

2018 STARTALK Spring Conference

LEARNING BY DOING AND MOVING AROUND



Student Program (Arabic):
Opening and Running a Moroccan Restaurant,
Virginia Military Institute

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SESSION OUTCOMES

- I can recognize the necessity of having students move frequently inside and/or outside of the classroom while learning the language.
- I can design learning activities involving—or centered around the idea of—physical movement.
- I can see the benefits of adopting a “physical-movement-centered” approach in language teaching.

- Presentation synopsis/rationale:
- Learning a second language for a typical young student should be a dynamic, lively, and fun experience. In all likelihood, having young, energetic language learners sit for all—or even most—of the session will result in boredom. These learners should instead be given lots of opportunities to learn the language by engaging in activities that make them move around and touch/do things, ideally all the time so much so that they would not be able to feel the passage of time. They deserve to be placed at the center of the learning process, and be “all over the map” inside and/or outside of the classroom.

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WHY THIS SESSION?

- **STARTALK Principle:** Facilitating a Learner-Centered Classroom
- **Target Audience:** Student Programs, New Student Programs
- **Session Focus:** Designing Effective Learning Plans
- **Key Words:** Kinesthetic Learning; Tactile learning; Movement; Scaffolding



What is Kinesthetic Learning? According to ISLA (International Learning Styles Australasia)

- Kinesthetic learners prefer to learn new or difficult information through 'real-life' experiences and demonstrations. They concentrate best when they are **physically active** and able to use their large muscle groups in the learning process. Experiential learning suits them well.

What is Tactile Learning? According to ISLA

- Tactile learners remember things better when they can use their fine **motor skills** to make or handle relevant materials while learning new or difficult work. They generally need to write or type notes while listening. They concentrate best when they can **manually** manipulate information in concrete formats, and they like to reinforce their understanding using other self-correcting resources.
- Indeed, most young learners enjoy and benefit from tactile approaches to teaching and learning.

- **What's your sense of an engaging activity in a language class?**

Some TELL (Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning) Project questions to consider:

- How often are the activities you design for learners truly engaging?
- How do you know that your students are motivated and engaged and not just compliant learners?
- What behaviors do your students exhibit to indicate engagement to you?
- What is your favorite activity?

An engaging activity can be enhanced by including features, such as:

Mime and Pantomime

Role Play

Pens, crayons, highlighters, pencils

Brochures / Posters

Blocks: plain wooden or paper blocks, letter blocks, word blocks

Games (especially those involving physical movement)

Treasure hunts

Charades

Information walls

Learning circles

“Learning stations and centers” by Kara Parker & Megan Smith:

These include:

- Reading Stations
- Writing Stations
- Game Stations

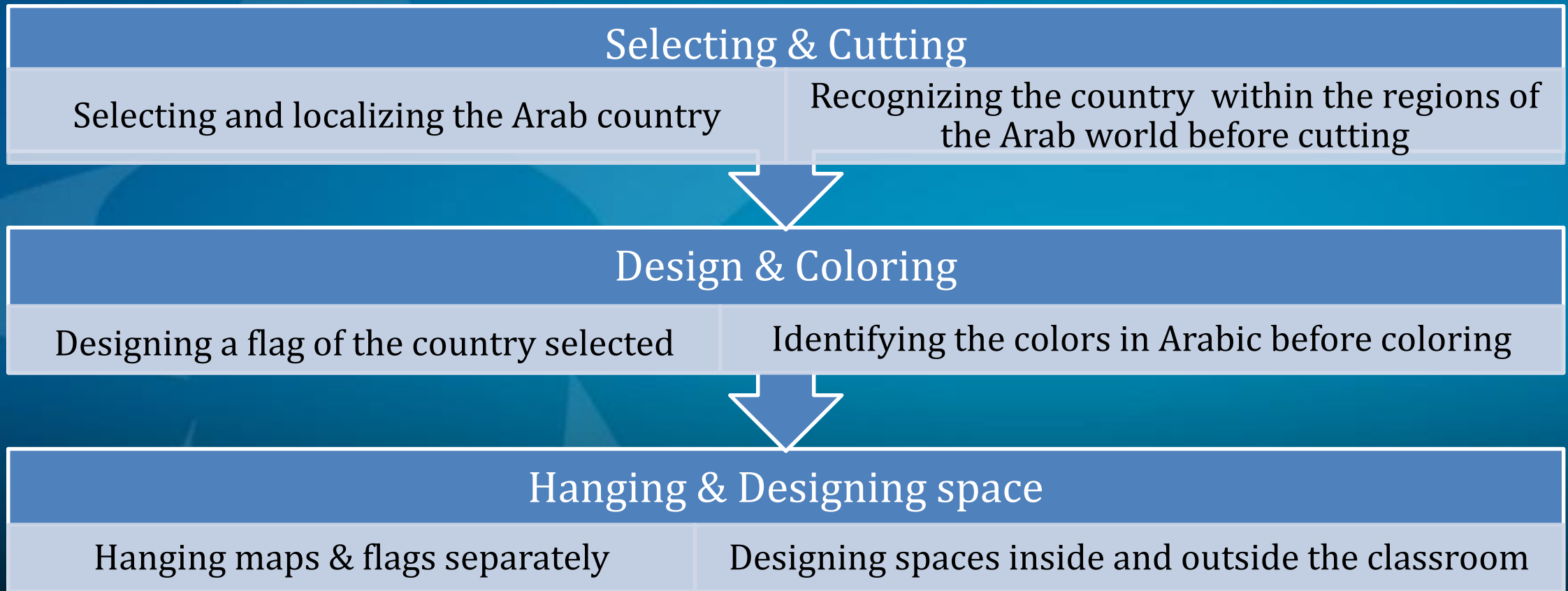
<http://www.creativelanguageclass.com/stations-centers/>

Activities that lend themselves to the Kinesthetic and Tactile Approaches include:

- Coloring the flags of countries and hanging them on walls inside/outside of the classroom
- Cooking lesson (e.g. Bastilla); Making (Moroccan) Tea
- Making posters (e.g. of menus) and hanging them on walls inside/outside of the classroom
- Giving directions
- Buying groceries at a traditional market

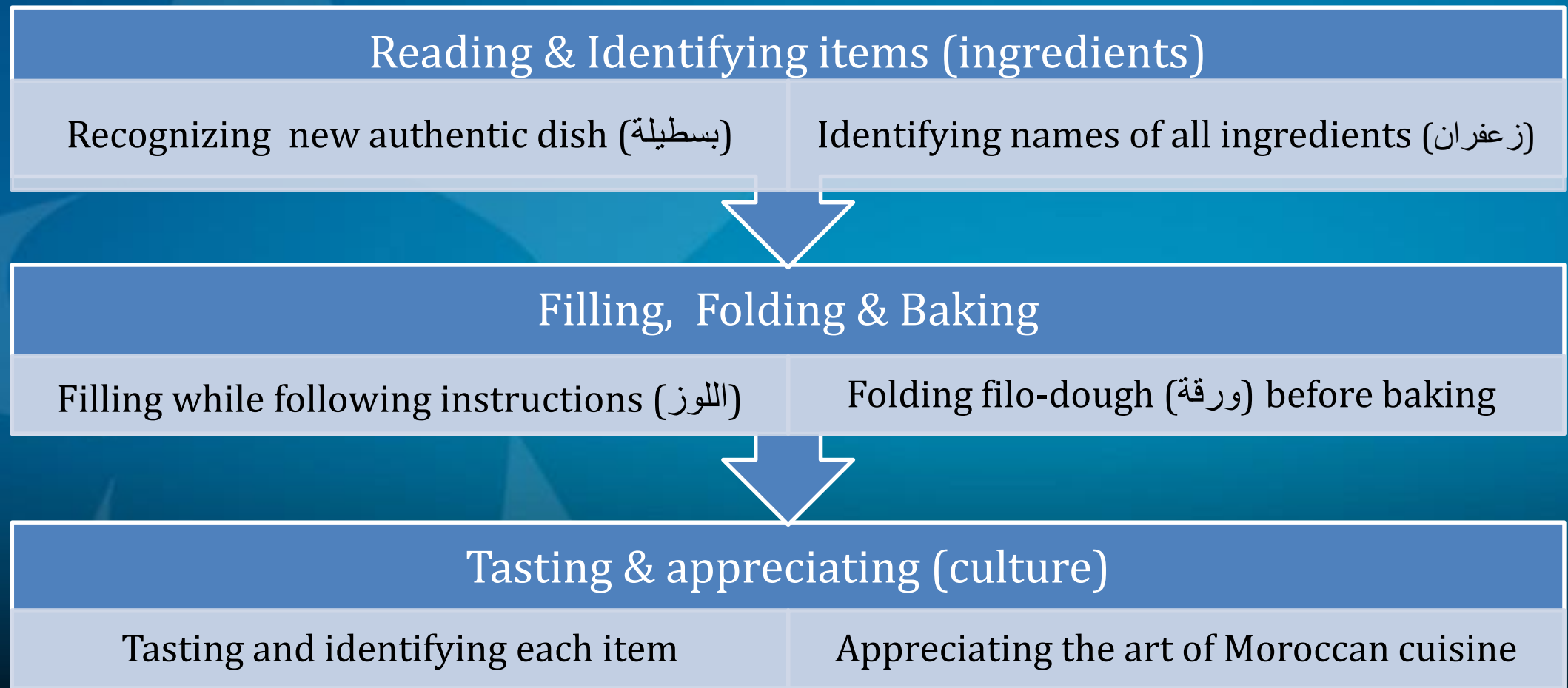
Strategy/Routine

- Activity: Coloring the flags of Arab countries and hanging them on walls inside/outside of the classroom



Strategy/Routine

- Activity: Cooking lesson (Moroccan Bastilla)



Cooking lesson (Moroccan Bastilla)

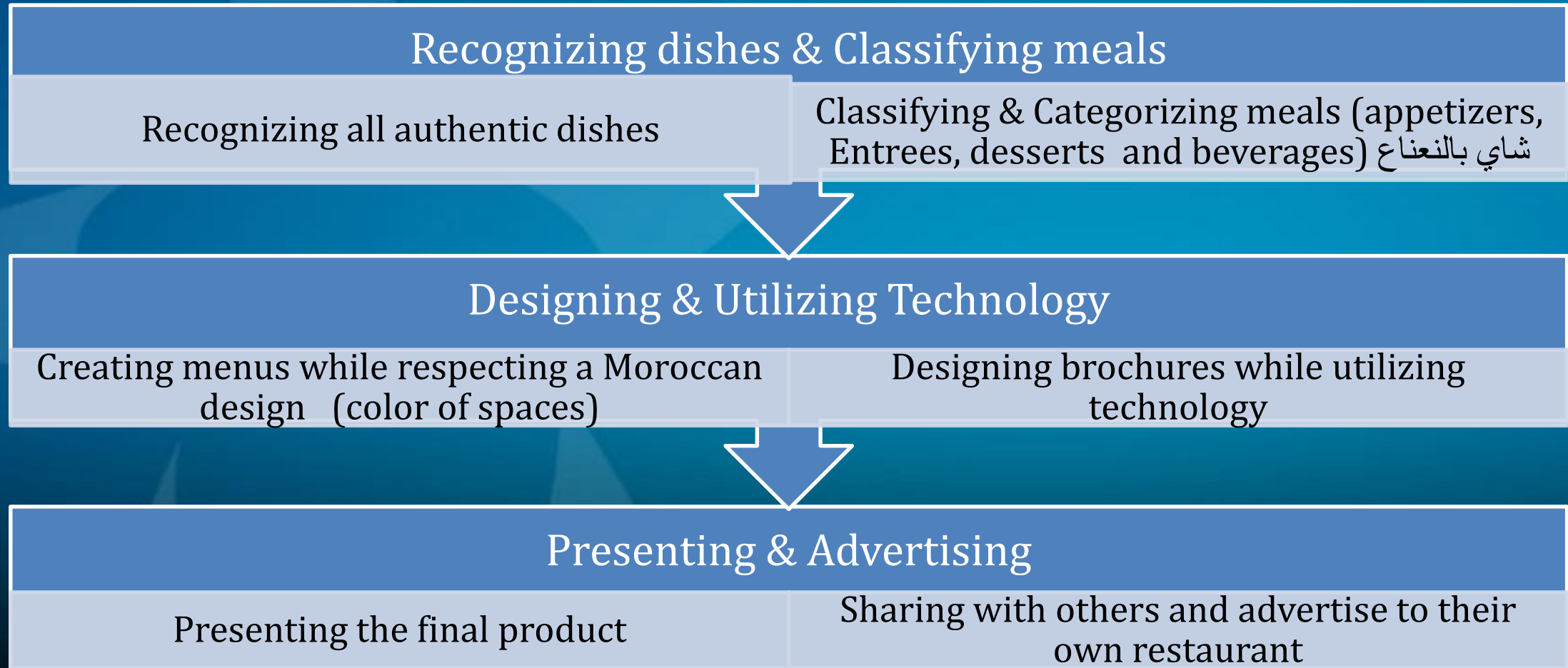


Buying groceries at a traditional market



Strategy/Routine

- Activity: Making posters (of menus) and hanging them on walls inside/outside of the classroom



Strategy/Routine

- Activity: Giving directions

Countries/
Maps

Providing Geographical
location of an Arab country
شمال - جنوب - شرق - غرب

Direction

Providing directions
according to the Moroccan
etiquette

كسكس - طجين - شاي بالنعناع
مقبلات

Classifying/
designing

Cooking/
baking

Providing directions
according to the art of
Moroccan cooking

التوابل - الزعفران
الحشوة - اللوز
الورقة - لطي البسطيلة

LESSONS LEARNED: Applying Tactile and sequencing

- The application of the Backward Design is enhanced by providing tactile stimulation to learners.
- The necessity of formulating relevant language chunks to use as instructions pertaining to kinesthetic and tactile activities.
- The importance of organizing and sequencing units to better suit the program theme and the level of learners, i.e. being mindful of "scaffolding."
- The usefulness of localizing, as much as possible, the activities conducted, i.e. use reference points that students are familiar with.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

- Tip 1: Difficulty in having all resources needed (e.g. space) to have these tactile and kinesthetic activities run smoothly. Having a hallway by the classroom could be a plus.
- Tip 2: Tactile and kinesthetic activities could take much longer than anticipated, so be sure to always plan for giving extra time for such activities.
- Tip 3: Disrupting a class/classes nearby due to the noise and liveliness that characterize some tactile and kinesthetic activities. Be sure to think about the logistics.

CHALLENGES

- Team collaboration: → Implementation should be clear to all instructional staff in the prep phase. Instructional team should discuss beforehand to avoid confusion.
- Long classes (9 AM-3 PM) could be exhausting to students → Give plenty of breaks and have some snacks available and/or encourage students to bring their own snacks.

BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- Becoming motivated and engaged
- Collaborating with and learning from other participants
- Being placed at the center of the learning process
- Contributing to and shaping the learning-teaching process
- Learning in different settings, thus avoiding boredom and monotony
- Retaining more concepts through highly engaging activities
- Ultimately becoming a successful learner!

CONCLUSION

- Tactile and kinesthetic activities a- encourage students to be creative; b- increase their comprehension skills; c- enhance their social skills; and d- help them be better learners and problem solvers. They are worth it!

Thank You!

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