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A Comparison of Student Achievement in the Second Language Acquisition of Spanish in Both Total Online and Traditional College Level Courses

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A Comparison of Student Achievement in the Second Language Acquisition of Spanish in both total Online and Traditional College Level Courses

Presented by: Vanessa Paige Fox Crump
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Introduction

- Need to increase foreign language education

    - Online education is being used; allows for flexibility

    - Department of Defense: National Security and Professional Communication (Jackson & Malone, 2009)

    - Modern Language Association (2011): Expansion of undergraduate language training, 9/11/2001

    - The University System of Georgia (2013): 31institutions offer online courses; 110 Spanish courses

Purpose of Study

✦ Students should have similar achievement levels in both the online and on-campus courses.

✦ Research Questions Addressed:

✦ Is there a difference between traditional and online course scores on the final oral exam?

✦ Is there a difference between traditional and online course scores on the written final exam?

Literature Review

- Equivalency Theory: Students in online courses can meet similar outcomes as the traditional classrooms (Lapsley, Knlik, Moody, & Arbaugh, 2008).

- Business courses that show comparative outcomes (Weber & Lenon, 2007; Wagner, Garippo, & Lovass, 2011). Concerns of academic integrity in online courses (Wagner, et. Al, 2011).

- Computerized Assisted Language Learning (CALL):

  - Used in multiple formats

  - Primarily used to improve and build on skills being taught in on-campus classes.

  - Total CALL classrooms are still fairly new

Literature Continued

- Research on CALL and foreign language:

    - Specific skill(s) taught in foreign language courses (reading comprehension, grammar, cultural knowledge, and oral proficiency)

    - Majority looked at hybrid or on-campus

    - Variety of research styles and languages used

- Gap in the literature

    - Appeared to be no studies that addressed student achievement on final exams between on-campus and online courses

Description of Course Layouts

- SPAN 1001 and 1002 exist in on-campus and online formats

- Online was developed from materials and teaching styles of the on-campus courses and include necessary technological solutions for things to function correctly.

- Both types include sections on vocabulary, culture, grammar, writing, reading comprehension, and pronunciation.

- Both types also include quizzes, exams, discussion posts, oral exams, lecture, reading comprehension practice, and workbook assignments.

Description of Course Layouts Continued

- Both utilize course materials, quizzes, discussion posts, reading comprehension practices, and workbook assignments in online/digital formats.

- The online courses perform electronic exams and audio recordings for oral exams, where as on-campus courses take in class paper and pencil style exams and complete oral exams in front of the professor.

Example of Vocabulary Lesson: On-Campus

FOOD/ COMIDA

The following chart is a list of common foods in the Spanish language. Sometimes there are multiple words to express the same thing. These differences are cultural and vary from country to country.

Español	Inglés	Español	Inglés
Las bebidas	Beverages	El agua	Water
El café	Coffee	El té	Tea (hot not iced)
La leche	Milk	El zumo El jugo	Juice. *It varies from country to country as to which is concentrate and which is fresh.*
El vino Tinto Blanco	Wine Red White	La cerveza	Beer
La gaseosa Los refrescos La coca cola	Carbonated drink Soft drink Coca Cola	La botella de agua	Bottle of water
La copa de vino	Glass of wine	Las frutas	Fruits
La naranja	Orange	El banano La banana	Banana. *The gender depends on the country.* Plantain (Spain)
La manzana	apple	La cereza	Cherry
La pera	Pear	La piña	Pineapple
La fresa La frutilla	Strawberry	La uva	Grape

Example of Vocabulary Lesson: Online

Food (*Comida*)

The following chart is a list of common foods in the Spanish language. Sometimes there are multiple words to express the same thing. These differences are cultural and vary from country to country. It is important that you pay attention to definition differences that are listed as *cultural country differences*. Also, it is important that you group your words together by category as you study. You will need to be able to identify foods as fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products, snacks, etc. It is also important that you pay attention to the article, accents if any, and spelling of the words -- since one small omission or change will cause the definition of the word to change.

Español	Inglés
Las bebidas	Beverages

BACK   Click the Spanish word to hear it pronounced.   NEXT

Example of Culture/Reading Comprehension: On-Campus and Online

Reading Assignment

Read the following sections in the text on culture. Make sure you pay attention to the information presented in each section. You will have to answer questions on the unit exam based on the material. You may find a dictionary will be helpful.

- Pg. 183, *A la hora de comer*;
- Pg. 189, *Los bares de tapas*;
- Pg. 192, *Las costumbres en los restaurantes hispanos*.

Discussion

Answer the following discussion question:

In this section, we are studying foods. After looking at the vocabulary and discussing types of foods and eating patterns, there are several questions that I want you to answer. 1.) What types of Hispanic foods have you tried? 2.) What types of Hispanic drinks have you tried? 3.) What was your impression of each one? 4.) What types of foods and drinks would you like to try after the classroom discussion? Each question must be answered completely.

Example of Grammar Lesson: On-Campus
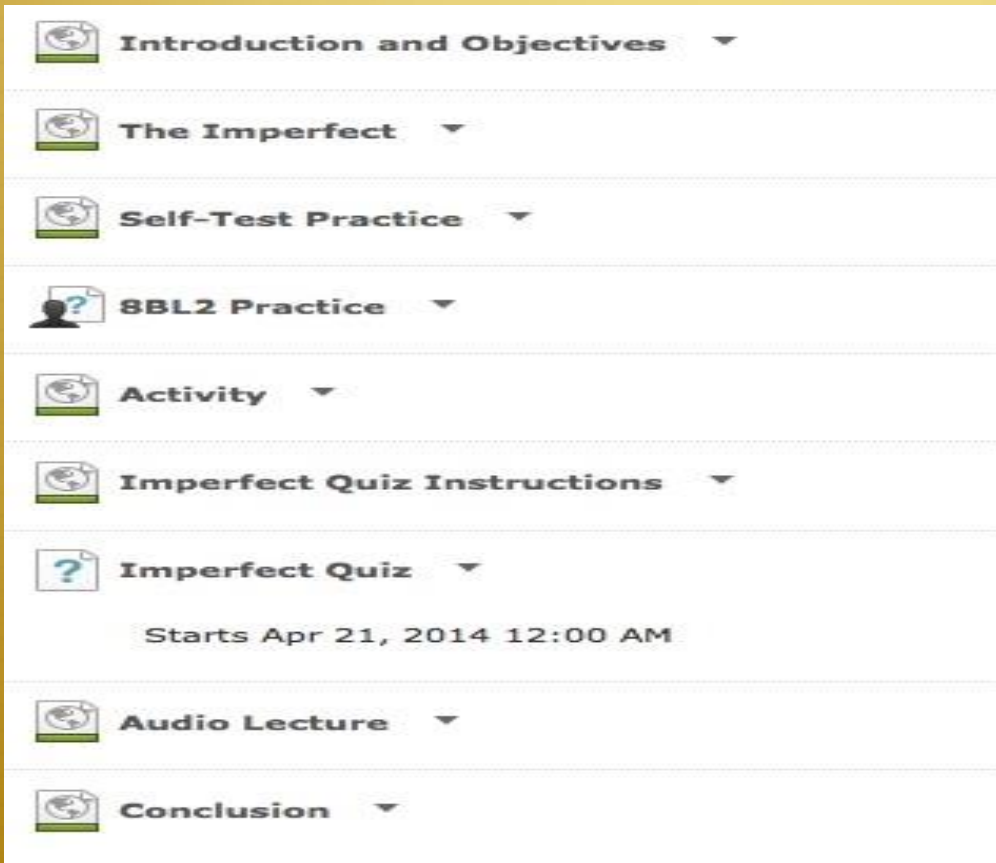
Imperfect

Uses:

- To describe habitual, repeated, and continuous actions in the past
  - Describe states of mind and feelings in the past
    - Describe weather in the past
    - To express age and time in the past
  - Describe two or more simultaneous past actions in progress
- To describe a continual action that was interrupted. The action in progress is in imperfect. The interrupting action is in preterite.
    - To "set the stage" of the story

-AR VERB ENDINGS IN THE IMPERFECT

Singular		Plural	
Yo	– aba	Nosotros	-ábamos
		Nosotras	-ábamos
Tú	-abas	Vosotros	-abais
Él	-aba	Ellos	-aban
Ella	-aba	Ellas	-aban
Usted	-aba	Ustedes	-aban

- ✦ Students receive lecture and practices that are completes in class. The students complete an electronic quiz on the topic once the topic is covered and completed in class.

Example of Grammar Lesson: Online

Introduction and Objectives ▼

The Imperfect ▼

Self-Test Practice ▼

8BL2 Practice ▼

Activity ▼

Imperfect Quiz Instructions ▼

Imperfect Quiz ▼

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Audio Lecture ▼

Conclusion ▼

✦ Students would work through lecture materials and practices. They would also take an electronic quiz on the topic. The audio lecture allows students to listen to lecture in Spanish while reading through the notes provided in the second link of the unit.

Methodology

- Quantitative, ex-post facto style study

    - Test scores were examined that had been previously given.

- 375 Spanish students from a two-year associate degree offering college

    - SPAN 1001: 141 on-campus; 127 online

    - SPAN 1002: 44 on-campus; 63 online

    - On-campus and online versions were taught

    - Six-semester period

    - Varied in age, sex, race, background in the language, and outside school responsibilities.

Methodology Continued

- Final oral exams and final written exams

  - Administered at end of each semester

  - Similar questions; usage of 3:1 for randomization.

- All scores were factored stored in electronic grade-books

- All outlying scores of 0 for non-submission were eliminated

- The data were placed into SPSS

  - Coded per type of course and type of exam (1 on-campus ; 2 online)

- Analyzed using two-independent samples t-tests

Results of Research Question A

Results of T-tests for the Final Oral Exam for SPAN 1001 Courses

Outcome	Course Type							
	On-Campus			Online				
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	t	df
Overall Score	17.29	1.92	136	16.94	1.73	99	1.43	233

* $p < .05$.

Results of T-tests for the Final Oral Exam for SPAN 1002 Courses

Outcome	Course Type							
	On-Campus			Online				
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	t	df
Overall Score	17.82	1.21	39	16.84	1.80	51	2.91*	88

*$p < .05$.

Results of Research Question B

Results of T-tests for the Final Written Exam for SPAN 1001 Courses

Outcome	Course Type							
	On-Campus			Online				
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	t	df
Written Exam	84.78	15.75	141	86.67	12.9	113	-1.09	252

* $p < .05$.

Results of T-tests for the Final Written Exam for SPAN 1002 Courses

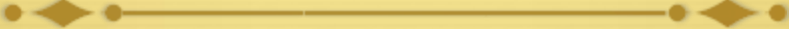| Outcome	Course Type							
	On-Campus			Online				
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	t	df
Written Exam	81.17	9.99	41	83.37	14.01	62	-0.87	101

* $p < .05$

Discussions from the Results

✦ SPAN 1001 could reach similar levels of achievement

✦ SPAN 1002 could reach similar levels of achievement on the final written exam but not on the final oral exam.

✦ Unique in the fact that it addressed a gap in literature.

✦ SPAN 1001 did support the concept of equivalency theory, but SPAN 1002 only supported the theory in on the written final exam.

Limitations to the Study

- Way students are tested: proctored vs. non-proctored exams

- Course equalization of students

- The inability to randomize final oral exams questions online

- Length of time each course had to prepare for the exam

- Students re-taking the course and in Learning Support/Remedial Courses (especially SPAN 1001)

Implications based on the Results

* SPAN 1001 should remain in both class formats

* Examine the SPAN 1002 online course in the area of the final oral exam, as it may be considered more/too difficult

* Address as many of the limitations as possible

Recommendations

- Develop and launch higher level online courses(ex. SPAN 2001)

- Provide more oral practice opportunities for SPAN 1002 online

- Repeat the study in multiple formats:

  - Review more semesters/course sections

  - Using different texts and curriculum for the courses

  - Analyze similar data for higher level courses

  - Identify and eliminate scores for re-takers and Learning Support and/or second/third attempts

Recommendations Continued

- Address the limitations that can be addressed

    - May be impossible to make courses equal or change pre-exam study time

    - Develop ways to randomize oral exam questions online

    - All final written exams must be proctored

- Present findings at a state conference

- Present findings in publications such as journal articles

What has been done since this research?

- The consolidation of the school has changed the curriculum and the text. Both SPAN 1001 and 1002 have been re-written and updated to accommodate the changes in the courses.

- There are also new rubrics and criteria that the oral exams are graded on that came out of the consolidation.

- Desire to Learn Dropbox recordings have allowed us to create multiple random dropboxes that students are randomly assigned. Each dropbox group has specific questions that the students must answer. This has allowed some randomization of the oral exams as students receive the questions once they click on the dropbox to record.

What has been done continued

- ✦ I am currently working on building more oral practice activities for the online SPAN 1002 course to be embedded into the course.

- ✦ Many of the activities and media for the online course have been re-coded to function in multiple electronic formats and accommodate the usage of ipads, smartphones, tablets, and computers.

- ✦ SPAN 2001 is in the pipeline to be created. It is hopeful that it will have a Spring 2016 launch date.