

The World Is Not Flat... So Why Are Our Textbooks?

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THE STATE OF THE SITUATION



"I said I took two years of Spanish. I didn't say I could speak it."

The role of the traditional language text

- Instructors rely on textbooks to determine curricula
 - (Byrnes, 1998; Lord, 2014; Richards, n.d.; Wiggins & McTighe (1998, 2008)
- Language textbooks generally follow a “coverage model”
 - (Chaffee, 1992)
- Publishing houses and instructors tacitly endorse a grammar-coverage approach
 - often ends up excluding meaningful contexts
 - (Allen & Paesani, 2010)

Current approaches to language teaching

as determined by leading textbooks

- Focused on skills development
- Emphasis on oral/aural modalities
- Reading/writing treated as separate skills, independent of audience
- Content is self-referential; centers on "practical" language use
- Culture treated as static 5th skill, and as separate (incidental?)

As such, our students . . .

- are not engaged by these materials
- do not enjoy language classes
- believe homework is busy work
- end up working toward the test only
- feel unprepared to use Spanish meaningfully
- cannot keep up with the rising cost of textbooks

THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH

Increasing criticisms of status quo

- **“ideas and concepts should anchor students’ intellectual and linguistic trajectories in the college-level foreign language curriculum at all levels of instruction,”** despite the inherent challenge in developing “students’ thinking abilities at their intellectual levels while developing their linguistic skills in the target language, which are at a much lower level.” Meyers (2009, p. 86)

We need a new approach to language materials that...

- ◆ is **informed** by SLA research and professional guidance
- ◆ takes advantage of what **digital can do** that print cannot
- ◆ provides a **meaningful foundational experience** for all students
- ◆ **empowers teachers** to test the way they teach
- ◆ prepares students to **use** the language
- ◆ addresses issues of **affordability** and **access**

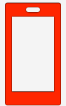


CONTRASEÑA

What is Contraseña?



24-unit program with **all in-class and out-of-class materials**



All-digital, immersive, mobile language learning experience



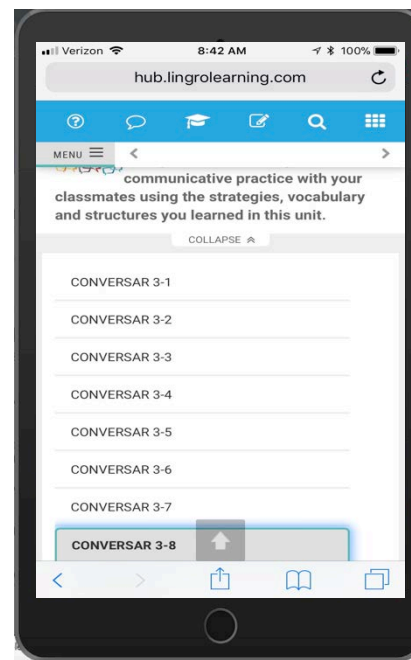
Based on principles of **backward design** for a **flipped class model**



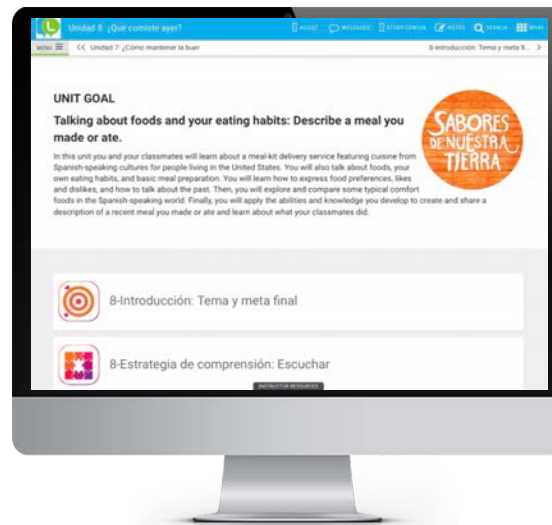
LingroHub: a simple but not simplistic platform



New approach to **student engagement**



Communicative work in class



Work outside of class

Contraseña Pedagogy



Visible learning



Focus on receptive and productive strategies



Contextualized, purposeful practice



Social learning



Text-driven (literacy) approach



Focused on all four skills, not just oral communication



(Cross)-Culturally informed

KEY FEATURES

1. Digital interface
2. “Transformed approach”
3. Focus on outcomes, visible learning
4. Make maximal use of time

1) Digital interface

- Native-digital
(conceived as online platform from ground up)
- Multimedia integral to design
- Mobile adaptive

- Suitable for all class delivery modes
 - Face-to-face | Hybrid | Online

2) Transformed Approach (MLA 2007)

- Ability to “operate between languages and cultures”
- Content is text-driven and looks outward; emphasis on identifying multiple perspectives
- Culture is fluid, context-bound, mediated through language use; integrated and intentional approach
- Wrap the textual within the communicative and vice versa
- Focus on textual (written and oral) resources as the basis for language
- Emphasis on skills and strategies

➔ Literacy based approach

- Each unit is text-driven
 - Text = written, audio, video (alternate written/oral)
 - Variety of genres
 - Texts increase in complexity, authenticity
- Unit text models language and culture in use
- Unit text serves as model for end-of-unit project

Example: Graphic novel



Example:
Newspaper
article with
video

La nueva definición del mexicano, según los mexicanos

Alberto Nájar
BBC Mundo, Ciudad de México

🕒 19 noviembre 2015

[f](#) [🐦](#) [💬](#) [✉️](#) [Compartir](#)



Example: Microcuento

El eclipse

Augusto Monterroso

Cuando fray Bartolomé Arrazola se sintió perdido aceptó que ya nada podría salvarlo. La selva poderosa de Guatemala lo había apresado, implacable y definitiva. Ante su ignorancia topográfica se sentó con tranquilidad a esperar la muerte. Quiso morir allí, sin ninguna esperanza, aislado, con el pensamiento fijo en la España distante, particularmente en el convento de los Abrojos, donde Carlos Quinto condescendiera una vez a bajar de su eminencia para decirle que confiaba en el celo religioso de su labor redentora.

Al despertar se encontró rodeado por un grupo de indígenas de rostro impasible que se disponían a sacrificarlo ante un altar, un altar que a Bartolomé le pareció como el lecho en que descansaría, al fin, de sus temores, de su destino, de sí mismo.

Tres años en el país le habían conferido un mediano dominio de las lenguas nativas. Intentó algo. Dijo algunas palabras que fueron comprendidas.

Entonces floreció en él una idea que tuvo por digna de su talento y de su cultura universal y de su arduo conocimiento de Aristóteles. Recordó que para ese día se esperaba un eclipse total de sol. Y dispuso, en lo más íntimo, valerse de aquel conocimiento para engañar a sus opresores y salvar la vida.

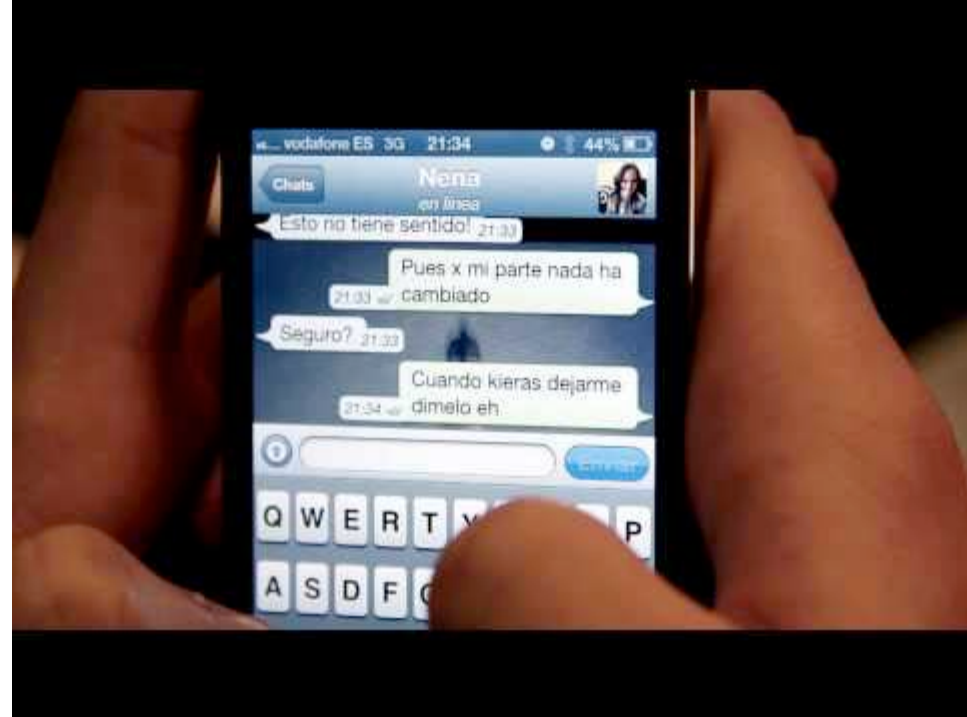
-Si me matáis -les dijo- puedo hacer que el sol se oscurezca en su altura.

Los indígenas lo miraron fijamente y Bartolomé sorprendió la incredulidad en sus ojos. Vio que se produjo un pequeño consejo, y esperó confiado, no sin cierto desdén.

Dos horas después el corazón de fray Bartolomé Arrazola chorreaba su sangre vehemente sobre la piedra de los sacrificios (brillante bajo la opaca luz de un sol eclipsado), mientras uno de los indígenas recitaba sin ninguna inflexión de voz, sin prisa, una por una, las infinitas fechas en que se producirían eclipses solares y lunares, que los astrónomos de la comunidad maya habían previsto y anotado en sus códices sin la valiosa ayuda de Aristóteles.

Example: Short film

Yo tb tq



Prepare students through *receptive* and *productive* strategies

- Receptive strategies to prepare learners to understand the main unit text
- Productive strategies to prepare students to carry out unit-final project.

Estrategia de comprensión:
Leer/Escuchar (Receptive Skill Strategies) ✕

Contraseña: Texto (Main Text) ✕

Estrategia de producción:
Hablar/Escribir (Productive Skill Strategies) ✕

Contraseña: Proyecto (Unit Final Tasks) ✕

- **Leer:** La identificación efectiva de cognados y de raíces de palabras

- **Texto escrito:** Los perfiles sociales de John Debow y María León

- **Ortografía:** Los sufijos en español
- **Destreza:** Usar cognados para escribir

- **Proyecto escrito:** ¿Quién soy yo?

- **Escuchar:** Cómo expresar falta de comprensión

- **Texto oral:** Conversaciones en la universidad

- **Pronunciación:** El acento léxico
- **Destreza:** Hacerse entender

- **Proyecto oral:** ¿Quién eres tú?

- **Leer:** El uso efectivo del diccionario

- **Texto escrito:** Los planes de Ana y David

- **Ortografía:** La letra **h**
- **Destreza:** El uso del diccionario

- **Proyecto escrito:** ¿Qué tengo que hacer esta semana?

- **Escuchar:** Comunicación sin palabras: los gestos

- **Texto oral:** Mi universidad: Un selfirecorrido

- **Pronunciación:** Las vocales **a, e, o**
- **Destreza:** El uso de los gestos

- **Proyecto oral:** ¿Cómo es mi universidad?

- **Leer:** Inferir y comprender lo esencial

- **Texto escrito:** Una nominación

- **Ortografía:** Las letras **x** y **r**
- **Destreza:** Escribir mensajes formales e informales

- **Proyecto escrito:** ¿A quién admiro?

- **Escuchar:** Predecir e identificar palabras conocidas

- **Texto oral:** La familia de Teresa

- **Pronunciación:** Las vocales **i, u, y** los diptongos
- **Destreza:** El uso de los organizadores gráficos para planificar

- **Proyecto oral:** ¿Quién es mi familia?

UNIT 18: Interpreting identity through the spoken word: Read aloud and analyze a poem that expresses an aspect of the poet's cultural identity.



Introducción: Tema y meta final



**Estrategia de comprensión:
Leer**

Los elementos de un ensayo cohesivo



Contraseña: Texto

Nuyorican Tales (J.F. Seary)
Comentario literario



Vocabulario

Nuyorican Tales
La identidad



Gramática I

Review of the subjunctive and subjunctive with nominal clauses of doubt and denial



Gramática II

Subjunctive with nominal clauses of desire and emotion



Exploración cultural

Las identidades hispanas en Estados Unidos



**Estrategia de producción:
Hablar y escribir**

Pronunciación: La actuación de la poesía
Destreza: Cómo editar un trabajo escrito



Contraseña: Proyecto

¿Te sorprende que un poema pueda expresar la identidad?

¡OJO! This short film is an authentic text, created for an audience of native Spanish speakers. Of course, there will be words and structures with which you aren't familiar as this is expected to happen at this stage of your learning. Ample practice and visual support throughout the unit will help you understand the key points of the story. In addition, such choice of text is designed to have you apply the variety of listening comprehension strategies that you've learned up to this point.

Paso 1. Some of the dialogue that takes place in the film occurs via text messages. Look at these abbreviations and drag each one to its corresponding meaning. **¡OJO!** While some follow the patterns presented in *Estrategia de comprensión*, there are always individual variations in how people shorten words in their messages.

TIP: Instead of dragging you may also click on the word in the bank and then click on the space it belongs in.

tnemos k hablar

y x k t lo imaginabas

dsd hac tiempo

k s lo k sientes

x mi

parec q s lo q kieres tu

Escuchar 2-2 ¿Perdón? Listen to excerpts from three short conversations and pay attention to how the speakers ask for clarification or ensure their comprehension. Follow the steps to complete this activity.

Paso 1. In each conversation, select all the expressions that you hear.

Conversación 1:



¿Cómo se dice...en inglés?

Más despacio.

No entiendo.

¿Puedes repetirlo?

¿Qué significa...?

Next

Check Answer

Hablar 2-2 ¿Me explico? You may not have realized it, but you've already seen examples of comprehension checks in the conversations from *Contraseña: Texto*. [Watch the excerpts of those conversations again](#), and indicate which strategies you observe the speakers employing for each conversation.

1. **Conversación 1:** Eric y Roberto

Speaker asks overtly if the listener understands.

Speaker paraphrases.

Speaker reads cues (frowns, etc.) from the listener.

Speaker speaks louder.

Speaker speaks more slowly.

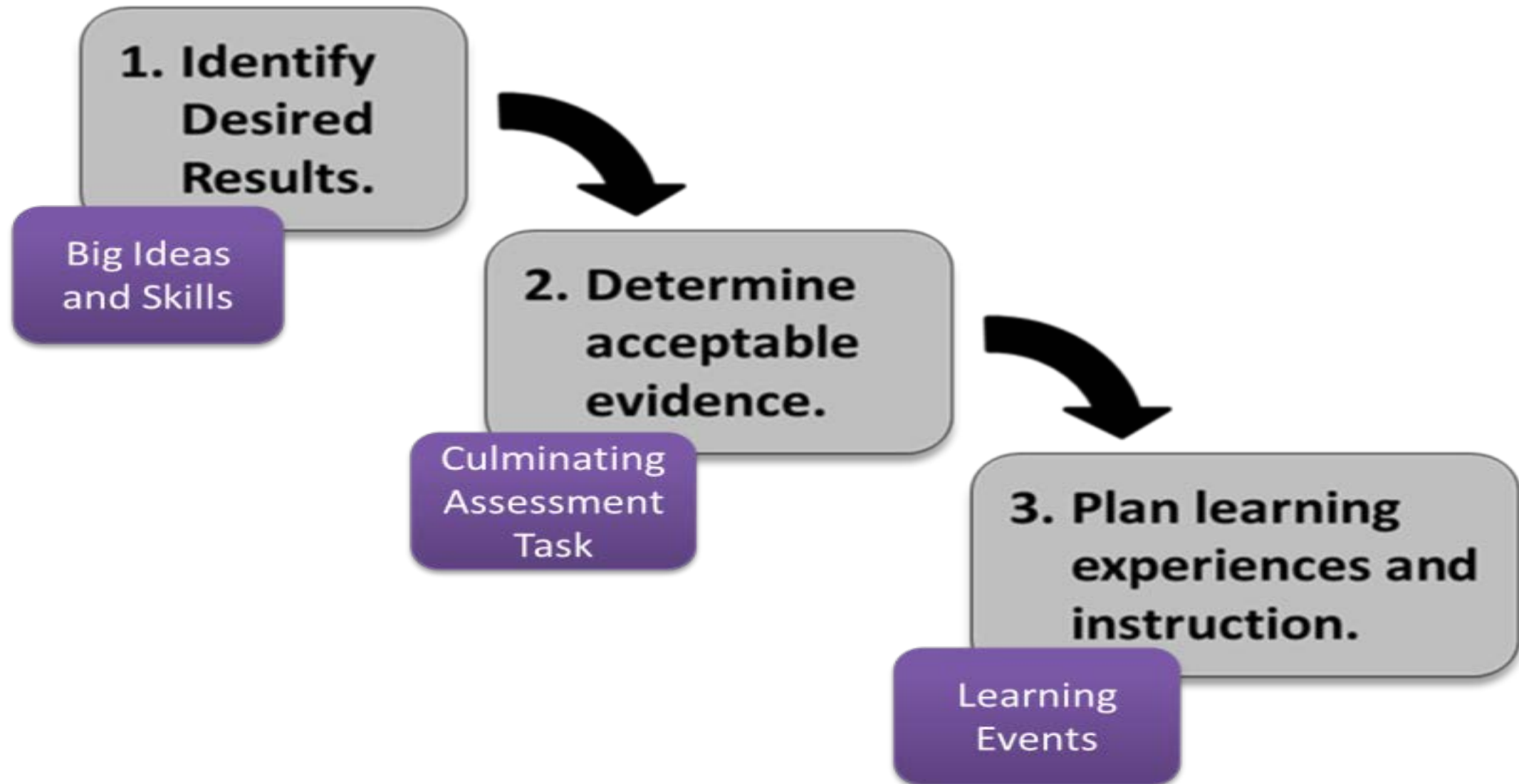
Check Answer



3) Focus on outcomes

- Clearly articulated unit-level goals
- Adaptive interface to emphasize mastery-based learning and assessment
- Project based assessment focuses on what students learn, not what they haven't
- Tenets of **BACKWARD DESIGN** →

Backward Design



➔ Visible learning

- Carefully sequenced modules to facilitate the acquisition of a broad range of language, communicative and content learning outcomes
- Summative portfolio activity for each unit: application of unit's linguistic, communicative, cultural and content-related learning to the realization of a meaningful task
 - Portfolios offer formative and summative assessment opportunities that are critical for closing the assessment loop
- Allows us to test the way we teach

4) Make maximal use of time

- Out of class: time is spent in preparation
- In class: time is spent in communication
- No artificial division between presenting, practicing, using and assessing language

Practice is meaningful, not busy-work!

OUT OF CLASS 1: *Preparar*

COLLAPSE ↗

Vocabulario I: Los alimentos

Watch this presentation about different types of food. Then, review the list of active vocabulary and explore the tutorial before moving to the practice section in **Aplicar**. [Click here to download or print Vocabulario I.](#)

1. Presentación interactiva (5:09 min)

manzanas
fresas
uvas
naranjas
plátanos
bananas
guineos

FRUTAS

2. Vocabulario

Here is the complete list of active vocabulary words for this section to talk about food groups.

Vocabulario 8-1

Show All

LAS PROTEÍNAS x

PROTEINS

la carne de res (picada)

el chorizo

los huevos

el jamón

los mariscos

OUT OF CLASS 2: *Aplicar*

Activity 1 of 9

Vocabulario 8-1 A clasificar. Select the food group to which each food item below belongs.

Vocabulario I: Los alimentos
Vocabulario II: Las comidas

1. Las fresas son

2. El jamón es

3. La zanahoria es

4. El yogur es

5. Los champiñones son

6. El arroz es

7. La leche es

8. El aceite es

9. El pimiento es

10. La sal es

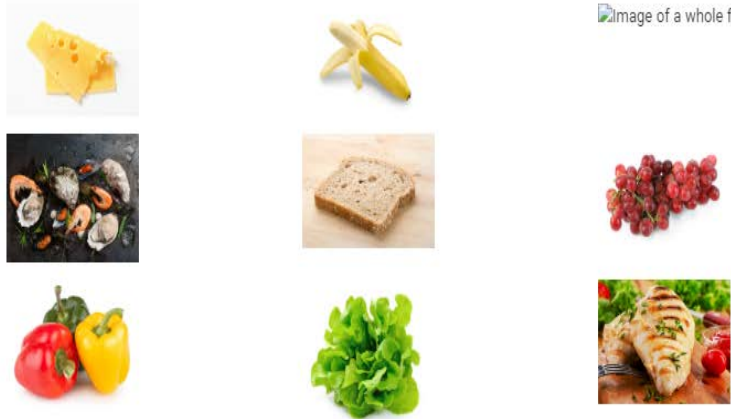
Check Answer

Activity 4 of 9

Vocabulario 8-4 ¿Qué comida es? Look at the images and complete the paragraph with the word that each of these images represents. Each word will be used only once.

Vocabulario I: Los alimentos
Vocabulario II: Las comidas

Image of a whole fish on a platter.



En tiempos de estrés y comida rápida, es importante cuidarse con una dieta equilibrada. Desde verduras como los (1) de varios colores y proteínas que vienen del mar (*come from the sea*) como el (2) y los (3) , hay opciones sanas para cualquier momento del día. Por ejemplo, para el desayuno el (4) integral tostado y una fruta, como un (5) , son fáciles de preparar y comer por la mañana. Una ensalada mixta de (6)

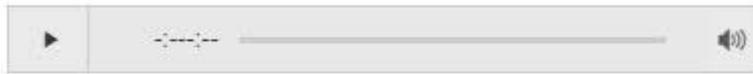
OUT OF CLASS 3: *Comprobar*

Activity 1 of 1

COMPROBAR

Vocabulario 8-13 ¿Qué ingredientes lleva? Follow the steps to complete this activity.

Paso 1. Listen to the excerpt from the commercial for **Sabores de nuestra tierra**, in which three clients review the home delivery service. Select the correct option to complete each statement, based on what you hear.



1. ¿Cuántos platos se incluyen en el anuncio?

2

3

4

Check Answer

2. ¿Cuál es un ingrediente principal del primer plato?

huevos fritos

queso

maíz

Check Answer

3. ¿Qué adjetivo usa la clienta para describir el primer plato?

liviano

amargo

no grasoso

IN CLASS: *Conversar*



(Pilot study outcomes, Spring 2019)

NEW APPROACH IN ACTION

Participants

A. University of Florida

Beginning Spanish 1

- Control group
 - N=46
 - Regular textbook, online platform
 - Standard syllabus
- Experimental group
 - N=23
 - *Contraseña* learning materials
 - Modified syllabus

B. University of Kansas

- Beginning Spanish 1 (SPAN 104)
 - N=26
 - *Contraseña* learning materials
 - Fully flipped implementation
- Beginning Spanish 2 (SPAN 111)
 - N=56 first time enrollees, N=24 students who completed 1st semester with *Contraseña*
 - *Contraseña* learning materials
 - Modified syllabus

Data sources

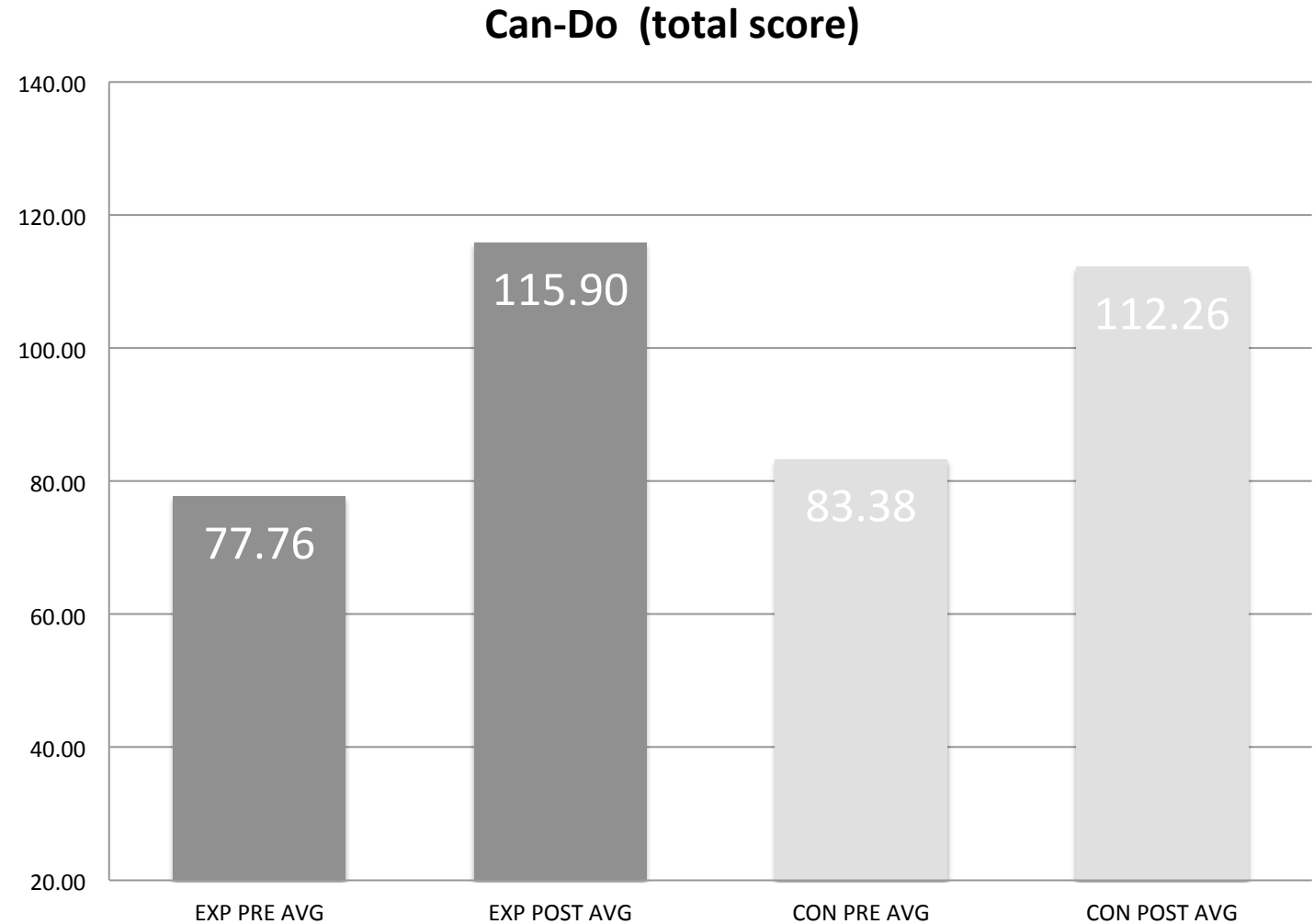
Same instruments for pre-test (week 1) and post-test (week 16)

- **Can-Do Statements**
 - 20 “Can-Do” Statements based on ACTFL’s proficiency guidelines
 - Participants rated on a Likert scale of 1-7
- **Attitude Survey**
 - 18 statements about attitudes towards class, Spanish, ability/interest in learning Spanish
 - Participants rated on a Likert scale of 1-7
- **General “Proficiency” Assessment**
 - 100 multiple-choice items
 - Covering grammar and vocabulary topics from first 4 semesters
- **Back End Analysis**
 - How many minutes students spend in out-of-class work
- **Classroom Observations**
 - Talk time
 - Use of Spanish/English

Can-Do Statements: Total score (summing all responses)

(can-do)	Pre-Post change
Experimental	+38.14
Control	+28.88

*Ordinal mixed effects model found significant interaction of Group*Time, suggesting larger changes in rating likelihood (toward higher ratings) for Experimental than Control ($p < .001$)*



Can-Do Statements: By item

Experimental group post-semester higher than control:

#9: I can express my own preferences or feelings and react to those of others.

#15: I can express my preferences on everyday topics of interest.

#16: I can compare cultural products and practices from my culture and those of Spanish speaking cultures.

#17: I can converse with Spanish-speakers in familiar situations at school, work, or play.

#18: I can show interest in basic cultural similarities and differences when conversing with Spanish speakers.

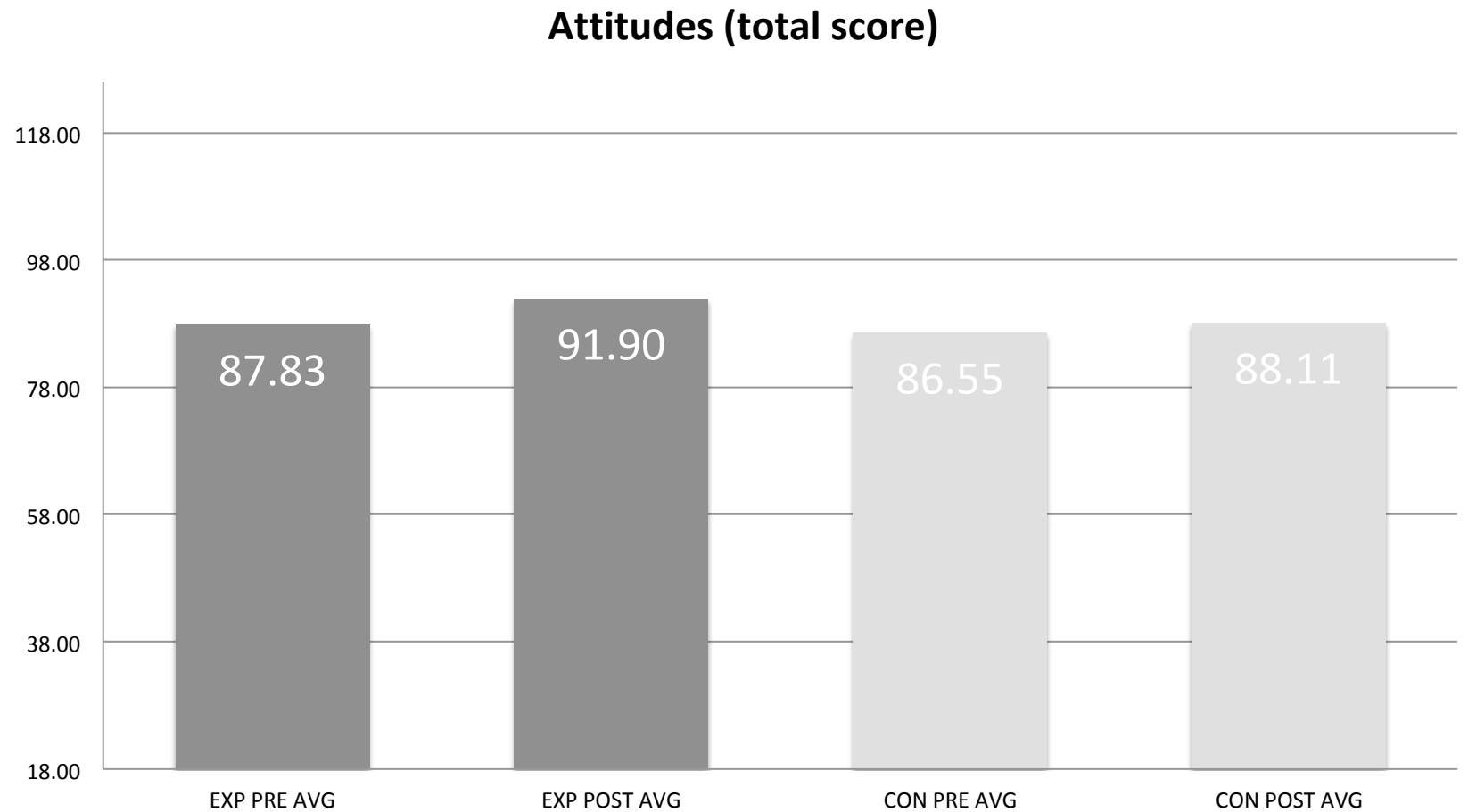
#19: I can recognize that significant differences in behaviors exist among cultures.

#20: I can use culturally appropriate behaviors and avoid major social blunders.

Attitude Survey: Total score (summing all responses)

(attitudes)	Pre-Post Change
Experimental	4.08
Control	1.56

*Ordinal mixed effects model found significant interaction of Group*Time, suggesting larger changes in rating likelihood (toward higher ratings) for Experimental than Control ($p < .001$)*



Attitude Survey: By item

Experimental group post-semester higher than control:

#4: I look forward to taking SPN1131 in the future.

#8: I like the atmosphere of my Spanish classes.

#15: I always look forward to Spanish classes.

#16: Studying Spanish can be important for me because I think I'll need it for further studies within my major/field of interest.

#18: I really enjoy learning Spanish.

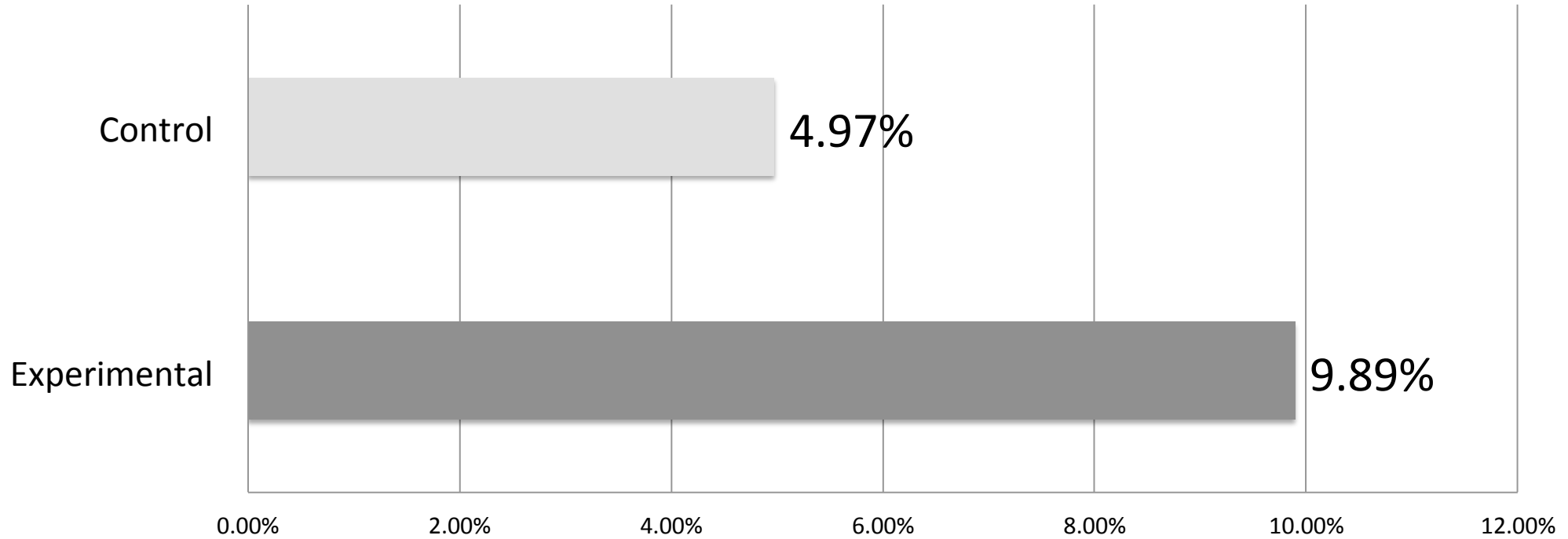
Experimental group post-semester lower than control:

#11: get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my Spanish class.

Results: General “Proficiency” Test

	<u>PRE</u>	<u>POST</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
Experimental	48.00%	57.89%	+9.89%
Control	59.41%	64.38%	+4.97%

Pre- to Post- IMPROVEMENT

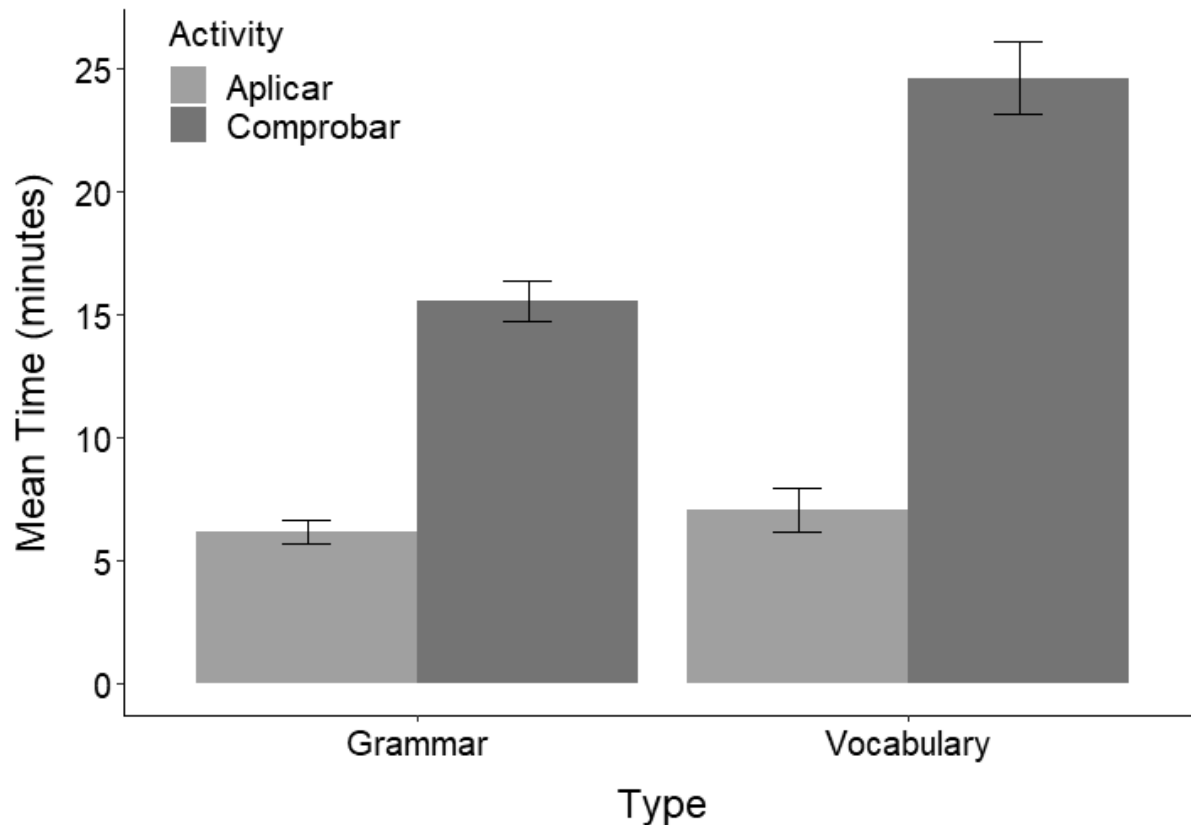


Results: Time Spent on Class Preparation

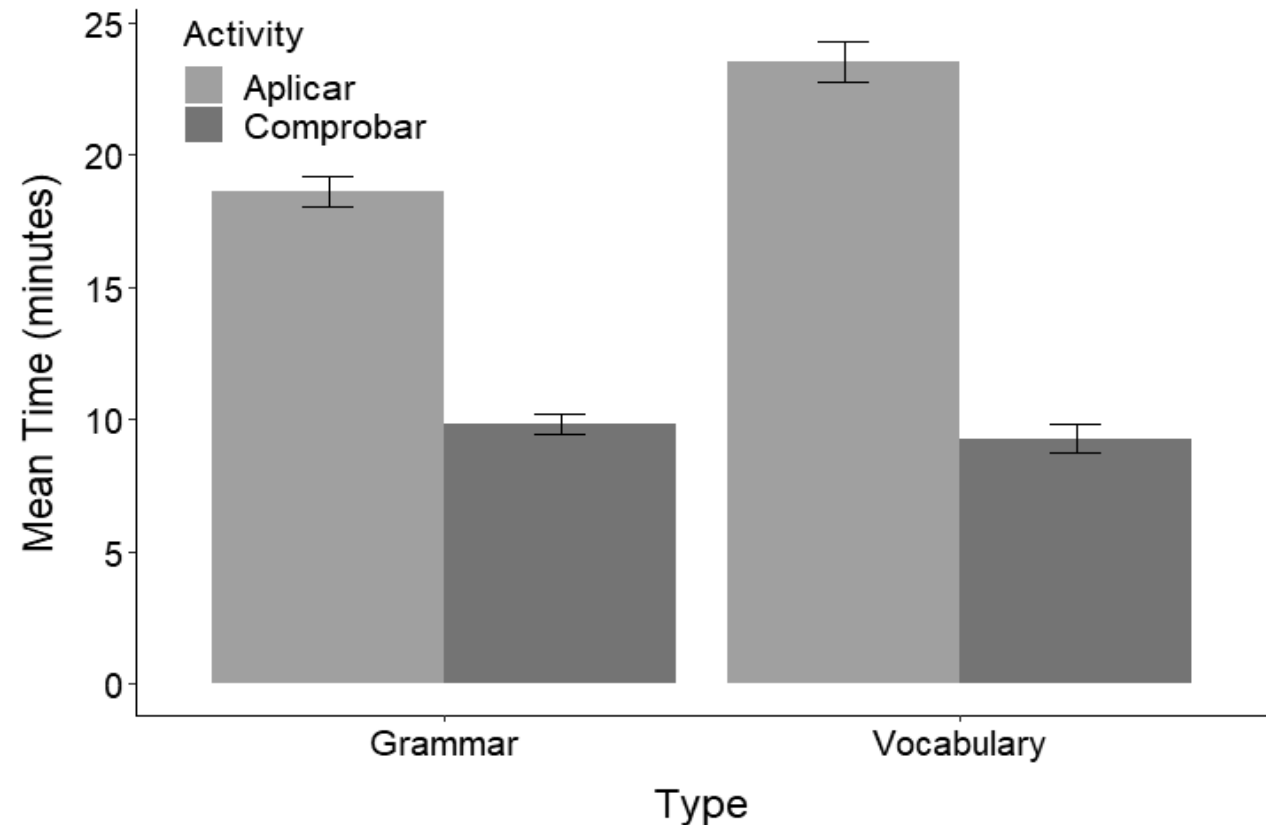
Aplicar = Input → Output Instructional Sequence

Comprobar = Discourse-level summative “quiz” over same material

KU 104 Mean Completion Time



KU 111 Mean Completion Time



Results: Classroom interactions

[analysis underway]

- Preliminary analysis:
 - Increased student talk time
 - Decreased teacher talk time
 - Increased use of Spanish

CONCLUSION

These digitally- based materials...

◆ were informed by SLA research and professional guidance

- MLA 2007 report
- SLA research
- Educational Technology research
- Experience as educators and LPDs

These digitally- based materials...

- ◆ were informed by SLA research and professional guidance
- ◆ take advantage of **what digital can do** that print cannot

- Multimodal instruction, practice, projects
- Authentic texts in different genres
- Cultural collaborators
- Development of 21st century skills

These digitally- based materials...

- ◆ were informed by SLA research and professional guidance
- ◆ take advantage of **what digital can do** that print cannot
- ◆ provide a **meaningful and engaging foundational experience**

- Focus on content, contextualization and language use
- Class time for real communication
- Evidence of student engagement

These digitally- based materials...

- ◆ were informed by SLA research and professional guidance
- ◆ take advantage of **what digital can do** that print cannot
- ◆ provide a **meaningful and engaging foundational experience**
- ◆ **empower teachers** to test the way they teach

- Portfolio of project-based assessments
- Students showcase what they know
- Can be exported for evidence of learning

These digitally- based materials...

- ◆ were informed by SLA research and professional guidance
- ◆ take advantage of **what digital can do** that print cannot
- ◆ provide a **meaningful and engaging foundational experience**
- ◆ **empower teachers** to test the way they teach
- ◆ prepare students to **use** the language

- Unit structured to prepare for project
- Provide real language practice


These digitally- based materials...

- ◆ were informed by SLA research and professional guidance
- ◆ take advantage of **what digital can do** that print cannot
- ◆ provide a **meaningful and engaging foundational experience**
- ◆ **empower teachers** to test the way they teach
- ◆ prepare students to **use** the language
- ◆ address issues of **affordability** and **access**
 - Digital delivery lowers cost
 - Adaptive platform
 - Easy, frequent updates and fixes

Proyecto 2: ¿Quién eres tú? Using *Conversaciones en la universidad* as a model, you will write questions and then interview a Spanish speaker.

-Phil, Retiree, Continuing Education Online





**THANK YOU.
QUESTIONS?**

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