Technology use in the second language classroom has become ubiquitous; however, the overwhelming choice of digital tools and content often makes it difficult for instructors to use technology meaningfully and constructively. This talk explores how applying Henry Jenkins’ theory of participatory culture to a beginning language curriculum gives purpose and coherence to the diverse multimedia tools and assignments used in language courses and ultimately fosters student engagement and interest in the material. By emphasizing students’ roles as creators and participants in on-line activities and collaborative group assignments, a participatory culture approach lowers barriers to student participation and helps students define, understand, and achieve their shared goals.