10-1-2017

Making It Personal: Performance-Based Assessments, Ubiquitous Technology, and Advanced Learners

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Abstract

This pedagogical implementation study advocates for performance-driven assessments to help learners become aware of and improve upon presentational speaking skills at the advanced level. A social media content creation tool, Adobe Spark Video, enabled learners to practice oral skills outside of class. The task design, implementation, and evaluation met the principle objectives of learner autonomy—namely awareness, choice, reflection, and goal setting. A step-by-step guide with examples and survey results about student perceptions is included. While the case study targeted upper-division Spanish majors, the pedagogical model could be adapted for intermediate and advanced learners of any second or foreign language.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy, Ubiquitous Learning and Teaching, Instructional Design

Language(s) Learned in this Study: Spanish

Introduction

A traditional foreign language major (i.e., with no native or heritage language background) faces formidable odds in achieving advanced-level competence. Second language acquisition research suggests that with Category 1 languages like Spanish, French, Italian, and so forth, learners need 720 contact hours to reach the advanced level (Malone, Rifkin, Christian, & Johnson, 2003). Yet, a typical undergraduate program affords 320 hours at best. With less than half of the required time on task, the discrepancy between advanced-level expectations and intermediate-level realities is all but inevitable. Not surprisingly, graduating majors in foreign language programs in the US regularly fail in great numbers to meet the minimum requirements set forth by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in oral proficiency for teacher certification (i.e., advanced-low).

This pedagogical implementation study aimed to serve as a model for addressing the dual problems of inadequate time on task and lack of metalinguistic awareness of what constitutes advanced language competence. It proposed to do this through the use of a social media content creation tool (SMCCT; see Lewis, Pea, & Rosen, 2010) and explicit exposure to objective benchmarks of language ability. Ubiquitously accessible pedagogical resources (Burston, 2014), in this case the SMCCT, provides the means of greatly extending student time on task outside of the classroom, and performance-driven assessments[1] raise awareness of the criteria that underlie the determination of advanced-level competence. The SMCCT used, Adobe Spark Video (ASV), was aligned to the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) and ACTFL can-do statements (CDSs) and the ACTFL performance descriptors (PDs) to offer intermediate-high- and advanced-level second language (AL2) learners the opportunity to improve oral proficiency while becoming more autonomous through four key elements in a learner autonomy (LA) framework: awareness, choice, reflection, and goal setting. Insights from a Senior Capstone (fourth-year) Spanish Linguistics course are highlighted. However, this model for assessment design and

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evaluation can be adapted to intermediate and advanced levels and applied to any language.

The Advanced-Low Hurdle

In Spring 2016, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and ACTFL made it a requirement that foreign language teacher candidates reach at least advanced-low (for category 1 and 2 languages) on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in order for programs to maintain national recognition. This cut-off has serious consequences for teacher candidates not having the advantage of being a native or heritage speaker. Indeed, according to the most recent national study of teacher certification results (Glisan, Swender, & Surface, 2013), in 2012, 45.7% of all category 1 and 2 language candidates ranked no higher than intermediate-high. Inasmuch as native and heritage speakers are included in these statistics, it can be confidently assumed that on the one hand, their presence inflated the success rate and, on the other, the failure rate is particularly reflective of traditional students. Needless to say, these statistics should not only impact foreign language teacher education preparation but also incite discussion within foreign language programs about how to improve linguistic competence especially for traditional language majors. It begs the question, given the longstanding dominance of communicative language teaching methods, why foreign language and teacher training programs struggle to graduate advanced-level students at least in terms of oral proficiency. After all, advanced-low is the minimum level at which teachers can speak spontaneously in the classroom, provide the language input that is necessary for language acquisition to occur, and interact comfortably with their students in the foreign language. So, too, teachers need to be able to speak at the advanced level in order to deliver a standards-based instructional program (Glisan, 2013, p. 543).

One of the challenges in advanced-level foreign language courses is that linguistic development is often parenthetical to content like literature, linguistics, or culture. While these content areas are critical in fostering learning outcomes for any given major, they should not come at the cost of continued language development. As competency level studies published over the past 50 years consistently attest, access to content alone in the target language demonstrably fails to allow substantial numbers of learners to reach an advanced level of proficiency (e.g., Carroll, 1967; Hamlyn, Surface, & Swender, 2007; Hiple & Manley, 1987; Sullivan, 2011; Swender, 2003; Uber Grosse, Alley, & Uber, 1992). For upper-division content courses to have any hope of overcoming this shortcoming, they must be conceptualized and implemented with a strong, integrated, language learning component. Moreover, explicit learning outcomes must align to a holistic framework that transcends the course. So, too, it is essential that learners have an accurate awareness of their current foreign language competence level as well as of what constitutes an advanced level. This applies to all graduating majors, but especially to those requiring teacher certification. Without such awareness, students in their third and fourth years really have no way of knowing what exactly they need to do on an individual basis to attain advanced-level competence. Typically, language learners have only their grades and the title of courses in which they have enrolled (e.g., Advanced Writing) as an indication of their linguistic competence level. Yet grades and course titles do little, if anything, to help orient them to the descriptive benchmarks that underlie the criteria upon which advanced-level linguistic competence is evaluated. If students are not to be left shooting in the dark, course evaluations, in addition to grades, need to systematically incorporate self-assessments and formative or summative assessments that use a holistic evaluation based on the same objective measures of proficiency against which advanced-level performance is judged. In this way, advanced language learners are empowered to be conscious and conscientious participants in how they work with their instructor to bolster their success.

Although many in the profession may question the required OPI advanced level as an unrealistic and overbearing burden on foreign language teacher candidates, these types of objective measures do have the merit of revealing compelling characteristics about the typical foreign language major and the nature of language development over time. A viable way to address the time issue (i.e., 720 hours) is to incorporate computer-assisted language learning (CALL) materials outside of class to increase time on task. The alignment of CALL to the level of the learner, however, is paramount. As is implied by the broad range of

published results in teacher certification OPI assessments, the linguistic competence level of third- and fourth-year students can, and usually does, easily vary from intermediate-low to superior on the ACTFL scale. CALL materials need to be adaptive (i.e., personalized) and strategically implemented within a LA framework in order to afford learners increased opportunities to progress on the proficiency scale and make the transition from intermediate to advanced level. It is this goal that motivates the pedagogical implementation case study that follows, which was based upon the exploitation of the SMCCT, ASV.

Conceptual Framework: Proficiency Driven Assessments and Learner Autonomy

LA and AL2 learners share a synergistic relationship. The more proficient learners become in a language, the better they are able to take hold of their learning (Holec, 1979). LA refers to the goal for learners to assume responsibility for their own learning process (Benson, 2006; Blin, 2004; Holec, 1979; Little, 2007; Schwienhorst, 2012; Van Lier, 2014). While arguably beneficial for any academic discipline, LA is especially essential for the L2 classroom because it influences language development. For example, L2 learners must make appropriate choices when engaging with resources in and speakers of the target language; and they must be aware of their linguistic objectives with regards to these interactions. Little (2007) offers some of the most tangible concepts of LA for language learning and highlights three pedagogical principles that are required for achieving the goal of LA. First, learners need to value their role as a key player in the process of learning. Second, learners should be reflective and critically evaluate how they are learning. Last, Little suggests that learners need to use the target language "as the principal medium of language learning" (p. 2). Perhaps most importantly, LA is largely rooted in the notion of *awareness*: language awareness, self-awareness as a language learner, awareness of learning goals, and, finally, an awareness of options or learning strategies (Porto, 2007, p. 673).

ACTFL provides an effective toolkit for helping learners become aware of what is required to improve their proficiency. In addition to defining the proficiency levels and sub-levels according to mode (writing, reading, listening, speaking), ACTFL, in tandem with the NCSSFL, provides a check-list of CDSs that make linguistic progress both tangible and implementable. By using the CDSs for self-assessments, AL2 learners are encouraged to become better aware and reflective about functions that are either attainable or just within reach. In the same way, the PDs provide rich detail for beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels across seven domains that address the learner's performance and communicative ability. Moreover, PDs can provide instructors with helpful language to include in a rubric for summative assessments that target a function of the CDSs. In this way, the CDSs and PDs can be used together to offer holistic, descriptive direction in linguistic development. In both the CDS and PD documents, ACTFL encourages language instructors to explicitly guide learners to look as a scaffold to the level just beyond their reach. Thus, these documents help language instructors foster a LA environment, especially for AL2 learners that must overcome larger boundaries of proficiency at the advanced and then superior levels on the inverted ACTFL Guidelines Pyramid.

CALL is defined by Levy (1997) as the "search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning" (p. 1). Drawing upon Kessler's (2013) description of digital project-based learning as a context for promoting participatory culture in a LA framework, ASV, exploits CALL material that offers AL2 learners additional context beyond the traditional classroom. Accordingly, autonomy can be negotiated through the ways learners are encouraged and empowered to interact with SMCCTs such as ASV through content creation and, later, reflection.
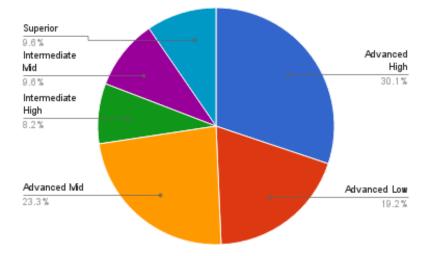
The SMCCT used in this study, ASV, is not a language learning technology. Rather, it is a web-based tool that coincidentally helps language learners organize and voice-record their presentations efficiently and creatively. Using the ACTFL CDSs as the impetus to offer both awareness and choice, AL2 learners used ASV for a project-based presentational speaking assessment. The technology enabled AL2 learners to reflect both individually and collaboratively on presentational speaking parameters via a rubric that drew largely from the PDs, which the instructor used for feedback. The following sections outline the

instructional context and the details of the assignment from implementation to evaluation based on a case study at Boise State University (BSU).
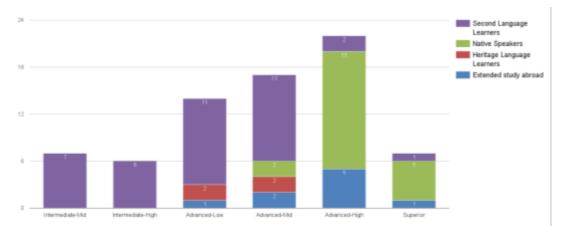
Instructional Context

Adhering to Little's (2007) pedagogical principles for LA, this case study was designed to help graduating Spanish majors become aware of, reflect on, and practice their oral proficiency according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. At BSU, the topic of the Senior Capstone course (Spanish 498) varies depending on the expertise of the professor. For this study, it was a Spanish sociolinguistics course that explored language and identity in the Spanish-speaking world. The students in the course were exposed to the notion of oral proficiency in large part because of the OPI that was administered when they entered into their upper-division (i.e., 300-level) coursework. They also knew that the OPI would be administered when they exited the program. Thus, they had taken one OPI exam, had heard and read about it in their syllabus, and had been aware of their level of oral proficiency from their third year. Over the previous two years, several of the instructors in the Spanish program had used the CDSs in their courses, but this was not mandatory and therefore not standardized in the program. Therefore, the students in this study had some familiarity with oral proficiency and the ACTFL proficiency guidelines and yet no explicit understanding of how to advance to the next level.

Like all other upper-division Spanish courses at BSU, Spanish 498 is populated by learners with a broad range of linguistic backgrounds, namely native speakers, heritage language learners, returning missionaries with extended experience abroad (two or more years), and traditional second language learners. Figure 1 shows the average oral proficiency profile for Spanish majors enrolled in their final semester (i.e., Senior Capstone). As with other published studies of the linguistic competency of graduating language majors, a wide proficiency range is attested, in this case from intermediate-mid to superior. It is to be noted, however, that the Advanced ratings (which together amount to 82.2%) are very high compared to nationally published averages (e.g., Glisan et al., 2013). This high level of linguistic competence results from the particular context at BSU—that is, a substantial number of native speakers, heritage language learners, and students that spend two or more years abroad. Figure 2 depicts the linguistic profile for the 74 graduating Spanish majors that took the OPI from 2014 to 2016.
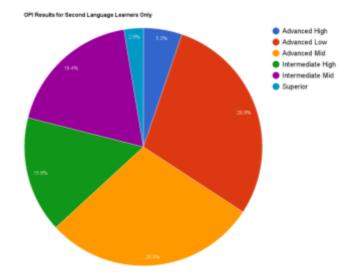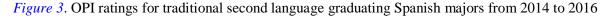

Figure 1. OPI advisory ratings (*N* = 74) for graduating Spanish Majors at BSU from 2014 to 2016

Figure 2. OPI advisory ratings according to linguistic profile for graduating Spanish majors at BSU from 2014 to 2016

Of the 74 graduates, just 51.4% (*N* = 38) were traditional second language learners, meaning they neither were native speakers or heritage language learners nor had experienced extended study abroad (for two or more years). As Figure 3 demonstrates, even so, BSU traditional second language learners exceed the national average, with 65.7% attaining advanced level proficiency or higher. Notwithstanding, some caution is warranted when interpreting these results, firstly because the sample size is small and secondly because these ratings were advisory.[2] Lastly, however good the BSU results may be, the bottom line remains that over a third of traditional graduating majors remain at the intermediate level of competency.

Figure 3. OPI ratings for traditional second language graduating Spanish majors from 2014 to 2016

Owing to a successful internal grant in 2013 that provided both the infrastructure and training to aid teaching and learning via mobile technology, the upper-division Spanish program at BSU is mostly mobile. As a result, the participants in this study were accustomed to using a number of mobile apps and web-based tools in their courses—for example, Notability, Adobe Spark, Nearpod, PicCollage, and Google Docs. One of the principal objectives in the mobile initiative was to increase opportunities for learners to use the target language in personalized ways both in and out of the classroom. Personalized CALL usually refers to adaptive, language learning technologies that can cater to the individual needs of the language learner. In the context of this study, however, *personalization* refers to the ways the instructor designed and

implemented the task and the pairing of the technology. Specifically, learners were offered the opportunity to choose the level of the task that best fit their needs as well as to personalize the assessment according to their interests, experiences, and so forth.

ASV (formerly Adobe Voice) has been one of the standout technologies in the program and specifically in Spanish 498. Since all students were provided with Apple iPads, they could access ASV using these devices to create professional animated video presentations. However, being entirely cloud-based, ASV was equally accessible to them from virtually any computer with a broadband Internet connection. The video was unique in that the users' voice animated what was depicted on each slide so that the focus was on the content (i.e., picture or words on the slide) rather than a traditional video presentation where the speaker would be front and center. Users could select from templates that featured themes (e.g., show and tell, tell a story, promote an idea, etc.), or they could start from scratch. One of the best characteristics of ASV was that it encouraged users to talk under 60 seconds before prompting them to move on to their next slide, therefore scaffolding an organized discourse (which was one of the benchmarks for advanced presentational speaking on the PDs). With the tap of a button, users could grab images and icons from the web and create a powerful visual that connected to the idea they were discussing or defending. Because this tool did not allow much room for text, it obliged students to communicate via oral discourse, which was the objective of the assignment *Making it Personal*.

Making it Personal: The value of Awareness, Choice, and Reflection in Advanced Language Learning

The title of the course in question was Senior Seminar: Multilingualism, Identity, and Linguistic Variation in the Spanish Speaking World. One of the goals of the course was to make content personal and to help learners—regardless of linguistic or ethnic background—find a way to relate and identify with Spanish-speaking communities either abroad or in the US. To this end, the theme for the summative assessment (comprising 20% of the total grade) was Making it Personal. Students, working independently, did the assignment four times during the 15-week semester (each time the ASV assessment probed a different topic according to the thematic unit) and targeted three of the course learning outcomes:

- Analyze the most salient patterns and characteristics for linguistic change and variation in Spain, Latin America, and the US.
- Practice and improve presentational speaking via a research presentation and Making it Personal assessments.
- Learn about and demonstrate digital fluency in tandem with Spanish language proficiency.

Assessment and Rubric Design

The assessment was designed to adhere to the three course objectives listed above as well as to four LA objectives (i.e., awareness, choice, reflection, and goal setting) through the incorporation of the CDSs and PDs. In addition, the instructor was also mindful of the ACTFL Global Competencies and aligned the Making it Personal assignment to two of the five global competencies:

- Recognize the multiplicity of factors that influence who people are and how they communicate.
- Reflect on one's personal experiences across cultures to evaluate personal feelings, thoughts, perceptions, and reactions.

Appendix A and Appendix B elucidate how the instructor designed the task and the rubric, respectively.

Assessment Implementation

The assessment implementation was a 3-part process that was conducted outside of class (see Appendix C). At the beginning of the semester, a proficiency workshop was conducted to present the ACTFL proficiency guidelines and distribute the CDSs and PDs specific to presentational speaking. Students were guided
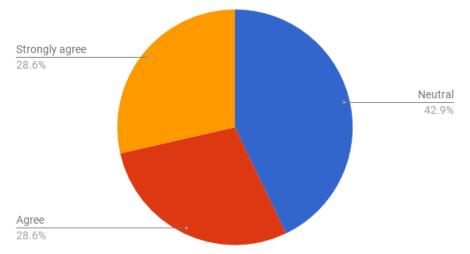
through the documents and asked to self-assess their performance in accordance with the ACTFL PDs that were studied. Although the CDS and PD documents existed only in English, students responded to all three steps in the target language (i.e., Spanish). A student example (permission granted; final OPI advisory rating was intermediate-high), may be seen at this page.

Reflections on Learner Progress

Since the purpose of this paper is to provide a pedagogical model for using instructional technology, no analysis of linguistic gains is presented. However, student reactions to becoming more aware, the use of the ASV technology, and perception about oral proficiency provide valuable feedback to help steer future pedagogical implementation. There were a total of 17 students (7 male, 10 female; aged approximately 18–40) enrolled in the course and the linguistic background of the students was indicative of Spanish majors in general. Native speakers and heritage language learners accounted for 23.5%, each, while students with extended study abroad accounted for just 11.8% and traditional second language learners 41.2%.
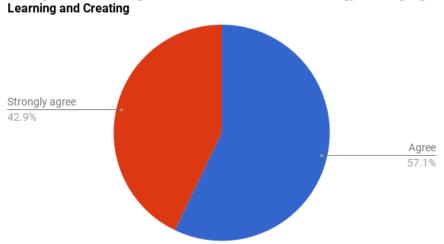
To collect this feedback, a short, anonymous survey was sent out to all of the students four months after the course had ended. The lapse in time was beneficial in helping students distance themselves from course evaluation (in this case, one particular assignment) and their final grade. On the other hand, the time lag undoubtedly contributed to a low response rate—only 7 out of 17 students replied. Notwithstanding, those that did so responded favorably to the Making it Personal assignment and to the way it increased awareness of their presentational speaking performance at the intermediate and advanced levels.

First, all of the respondents found the incorporation of the CDSs and the PDs in the rubric to be an improved way of receiving feedback over just a grade (see Figure 4). Second, they agreed that ASV was a good technology for creating and practicing in the target language (see Figure 5).

The Can-Do Statements and Rubric Made me Better Aware of How to Improve

Figure 4. Learner perception about CDSs and PDs for feedback

Making it Personal Assignments Are a Good Use of Technology for Language Learning and Creating

Figure 5. Learner perception about use of ASV technology

Last, all but one student believed that the assignment helped them improve their oral proficiency (see Figure 6). It should be pointed out, however, that the one student who responded *Neutral* was a female native speaker who arguably did not experience much need to improve oral skills. Although she did not disagree (or find it to be a hindrance), the assignment might not have targeted her particular presentational speaking needs at the superior level (the OPI rating the student received).[3]

Making it Personal Assignments Helped me Improve my Oral Proficiency

Figure 6. Learner perception about oral proficiency gains.

Finally, students were asked to reflect on the value of the assignment in raising awareness of advanced-level expectations. What follows are some of their responses. Words in bold connect to the key pedagogical purpose of the assignment, especially as it relates to the principles of LA.

> Reflection Prompt: The Making it Personal assignments were an attempt to help you measure your own abilities according to real-world expectations. Do you agree this is important? Was the assignment successful in helping you become more aware?

*I think **it matters very much to know what is expected** at the advanced level for oral proficiency. Before the course, **I did not know that there was even a rubric**. You were successful in helping me **become more aware** and that has **improved my oral proficiency** inside and out of the academic atmosphere.*

*As a result of this class **I reached a level of Spanish proficiency I had no idea a non-native speaker could reach**. In the short break after the semester I can already feel a small decrease in proficiency. The **level of practice and practical application** that comes with this course and the program in general was **one of the greatest experiences of my life**.*

*I feel like **I have a better understanding of the academic use of Spanish from the assignments**. In conversation classes the conversations are more general and casual. But in your class it was academic and complex and **challenged me in a way that I had to form an opinion regarding a topic that was complex and then articulate that opinion using academic Spanish**.*

Conclusion

For most traditional L2 learners, the lack of time on task unquestionably impedes reaching the advanced level before graduating. Foreign language instructors need to consider every viable way to overcome this shortcoming, especially in light of the new ACTFL and CAEP standards for advanced-low oral proficiency. CALL materials have the potential to increase opportunities for language practice outside of class. Yet, no matter how sophisticated the technology may be, the role of the instructor in helping learners to successfully engage with the technology remains critical. As learners try to inch their way up the more advanced levels of the inverted pyramid, they need to understand the path forward so that time on task is used purposefully and strategically. Just as foreign language classrooms should be learner-centered, language learning should be rooted in a learner-centered process built on explicit knowledge about the nature of proficiency. Thus, raising awareness about how to navigate advanced-level expectations successfully is paramount. Learners must also be aware of their linguistic abilities in light of these expectations. ASV is a unique SCMCCT that captures what learners can do by recording their presentation. However, the key elements in this assignment are instructional design, implementation, and evaluation. Specifically, learners select the task that fits their individual ability and are guided to pay attention to their linguistic abilities through the rubric evaluation. As a result of their choice, practice, and reflection, students were able to set tangible goals for moving forward.

Although objective evidence of gains in oral proficiency resulting from Making it Personal assignments has yet to be established, preliminary student self-evaluations do point in this direction. At the very least, it can be said with confidence that the students in this study knew what was expected of them for advanced-level oral proficiency. They also knew exactly how they measure up according to the ACTFL CDSs and PDs that transcend their achievements in the course from a content standpoint (i.e., how well they understood Hispanic sociolinguistics). Thus, for all learners, whether they are struggling to make the transition to the advanced level or trying to move up the advanced scale, performance-driven assessments provide a roadmap for ongoing learning.

Future Implications and Limitations

Future studies should look at linguistic gains in light of performance-driven assessments to evaluate the role of explicit learning and LA. Long-term effects that take into account LA and the role of ongoing learning would also help evaluate whether or not awareness, choice, reflection, and goal setting lead to patterns in language learning behavior that transcend both the classroom and the program. It would be especially relevant to examine whether and how learners that go into graduate language programs utilize a similar process to continue improving proficiency. Lastly, it is also worth exploring how a SMCCT, like ASV, better prepares graduates for the workforce. Foreign language programs struggling to advocate and demonstrate their relevance could benefit from an approach that combines digital fluency in tandem with

language proficiency.

Finally, there are some limitations with regards to this study. First, the BSU Spanish program has an infrastructure in place that readily supports instructional technology and language learning with CALL. This is not the case for all language programs, and although ASV is an easily accessible tool, teacher training and learner training would have to be carefully scaffolded so that the focus were on language practice and creation, not learning and troubleshooting the technology. Second, this assessment targeted presentational speaking according to the CDS and PD documents, which, together, contributed to language performance practice in an instructional setting and targets—ultimately, oral proficiency. However, assessment of presentational speaking alone is not enough. Interpersonal speaking also plays an important role in oral proficiency. So, too, other modes like interpretive listening and reading and presentational and interpersonal writing should also be woven into the fibers of every L2 course, especially into upper-level, content-heavy AL2 courses.

Notes

1. *Performance*, as defined by ACTFL, is a result of "explicit instruction in an instructional setting" and the performance descriptors detail "more granular information about language learners" than the proficiency guidelines. However, "a collective set of performances generally correlates to a proficiency level" (ACTFL, 2015, pp. 3–4).

2. An ACTFL advisory OPI rating is assigned to an individual by an ACTFL certified OPI tester in his or her own academic institution.

3. The results in the survey were anonymous, however, in this instance the participant replied to an open-ended comment where she divulged her reasoning for her response based on her native speaker and OPI superior ranking status.

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Appendix A. Instructor Task Design Flow-Chart

For an example of this process, see Appendix B.

Step 1
Select CDSs

Determine proficiency range to target
Intermediate-high (IH), advanced-low (AL), or advanced-mid (AM)

CDSs for Presentational Speaking
IH: I can make presentations in a generally organized way on school, work, and community topics and on topics I have researched. I can make presentations on some events and experiences in various time frames.

AL: I can deliver organized presentations appropriate to my audience on a variety of topics. I can present information and events and experiences in various time frames.

AM: I can deliver well-organized presentations on concrete, social, academic, and professional topics. I can present detailed information about events and experiences in time frames.

Step 2
With Step 1 in mind, create content objectives

Course Content Objectives
Characterize linguistic phenomena specific to Spanish in the US.

Recognize attitudes and ideologies that associate with these phenomena.

Provide an example (personal) that connects to the content.

Step 3
Create the rubric

Create different task descriptions based on the CDS for the three proficiency levels.

Determine categories that are essential for success specific to the assignment (e.g., professionalism, pronunciation, content, etc.).

Incorporate the PD descriptors for standardized qualities of intermediate- or advanced-level (whichever they choose) presentational speaking.

Appendix B. Topic Selection for Students

Example: Making it Personal #3

Based on your pre-reflection, you will select the topic for the proficiency level that best defines you at this moment:

A. Intermediate-high:

CDS: I can make presentations in a generally organized way on school, work, and community topics and on topics I have researched. I can make presentations on some events and experiences in various time frames.

Topic: Select two linguistic phenomena that characterize Spanish in the US from Chapter 5 and explain them in your own words and with examples (not borrowing the examples from the book). Reflect on (a) why these are interesting to you, (b) how they change or expand your perception about Spanish in the US, and (c) how these phenomena connect to the overarching theme of the class about the evolution of language.

B. Advanced-low:

CDS: I can deliver organized presentations appropriate to my audience on a variety of topics. I can present information and events and experiences in various time frames.

Topic: Select two linguistic phenomena that characterize Spanish in the US from Chapter 5 and explain them in your own words. Tell about a time when you've spoken with Spanish speakers in the US. Or, retell the experience of one of the anecdotes form the speakers in Habla Ya that we have watched in class. Reflect on (a) why these are interesting to you, (b) how they change or expand your perception about Spanish in the US, and (c) how these phenomena connect to the overarching theme of the class about the evolution of language.

C. Advanced-mid:

CDS: I can deliver well-organized presentations on concrete, social, academic, and professional topics. I can present detailed information about events and experiences in time frames.

Topic: Defend or dispute an attitude or ideology related to Spanish in the US that we have discussed and studied in relation to Chapter 5. In your argument, explain the concept of the systematicity of the language. In addition, reflect on how Spanish in the US will continue to evolve in the future and make a prediction about the linguistic evolution and social perception that will follow.

Instructor's Rubric

Points	Comments
Creativity and Professionalism	
1 2 3 4 5	
Pronunciation	
1 2 3 4 5	
Content: Did the student answer all the items specific to their topic prompt?	
5 6 7 8 10	
Quality of the example or reflection to support the topic	
5 6 7 8 10	
Intermediate or advanced performance: Based on the topic and level you selected, did you meet the majority of the expectations in the 7 domains (see the ACTFL PDs)?	
5 6 7 8 10	

Appendix C.

The following steps demonstrate how learners were encouraged to become autonomous while working towards improved presentational speaking performance for each Making it Personal assignment.

Step 1. Becoming Aware (Pre-Reflection)

1. Go to the *Presentational Speaking* pages in the CDSs. Begin at intermediate-mid and go as far as you can (up to superior, if relevant). Please select (mark with an *X*) the descriptors that correspond to activities you can do with ease.
2. Read through the presentational PDs. In the intermediate and advanced columns, underline key words that indicate what you can do with ease and circle key words that describe what you cannot do with ease.
3. Write a one-paragraph summary (in Spanish) about your observations from these two documents in relation to your speaking abilities. Conclude by selecting the level that is just within reach of your comfort zone (e.g., intermediate-high, advanced-low, or advanced-mid).

Step 2. Choice (Making it Personal)

See the rubric and select the task at the proficiency level you have chosen. Complete the assignment based on the topic description for that level.

Step 3. Reflection and Goal Setting

Post-reflection (once you've received the graded rubric and feedback from your instructor)

1. Go back and watch your Making it Personal assignment.
2. Based on the feedback from your instructor, reflect on what you did well and write down three goals you have for improving on the next assignment.
3. As a result of this assignment, do you feel you need to continue working on presentational speaking skills at this level or are you ready to move to the next sub-level? You need to justify your claim.

About the Authors

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