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“Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace:” A Curricular Design for the Teaching of Languages for Specific Purposes in the Pandemic Era and Beyond

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“Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace:” A Curricular Design for the Teaching of Languages for Specific Purposes in the Pandemic Era and Beyond

Cover Page Footnote

Sometimes all it takes is a spark. Something very small, but when the spark becomes a flame, that flame spreads. The authors wish to consider this article as a tribute to Leon I. Twarog, Ph.D. (1919-2005), Professor and founder of the Department of Slavic Languages and East European Languages, and former Director of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies [today, The Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies] at The Ohio State University. He was the spark that ignited TAMBSPI that grew into TELE-TAMBSPI, and then on to the present day with programs such as “Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace.” Dr. Twarog received his Ph.D. degree from Harvard University in Slavic Languages and Literatures and had a long and productive career at The Ohio State University not only until his retirement in 1987 but well beyond. He mentored countless graduate students and language instructors at all levels of academic title. His creativity, enthusiasm, and determination inspired those who worked under his directorship. Dr. Twarog and his wife, Katherine L.F. Twarog, Ph.D., hosted well-loved receptions and dinners at their home for faculty and students and were devoted parents to their six children. In addition to the creation and growth of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and TAMBSPI and TELE-TAMBSPI, major accomplishments include building a great national library collection; developing a successful travel-study program; the establishment of the Hilandar Center; and the development of new area programs (Slavic and East European, East Asian and Middle East). In 1992, he received the Distinguished Service to AATSEEL award.

**“Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace:”
A Curricular Design for the Teaching of Languages for Specific Purposes
in the Pandemic Era and Beyond**

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Introduction

In July 2020, the Trump Administration pushed for the return of face-to-face (f2f) K-16 instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. Face-to-face instruction returned several times during the 2020-2021 school year, but the pandemic forced schools to return to online classes. John B. Barry's *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* (1918-1921)¹ has been used to predict future outbreaks of this current virus. Public health officials predicted a second and a third wave that hit classrooms and schools between 2020-2022. The disruptions to education and the cost of refitting university facilities challenge the traditional operations of US higher education.

In the meantime, university foreign language programs in the US and elsewhere are struggling to teach online. Before the pandemic, few language instructors had ever taught online. But now, most have had to retrain to offer their regular language courses online or via some hybrid combination of online and reduced classroom contact. Moreover, few language instructors are or have been teaching Language for Specific Purposes courses online at all at the postsecondary level. Murphy-Judy (2015) reports that only four of 132 respondents reported teaching an LSP course online. Despite numerous inquiries to LSP and instructional technology Facebook websites, as of this writing, few are teaching LSP courses online; furthermore, no one is teaching a self-paced, mastery-based LSP course online.

In 2013, Sacco and Clò proposed the “Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace” Model to the California State University system for the teaching of Business Italian system-wide. The goal was to enroll any interested CSU system student in this LSP course to be offered

¹ Originally published in 2004 by Viking Press, Penguin Books paperback edition 2005; in summer 2005, then President George W. Bush read the book while on vacation at his ranch. This study inspired Bush's 2005 speech to the National Institute of Health urging officials to set forth plans for the federal government to prepare for future pandemics. The book is experiencing a surge in popularity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

24/7/365 at San Diego State University. Unfortunately, despite excellent reviews, it was rejected as they competed for limited awards against all discipline-oriented proposals from 22 CSU institutions. However, given the pandemic's negative impact on foreign language programs, it might be advantageous to revisit this model as a means to teach languages for specific purposes.

Back in 2013, distance education had become a major topic of discussion within the California State University system. Many colleagues on campus distrusted the imposition of distance education, viewing it as a threat to quality and personalized instruction. Many condemned the Chancellor's efforts as cost saving in its intentions without regard to quality education. The Pandemic has given foreign language programs little choice but to teach online.

Clayton M. Christensen and Henry Eyring in their book *The Innovative University* (Christensen & Eyring, 2011) addresses these fears by describing the innovation in distance education pioneered by BYU-Idaho and Southern New Hampshire State University. In an interview Christensen, a Harvard Business School professor, admitted that Harvard can no longer match the quality of accounting instruction offered by BYU-Idaho, a university less than two decades old. According to Christensen, it is institutions like BYU Idaho that are "disruptively innovative" in their efforts to challenge status-quo face-to-face instruction at traditional universities nationwide. (SDSU is one of those universities). California State University of Pennsylvania bears out Christensen's claims to innovation – in this case in the teaching of Arabic. California State University of Pennsylvania offers elementary Arabic worldwide in partnership with a university in Morocco. Consequently, it has become a national leader in the teaching of elementary Arabic online.

The goal of this paper is to describe the "Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace" Model for the teaching of LSP courses not only during the pandemic but beyond. We will start with descriptions of two background models that could be considered forerunners, and continue with an elaboration of our current proposal. While will concentrate on a program for Italian for Business, we believe our proposal could serve as the model for programs in other languages as well, such as French or Spanish (or really any language) for Business.² Furthermore, we are confident that our proposal is an excellent program for both maintaining curriculum delivery during the pandemic as well as meeting the academic needs of our students.

Background

The current model is based on two highly successful models: (1) the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) and (2) The Ohio State's Foreign Language Individualized Program.

The Florida Virtual School is "an accredited, public, e-learning school serving students in grades K-12 online - in Florida and all over the world" (The Florida Virtual School, 2020). The mantra for the distance-learning course was "anytime, anyplace, any path, any pace," which

² Dr. Mártha Pereszlényi-Pintér, Associate Professor Emerita of French at John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio, is planning to use the Italian model described in this paper for a course in Business French traditionally offered every other spring semester, not only as a potential safeguard if the COVID-19 pandemic continues, but also to maintain a curriculum for French minors and self-designated majors at a smaller institution.

Sacco and Clò borrowed from the Florida Virtual School (FLVS). Since 1997, the Florida Virtual School has been offering 190 online courses to K-12 students throughout the US. Since 1997, the FLVS students has completed 4.6 million semesters of coursework. In the 2017-2018 school year, 215,505 students completed courses. FLVS is the first statewide Internet-based public high school in the United States. Its courses are free to Florida students; students throughout the U.S. and in dozens of countries pay tuition. FLVS offers year-round, rolling enrollment, which enables students to start and finish a course at any time. FLVS students are as diverse as the 190 online courses it teaches. They include . . .

- “Advanced learners looking for a challenge
- College and career-minded students
- Homeschool students
- Children in military or overseas families
- Amateur athletes and performers
- Students trying to catch up
- Homebound youth
- Individuals seeking supportive, student-driven learning.” (Florida Virtual School, 2020)

Most of FLVS’s courses use a hybrid teacher-online model of instruction that takes place within a 15-week semester. FLVS Flex, a subset of FLVS, offers students the freedom to complete coursework online whenever and wherever they desire – at home, during a free period at school, or while on summer break. FLVS Flex serves homeschoolers or a traditional public or private school students offering close to 200 online middle and high school courses. With year-round, 24/7 access, students can complete courses on their schedule, “finishing a course at an accelerated pace or taking extra time on difficult topics.” Certified teachers assist students online, by phone, email, or text.

In foreign languages, FLVS Flex offers four years of Spanish, three years of Chinese and Latin, two years of French and two years of American Sign Language. Students can start and finish within a period of 32 to 36 weeks. FLVS’s concept of self-pacing, unlike Ohio State’s, requires weekly progress. Major topics and contents within the foreign language courses reflect ACTFL standards (ACTFL, 2012) and students must maintain regular contact with teachers.

Testing reflects a variety of assessments that include practice lessons, multiple-choice questions, writing assignments, projects, research papers, oral assessments, and discussions. All courses use the state-approved grading scale. All courses require a mandatory final exam or culminating project that will be weighted at 20% of the student’s overall grade. Students can request that exams be proctored by FLVS at any time. When taking the exam to assess a student’s integrity, students must pass the exam with at least a 59.5% in order to earn credit for the course.

Ohio State’s Individualized Program

In the late 1970s, a system of individualized instruction at The Ohio State University at the elementary level in Arabic, French, German, Latin, Russian, and Spanish was funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant. The project involved three components-- **Teacher-Assisted, Mastery-Based, and Self-Paced Instruction**, hence the acronym **TAMBSPI**.³ Developed under the leadership of project director Dr. Leon I. Twarog, in the original program, the student worked with a textbook, audio tapes, and supplemental but not necessarily computerized materials. The student also studied mostly on his/her own, but could receive Teacher Assistance as needed at a Learning Center where a trained teacher was on duty for a specific number of hours each week. Students followed an activity schedule and when they felt ready, they asked the teacher to administer oral and written achievement tests for a particular unit (the equivalent of 10 contact hours of class). If the student demonstrated mastery by passing the tests at 80 percent or higher, the student was permitted go on to the next unit; otherwise, the student was to consult with the teacher, engage in additional study, and retake another version of the test until the eighty percent mastery was achieved. A minimum of two units per academic quarter was required, but there was no maximum. Since 80% mastery was required, only grades of A's and B's were given (but of course an F if the student did not do the work at all).

An outgrowth of the original program was TELE-TAMBSPI, where students used the same textbooks and programmed materials, and were held to the same performance standards, the only difference being that all teacher assistance as well as oral testing were done over the telephone. Local students took the written tests at the Telephone Center. Written tests for non-locals were sent to and proctored at an approved external academic testing center, then mailed back to the Telephone Center for correction.

In TELE-TAMBSPI, instructors used the target language as much as possible and did what teachers do in any on-on-one situation, except that the student-teacher contact was over the telephone. Teachers answered questions about grammar with explanations in English or the target language, conducted conversations and drills, listened to reading passages, corrected pronunciation as necessary, assisted the student with oral compositions, and gave oral tests as well as discussed results of written tests.

TELE-TAMBSPI was first offered in an experimental program in Polish and Russian in 1983 to citizens of greater Columbus. In calendar year 1985, with funding from the Division of Education Programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a program aimed at non-traditional learners in the Columbus area was launched. The 1985 NEH programs sought to answer two questions: 1) is TELE-TAMBSPI an effective approach to mastery based, self-paced language learning for students with no previous instruction in a particular language, and 2) how effective is TELE-TAMBSPI in helping individual students to review a foreign language and regain lost competency? Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian were selected to test the first objective, and French and Spanish the second, with the provision that anyone with previous study of the first four languages would follow the procedures for French and Spanish. French and Spanish were only available to those who had studied the language at least five years earlier, and

³ For a full description of the program, see "Mastery-Based, Self-Paced Instruction in Foreign Languages at Ohio State University: A Report to the Profession on a Four Year Experiment in Individualized Instruction in Six Foreign Languages" by Leon I, Twarog and E. Garrison Walters (*Modern Language Journal*, Volume 65, Number 1, 1981) pp.1-23.

who had had the equivalent of a minimum of 20 quarter hours of college instruction in these languages. French and Spanish students could make use of the materials and the instructor's time in any way that permitted the most rapid progress in restoring previous language skills. Tests for the latter were optional but were available to check progress if needed. Regarding tuition, students in the first four languages paid regular in or out of state tuition at the credit hour rate. French and Spanish students paid non-credit tuition.

In 1985-1986, the Telephone Center was open 14 hours per week. The NEH program was designed to serve the needs of the greater Columbus population during the regular school year, and to serve as the first stage of an eventual fully operational system in which a student would never actually see the instructor. (Hence, one could posit that the program was a forerunner of current online instruction.) A national evaluation panel for the project concluded that the program merited further experimentation. For calendar year 1986, the program continued with university funds, and the languages offered were Russian, Polish, and Czech. For summer quarters the program was offered on a national basis with an 800 number installed to field questions from outside Ohio. Students within Ohio had to call in at their own expense. Students registered for credit paid regular tuition, and non-credit students paid a flat fee.⁴

Regarding instructors, all were skilled classroom teachers, and one also had had in-person TAMBSPI individualized instruction experience. The age of the 182-person student body enrolled in the 1985 program ranged in age from nine years old to sixty-seven. The median age was 37, and approximately fifty of the 182 were in their 30s and 40s. Most of the students were employed full time and could only enroll in courses offered on weekends or evenings. In academic periods when the program was open to out of state students, participants came from states spanning the USA from New Hampshire to Washington State.

Why did they enroll? The reasons for enrollment fell into several different categories: (1) foreign business interests now or expected in the future; (2) heritage and family reasons; (3) preparation for travel, either business or pleasure; (4) meeting course or graduation requirements (high school or college students); (5) general interest in languages; (6) intellectual stimulation and self-improvement; (7) overcoming fear of incompetence in a classroom setting; and (8) getting a job.

Data from testing revealed that TELE-TAMBSPI students achieved superior levels and learned the material very well in both written and oral testing (see journal article cited for data). Regarding cost effectiveness, it may vary from institution to institution but certainly is favorable for institutions offering less commonly taught languages or language programs. For the student, motivation is by far the highest predictor of success. TAMBSPI and TELE-TAMBSPI being mastery-based and self-paced have no failures, but only individuals who are unable or unwilling to put in the time to learn, whatever their abilities.

Obviously, the academic world of 2020 and beyond especially in the time of a pandemic and an uncertain future for classroom instruction is far different from the time capsule of a

⁴ In 1988, the senior author received a Title VI U.S. Department of Education grant to install OSU's TELE-TAMBSPI program in Eastern European languages at Michigan Tech. The program was popular among many engineering students because their families had emigrated to the U.S. from Russian, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria.

program initiated in the late 1970s and 1980s. Moreover, technology in the form of online instruction delivered via computer, tablet, or even cell phone has replaced the desktop telephone. Nonetheless, nothing has nor can replace the teacher who must be involved in some form for a program to be truly successful – hence the **T-A** or Teacher Assisted in TAMBSPI. But the **M-B** or Mastery-Based and **S-P** Self-Paced are the hallmarks of this very successful program that can serve as the model and forerunner in meeting the needs of the foreign language student of the 2020s. In particular, given that the learners even in this early program were most often busy individuals who could not afford the time for traditional classroom instruction, and who for whatever reasons could not keep pace (either faster or slower) with the classroom orientation momentum, such students should be welcomed as source of additional enrollment for the university. Finally, given that the students were often already engaged in the business world, expanding a self-paced mastery-based Language for Specific Purposes should be an obvious new opening to attract not only local but also national students, including traditional college undergrads as well as non-traditional students.

As of the current year 2022, the Individualized Instruction Program in foreign languages is still a regular part of several foreign language offerings at the Ohio State University. That the concept of the TAMBSPI model for an individualized instruction program has not only survived for over 40 years, but even continues to prosper and grow, attests to its validity and vibrancy. Currently at OSU, the Individualized Instruction Learning Center (IILC) houses the individualized programs for six languages: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Russian, as well as online courses in French, Italian, German, and Russian. I.I. programs mirror the content of courses offered in the classroom and are the equivalent in content and in credit hours to the classroom-track course at the same level.

While certain aspects have necessarily evolved (e.g., OSU is now on semesters and not quarters; the Romance Language department split into two departments: French & Italian and Spanish & Portuguese; technology has allowed for certain curricular materials to be accessed online...) the **I.I. courses are still based on the following principles:**

- **Mastery-based language learning:** Because of the highly independent nature of individualized language learning all students must perform at a 75% or 80% level or better (depending on the language) to continue in the program.
- **Variable credit:** One complete course is generally worth four credit hours. In the classroom, these four hours would be completed in one 14-week semester. Students in individualized programs have the option of completing a course in one semester or in spreading these four credit hours over several semesters. Students who wish to progress more quickly can enroll for more than the four credit hours.
- **One-on-one instruction:** All instruction in the IILC is done on a one-on-one basis, thus allowing the instructor to focus on individual needs and questions.
- **Flexible scheduling:** Students in individualized instruction use an online scheduling program.
- **Student autonomy:** Individualized instruction allows students to be in charge of their own learning in a variety of ways: scheduling required appointments, determining the number of credit hours for a given semester, deciding when to take tests and quizzes, and organizing their own learning.

“Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace:” A Case Study in Business Italian

At most California State University foreign language departments, Business Italian cannot enroll a critical mass of students to meet the cutoff of 15 students. The same holds true in most U.S. foreign language departments. However, a Business Italian course offered online to all 22 CSU foreign language Italian-language students would attract enough students to make the cut. That was the concept behind the proposal.

In Sacco and Clò’s 2013 proposal, they designed a state-of-the-art distance-learning course that would serve the San Diego State University (SDSU) community as well as key external constituencies such as California State University system universities and the Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBER). The program would start with Business Italian. They designed distance-learning Business Italian by incorporating elements of FLVS and Ohio State’s teacher-assisted, self-paced, master-based instruction. If successful, Sacco and Clò would have invited other CSU foreign language departments to install similar LSP courses within the network.

Their mantra of “anytime, anyplace, any path, any pace” is demonstrated in the following strategies:

Any time: Students could pursue their study of Business Italian anytime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year via SDSU’s Language Acquisition Resource Center’s Moodle platform.⁵

Any place: Students anywhere in the world could enroll and complete units on the online course.

Any path: Students have a choice of completing units that fit their individual needs or instructional path. The 12 units offer students a variety of topics and themes.

Any pace: Students are free to work at their own pace. That pace might be completing a minimum of one unit (equaling one semester credit) in a semester, three credits, five credits or the course maximum 12 credits.

The units included . . .

1. Panorama of the Italian economy;

⁵ Moodle is an acronym meaning Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. There are over 100,000 implementations around the world and over 160 million learners using it. The Moodle site can be accessed via PC, tablet or other mobile device via a web-browser or a free mobile app for cellphones. Moodle supports a range of media to present or link to learning materials, support the learners and to assess their learning. Communicating and collaborating with peers – using the course forums, learners can discuss topics, share ideas and even feedback on each other's work.

2. Commercial communication (the analysis and composition of business letters, memos, and reports);
3. Job seeking (the study of job data banks, the design of the CV and accompanying letter, topped off with mock job interviews in Italian);
4. Case study analysis (the study and analysis of key intercultural business/political issues and conflicts);
5. Hospitality and tourism management: USA-Italy;
6. Olive oil production and distribution in Puglia;
7. Cinema and literature (The viewing of key Italian films and the reading of literary works featuring business themes);
8. Issues in Business Culture (Styles of negotiation, wages and promotion systems, unemployment, innovation and entrepreneurship);
9. Art and business;
10. Italian government and political systems;
11. Sustainability (The Slow Food movement);
12. Diversity (North vs. South, women and work, immigration).

Mimicking Ohio State's mastery-based instruction, students must complete each semester unit with a minimum of 80% before they can proceed to the next unit. The combination of these pedagogical features makes the proposed online Business Italian course a model for distance learning at SDSU as well as a model for teaching low-enrolled LSP courses at U.S. colleges and universities.

Implementation

The development of a Center for LSP Studies is a significant undertaking and might be anchored. This essay proposes the adoption of a Center for LSP Studies, preferably anchored at a current U.S. Department of Education Title VI Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) or at a Title VI Language Resource Center (LRC). CIBERs are mandated to promote languages for specific purposes, especially for business, economics, and engineering. LRCs are mandated to promote all foreign languages especially less commonly taught languages (LCTLs). CIBERs and LRCs can request funding to include the proposed Center as part of their mandate

or they can apply for funding through other Title VI Programs.⁶ Funding would be used to enlist LSP faculty to create courses and other tasks similar to those mentioned in the TELE-TAMBSPI description.

The “zoom-boom”

This paper began with references in both title and opening remarks to Covid-19 and the ensuing pandemic era. Therefore, it seems appropriate to come full circle: to end with remarks addressing this unprecedented turning point in the manner in which curriculum is delivered, no longer by choice but by the dictates of global issues beyond our control. A once obscure company, Zoom Video Communications, is rapidly emerging as the latest internet gold mine as millions of people, while tethered to their homes during the pandemic, flock to its “zoom” service for both educational as well as business purposes. It is a no-brainer to observe that this particular zoom teaching format for a course in LSP for Business Italian, or any other language, is particularly suited because it prepares students for participation in the business world that is already “zooming” online. Moreover, it seems very likely that the business world will continue to function in large part online, even if and when the pandemic recedes.

A course in LSP is also particularly suited to the **HyFlex, or “hybrid flexible,” course format**. HyFlex is an **instructional approach that combines face-to-face (F2F) and online learning**. Each class session and learning activity is offered in-person synchronously online via zoom or another similar platform, and asynchronously online, whereby students work on their own on materials prepared and assigned by the instructor. Students in LSP courses can still participate at their own pace. The flexibility of the HyFlex format also demonstrates that institutions can maintain educational and research activities during a disruption.

Regarding testing, the LockDown Browser[®] is a custom browser that locks down the testing environment within a learning management system. Used at over 1500 higher educational institutions, LockDown Browser is the “gold standard” for securing online exams. The browser menu and toolbar options are removed, except for Back, Forward, Refresh and Stop. Access to other applications including messaging, screen-sharing, virtual machines, and remote desktops is denied, printing and screen capture functions are disabled, copying and pasting anything to or from another screen is prevented, right-click menu options, function keys, keyboard shortcuts and task switching are disabled. Finally, a test, quiz, or other form of assessment cannot be exited until the student submits it for grading.

Oral communication including oral testing can take place via zoom. But since in an LSP course written testing as described in this paper will presumably take place in an unproctored environment, combining the LockDown Browser[®] with a Respondus monitor becomes a powerful tool. It will safeguard the integrity of exams that can be created and managed, and subsequently printed to paper or published directly to Canvas, Blackboard, Brightspace, Moodle, and other learning systems. The Respondus Monitor is actually an automated proctoring service for LockDown Browser[®] that uses students' webcams to record students during online, non-

⁶ Two specific federal programs come to mind: The Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages Program and the International Research and Studies Program.

proctored tests and quizzes, and automatically detects behaviors that could indicate cheating. Due to the urgency of switching to online course delivery during the spring 2020 quarter/semester quarantine, most if not all schools already have provisions for non-proctored written testing in place, and for which the LockDown Browser[®] with a Respondus monitor is the most frequently used platform. Hence, there are no special or extra expenditures necessary for LSP courses either. Also, great number of students have already been exposed to the LockDown Browser[®] and Respondus monitor.

Thus, even if by happenstance (due to the pandemic), the “Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, and Any Pace” model is particularly suited not just to the subject matter of an LSP course, but in particular to a rapidly growing new education communication format delivered electronically. This format includes the following: **T-A** teacher Assistance via zoom, while still allowing **S-A** Self-Pacing via synchronous and especially asynchronous zoom or HyFlex delivery. **M-B** Mastery-Based progress is assured via testing safeguards using the LockDown Browser[®] with a Respondus monitor.

Spanish for Medical Interpreting and Translating

Spanish for Medical Interpreting and Translating, created by Dr. Diana Ruggiero, Professor of Spanish at the University of Memphis, is an existing course that has been re-designed to meet the criteria of “any time, any place.” It uses a fundamental aspect of the new tendencies for course materials: open educational resources (OER). Creative Commons defines open educational resources (OER) as teaching, learning, and research materials that are either (a) in the public domain or (b) licensed in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities.

- Retain – make, own, and control a copy of the resource
- Reuse – use your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource publicly
- Revise – edit, adapt, and modify your copy of the resource
- Remix – combine your original or revised copy of the resource with other existing material to create something new
- Redistribute – share copies of your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource with others⁷

The benefit of having materials available to students at little to no cost is an excellent solution to the global crisis that the 2020 pandemic initiated. As a result of exploring better options for students, Ruggiero decided to re-examine and take a close look at her Spanish medical courses. Spanish for Medical Interpreting and Translating is a University of Memphis Global course that is asynchronous and self-paced (Anytime, anywhere). The course is redesigned thanks to a Tennessee Board of Regents Cycle 3 Open Educational Research (OER) Tier 1 grant (for \$29,997). The grant supported the creation of open source materials for use in

⁷ Open Education by Creative Commons. License Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)
<https://creativecommons.org/about/program-areas/education-oer/>

an online Spanish for healthcare interpreting course as a part of an initiative to increase diversity and inclusion in the Languages for Specific Purposes Curriculum.

The final product of the OER grant is an open access book with medical interpreting materials that focuses on language pedagogy and applies methodological research, published in pressbooks and part of creative commons with an open license, to be shared and remixed. The course has 12 units that matched the open education book, soon to be released on pressbooks in Spring 2023. As part of the grant, 12 medical interpreting videos were created in alignment with the medical interpreting National Standards of Practice, written by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care. Each video is unique, open source, makes available subtitles and transcripts for accessibility, and integrates UDL (Universal Design for Learning). As an overarching theme, the videos emphasize cultural sensitivity in health care and the practice of Cultural Humility, which means that no matter the degree of knowledge we might assume that we have about another culture, we must treat each intercultural encounter as a unique opportunity to learn and grow from that exchange. The course objective is to prepare students for the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI) exams.

Dr. Ruggiero created the medical interpreting video scripts based on the ethics and standards of medical interpreting, and directed and collaborated with the local non-profit, Cazateatro, to create them. The course was selected to be re-designed because it is a medical interpreting course and directly impacts first-generation Latinx students, mostly female, who want to become medical interpreters. Some students also have interest in entering medical school or other related careers in nursing, fitness, counseling and mental health.

The assessment of the project is to measure the impact of open source materials on Latinx students and to understand how the use of open education practices impacts students' experiences and outcomes. Teaching with OER does not only involve classes with free textbooks, it is an inclusive experience, and it allows students agency, and input to directly impact the course content, book and OER materials, as they can be adapted and updated easily. The grant writing for this project was itself funded by seed money in the amount of \$1,000 awarded by the University Schools Research Consortium Grant Writing Competition.

Medical interpreting is developed on Canvas and Dr. Ruggiero together with instructional designer Trish Lange re-designed the units to match the new modality. Usually, medical interpreting books are just printed and do not offer interactive materials. The materials developed by the grant have not only videos, but also H5P exercises to complete the acquisition of specialized material. To better prepare for the task, Dr. Ruggiero obtained both an online teaching certificate and Instructional Designer Certification from the Online Learning Consortium (OLC). She also completed both the Institute for Emerging Leadership in Online Learning (IELOL) Local and Global certificates. The objective is to build greater consistency across course structure, content, and delivery in alignment with all stakeholders.

The unique feature of the OER textbook for medical interpreting is that it includes the chapters never seen before on a medical interpreting book: one chapter is on the crucial collaboration by Dr. Fedora Rugless, who focused on healthcare research and diversity. Due to

her research interests in exposure effects and neuromotor performance to patient centered outcomes, she developed a chapter for the OER book that deals with diversity beyond the Latinx populations and is inclusive of all patients. Dr. Robert Denn, grant director, was also key to the success of the development of the grant, funding and compilation of the tasks, by providing workshops and continuous support.

“Traditional universities have spent the past century getting bigger and better, following standards set by the great research institutions, especially Harvard...However, as the costs of this climb have grown, so has the number of students for whom a college education has become too expensive. Consequently, an increasing number of students are opting for online degree programs. Though they might prefer the traditional campus experience, the convenience of living at home, setting one’s own schedule, and potentially retaining a job makes the online option.” (3)

Eyring and Christensen (2011) called this “disruptive innovation,” so looking at the big picture it is important. The pandemic made us realize how important it is to stay current in our teaching. Many teaching modalities exist, face to face and online, and within those we can name a variety of modalities, from flipping the classroom to blended, asynchronous and hybrids, to name a few. Becoming proficient in each modality makes us better educators overall, especially staying current with the disruptive innovations that will affect how, what, why and where we teach. Moreover, since cost is an issue, having open educational materials is a very valuable asset for the courses, since it benefits the students who have paid little to no money for the course materials. As scholars, we can access the materials, research, books we created, share them with the intellectual community, and decide what type of Creative Commons copyright licenses we want to assign (can be shared as it is or modify as needed, remix). We can access what we create and update as we need, without having to wait to be printed as another edition.

Conclusion

The pandemic era is exerting unprecedented pressure on American universities and subsequently foreign language departments. Even before the pandemic, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported in 2019 that, according to the Modern Language Association, 651 foreign language programs had been lost in a three-year period. That number will surely grow in the next *Chronicle of Higher Education* report in 2023. NYU marketing professor Scott Galloway is predicting the demise of dozens of US colleges and universities, especially for those that depend almost exclusively on tuition (Galloway, 2020). The University of North Carolina system of 17 institutions faces a 50% budget cut scenario due, in large part, to the immense costs of re-equipping universities to protect students, faculty, and ancillary staff. The devastating foreign language departments’ losses at the University of Akron and Carthage College represent the vanguard of program losses facing many other language departments. Many LSP courses may disappear as a result of these cuts.

The authors’ “Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, and Any Pace” Model is a potential countermeasure to predicted cuts. The Model, if implemented within a center or individual departments, expands the student enrollment base by permitting students to start and finish an

LSP course at any time during the year 24/7/365. Student-centered instruction (Christensen, 2011) via self-paced instruction deters class drops because students work at their own pace without the pressure of completing coursework imposed by an instructor. A student can complete a portion of the course, the whole course or even multiple courses in this scenario. Each LSP course would be divided into units, each representing one-quarter or one-semester credit. Students must attain 80% to complete the unit enabling them to access other units. If directed by a center or even an individual foreign language department, "Any Time, Any Path, Any Place" would enable students from multiple universities or even students abroad to enroll in LSP courses.

Finally, if a Center for LSP Studies is created, most likely at a U.S. Department of Education Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) or at a National Resource Center (NRC), the center director would hire faculty nationwide to design and teach courses. Students nationwide, and even worldwide, would pay tuition to the provider, complete coursework, and receive academic credit(s) for the course.

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