

**What about content?
Beginning level language learning materials and
the case of French in the U.S.**



Carol A. Chapelle
Iowa State University

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Authors typically lack clear cut methods for selecting the content used to contextualize language in communicative L2 materials, but many researchers would argue that content is very important—that it creates a hidden curriculum in language teaching, conveying to learners messages about ownership of the language, roles of nonnative speakers, and their opportunities for language use. My research examines content in ten French textbooks, workbooks, and CD-ROM materials used at large public universities to assess one aspect of content—the extent to which Canada is introduced. High impact textbooks were chosen on the basis of their use at large universities in the northern United States, where proximity to Canada might prompt students’ interest in Canada. Two raters, including one from Québec, systematically identified the presence of Canadian content in these first year materials. I will explain the background for the study, the methodology and the results obtained so far (from half of the textbooks and workbooks). Based on these results, I will argue for strengthening the introduction of Canada in first year French texts.