning.	
	Enrico Minardi	Digital Assessment: AI or not AI?	I have recently started teaching upper division content classes (literature and culture courses) in an online format. These courses' most problematic aspect is assessment, usually in the form of either open-ended questions or papers. The difficulty of ascertaining if the student's text is authentic or generated by the AI calls for a radical revision of the assessment's methods. Examples of 'wrong' assessments along with properly designed ones fitting the online format will be featured.	
	Ken Stewart *Exhibitor Session Lingco	Tailor-Made Teaching: Customizing Language Instruction for Every Learner	Just like a perfectly tailored outfit, language instruction should be customized to fit the needs of each learner. This session explores how to craft individualized, proficiency-based lessons using Lingco's editable and authentic content. Discover how to weave thematic instruction, cultural connections, and adaptable activities into a seamless learning experience. Learn practical strategies to design lessons that fit your students like a glove—engaging, rigorous, and tailor-made for success!	

	Dr. Albert Martino Jr.	E-Z Peezy Paired Activities	E-Z Peezy Paired Activities. Three non-technology-based, fun and engaging activities for the world language classroom. Learn how to play Catch a cow, What's in your fridge? And Hear/Say. These paired activities require paper, perhaps a sheet of card stock and markers/colored pencils and away you go!!!!!! These will be fully explained and demonstrated throughout the session. Walk away with 3 new ideas for your world language classroom!!	
	Hannah Rude	Making a Splash! Diving in the Arizona Seal of Biliteracy	This session will focus on how to successfully implement the Seal of Biliteracy Program at your site/district. The goal is for educators to walk away understanding the Seal of Biliteracy requirements, its impact on all students, including ELs, and clear structures on how to implement. Educators will be provided resources to support the program.	
	Laura Zinke, Lacey Chavez, and Carla Whitehead	The Value of Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica on your campus	In this session, participants will explore the transformative impact of establishing a chapter of the Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica (SHH) on their campus. SHH fosters academic excellence, builds student identity and pride, and creates a visible and vibrant language-learning culture on campus. Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of how to start a chapter, maintain active membership, and maximize student involvement through service projects, cultural events, and national scholarships.	
	Mariana Jimenez *Exhibitor Session Wayside Publishing	BrAInstorming Technology Use in the Language Classroom	AI is rapidly transforming our world, and the future of language learning. Join this collaborative session to explore and address the main opportunities and challenges that lie with integrating these new technologies! Leave with new ideas and strategies to implement immediately, as well as new connections with other conference participants.	

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	Zhe Kang	Talk, Move, Celebrate: Collaborative Learning in the Language Classroom	As AI becomes a fixture in education, it's more important than ever to strengthen real human interaction in the language classroom. This session showcases engaging, collaborative activities that build language proficiency, social skills, and intercultural awareness—while also fostering meaningful communication and classroom community. Participants will leave with ready-to-use strategies that center student voice and prioritize human connection in an increasingly automated world.	
	Jennifer Preciado Pérez	Teaching Spanish through Real-Time Feedback: Exploring Padlet's Potential	Providing effective in-class corrective feedback is a complex task, constrained by time and cognitive demands. Nevertheless, it fosters language development by raising learners' awareness of language form. This presentation introduces Padlet as a dynamic tool for delivering real-time corrective feedback in in-person classes. Participants will engage with the tool to explore communicative activities designed to enhance linguistic accuracy, and reflect on Padlet's practical benefits and limitations as an assessment tool in classroom settings.	
	Kate MacKay and Marisol Aguirre	Creative Resources for Teaching Language, Literacy, and Culture	The Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language and Literacy (CERCLL) is a Title VI Language Resource Center committed to advancing the teaching and learning of second languages through research and the development of resources and professional learning opportunities for language educators. If you are a world language teacher looking for free open resources for your classroom, this session is for you. Come learn about all the (mostly free) resources that CERCLL has to offer!	

	Sarae Martin and Danielle Reilly *EF Tours	Travel the World - Starting a Travel Club at your school	Are you passionate about traveling the world and would like to share that passion with the students in your school? Join us to discuss ways to bring a Travel Club to your school and provide opportunities for students and teachers to travel the world. Leave with an understanding of how easy it is to start traveling and introducing real-world experiences in history, language and culture. Geared for Middle school and above classrooms.	
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	Alisa Kaiser	Memes, Meaning, and Modern Learners: Digital Literacies in the Language Classroom	This workshop explores how meme videos (microvideos) can be powerful tools for teaching language and culture. Participants will discover how short-form internet content builds learners' understanding of idioms, dialects, and authentic speech patterns. The session will also highlight student-created memes as a way to showcase intrapersonal language skills and creative expression. Attendees will engage in hands-on activities and leave with practical strategies for integrating memes into their own classrooms.	
	Ran An	Radical-Based Collaborative Storytelling: A Creative Approach to Chinese Character Instruction	This session presents a creative, radical-based approach to Chinese character instruction through collaborative storytelling. Some radicals inspire genre-specific writing—adventure, motivational prose, or even horror story. Students co-create stories using shared-character components, deepening their understanding of character structure while exploring narrative techniques like flashback. Designed for Intermediate Low and above, this approach enhances literacy, creativity, and cultural engagement in the Chinese classroom.	

	<p>Nicole Teyechea and Monica Harvey</p> <p>*Exhibitor Session Finita</p>	Cross-Linguistic Thinking Made Visible	<p>This session introduces the 5 Drivers of Cross-Linguistic Instruction—a practical framework to support biliteracy without duplicating content. Participants will explore tools to align purpose, cognitive demand, and academic thinking across Spanish and English instruction. Through real classroom examples and guided planning, teachers will learn how to make students' thinking visible in both languages, using language as a cognitive skill to deepen understanding and build truly biliterate minds.</p>	
	Alex Agyena Duah	Digital Bridges: Alleviating L2 Writing Anxiety Through Innovative Technology	<p>In this presentation, I explore how technology-enhanced instruction can help alleviate L2 writing anxiety, a pervasive issue in language learning. Synthesizing recent research, this presentation will show the digital tools that have been found effective in addressing writing-related anxiety among L2 learners. It will also offer pedagogical insights for integrating technology to support learners' emotional and cognitive development in multilingual classrooms as well as implications for further research.</p>	
	Jersus Colmenares	Languages that heal: Designing career-ready world language courses for specific purposes	<p>Discover how world language teachers can design and implement a specific-purpose, career-readiness language course for health sciences majors. Sample experiential learning-oriented tasks, and evaluations grounded in communicative and task-based approaches will be demonstrated. The session concludes with research-based and pedagogical implications for developing meaningful LSP courses in any language.</p>	
	AATSP Board	Meet your Arizona AATSP chapter!	<p>Are you an educator of Spanish or Portuguese? Come meet your officers of the Arizona chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese and find out about our organization's activities for you and programs for your students. These programs include the National Spanish Exam, Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica, and Annual Poster Contest.</p>	
	Von Ray	Achieving Intermediate	<p>How long does it take to achieve intermediate fluency in school? An ACTFL publication suggests</p>	

	*Exhibitor session	fluency in 60 hours with Storytelling	that it takes 4 - 7 years. Amazingly, nearly 90% of students taught with TPR Storytelling are achieving intermediate fluency in 60 hours. Our best students are intermediate speakers after just 30 hours. Come learn how the innovative ideas in this session can help your students get there too.	
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