

# **NECTFL**

# ***REVIEW***

**A Journal for K – 16+  
Foreign Language Educators**



**Northeast Conference  
on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

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**NECTFL—responsive leadership and innovative professional development for over 60 years!**

NECTFL is a not-for-profit proactive regional association of world language educators dedicated to the belief that all Americans should have the opportunity to learn and use English and at least one other language. The NECTFL mission is to anticipate, explore, respond to, and advocate for constituent needs; offer both established and innovative professional development; and facilitate collegial exchange on issues of importance to the field.



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## From the 2017 Conference Chair

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

My name is Carole Smart and I am a newly retired French teacher from Newmarket, New Hampshire. As the 2017 Conference Chair, I would like to extend my best wishes for a successful academic school year of 2016-2017. I am also honored to work for you and with you throughout this year as NECTFL continues to promote and advance world language education within our individual states, our region and across the nation.

NECTFL is now in its 63<sup>rd</sup> year and our conference is scheduled for February 9, 10, and 11, 2017, returning to the popular and well-located New York Hilton Midtown. With a focus on our vision and mission, we have chosen the theme of *Strengthening World Language Education: Standards for Success*. We will begin on February 9 with several impressive pre-conference workshops. There will be an opening session on Friday and a closing session on Saturday. The very successful approach to clustering sessions through the use of strands, the research roundtables, and tech lab will provide the format of the conference on February 10 and 11. The strands for this year's conference are as follows:

- A. Exploring the Role and Scope of Standards in World Language Education;
- B. Building Deeper Understandings of Standards through Research;
- C. Integrating Standards in Teaching and Curriculum;
- D. Understanding Standards and Their Impact on Learning and Assessment;
- E. Strengthening Teacher Education and Professional Development for Implementation of Standards; and
- F. Exploring the Role of Digital Literacies in Standards-based Instruction.

There will be opportunities for discussion among colleagues as you explore the themes presented in these strands, research round tables and hands-on tech lab, presented a facilitated by outstanding World Language educators in our field. You will become inspired by new ideas and strategies; you will feel empowered to implement changes in your teaching; you will be able share all that you learn with your departments and you will be able to make a significant imprint on the language learning of the students in your schools. This is where it all begins!

Many articles in this issue of the *NECTFL Review* address the aspects of intercultural competence, the theme of the 2016 conference. These articles will help to maintain an open discussion around this topic as we now begin to focus on a new theme in 2017. We are hopeful that this is a process that will continue for 2017 and for many years to come.

There are several people for whom I am extremely grateful: Cheryl Berman, for her leadership in bringing major changes to the organization; Becky Fox, for bringing a "new look" to our conferences;

John Carlino, as our new Executive Director, for his organization and work that he does for the Board of Directors; Bill Heller, our 2017 Vice-Chair, for his incredible work on the conference program and Bob Terry, our Editor, for his diligence in his work of the publication of the *NECTFL Review*.

In closing, I wish to thank you for your dedication to NECTFL, seen by the attendance of the 2016 conference and your engagement through Facebook. The increased dialogue using technology is enabling us to stay current across the region throughout the year. Your support of NECTFL is what makes the organization as great as it is. So, as you begin your academic year, please urge as many world language teachers as possible to attend the conference. Think about the benefits to your students and work with your administrators. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a whole group of you could attend to connect with other professionals from across the region? Together, we can make this the best conference ever—for our professional learning and for the benefit of all our students!

See you in NYC!

With my sincerest thanks to all of you,

Carole Smart  
2017 NECTFL Chair



## A Message from the Executive Director of NECTFL

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Greetings and welcome to the 2016-17 academic and conference year!

With a full year under my belt at the helm of NECTFL, I must say that it truly has been my pleasure to work for this tremendous organization and with the amazing and dedicated professionals who are its pillars.

After so many years of seeing conferences everywhere suffer from the economic downturn, it was a thrill to see such a strong return to the Northeast Conference this past February. Expertly chaired by Dr. Rebecca Fox, the conference drew over 1300 participants, not only from our region, but from across the country and around the globe. The conference theme, *Developing Intercultural Competence through World Languages*, was explored through a series of strands, through which presenters delved in with a clear focus aimed at expanding our collective knowledge of this important topic. The cornerstone of our closing session was an expertly facilitated synthesis of the six strands led by past chair Dr. June Phillips. The subsequent call for papers for a special edition of the *NECTFL Review* on this theme was answered with a significant number of abstracts. Stay tuned for the results, as this special issue promises to be the perfect epilogue to the 2016 conference.

With preparations for the 2017 conference well under way, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend February 9-11 in New York City. Our 2017 Chair, Carole Smart, the NECTFL Board of Directors, as well as headquarters staff have all been working hard to lay the foundations for our next conference with a theme that is sure to inspire a myriad of excellent workshops, sessions, and papers: *Strengthening World Language Education: Standards for Success*. Professional development is a central component of good teaching at any level and it is truly our honor to be a source of such high-quality, world language-specific professional development for our constituents. Come, learn, share, grow, and disseminate your new knowledge among your colleagues. We are very much looking forward to seeing you in New York!

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the contributors to this issue of the *Review*, to Robert Terry, Managing Editor & Articles Editor, and to Tom Conner, Reviews Editor. It is so important for our region to have this forum and I invite everyone to consider contributing to a future issue.

Best regards,

John Carlino  
Executive Director

## **NECTFL ADDRESSES**

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## Guidelines for the Preparation of Manuscripts

All articles submitted will be evaluated by at least two, normally three, members of the Editorial Review Board. Elements to be considered in the evaluation process are the article's appropriateness for the journal's readership, its contribution to foreign language education and the originality of that contribution, the soundness of the research or theoretical base, its implications for the classroom, and finally, organization, focus, and clarity of expression.

As you prepare your manuscript for submission to the *NECTFL Review*, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. We use the most recent **APA [American Psychological Association] Guidelines**, and not those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please use the latest edition (6th ed., 2010) of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or the *Concise Rules of APA Style* as your guide. For models of articles and references, examine *The NECTFL Review*, recent issues of the *Modern Language Journal* or *Foreign Language Annals*. These journals follow the APA style with minor deviations (and those being primarily changes in level headings within articles). Citations within articles, bibliographical entries, punctuation, and style follow the APA format very closely. You can visit the following web sites, which give you abbreviated versions of the APA guidelines:
  - a. APA Formatting and Style Guide: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> — this excellent site offers guidelines for using the 6th edition of the APA guidelines.
  - b. APA 6th Edition, Wake Forest University: <http://zsr.wfu.edu/research/guides/apa.html>
  - c. APA — <http://www.apastyle.org/>. This is the very source...the APA, with all sorts of help and assistance.
  - d. Writer Resources: APA: <http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/citation/apa/> — this is yet another great site from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to guide you through the APA style.
  - e. APA Style Essentials: <http://psychology.vanguard.edu/faculty/douglas-degelman/apa-style/> — this handy reference guide based on the APA sixth edition comes from the Vanguard University of Southern California.
  - f. APA Reference Style Guide: [http://library.nmu.edu/guides/userguides/style\\_apa.htm](http://library.nmu.edu/guides/userguides/style_apa.htm) — this site from Northern Michigan University offers a quick overview of styles from the APA sixth edition.
2. Submit your article electronically to [rtery@richmond.edu](mailto:rtery@richmond.edu). Please follow these guidelines carefully to expedite the review and publishing process. Note: In order for an article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers, authors must complete the online **Author/Article Information form**.
  - a. Use a PC- or Mac-compatible word-processing program —Microsoft Word 2007 or 2010 for PC; 2008 or 2011 for Mac. You can save your file as either .doc or .docx.
  - b. Do not use the rich text format.
  - c. Use Times New Roman 12-point or Minion Pro 12-point and only that one font throughout.
  - d. Use italics and boldface type when necessary, but do not use underlining.

3. Please think carefully about the title of your article. Although “catchy” titles are permissible, even desirable in some cases for conference presentations, the title of your article should be more academic in nature, allowing the reader to determine at once what subject the author(s) will be addressing. It should be brief, preferably without subtitles, and ***no longer than 12 words***.
4. **We require an abstract of your article.** See pp. 25-25 [Section 2.04] in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2010) for clear guidelines for writing an abstract.
5. Articles will not be accepted if they appear to endorse or sell software, hardware, books, or any other products.
6. **Do not include the names of the author(s) of the article on the first page of the actual text.**
  - a. On the first page of the submitted article, authors should provide the following information:
    - i. The title of the article
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  - e. Your credentials.

**Example:**

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8. Please note that the typical length of manuscripts averages approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages, including notes, charts, and references. This does not mean that a slightly longer article is out of the question.
9. Authors should read the manuscript very carefully before submitting it, verifying the accuracy of the citations (including the spelling of names, page numbers, and publication dates); the accuracy of the format of the references; punctuation, according to the APA Guidelines; spelling throughout the article.
10. Please consult the [Checklist for Manuscript Publication](#). Promising articles have been rejected because authors did not spend enough time proofreading the manuscript. Proofreading includes not only reading for accuracy but for readability, flow, clarity. Using the Checklist will help ensure accuracy. Authors are encouraged to have several colleagues read the article before it is submitted. Whether you are a native speaker of English or not, please ask a colleague whose native language is English to proofread your article to be sure that the text sounds idiomatic and that punctuation and spelling are standard.
11. In order for an article to be processed and sent to outside reviewers, authors must complete the online [Author/Article Information form](#). This form is used to match the author's description of the article with the appropriate reviewers according to (1) instructional level; (2) areas of interest; (3) the type of content; (4) relevant language(s); (5) keywords that best describe the article content [no more than four should be indicated].

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### Checklist for Manuscript Preparation

Here are a few reminders, many of which are taken directly from the APA Guidelines:

- Please remember to use the spell check and grammar check on your computer before you submit your manuscript. Whether you are a native speaker of English or not, please ask a colleague whose native language is English to proofread your article to be sure that the text sounds idiomatic and that punctuation and spelling are standard. Otherwise good articles have been rejected because the writing style has very obvious non-native features and elements that detract from the message.
- Any portions of text in a foreign language must be followed immediately by an English translation in square brackets.
- Do not submit an article that includes tracking. If tracking has been used in the writing of the article, verify that every change indicated in tracking has been accepted or rejected and that the tracking box and any marks in the margin have been deleted.
- Remember that in the APA guidelines, notes (footnotes or endnotes) are discouraged — such information is considered to be either important enough to be included in the article itself or not significant enough to be placed anywhere. If notes are necessary, however, they should be endnotes.

- Do not use automatic footnoting or endnoting available with your word processor. Use raised superscripts in the body of the text and regular Arabic numerals in the notes at the end. Automatic endnotes/footnotes present major problems as an article is prepared for publication.
- Do not use automatic page numbering, since such numbering is often difficult to remove from a manuscript and has to be removed before the article is prepared for eventual publication.
- Please double-space everything in your manuscript.
- Use left justification only; do not use full justification anywhere in the article.
- The required font throughout is either Times New Roman 12 pt. or Minion Pro 12 pt.
- There should be only one space after each period.
- Punctuation marks appear inside quotation marks. Quotation marks, question marks, and exclamation points appear inside the quotation marks only when they are part of the actual quoted material. Otherwise, they should appear outside of the quoted material (as, for instance, when the author of the article is asking a question or reacting strongly to something).
- In listing items or in a series of words connected by *and*, *but*, *or*, use a comma before these conjunctions.
- When providing a list of items, use double parentheses surrounding the numbers or letters: (1), (2), or (3) or (a), (b), and (c).
- All numbers above nine must appear as Arabic numerals ["nine school districts" vs. "10 textbooks"]; numbers below 10 must be written out.
- Please remember that page number references in parentheses are not part of the actual quotation and must be placed outside of the quotation marks following quoted material.
- Use standard postal abbreviations for states in all reference items [e.g., NC, IL, NY, MS], but not in the text itself.
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- Please note the differences between the use and appearance of hyphens and dashes. Dashes (which should be used sparingly) should appear as the correct typographic symbol (—) or as two hyphens (--). If your computer automatically converts two hyphens to a dash, that is fine. APA guidelines, as well as those for other style manuals, suggest that commas, parentheses, and other marks of punctuation are generally more effective than dashes.
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  - First page of the manuscript — containing the title of the article and the abstract
  - The text of the article
  - Notes; References, Appendices — in this order
  - The short, biographical paragraph (no more than 4-5 lines).
- Authors must complete the online [Author/Article Information form](#). This form is used to match the author's description of the article with the appropriate reviewers according to (1) instructional level; (2) areas of interest; (3) the type of content; (4) relevant language(s); (5) keywords that best describe the article content [no more than four should be indicated].

## Call for Articles

The NECTFL *Review* encourages articles of interest to instructors, researchers, and administrators at all educational levels on theory, research, and classroom practice in language teaching. Articles dealing with pedagogical strategies, materials and curriculum development, language teaching technology, the teaching of literature, assessment, community awareness projects, and international studies would be equally welcome; the foregoing list illustrates the range of concerns that might be addressed in submissions. We welcome manuscripts from teachers at all levels, pre-K through university, and from teacher educators.

## The NECTFL Editorial Review Board

Our sincere gratitude to the following individuals who have agreed to serve as reviewers of manuscripts submitted for publication in the *NECTFL Review*. We cannot fulfill our mission without them!

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## Native Spanish speakers as binate language learners

Luis Javier Pentón Herrera, *Concordia University Chicago*

Miriam Duany, *Laurel High School (MD)*

### Abstract

Native Spanish speakers from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, who are also English language learners, are a growing population of students in the K-12 classrooms throughout the United States. This particular group of students is oftentimes placed in Spanish-as-a-foreign-language classes that fail to meet their linguistic development as native Spanish speakers. Conversely, those who are placed in Spanish for Heritage Speakers classes usually do not receive the necessary beneficial linguistic support to compensate for the interrupted education and possible lack of prior academic rigor. These binate language learners are a particularly susceptible population that requires rigorous first language instruction in order for them to use that knowledge as a foundation to successfully learn English as a second language. The purpose of this study is to address the needs of high school native Spanish speakers from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala who are also English language learners. In addition, a discussion of this population, their linguistic challenges in their first language, and approaches to excellent teaching practices are addressed and explained.

### Introduction

The increasing number of English Language learner (ELLs) students in the United States has generated interest in the fields of bilingualism and second language acquisition. Currently, the fastest growing ELL student population in

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**Luis Javier Pentón Herrera** (Doctoral Candidate, Concordia University Chicago) is currently an ESOL teacher at Laurel High School, Laurel, MD. His research focuses on bilingual education, second and foreign language acquisition, adult education, and reading and literacy.

**Miriam Duany** (M.A., Universidad de Salamanca) is currently a Spanish teacher at Laurel High School, Laurel, MD. She has taught Spanish for many years at all level (K-16). Her research focuses on Spanish pedagogy and on heritage language learning.

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the United States is comprised of Spanish speakers who come from Central and South America and the Caribbean (CAL, 2016; Peyton, Lewelling, & Winke, 2001). Research conducted by Uro & Barrio (2013) found that about 85.5% of English language learners in over 40 school districts throughout the United States

..over 85% of ELLs in these school districts in the United States speak Spanish as their L1 and have limited, or no proficiency, in English. or no proficiency, in English.

speak Spanish as their first language (L1). This means that over 85% of ELLs in these school districts in the United States speak Spanish as their L1 and have limited, or no proficiency, in English. Students who speak Spanish as their L1—Native Spanish Speakers (NSSs)—are individuals who are expected to have a certain level of understanding of the grammatical structure and rules of the Spanish language (Wells & Pappenheim Murcia, 2010). NSS students are

expected to be proficient in their L1 when they arrive in the United States, but this is not always the case.

When NSSs arrive in the United States with an L1 deficiency, it is very difficult for them to receive appropriate academic support in Spanish to fill the possible literacy and language gaps in education from their native country. In the United States, many school systems require students to take foreign language courses as a requirement for high school graduation, but sometimes Spanish for Native Speakers (SNSs) or Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHSs) classes are not available at schools for diverse reasons, and NSSs are placed in Spanish-as-a-foreign-language classes. Spanish-as-a-foreign-language classes are not appropriate for NSSs because these courses are not tailored to meet their specific linguistic needs, which are not the same as those learning Spanish as a second or foreign language. This inadequate support of Spanish negatively impacts the students' further development in their native tongue and creates a language literacy gap that can also damage the learning of English as a second language (Pentón Herrera, 2015). The purpose of this study is to address the linguistic and academic needs of high school NSSs from El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Guatemala, who are also ELLs. In addition, a discussion of this population, their linguistic challenges in their L1, and approaches to effective teaching practices are addressed.

### Student Demographic

The students addressed in this study are 15 to 20 years old and are high school native Spanish speakers from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Many of these students are arriving in the United States with interrupted education, educational gaps, and some of them have never been to a formal school back in their home countries. Recent research from Infante Roldán and Letelier Gálvez (2013) reported that El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras are currently implementing countrywide educational programs with the purpose of reducing the growing illiteracy percentage among their adolescent and adult population. According to this report, the illiteracy rate for individuals 15 years old and up in Guatemala is 18.46%, in El Salvador 17.9%, in Honduras 14.9%, and in Mexico over 34% (Infante Roldán & Letelier Gálvez, 2013; Llorente Martínez, 2013). Many of the students arriving in the United States from these countries

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are part of those statistics, and although they are fluent speakers of Spanish, their reading and writing proficiencies are often very underdeveloped.

A special note is warranted in regard to Spanish fluency in speaking, writing, and reading for this population of students. Many students from these four countries were raised speaking and writing a Spanish argot that uses a variation of verb conjugations and personal pronouns not commonly used and acknowledged by La Real Academia Española (The Royal Spanish Academy). La Real Academia Española is a widely recognized Spanish institution whose main mission is to ensure that the changes the Spanish language experiences in its constant adaptation to the needs of its speakers do not break the essential unity maintained throughout the Hispanic world (RAE, 2016). When these students arrive in the United States, they are exposed to Spanish concepts that are foreign to them; therefore, they have to become apprentices in their L1 while learning English as a second language. In a sense, these students are binate language learners (BLLs) because they are learning two languages at the same time. In this article, we refer to the term BLLs as students who are ELLs and are also illiterate, or have underdeveloped proficiency in Spanish, their L1.

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## Spanish Regional Variations in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico

All Spanish-speaking countries speak Spanish with distinct dialectal features. Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico also use distinctive regional variations of Spanish that are different in each country and should not all be grouped as one identity. There is currently limited information about the dialect used by Central Americans (Lipski, 1985) and most of the linguistic data gathered is from Mexican and Puerto Rican students (Anderson & Smith, 1987; Goldstein, Fabiano, & Iglesias, 2004; De la Mora & Maldonado, 2015; Vélez Salas, Treviño Schouten, Cárdenas, & Bayley, 2015; Keating, Jegerski, & Vanpatten, 2016). However, the following discussion provides important general information and features about the Central American Spanish variations most students use when they arrive to the United States, as it pertains to phonology, morphology, and syntax. The purpose of this section is to provide a general and basic idea to Spanish teachers about their students' dialectal background and should not be considered an exhaustive resource. In addition, this section introduces resources that Spanish language educators can use for more in-depth learning about these topics.

### *Phonology*

Central America is an area in which consonants are not stressed and sometimes are exchanged. The sounds for /s/ and /c/ are oftentimes changed to an /h/ sound, making the number *dieciocho* (eighteen), for example, sound like *diehiocho*. This phonetic phenomenon is “more pronounced in the Central American dialects of El Salvador and Honduras” (Lipski, 1985, p. 145), but it is also found in Guatemala, and to a lesser extent, in Mexico. Similarly, in some parts of Mexico and Central America, consonant reinforcement is compensated

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for with vowel weakening, but the opposite occurs in Mexican coast modalities in which the stability of vowels is compensated by weakening consonants (Moreno-Fernández, 2011). More information about Spanish syllable structure and specific restrictions on possible combinations can be found in Colina (2006) and Diaz-Campos (2011). These resources provide a more in-depth analysis about the specificities of Central American Spanish and Hispanic sociolinguistics in general.

### *Morphology*

Central American Spanish is very distinctive in the use of the personal pronoun *vos*, a phenomenon known as *voseo*. *Voseo* is defined as the use of the pronoun *vos* as a second person singular subject, which is regularly *tú* or *usted* (Benavides, 2003). The conjugated form for *vos* is sometimes similar to the plural form of *vosotros* but this is not always the case. For example, *vosotros decís* (you all say) has the same conjugation as *vos decís* (you say); however, *vosotros habláis* (you all speak) is different from *vos hablás* (you speak). *Voseo* can affect both the pronominal and verb forms. *Voseo* represents an archaic form of the Spanish language spoken by Spanish conquistadores and colonizers in the sixteenth century and is still widely used in Central America and some countries in South America like Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and some parts of Bolivia. The Spanish Royal Academy has become active in acknowledging this variation, but in the United States *voseo* is not used or recognized academically. Therefore, when students arrive in the United States they are exposed for the first time to a different variation of the language that they are not used to hearing or seeing.

### *Syntax*

Central American students, most prominently students from Guatemala, may use word combinations that reflect the syntax of Mayan-derived languages and other indigenous languages (Vera Institute of Justice, 2015). Other common features of Central American Spanish are the ellipsis of negative particles in sentences that involve the preposition *hasta* (until), for example: *visitaré hasta el próximo año* [\*I will <not> visit until next year]; the use of demonstrative pronouns before possessive pronouns, for example: *esa tu bebé es grande* [\*that your baby is big]; and the intensive use of *ser* (to be), for example: *yo vivo es en El Salvador* [\*I live <is> in El Salvador] (Mackenzie, 2013). More detailed information about the syntax of the Spanish language, its evolution, and regional variation across Central America and other Spanish speaking countries can be found in Zagona (2002) and the other references used in this section.

## **Limited L1 and L2 proficiency—Interrupted Bilingualism**

Spanish is currently the second most-spoken language in the United States and it continues to become increasingly important throughout schools, businesses, the Internet, government and private agencies, non-profit organizations, and among other important sectors in the country (Miller, 2016; Hugo López & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013; Brecht & Rivers, 2000). As Spanish continues to become an important part of American culture, effective Spanish speakers will be expected to serve as a bridge between Spanish and English. The continued use of Spanish

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in business-related settings within the United States is promoting the importance of the language and it is transforming the perspective of Spanish from a language spoken only by uneducated immigrants (Fuller, 2012) to a powerful language that is associated with businesses (Huntington, 2004). This perspective on the Spanish language in the United States increases the importance of having skills that go far beyond conversational skills; it increases the importance of becoming proficient in all four language domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Unfortunately, our current educational system does not provide the necessary opportunities NSSs need to fulfill the demands that businesses in the United States look for in fully bilingual individuals. Spanish-speaking students in American schools often have a limited range of contexts in which they can use Spanish in meaningful ways. The use of Spanish in academic and social settings needs to be expanded to include more opportunities for effective oral communication; in-depth reading comprehension; writing for academic, literary, and professional purposes; and for expanding vocabulary (Roca & Colombi, 2016).

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Developing effective communication in an L2 needs practice and should not be considered as an activity that only exists inside the classroom (Wesely, 2010). In order to attain the Distinguished level of academic proficiency, learners must be effective oral communicators and analytical writers who understand the nuances and culture of Spanish in its oral and written form (ACTFL, 2012). Thus, making space in our schools for a more inclusive Spanish-speaking environment can positively impact our students' opportunities to achieve Distinguished academic proficiency (ACTFL, 2012), prepare them as future bilingual professionals, and develop their cognitive abilities.

The benefits of bilingualism and biculturalism have been addressed and demonstrated in many studies and articles (Cook, 1997; Worthy & Rodríguez-Galindo, 2006; Pentón Herrera, 2015; Toledo-Lopez & Pentón Herrera, 2015). However, very little is published about the negative impact dual illiteracy has on Hispanic students living in the United States. A study conducted by the National Assessment for Progress in Education (NAPE) in conjunction with the Department of Education found that 80% of all Hispanic high school students cannot read well enough to go to college and that over 56% of all adults in the Hispanic community are functionally illiterate (Imhoff, 1990). These statistics are alarming considering that the Hispanic population continues to increase at a very rapid pace in the United States.

Dual illiteracy is a dual challenge that affects NSS students from diverse perspectives. NSS who are illiterate in their L1 and who are introduced to an L2 can ultimately only reach a certain level of proficiency in that second language and will take longer to learn the L2 (Haynes, 2007). In other words, the strong presence and daily practice of the English language becomes the norm and the little knowledge acquired in Spanish is forgotten over time (Tran, 2010; Pentón Herrera, 2015). The loss of L1 proficiency also affects the NSS and their future

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generations' cultural identity and heritage (Anderson, 2012). In addition, dual illiteracy can impact future family generations as they miss the opportunity of receiving knowledge passed down about Spanish and their Hispanic culture (Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, & Velasco, 2012). In this sense, dual illiteracy influences the NSSs' ability to function as fully bilingual individuals and traps them between two linguistic realities in which a high level of proficiency is never achieved.

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### Teaching Techniques to improve NSSs' Spanish language proficiency

The role of language teachers is highly important for all students because, through language, students learn more about their own culture, traditions, and their connection to who they are as individuals. More specifically, Spanish educators of illiterate or low-proficiency NSSs play a vital part in the integration, success, and further education of these students. There are three phases that all NSSs undergo when learning Spanish: (1) readiness, (2) acquisition, and (3) consolidation (Quintana Padrón, Zanleoni Torres, Bocourt Salabarría, Guevara Marrero, & Enrique Hondares, 2015). During the **readiness** phase, Spanish-speaking students create the basis necessary for the development of the skills required for literacy and school life. Usually this phase occurs in elementary school. **Acquisition** enables students to recognize aural and visual representations of language through oral and written activities. Lastly, **consolidation** is a period of systematic training of all skills with increasingly higher demands in which a progressive and strengthening development of communication skills is encouraged (Quintana Padrón et al., 2015). Many of the NSS students addressed in this study arrive in our schools in the readiness phase, and it is up to the Spanish language educator to help those students advance to the consolidation phase through the students' participation in Spanish classes.

This section of the study focuses on providing teaching techniques Spanish language educators can use to support the learning process of illiterate or low-proficiency NSSs with the purpose of helping these students advance to the consolidation phase. There are five main topics addressed: (1) accentuation, (2) putting words together, (3) upper and lower case, (4) orthography, and (5) digraphs. These five topics were selected because the authors of this study found that they are most challenging for illiterate and low-proficiency NSS students. All of these topics are considered basic concepts that students need to know and understand in their native language in order to continue progressing through the language proficiency phases and to better learn and understand a second language. Each of these subjects is explained in this section and activities are provided to assist Spanish educators in teaching this information to illiterate and low-proficiency NSSs. The vision of this section is to provide useful ready-to-print worksheets Spanish language educators can use to support the teaching of these five important concepts to NSS illiterate or low-proficiency students.

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### *Accentuation (Acentuación)*

*Acentuación* in Spanish is of utmost importance because the same word can have different meanings depending on where the accent is placed. A simple accent over a vowel can change a word from a pronoun to a verb, or from an article to a personal pronoun. Similarly, the tilde (*virgulilla*) on top of the letter *n* (*ñ*) changes the meaning of the words. Illiterate and low-proficiency NSSs do not know or understand the importance of accentuation and that makes it difficult for them to understand the parts of speech in Spanish. Learning the grammatical rules of accentuation, both in spoken and written form, are basic skills that any Spanish speaker needs to have to successfully communicate in Spanish. In addition, when NSSs have a solid understanding of accentuation in Spanish, English language acquisition becomes an easier process (Cortés Moreno, 2002) because, for example, understanding basic rules of accentuation in Spanish will help learners discern the difference between *ella esta* (\*she this) and *ella está* (she is), a common mistake among newcomer ESL NSS students. The worksheet on **Appendix A** can be used to help Spanish educators teach accentuation and explain its basic concepts.

### *Putting words together (Escritura en bloque)*

*Escritura en bloque* occurs when students write words, phrases, and even paragraphs together without spaces between them. This writing challenge may be associated with dyslexia (Yale School of Medicine, 2008) but, sometimes, it just reflects the students' poor writing skills. **Appendix B** offers a proactive idea to teach vocabulary, spelling, and writing at the same time in order to help students overcome this challenge. **Appendix B** shows a word builder (*componedor*) and each picture shows the steps Spanish educators can use to help NSSs become better writers. The first picture shows vocabulary practice. Teachers can choose vocabulary words and they can have NSS students practice spelling using the *componedores*. Once students are ready, educators can use dictations (*dictados*) to have students integrate those vocabulary words into complete sentences also using the *componedores*. The systematic integration of this activity in Spanish classes will prove effective in helping NSS students overcome their writing and spelling challenges.

### *Upper and lower case (Mayúsculas y minúsculas)*

*Mayúsculas y minúsculas* are highly important in the Spanish language and in all Romance languages and they reflect the writer's basic understanding of Spanish grammar. The rules for the use of upper and lower case in Spanish are conventional and change for diverse reasons impacted by the evolution of language and culture. In today's world, for example, writing complete words and sentences in upper case on social media websites or e-mail communication may symbolize yelling or speaking very loudly. It is important for NSS students to learn the importance of using upper and lower case to be more successful communicators in today's globalized environment. One of the many benefits of learning the basic rules of using upper and lower case in Spanish is that NSSs can use that information and transfer it to English, as many of the rules for upper and lower case are very similar

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in English and Spanish. **Appendix C** shows activities adapted from Rodríguez Pérez, Balmaseda Neyra, and Abello Cruz (2015) that Spanish educators can use to support their instruction of upper and lower case use.

### *Orthography (Ortografía)*

*Ortografía* is the conventional spelling system or written form of a language. Orthography in Spanish, and in other languages, is an integral part of its identity and the language's survival depends on the speakers' effective use of it. Since the creation of symbols to encode a spoken language is a precondition for any literacy in that language, many people involved in language revitalization and preservation work very hard to ensure that effective orthography is perpetuated (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006). Educators teaching illiterate or low-proficiency NSSs are, in a way, professionals who are working to revitalize and save the appropriate use of Spanish language among those students. Unless Spanish orthography is taught to illiterate or low-proficiency NSSs, they will grow farther away from their native language and English will try to fill in the linguistic gaps of those students. The end result of using one language (English, in this case) to fill in the linguistics gaps of one's native language (Spanish, in this case) is the incorrect use of both languages. In addition, since Spanish is not the primary language used in the United States, illiterate or low-proficiency NSSs will fail to pass down Spanish language skills to their future generations (Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, & Velasco, 2012). **Appendix D** presents an opportunity for students to practice some of the most common orthographic mistakes in Spanish, but this list is not exhaustive. For a complete explanation and more activities about Spanish orthography refer to Rodríguez Pérez et al. (2015).

### *Digraphs (Dígrafos)*

*Dígrafos* are groups of two letters that represent a single sound. In Spanish there are five groups of digraphs:

1. Digraph *ch* represents the phoneme /ch/: *chapa, abochornar*.
2. Digraph *ll* represents the phoneme /ll/ and also the phoneme /y/, depending on the population of Spanish speakers: *lluvia, rollo*.
3. Digraph *gu* represents the phoneme /g/ when written before the vowels **e** and **i**: *pliegue, guitarra*. The *gu* digraph must not be confused with the *gü* digraph because they are different: *lingüística, güira*
4. Digraph *qu* represents the phoneme /k/ when written before the vowels **e** and **i**: *queso, quinqué*.
5. Digraph *rr* represents the phoneme /rr/ and is always written between two vowels: *arroz, tierra*.

**Appendix E** provides different exercises where students can practice digraphs in Spanish.

## Conclusion

This article sheds light on the linguistic needs of many native Spanish students who arrive to the United States with little or no proficiency in their native



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language. Many professionals in the teaching field, including Spanish teachers, have an incorrect perception that native Spanish speakers know the language because they can speak it. However, this is not the case. This article seeks to educate counselors, language teachers, and professionals in the educational field about the importance of developing native Spanish speakers' L1 proficiency and truly understanding their proficiency in their L1 in order to provide appropriate academic and linguistic support to develop their language proficiency skills in both L1 and L2. Similarly, this study also points out five of the most important topics this population of students needs to know in order to be successful Spanish communicators and to later use those strengths to learn English. The resources provided in the appendices are meant to facilitate the teaching of these five topics and can be modified as needed to meet specific students' needs.

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### Appendix A: Accentuation (*Acentuación*)

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

(1) En este ejercicio encontrarás ejemplos de tres grupos de palabras cuyo significado varía de acuerdo con su acentuación. Añade otros dos más. [*In this exercise you will find examples of three groups of words whose meaning changes according to its written accent. Add two more.*]

#### Esdrújulas

cántara

capítulo

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Llanas

cantara

capitulo

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Agudas

cantará

capituló

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(2) Como conoces, los monosílabos no se acentúan, excepto cuando requieren tilde diacrítica. Explica cada caso y escribe una oración como aparece en el ejemplo. [*As you know, the monosyllables are not accentuated (In Spanish), except when they require diacritic tilde. Explain each case and write a sentence as shown in the example.*]

#### De/dé

De: preposición: *La explicación **de** esto es sencilla.*

Dé: forma del verbo dar: ***Dé** la explicación adecuada.*

#### El/él

El:

Él:

#### Mas/más

Mas:

Más:

#### Mi/mí

Mi:

Mí:

#### Se/sé

Se:

Sé:

#### Si/sí

Si:

Sí:

#### Te/té

Te:

Té:

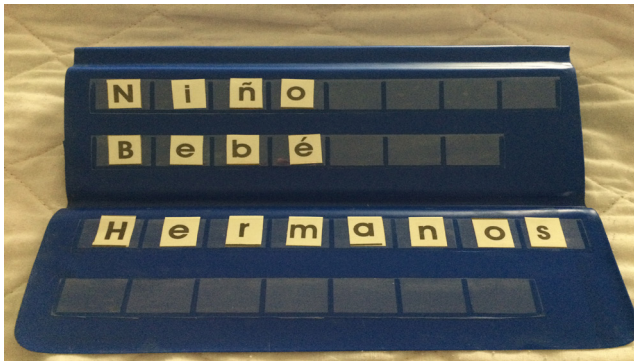
**Native Spanish speakers as binate language learners**

**Appendix B: Putting words together (*Escritura en bloque*)**

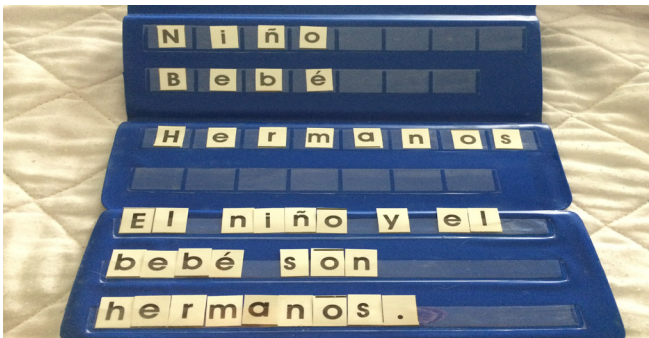
The word builder (*componedor*)



Vocabulary spelling and practice.



Using the vocabulary words in sentences through dictation



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### Appendix C: Upper and lower case (Mayúsculas y Minúsculas)

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

- Llene cada uno de los espacios en blanco con la letra o las letras que cada caso exija. *[Fill in the blank with the best option for each case.]*
  - [Ch-ch] \_\_\_\_arles [Ch-ch] \_\_\_\_aplin es uno de los más grandes actores de todos los tiempos.
  - Fui a [Gua-gua] \_\_\_\_temala y a [Hon-hon] \_\_\_\_duras, después pasaré por [El-el] \_\_\_\_Salvador.
  - La [A-a] \_\_\_\_samblea [G-g] \_\_\_\_eneral de la [ONU-Onu-onu] \_\_\_\_ ha condenado en varias ocasiones la crueldad animal.
  - [L-l] \_\_\_\_a historia conserva el nombre de de un caballo famoso: [R-r] \_\_\_\_ocinante, caballo fiel del [QU-qu-Qu] \_\_\_\_ijote.
  - [C-c] \_\_\_\_iudad de [M-m] \_\_\_\_éxico es una de las [C-c] \_\_\_\_iudades más populosas del mundo.
- A continuación se ilustran algunos posibles usos de la mayúscula. Marque “Sí”, “No”, o “A veces”, según corresponda. *[The following chart illustrates possible examples on the use of capital letters, use “Yes”, “No”, or “Sometimes” to identify the correct answer.]*

	Sí	No	A veces
Al escribir abreviaturas			✓
Al comenzar un escrito.			
Después de dos puntos.			
Al escribir los días de la semana.			
Al escribir la primera palabra de una cita textual.			
En los nombres de los organismos estatales y organizaciones.			
Cuando queremos destacar un nombre.			
En todas las letras de las siglas.			
En la primera letra de las abreviaturas.			
En las escrituras de los números romanos.			

## Native Spanish speakers as binate language learners

### Appendix D: Orthography [*Ortografía*]

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

- Cada una de las expresiones siguientes puede resumirse en un adjetivo terminado en **-ivo** o en **-iva**. Observa el ejemplo y completa el resto de los ejercicios. [*Each of the following expressions can be shortened by using an adjective ending in -ivo or -iva. Use the example to complete the rest of the exercises.*]
  - Piensa mucho: pensativo, pensativa.
  - Se expresa bien:
  - Que reproduce:
  - Capaz de defender:
  - Puede hacer explotar:
- Para completar las oraciones siguientes empleando los verbos que se indican, ¿utilizarás **b** o **v**? Aquí se utiliza la conjugación de la forma verbal imperfecto. [*Use b or v to complete the following sentences using the imperfect verbal tense.*]
  - Él reía mientras yo le \_\_\_\_\_ (hablar); eso, por supuesto, me \_\_\_\_\_ (molestar) bastante.
  - Nosotros \_\_\_\_\_ (estar) leyendo cuando él entró; \_\_\_\_\_ (terminar) de leer uno de los capítulos más interesantes.
  - Tú \_\_\_\_\_ (entrar) cuando yo salía; \_\_\_\_\_ (acabar) de recibir una noticia que me \_\_\_\_\_ (obligar) a salir con urgencia.
- Forma el plural de cada una de estas palabras para identificar una regla importante del uso de la **s**, **c**, y **z**. [*Practice the use of s, c, and z by making the following words plural.*]

compás	
mambí	
juez	
lápiz	
capaz	

- La formación de sustantivos con la terminación **-ez** y **-eza** es una regla sin excepciones. Escribe en cada caso el sustantivo que corresponde. [*The rule of nouns ending in -ez and -eza do not change. Write in each case the noun that best fit.*]

triste	tristeza	delgado	delgadez
tímido		raro	
pobre		puro	
pequeño		firme	

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### Appendix E: Digraphs [Dígrafos]

1. Se emplea **ll** en las palabras terminadas en **-illo**, **-illa**. Escribe una lista de palabras con esta terminación para practicar la escritura de este dígrafo. [Words that end in **-illo**, **-illa** use **ll**. Write a list of words ending in this digraph.]

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)

2. Se emplea **rr** sólo entre vocales y nunca al principio o al final de las palabras. Completa las palabras en el cuadro con **r** o **rr** según sea correcto. [The **rr** it is only used between vowels and it is never used in the beginning of the words. Complete the following words with **r** or **rr** as appropriate.]

a ___ oz	cue ___ no	ba ___ er	___ eir
c ___ iada	guita ___ a	come ___	cacho ___ o
co ___ er	gue ___ a	sali ___	zo ___ o
ja ___ o	güi ___ a	___ oedor	son ___ isa

3. Se emplea **gu** sólo seguido de las vocales **e**, **i** cuando tiene el sonido /g/. Indica si las palabras están correctas y escribe correctamente las palabras incorrectas. [The digraph **gu** is only used when followed by the vowels **e**, **i**. Identify the correct words and re-write the incorrect words.]

<b>guerrero</b>	✓ correcto
<b>guitarra</b>	X incorrecto - <b>guitarra</b>
<b>goloso</b>	
<b>Guillermo</b>	
<b>guabinete</b>	
<b>gallina</b>	
<b>guanar</b>	
<b>guordo</b>	

4. Se emplea **qu** sólo seguido de las vocales **e**, **i** cuando tiene el sonido /k/. Selecciona la opción correcta para cada una de estas palabras. [The digraph **qu** is only when followed by **e**, **i** with the /k/ sound. Choose the correct option for each of these words.]

- (a) cro \_\_\_ tas (que-ke-qe)
- (b) \_\_\_ rer (que-ke-qe)
- (c) ní \_\_\_ l (que-ke-qe)
- (d) \_\_\_ ero (qui-ki-qi)
- (e) ban \_\_\_ te (que-ke-qe)
- (f) pelu \_\_\_ n (quí-kí-qí)
- (g) acha \_\_\_ (que-ke-qe)
- (h) \_\_\_ atar (Qua-Ka-Qa)



# Classroom currency as a means of formative feedback, reflection, and assessment in the World Language classroom

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## Abstract

This study examines the formative aspects of teaching in the World Language community college classroom: formative feedback, reflection, and assessment, and then recommends a new educational technique that applies the aforementioned formative elements into the classroom. To this end, in the fall semester of 2015, three sections of Spanish I at the community college level were introduced to a system in which the students were to reward the instructor with play money (or “tip” him) when they perceived that they had met the daily “I can” statements thanks to the lesson and subsequent activities. “Tip” record keeping and quantitative evidence from the instructor rubric suggested that the play money encouraged students to reflect on their own learning, provided the instructor with immediate feedback from students, allowed for critical reflection of activity types, and enabled the instructor to measure whether perceptions (the “tips”) matched his formative assessment of how students actually performed in small groups and class activities. This paper also provides insight into which activity types students perceived as the most effective in the World Language classroom.

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The more formative aspects of classroom learning (formative feedback, reflection, and assessment, as defined below) are considered key to enhancing knowledge and student skills (Corbett & Anderson, 1989; Moreno, 2004; Pridemore & Klein, 1995). These formative elements not only enrich student knowledge, but also motivate student learning (Narciss & Huth, 2004). These truths are evident not just in the areas of English, math, and science, but in the World Language classroom as well. As educational accreditors and supervisors are moving toward data-driven results and outcomes, it is the educator who is tasked with finding ways of providing evidence for his or her formative means of assessment and feedback as well as student success.

What are formative feedback, formative reflection, and formative assessment? How are they different from each other, and how can educators implement them? As outlined below, the classroom currency technique will be explored in this study as an effective technique of integrating all of these elements at the community college level, while collecting valuable data for stakeholders, students, and accrediting agencies. This study is also applicable to secondary and four-year university instructors of any subject.

### Background

According to Shute (2007), “formative feedback represents information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify the learner’s thinking or behavior for the purpose of improving learning ... [T]he teacher may also receive formative feedback and use it as the basis for altering instruction” (p. 1). For the purpose of this article, the focus will be on the latter in that the students will be the ones providing the instructor with feedback, via play money, which he then uses

Formative feedback is presently defined as information communicated to the teacher by the students that alters his or her teaching.

to assess and reflect upon his own instruction. Formative feedback is presently defined as information communicated to the teacher by the students that alters his or her teaching.

Formative reflection stems from the idea that “honest self-appraisal is the starting point for the process of cultivating the skills of ... teaching” (Emerson, 2007, p. 297). Emerson (2007) explains that one way for formative reflection to occur is through some form of instructor journaling that incorporates “personal reflection and thoughts about the exercises provided” and records “teaching stories” (p. 297). According to Westberg and Jason (2001), this process is meant to incite critical reflection on experiences and to identify student learning needs. More broadly, formative reflection ensues when the teacher asks him or herself questions, such as “what happened?,” “so what?,” and “now what?,” while “summative reflection focuses more on what can be improved or done differently” (Emerson, 2007, p. 297). It is important to note that journaling is not a required component of formative reflection, as it often takes place while in the classroom. “Reflection strategies can support either reflection-in-action (formative reflection) or reflection-on-action (summative reflection)” (Selber, 2004, p. 159). This “honest self-appraisal” of learning should also be conducted by the students (Emerson, 2007, p. 297), who must consider how well they are mastering the learning targets.

## Classroom currency—formative feedback, reflection, and assessment

According to Selber (2004), “reflection-in-action is potentially more potent because it produces contextualized experiments in which professional practices can be reconsidered, adjusted, and enhanced in real time” (p. 159). Likewise, it should be noted that student reflection may occur in a very similar manner in regard to the content that they learn in class, their perceived value of it, and its applicability to their lives, especially when they are prompted to do so. For both the student and the instructor, “reflection [is] ... the consideration of the larger context, the meaning, and the implications of an experience and action [and] ... allows the assimilation and reordering of concepts, skills, knowledge, and values into pre-existing knowledge structures. When used well, reflection will promote the growth of the individual” (Branch & Paranjape, 2002, p. 1185).

“When used well, reflection will promote the growth of the individual”

The final formative aspect focuses on the instructor. Brown (2004) explains that formative assessment is achieved in “evaluating students in the process of ‘forming’ their competencies and skills with the goal of helping them to continue that growth process” (p. 6). The author makes clear that “the key to such formation is the delivery (by the teacher) and internalization (by the student) of appropriate feedback on performance, with an eye toward the future continuation (or formation) of learning” (p. 6). Formative assessment most often draws upon qualitative classroom elements rather than scores, which principally focus on student performance. For example, the instructor of the current study formatively assessed students during the experiment by walking around the classroom and listening in on student activities and discussions. As further explained below, the instructor filled out a rubric based on his formative assessment of how well he perceived student learning during the interactive classroom activities.

Formative assessment most often draws upon qualitative classroom elements rather than scores, which principally focus on student performance.

In summary, *formative feedback* is the information communicated to the teacher by the students that alters his or her teaching; *formative reflection* is an honest self-appraisal by the teacher and the student in asking him or herself “what happened?”, “so what?”, and “now what?”; and *formative assessment* by the teacher monitors student learning in real time and is not necessarily tied to a score or grade. Often interrelated, these separate concepts all work together in the classroom to provide students with the best possible learning experience. It should be noted that all of these elements contribute in allowing students to learn from faculty and in allowing faculty to learn from students. This formative process is critical, as “students should know that their faculty want to grow, [just] as do they ... Excellence in ... education is found in faculty and students working and learning together, listening to one another” (Emerson, 2007, p. 299).

### Classroom Currency

Many educators in the past have incorporated play money into their classrooms for various purposes. The Internet contains a plethora of qualitative information from teachers across the country who have rewarded their students with classroom money for achievement and proper behavior. Smith, Smith, and

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De Lisi (2001) integrated classroom money in a different manner from the current study. The authors explained how one high school biology teacher rewarded his students with “biology bucks” when they met daily objectives or contributed greatly in class, and found that student participation and grades improved. Similarly, Godinez (2012) used classroom currency to teach her students economic skills and to successfully manage behavioral problems. Apart from these two studies, very little qualitative or quantitative data on the effectiveness of this technique is documented in peer-reviewed journals.

For the purpose of this article, classroom currency is still play money that students receive in the classroom. However, the technique used is very different from the previous studies and from stories found in blogs in that it is the teacher who receives the “money” and not the students. While the design of this experiment is explained in the methodology section, it should be noted that students were given classroom currency at the beginning of a class session and were told to reward their college instructor with “tips” for a job well done, based on how well class activities aided them in meeting the daily “I can” statement. In the students doing so, the instructor received immediate feedback from students. He was also able to critically reflect on the activity types that contributed to student learning based on student perceptions and was able to measure whether student perceptions matched his formative assessment of how students actually performed in small groups and class activities. Thereby, the instructor was able to alter plans for the next class session to best meet student needs.

### Definition of Activities

Following is an explanation of the activities that were employed during the study, all of which were carried out in the target language:

*Circle chat activity.* A circle chat activity is an activity in which two circles of students rotate after a designated amount of time as to constantly change partners (Robertson, 2014).

*Information gap activity.* An activity in which student A has the information that student B needs to complete a task and vice versa; students must negotiate meaning to fill in each other’s gaps (Richards, 2006).

*Information gathering activity:* “Student-conducted surveys, interviews, and searches in which students are required to use their linguistic resources to collect information” (Richards, 2006, p. 19).

*Information transfer activity:* This requires “learners to take information that is presented in one form, and represent it in a different form” (Richards, 2006, p. 19).

*Input activity:* Activity in which students recognize language use but do not produce it (Richards, 2006).

*Opinion sharing activity:* “Activities in which students compare values, opinions, or beliefs, such as a ranking task in which students list six qualities in order of importance that they might consider in choosing a date or spouse” (Richards, 2006, p. 19).

## **Classroom currency—formative feedback, reflection, and assessment**

*Pair-share:* Discussing a topic or answers with partner; conclusions are often drawn to solve a problem (Robertson, 2014).

*Picture-description:* Describing pictures or images to a partner (Mitchell & Myles, 2013).

*Role-play:* “Activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene or exchange based on given information or clues” (Richards, 2006, p. 20).

*Task completion activity:* Puzzles, games, map-reading, and other kinds of classroom tasks in which the focus is on using one’s language resources to complete a task (Richards, 2006, p. 19).

## **Methodology**

The research was completed during the fall of 2015 over a seven-week time frame. A community college in the midwest of the United States agreed to participate in this study. In three sections of Elementary Spanish I, 57 students chose to participate. For this community college, 75 students were enrolled in Elementary Spanish I in the fall, 2015 semester, constituting 76% of the available population represented in the sample. The demographics for this community college include the following, as reported directly by the institution in question (2014): 5,286 students enrolled, 23% minority enrollment, 33% first generation student enrollment, 32% of students received financial aid, average student age of 24, and 16:1 student to teacher ratio.

During the weeks of the study, the classroom instructor taught three units to the students while completing a formative rubric at the end of each class session based on his perception of students’ meeting the daily target. The instructor would briefly leave the classroom to complete the rubric while the students were leaving “tips.” The teacher began each unit by issuing \$3.00 worth of classroom currency to each student. Students were informed that they were to “tip” their instructor at the end of the class session based on the following criteria:

\$3: I feel that I completely met the daily learning target thanks to today’s learning activities.

\$2: I feel that I mostly met the daily learning target thanks to today’s learning activities.

\$1: I feel that I somewhat met the daily learning target thanks to today’s learning activities.

\$0: I feel that I did not meet the daily learning target, regardless of the learning activities.

During activities, the instructor was tasked with circling the room and formatively assessing student performance, based on the daily “I can” statement, on a scale of 1-4, with 1 indicating that the “I can” statement was not achieved and 4 indicating that it was fully achieved (See Appendix for instructor rubric). For the purpose of this study, a wide variety of activities were employed during data collection, and a “tip jar” was passed around the room after the measured class period. The range of activities that took place during the study is included in the previous section.

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At the start of each class period, the instructor wrote an “I can” statement on the board, derived from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* (ACTFL, 2015). Each statement serves as a self-assessment “used by language learners to assess what they ‘can do’ with language in the Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational modes of communication” (p. 1). These statements are aligned with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners for reporting performance in each mode of communication. The following are “I can” statements provided by ACTFL from which daily statements for this present study were derived:

1. I can describe myself and others as well as express likes and dislikes.
2. I can describe people, places, and things.
3. I can express origin, express emotions and conditions, and can describe what someone or something is like.
4. I can express ownership and can express likes and dislikes.
5. I can discuss free-time activities, plans, and food.
6. I can state what and whom I know and can express intention, means, movement, and duration.
7. I can identify family members and can describe daily activities.
8. I can express opinions, plans, preferences, and feelings.
9. I can discuss my daily routine and can express obligation.
10. I can express how long something has been going on.

The aforementioned design was used to collect and analyze data for the following research questions:

Research Question One: What perceptions do first-year World Language students have of classroom activities in relation to the learning target?

Research Question Two: What perceptions does the instructor have of student performance of classroom activities in relation to the learning target?

Research Question Three: How do student perceptions of classroom activities correlate with the instructor’s perceptions of student performance in relation to the learning target?

The two researchers requested and received approval from the college’s Institutional Review Board to complete this study. After meeting the students in the fall of 2015, the researchers explained the study and asked for the students to sign a research study consent form. The classroom instructor personally controlled all aspects of the study, including data collection and storage procedures.

A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was performed to compare the “tip” amounts from students with the formative assessment observations by the instructor. In this particular case, this procedure illustrates a quantitative measure to determine a statistical relationship between two or more observed data values (Lighter, 2011). This procedure was employed for each of the ten class sessions.

Minimal risks existed for the participants of this study. The students were treated the same as in any other school year or with any other instructor, using similar methodology, using the same text book, and following all institutional

## **Classroom currency—formative feedback, reflection, and assessment**

rules and procedures. None of the departmental goals or outcomes for Spanish I were altered.

### **Results**

Asking students to use classroom currency in correlation with daily learning targets encouraged students to reflect on their own learning and provided the instructor with immediate formative feedback in relation to both student learning and to the success or lack thereof of his classroom activities.

The activity types represented during the most “tipped” class session out of the ten sessions in this study were input activities, information gathering activities, and information transfer activities. An average of \$2.62 out of \$3.00 was received, and the instructor rated this class session 4/4.

The activity types from the least “tipped” class period were input activities, information gathering activities, opinion sharing activities, information gap activities, and role-plays. However, even the least “tipped” day received \$2.06/\$3 and an instructor rating of 3.67/4, suggesting that students felt that they “mostly met the daily learning target,” which is still quite remarkable. In fact, a couple of the activities from the least “tipped” day coincide with activities from the most “tipped” day, suggesting that students meet “I can” statements as long as active learning strategies are employed, as none of the activities that students were exposed to during data collection were mechanical, and all of them complied with communicative teaching method standards.

In terms of the formative assessment of student performance of the learning activities, the instructor revealed that his assessments highly correlated with the student perception “tips.” There were six class sessions in which the instructor formatively rated students a perfect 4/4 and consequently, five out of six of those class sessions were the highest tipped. The days in which the instructor gave between a 3-3.64/4 rating represent four class sessions, and three of those four sessions represent the least “tipped” days.

Statistically, when comparing the student “tips” with the instructor ratings, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the value of R is 0.6168. This is a moderate positive correlation, which means there is a tendency for high X variable scores to coincide with high Y variable scores (and vice versa). In other words, the perceptions of the students based on tipping moderately correlated with the formative assessment of the instructor. The data for this correlation were derived from Table 1 and Figure 1 on the next two pages, in which average daily student tip amounts were increased by \$1 each to provide for a clear correlation with the instructor rating, given that the instructor rubric scaled from 1-4.

### **Limitations, Conclusions, and Pedagogical Implications**

As with any study, some limitations exist. First, students who had prior knowledge of the learning target were not taken into consideration. This was not addressed in the current design so that students were not allowed a neutral option in their tipping. The researchers recognize that the data may have been different had students with prior knowledge of the daily learning targets been excluded.

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Another limitation was that tipping occurred for an entire class session instead of after each activity type, making it more difficult to discern which specific activities contributed to mastering the learning target. However, it must be noted here that

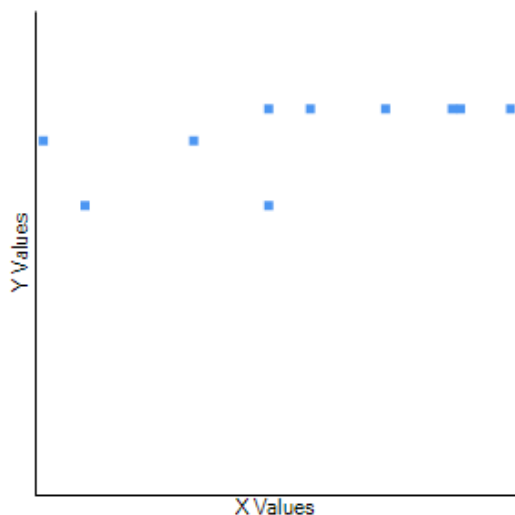
**Table 1.** Daily Activity Types, Student Tip Amount Averages, and Instructor Ratings

Days and activity types	X- Avg. Student tips	Y- Avg. Instructor ratings
1. Input activities, information gathering activity, picture-description, pair-share	3.33	3
2. Input activities, task completion activity, role-play, information gap activity	3.55	4
3. Input activities, information gathering activity, task completion activity, picture description, opinion sharing activity, information gap activity	3.24	3.67
4. Input activities, information gathering activity, role-play	3.56	4
5. Input activities, information gathering activity, opinion sharing activity, information gap activity, role-play	3.06	3.67
6. Input activities, information gathering activity, role-play	3.11	3
7. Input activities, information gathering activity, information transfer activity	3.62	4
8. Input activities, information gathering activity, role-play, circle chat	3.33	4
9. Input activities, information gathering activity, information gap activity, role-play	3.38	4
10. Input activities, information gathering activity, information transfer activity, role-play	3.47	4



## Classroom currency—formative feedback, reflection, and assessment

Figure 1. Student tips (X) versus instructor ratings (Y) correlation.



the specific learning activities were not as important to the instructor as understanding the formative process each educator should understand and implement. This study may possibly be improved with a follow-up investigation that triangulates data (including qualitative) to support and further describe the results from the quantitative measures.

As previously stated, the study design allowed the instructor to receive immediate feedback from students, to critically reflect on the activity types that contribute to student learning based on student perceptions, and to measure whether student perceptions match the instructor's formative assessment of how students actually performed in small groups and during class activities. It is noted here, that the instructor journal notes delineated which activities during each class session were perceived as successful or unsuccessful in relation to the daily learning target. Integrating all of these formative aspects into the classroom enhances knowledge and student skills while motivating student learning (Corbett & Anderson, 1989; Moreno, 2004; Narciss & Huth, 2004; Pridemore & Klein, 1995).

The instructor of the course was able to keep track of what activity types were most successful in his classroom, as well as record whether or not a large percentage of students successfully carried out daily "I can" statements. In keeping a log of successes and rating each class session, the instructor was able to provide qualitative evidence as to whether or not course and program outcomes were met. While this qualitative evidence was not the exclusive form of data collection at this community college to demonstrate student success and outcome compliance, the data from this study satisfied the administration's thirst for formative data. Additionally, the data will be included in the program review report that will be provided to accreditors in the future. The instructor also used the data for self-

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reflection of his own teaching and will modify activity types before the next semester based on the data. For example, the instructor noted on one occasion that a certain activity type did not work well for that day's learning target. The instructor noted this so that a different activity type will be implemented for the following semester. Further, certain activity types perceived as highly effective by the instructor will be continued or even used more frequently.

The "tip-based" data that the instructor tracked, as well as his instructor rubric, suggests that students prefer active, communicative activities such as role-plays, pair interviews and peer or group work, information transfer activities, information gap activities, task-completion activities, and information-gathering activities comprised of searches around the classroom. The instructor also found that students not only "tipped" well after performing these activities, but that they also performed well based on his formative assessment of their performance. Therefore, World Language educators should seek to include more active classroom activities that give students opportunities to use the language in meaningful ways, as students not only prefer these activities but meet daily learning targets thanks to them.

Additionally, students are very aware of their own learning when instructors facilitate opportunities for reflection. As demonstrated in Figure 1, student perceptions ("tip" amounts) and instructor ratings correlate and demonstrate the importance of the combination of formative class elements: feedback, reflection, and assessment.

College instructors and secondary teachers alike should consider the classroom currency format, as described in this study, as a means of self-reflection through feedback, and as a means of comparison between formative assessment and student perceptions. These elements are easily trackable if the instructor keeps a log of the "tips" he or she receives and can use this information to demonstrate student success in the classroom. As these formative elements enhance knowledge and student skills, inform teacher instruction, and aid in providing data on course or program success, the classroom currency technique is one that World Language educators and general pedagogues alike should implement.

"...the more learners are engaged in their own learning process, the more intrinsically motivated they become."

As ACTFL (2015) explains, "the more learners are engaged in their own learning process, the more intrinsically motivated they become. Research shows that the ability of language learners" to clearly understand specific learning targets "is linked to increased student motivation, language achievement, and growth in proficiency" (p. 1).

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## Appendix

### Instructor Log

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Learning Target: I can \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Learning Activity Types: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Students present: \_\_\_\_\_

Dollar amount of tips given: \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount of three sections divided by Total number of Students present represents the Average Tip per student for that lesson:

$$\text{_____} / \text{_____} = \text{_____}$$

### Instructor Rubric (Complete for each class section)

4	3	2	1
The instructor feels that almost all students completely met the daily learning target	The instructor feels that many students met the learning target but that several did not OR that most students somewhat met the learning target	The instructor feels that several students met the daily learning target but that many students did not	The instructor feels that most students did not meet the daily learning target

# Reviews

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**Edited by Thomas S. Conner, St. Norbert College**

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The Northeast Conference makes available in its *Review* evaluations of both products and opportunities of interest to foreign language educators. These evaluations are written by language professionals at all levels and representing all languages. The opinions presented by reviewers and by respondents (publishers, tour operators, webmasters, association leaders, etc.) are their own and in no way reflect approval or disapproval by the Northeast Conference.

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We will accept reviews of

- Software
  - Videos and films
  - Textbooks, instructional packages, and ancillaries
  - Websites
  - Grant opportunities
  - Programs of study, both abroad and in this country, targeting both educators and students
  - Reference materials
  - Other
- 

## Arabic

**Ali, Jamal. *Using Arabic Numbers*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown, 2014. ISBN 9781626160057. Pp. 224. Price: \$35.95 (paperback).**

It's hard to imagine a more elegant and comprehensive treatment of the use of numbers in a language than Jamal Ali's *Using Arabic Numbers*. As teachers and students of Arabic well know, the grammar rules for using numbers are among the most complicated in the language, and are often covered in superficial or confusing fashion in textbooks. Professor Ali's reference guide covers just about every aspect of the use of numbers in Arabic in systematic fashion and is organized for easy use as a reference work.

While the subject may not generate much excitement, the format of this book is likely to stir the interest of anyone passionate about the Arabic language. The author provides extensive examples from a wide variety of classical and modern texts of numbers used in different contexts. While I did not find an exact total, there would seem to be about a thousand quotes from literary and news sources, each with a translation and citation. The sources are truly impressive: they range from the Qur'an, to Ibn Battuta and al-Asha'ri to modern writers like Najib Mahfuz and Tawfiq al-Hakim and current newspapers. The wealth of sources is of particular value since the formal grammar rules pertaining to numbers exist primarily for their poetic qualities, and therefore, their use in literary texts helps demonstrate the reasoning behind rules that often seem strange to students.

The organization of the text makes it easy to look up any situation regarding the use of numbers that could occur. Since the book is intended as a reference tool, this feature makes it especially useful. The early sections, though, which cover the basic rules, could well be used in an Arabic class. The wealth of quotations from literary sources makes these sections easy to incorporate directly into an advanced-level or literature

class. The book is also of a convenient size to be carried as a reference tool. A quick reference chart of the major rules, such as gender agreement on numbers, however, would have been helpful.

*Using Arabic Numbers* is a valuable reference for Arabic teachers, as even few native Arabic speakers know all the grammar rules contained within. Most students, at least below the advanced level, do not need a separate reference work for the use of numbers, as the formal rules for numbers are not normally used in conversation. Teachers, translators, and writers of Arabic, however, will not want to be without it.

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Assistant Professor of Arabic  
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### Chinese

**Zhang, P. and Ni Wo Ta: *Developing Chinese Fluency: An Introductory Course. Volumes 1 and 2. Simplified Chinese Edition.* Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-285-43354-7.**

To say that *Ni Wo Ta: Developing Chinese Fluency: An Introductory Course. Volume 2* is an outstanding Chinese textbook is an understatement. It looks and feels like a fun educational magazine thanks to its colorful design and countless engaging pictures of authentic Chinese food and interesting regional sights, for example. In addition, this innovative first-year program fully utilizes multimedia, such as audio CD and video DVD. The natural interaction of the characters in the videos greatly enhances their educational value. The characters not only use up-to-date language and culture in contemporary China, but also illustrate authentic and interesting linguistic and social contexts. The four preliminary units in Volume 1 cover all the basic concepts, including the pronunciation/phonetic system as well as the Chinese writing system. Moreover, frequent review helps students consolidate what they have learned as they embark on their Chinese learning odyssey. The fourteen core units are divided into Volume 1 (Unit 1 to Unit 7) and Volume 2 (Unit 8 to Unit 14). The author uses the theme-based approach with great skill and proceeds in a way that helps learners best accomplish communicative goals. The topics in Volume 2, for example, teach basic survival needs and focus on such things as food and dining, talking about school work, discussing plans, etc.

Each unit of this textbook contains two lessons: Part A and Part B. On the first page of each unit, functions and global tasks are clearly listed; core vocabulary is precisely summarized; grammar is high-lighted; and cultural points are pinpointed. In terms of communication, all the interpretive, interpersonal and presentational goals are clearly stated from the start. The lead-in is well-organized: first, students preview the vocabulary; then, they focus on grammar. As a result, viewing the video story and following along becomes much easier and far more interesting. The pre-viewing and viewing prompts serve as great guides. It is very reassuring to hear the standard mandarin Chinese in all the video stories. The post-video tasks help students reinforce the vocabulary, and grammar as well as their understanding of Chinese culture.

The accompanying literacy workbook is a powerful learning tool. Part I of each lesson in each unit includes not only writing tips for effective memorization of the basic characters, but

also specific steps to follow when writing, including several dos and don'ts. The organization of the words is beautiful and follows a “chunking” strategy: instead of single characters, collocations/words instead are listed. For example, 鸡蛋 (egg) is listed as a combined word while 鸡 (chicken) and 蛋 (egg) are not defined together. Then, an example of how to use each character is provided: 一个鸡蛋 (one egg). As regards single characters, the author lists several cognates. For example, 生日蛋糕 (birthday cake) and 年糕 (New Year's cake) are provided for the word 糕 (cake). Parts II and III are strictly Pinyin to Chinese characters and Chinese characters to Pinyin, respectively. Useful phrases/fixed collocations and even sentences, instead of single words, are the norm here. Part IV, Read and Type, gives students an opportunity to use technology to help them learn Chinese. In point of fact, typing, instead of writing, is often students' preferred method when it comes to characters. The literacy workbook also includes a reading program. The ten accompanying stories are interesting and easy to read. Also, they include tasks designed to help students develop a reading comprehension strategy, such as using linguistic clues to make an educated guess about meaning.

In short, *Ni Wo Ta: Developing Chinese Fluency: An Introductory Course. Volumes 1 and 2* is ideal for students who do not have prior knowledge of Chinese language or culture. After finishing this book, students are expected to reach the beginning-high to intermediate level on the ACTFL scale or level 2 on the ILR (Interagency Language Roundtable) scale.

Judy Zhu

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Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center

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### **Publisher's Response**

Cengage Learning wishes to thank Professor Zhu for her thoughtful and positive review of *Ni Wo Ta*. We would also like to point out that we have an important feature, a digital feature that Chinese instructors around the country have been raving about: the iLrn. Created specifically for languages, iLrn is an all-in-one course management system developed to engage students and elevate thinking through listening, speaking, reading, and contextualized writing activities. Its ease of use, communication tools, and superior content—including multimedia and authentic materials—save instructors time and help students succeed in the course. To request a trial access to our Chinese iLrn, visit <http://www.cengage.com/ilrn/>.

Cengage Learning invites Chinese instructors to request a review copy of the text at [www.cengage.com/chinese](http://www.cengage.com/chinese).

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[www.cengage.com](http://www.cengage.com)

## French

**Anderson, Bruce and Annabelle Dolidon. *En avant: Beginning French (Second Edition)*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-07-338646-1. Pp.507. (Includes: Textbook, Workbook/Laboratory Manual, Connect French)**

The second edition of this introductory French program is suitable for either a two- or a three-semester sequence. Focusing on active learning and integration of culture, the textbook features a flexible lesson organization designed to meet the needs of diverse teaching styles, institutions, and educational goals. It expands students' communicative skills by presenting and rehearsing situations similar to the ones they are likely to encounter in real life.

*En avant* is divided into sixteen chapters each comprising four modules: communication, interactive vocabulary, interactive grammar, and culture. The chapters start with “*Communication en direct*” videos, shot on the streets of Paris and Montréal, which not only introduce students to new language structures and vocabulary, but also provide rich insight into the cultures of the French-speaking world. The “*Vocabulaire interactif*” section uses pictures, photos, and texts to introduce new vocabulary in context. The accompanying activities encourage students to make form-to-meaning connections in French, rather than in English. Each “*Grammaire interactive*” section begins with a short presentation activity and an overview of the grammatical point in question. The follow-up activities, “*Analysons*” and “*Mise en pratique*,” test students' understanding of grammatical structures before they are used in context.

One of the most valuable components of the program is a mobile-enabled digital teaching and learning tool students can access via the devices they use on a daily basis. This digital platform includes Learn Smart, which can be adapted to individual learning needs and helps identify the learning objectives linked to each grammatical structure and vocabulary item. It then provides students with a detailed account of their progress, and points out items that may need to be further practiced. Connect French also gives them access to the Workbook/Laboratory Manual, the eBook, Learn Smart, video and audio materials, and grammar tutorials on their tablets. Additional features include a video capture software, voice board, MH Campus and Blackboard integration, all of which will efficiently help streamline language instruction and acquisition. The extensive opportunities to practice language skills using the latest technology greatly enhance the quality of the program and make it more user-friendly and appealing to our technology-savvy students.

Throughout the textbook, the authors use translations and rule explanations sparingly. Instead, they opt for a more inductive method in which students are guided to make connections and associations, thereby figuring out the meaning of a word or expression from the context. The use of meaning-based contextual clues helps develop students' critical thinking. *En avant* also offers a distinctive approach to introducing, teaching and practicing grammar. The “*Par la suite*” section at the end of the book serves as a reference with practice activities in Connect French and in the print Workbook/Laboratory Manual. Chapters 4, 8, and 12 feature a recycling section allowing students to better understand and interconnect various grammar points. The activities are well designed,



well planned and range from fill-in-the-blank exercises and multiple-choice questions, to sentence completion activities and question/answer drills.

The seamless integration of French and Francophone culture is of great importance throughout the textbook. All presentations, activities, notes and videos are geared toward the development of cultural competency. In the “*Culture en direct*” section of each chapter instructors are provided with multiple tools to integrate culture in their curriculum. There are several sub-sections, entitled “*les coins*,” each focusing on different, but interrelated aspects of culture. In “*Le coin vidéo*” students develop their listening skills by watching French actors who use images and other visual prompts. “*Le coin lecture*” exposes them to a variety of authentic texts followed by guided writing and speaking activities. “*Le coin chanson*” introduces students to Francophone singers, Zazie, Brigitte Bardot, Lynda Lemay, Edith Piaf, Bénabar, Jacques Goldman, Faudel, Yannick Noah, among others, and to their music. After a short biographical note summarizing the life and the career of the artist in question, students listen to songs and complete comprehension activities. All the songs are readily available on YouTube, with or without the lyrics. In “*Le coin ciné*” students watch a scene from a French movie that is related to the theme of the chapter and complete a number of pre- and post-viewing activities. “*Le coin conversation*,” at the end of odd-numbered chapters, offers pair work and group activities the goal of which is to synthesize vocabulary and grammar from the previous two chapters.

There are several new components that have been added to the second edition. The authors introduced the new “*Le coin des beaux arts*” section in every other chapter. Students can look at masterpieces of French and Francophone art, which serve as a springboard for further discussions and other activities surrounding these paintings. Among the artists selected are painters from France, such as Edgar Degas, Edouard Manet, Paul Gauguin, and Henri Rousseau, as well as two Francophone painters, Kiné Aw from Senegal and Préfète Dufaut from Haïti. A detailed analysis of each painting, conducted in its historical and cultural context, is interwoven with grammar and vocabulary practice activities. All the other “*coins*” from the first edition have been revised and updated to include new images and songs. Several new readings from *Le Petit Nicolas*, *Le Petit Prince* and *La cantatrice chauve*, have also been added at the recommendation of one of the reviewers.

Overall, *En avant* is a solid, innovative and flexible program. Based on a communicative approach, it thoroughly integrates language skills within a meaningful Francophone cultural context while vocabulary and grammar are treated as tools for effective and successful communication. What sets it apart from other introductory textbooks is the richness of its cultural content, the wide variety of oral and written activities and the array of instructional resources from which the instructors can pick and choose. The second edition of this new program will no doubt continue to motivate and inspire beginning French students by providing an ambitious and challenging learning experience.

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**Boudraa, Nabil and Cécile Accilien. *Francophone Cultures Through Film*. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2014. ISBN-10: 978-1-58510-311-9.**

I have used film successfully at every level of the French curriculum, but for the longest time I had to develop suitable teaching materials on my own to help students to better understand not only the film I wanted them to watch in class, but also various cultural themes reflected in it. I assembled my own course packets, including introductory texts on the medium itself as well as introductions to famous French actors and directors, along with study questions, vocabulary lists, writing assignments, group projects, cultural modules, etc. I remember thinking: I should not have to do this. But, at that time, foreign language publishers did not show much interest in film or, for that matter, French civilization. This struck me as particularly odd in light of the fact that there are so many foreign films that lend themselves particularly well to the classroom, from *Jean de Florette* to *Au Revoir les Enfants*. Thankfully, the situation has greatly improved since then. As the authors of the book under review here emphatically state in their credo: “film has proven to be an excellent medium for the teaching of both language and culture” (xi). As I recall, Focus Publishing in Newburyport, Massachusetts, helped start the trend to focus on film and other publishers soon followed suit so that instructors at the high school and college levels in all the commonly taught languages finally have somewhere to turn if they want to implement film into the curriculum in a more structured and educational fashion. *Francophone Cultures* goes even further than other specifically French titles published by Focus (cf. Kerry Conditto) insofar as it presents Francophone film, not only mainstream French film, and deserves special kudos for covering so much ground in only one relatively short volume with such critical acumen and attention to student needs.

As the term “Francophone” in the title of this book suggests, the films presented cover the Francophone world in its entirety, “from Vietnam to Algeria to Haiti” (book cover) and aim at nothing less than providing students with a thorough introduction to the cultural context and the language (though there is no grammar component). As the late Senegalese film director Sembène Ousmane eloquently has stated: “the filmmaker is the modern *griot*.” “Her/his job is to represent her/his culture through local lenses and to make it accessible to everyone” (xiii). *Francophone Cultures* is not a book about film per se, though students will be exposed to much useful vocabulary to discuss film and will gain a more sophisticated appreciation of film in general.

Like all volumes published by Focus it accomplishes these varied objectives in a variety of ways by providing, specifically

- Contextualized vocabulary lists (including an introductory section on *Vocabulaire du Cinéma*).
- Comprehension questions ranging from basic to advanced, including a very creative exercise where students are asked to define the significance of quotes from the film under discussion.
- Group discussion topics.
- Analysis of significant scenes in each film.
- Relevant readings, such as country introductions, newspaper articles, and movie reviews, as well as a wealth of other information, for example, a country fact sheet, director and actor biographies, and a short bibliography for further reading.

- A Note to the Instructor containing valuable advice on how to use film in the classroom with the best results.

The fifteen films selected are divided into five parts and follow a roughly chronological order, each film corresponding to one of what the authors call five significant moments in the Francophone experience: the Colonial Experience; Struggles for Independence; Cultural Diversity, Immigration and Exile; and Women in the Francophone World. Films selected cover most if not all of the Francophone world (North and Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, Quebec and Europe) but leave out other areas that have also inspired some notable films (for example, Lebanon, Guyana, and Switzerland). Most instructors have no quarrel with these very commonsensical labels but may be looking for more background information, in which case the accompanying bibliography is a good starting point. Instructors will have to determine how much context to provide depending on the class and the level of their students. I should add here that most films are readily available on the American market (Amazon, Netflix, California Newsreel). But, instructors should also be aware that they may need an international DVD player to show the film.

The films are listed as follows (English titles—some well chosen, some not so good—are provided in parentheses when different from the French original):

**Part I: The Colonial Experience:**

*Rue Case-Nègres* (Sugar Cane Alley)

*Indigènes* (Days of Glory)

*Lumumba: the Death of a Prophet*

**Part II: Struggles for Independence:**

*La Bataille d'Alger* (The Battle of Algiers)

*Franz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask*

*Lumumba*

**Part III: Cultural Diversity**

*Un été à la Goulette* (A Summer in La Goulette)

*L'Auberge Espagnole* (The Spanish Apartment)

*Bienvenu Chez les Ch'tis* (Welcome to the Sticks)

**Part IV: Immigration and Exile**

*Salut Cousin!* (Hey Cousin!)

*Pièces d'Identité* (Identity Pieces)

*La Grande Séduction* (Seducing Doctor Lewis)

**Part V: Women in the Francophone World**

*Faat Kiné*

*Indochine*

*Poto Mitan*

There are too many movies for a single semester or even an academic year. Most likely, instructors will choose to use this book as a supplement in an intermediate or advanced-level course and maybe only cover a small handful of films unless they have the luxury of teaching in a department that offers a cinema course (cuts in personnel and curriculum everywhere have made this an increasingly rare option, unfortunately). In the event that only one, or two or maybe three films can be included, Focus Publishing

offers copyright for individuals, so that instructors can prepare student modules on the films of their choice.

Most, if not all, of these films are bound to startle students of today's generation, as much because of their content as because of their artistic style. How many students have ever seen a foreign film, much less what people in my generation euphemistically used to call "fine films"? The only French films that students today are likely to have seen are box office hits in France such as *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des Sources*, or maybe *Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain*, all of which finally made it to U.S. shores, where they received critical accolades and enjoyed a brief moment of commercial success. A surprising number of my language students have seen all three of the films just mentioned (and a few more), thanks to the tireless efforts of my colleagues at the secondary level. Nevertheless, I am wondering if it would not have been wise to include a chapter on the appreciation of film, since the ones studied in this text—all of them "fine films"—are bound to have an alienating effect on a contemporary American audience, which needs to understand that a "good" movie does not necessarily have to contain graphic violence and extravagant special effects (to complement the "acting" of high-paid "hunks," accompanied by a motley crew of "dumb blondes") that distract from character development and the "story," not to mention "poetry." Until recently, at least, French films (and European cinema in general) have been fundamentally different from much of American film production, which unfortunately caters to the lowest common denominator by serving up a generous helping of entertainment violence and censored sex. Thus, studying French film will be an eye-opener to many students who, sad to say, might not otherwise have had the chance to view a foreign film; it might also bring down the wrath of the local school board if the film can be perceived to violate so-called community standards, so, sad to say, in 2016, instructors need to be aware of the dangers of showing "unsanitized," non-Hollywood film in an American classroom.

The presentation of each film follows the same basic order and is evenly divided between sections providing information and sections soliciting student input. The authors' approach is practical and pedagogical almost to a fault. Each chapter contains the same subsections, each with clearly defined parameters, which isn't to say that teachers cannot pick and choose among subsections as indeed they do with any text. Very rarely can teachers cover all the material contained in any texts, and *Francophone Cultures* is no exception. There is simply too much good "stuff" here to cover in the time allotted, so most teachers will have to pick and choose. The text is billed as appropriate for an intermediate or advanced course, but presumably undergraduates should also be exposed to literature in their second and third years of study. Film is important, but so too are literature and the history of French civilization. However, the text may be used in combination with a literary or historical text. For example, *Indochine* could be assigned alongside a reading from Marguerite Duras's autobiographical novel, *L'Amant de la Chine du Nord* or a lecture or two on the U.S. war in Vietnam. The curriculum these days is becoming ever more interdisciplinary. The authors have struck "gold" with this book, which can be used in a variety of classroom settings.

For the purposes of this review, just to give readers a sense of what to expect, I will look at the next-to-last film, *Indochine*, a film I have been using in my intermediary second-year language class and also recommend as outside "reading" in my French civilization class. Having grown up in Asia and lived, served, and worked in places like Vietnam and Cambodia I strongly identify with this part of the world and try to work in a section on French

Indochina in my classes whenever possible. Although the authors' introduction to Vietnam is overall informative it overlooks a number of interesting facts: alas, no one speaks much French in Vietnam anymore despite the best efforts of the French government; Catholicism appears to have the most devout followers in the former Communist north and is thriving despite the government's oppressive policies; written Vietnamese uses a Roman alphabet, *quoc ngu*, which was introduced not to accommodate the French colonizer but long before that (in the seventeenth century) to mark Vietnamese opposition to Vietnam's perennial enemy China; China and Vietnam have been enemies forever (in point of fact "Vietnam" means "Southern China" and Vietnam had to fight long and hard for its independence from China long before it had to fight France or America); and finally, Communism is not all it is held up to be: in the center of Hanoi today it is Burger King, KFC and Pizza Hut that have triumphed (Vietnamese like deep fried greasy food even more than Americans), which is a sad statement on the legacy of the war. Is this what the war was all about? Why did so many people on both sides have to die for this? In my class I always have students work with up-to-date Vietnamese print media to show them that Communism is not necessarily incompatible with freedom of information or freedom to gorge themselves with junk food. I also throw in some Vietnamese just to give students a flavor of the language. "*Tên tôi là Tom*" means "My name is Tom." Written Vietnamese may not look too bad despite its dense forest of diacritical marks, but pronouncing Vietnamese is a different matter because it is a highly complex tonal language (with as many as six different tones) that makes Chinese look easy by comparison.

The various comprehension and group activities are overall well conceived and intelligent, appealing to students' wide range of abilities and interests. I particularly like no 6, "*Activités de conversation en groupe*," which has students research and present on topics, such as plantation life and political commitment (other topics are less fortuitous, anachronistic, and much more politically correct, e.g., "*multiculturalisme*"). As previously mentioned, I also like no. 7, "*Analyse de citations dans le film*," which has students analyze actual quotes (hopefully students will also feel inspired to go back and listen to these scenes). But why not also try to educate American college students about the legacy of the war and include a short section on our war in Vietnam? Finally, the bibliography would be even more useful if it included more titles and were annotated.

*Francophone Cultures* is an overall excellent introduction to the richness and diversity of the Francophone world and is designed with the undergraduate French student in mind. The content-based approach to teaching language through film will enable students to improve their language skills and learn about the Francophone world at the same time.

It is by far one of the best cinema texts I have seen in a long time thanks to its comprehensive nature and intelligent and eminently pedagogical approach. *Francophone Cultures* sets a new standard of excellence and I only hope that we will see more texts of its kind in the future. The Francophone world is incredibly rich so there are many more films that could inspire similar texts.

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St. Norbert College  
De Pere, WI

## Publisher's Response

On behalf of its authors, Nabil Boudraa and Cécile Accilien, as well as Ron Pullins and his team at Focus, who had the vision and daring to be the original publishers of this volume, my colleagues and I at Hackett wish to extend our thanks to Tom Conner for his constructive and insightful review of *Francophone Cultures Through Film*. Like its creators, we hope this volume succeeds in its aim to heighten the effectiveness of film as a teaching tool at the intermediate French level. Its ample array of language & culture-learning materials and exercises for fifteen easily accessible Francophone films strives to present these linguistic works—and the worlds they represent—in a way that should be well within the grasp of American students at the intermediate level. Instructors wishing to assign only a small portion of the work are encouraged to apply for permission to Hackett Publishing, [permissions@hackettpublishing.com](mailto:permissions@hackettpublishing.com), to reproduce any materials controlled by the publisher.

Brian Rak  
 Editorial Director  
 Hackett Publishing Co.

**Flumian, Catherine, Josiane Labascoule, Christian Lause, and Corinne Royer. *Rond-point: une perspective actionnelle*. Second Edition. New York: Pearson, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-205-78277-2. Pp. 308. Includes: My French Lab.**

*Rond-point* was originally published in France and later adapted to the American market by Hedwige Meyer for Pearson. It is based on the CEFR, a set of guidelines used to delineate language proficiency standards in the EU, and its American counterpart, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Following the principles of task-based language instruction, students are immersed in the target language from the very first day of class, and learn through collaboration and interaction using contexts that are authentic and related to real life. This introductory college-level textbook also introduces *l'approche actionnelle*, commonly used in European schools, in which each chapter is related to the completion of a final project (*tâche ciblée*) linked to a specific task.

The textbook consists of a preliminary unit followed by twenty chapters, each of which features a similar layout and five double-page spreads. The chapters are generally shorter than those found in other textbooks currently available, which makes it possible for instructors to cover all of them in just two semesters, or in three semesters at those institutions at which introductory French courses meet less than three times a week. Within each chapter students will find clearly defined subsections devoted to different aspects of the language learning process. The “*Ancrage*: theme discovery” section introduces thematic vocabulary by way of communicative group activities related to visual cues. Students are asked to discuss pictures and photographs and then compare their responses while forming hypotheses about French culture later borne out and confirmed by the chapter content. Rather than present vocabulary lists with their English translations, the authors encourage students to figure out and deduce the meaning of words and phrases from the context. Each chapter’s main theme is further expanded in the “*En contexte*” section, which provides a wide variety of activities geared toward the

improvement and rigorous practice of communicative skills. The authentic documents and other materials, displayed on double pages, provide excellent models to follow. In preparation for the final project, students also have opportunities to review and practice grammar. The “*Formes et ressources*” section includes forms and structures necessary to tackle the topic under study. The main grammatical points appear at the bottom of the page in the form of a concise, but effective overview. All of the chapter segments are synthesized in the “*Tâche ciblée*” section culminating in a concrete task, along with pictures and other resources which makes it possible to use all language skills practiced throughout the chapter. Students are invited to draw upon the explanations and activities from the chapter to successfully complete the project. The following section, “*Regards croisés*,” presents various aspects of French and Francophone cultures through the use of authentic materials designed to develop intercultural knowledge while establishing comparisons between French-speaking cultures and students’ own cultures. Lastly, the “*Précis de grammaire*” section is a useful and well-presented grammar and vocabulary tool, which can be consulted as needed and used at any point in the chapter’s sequence.

The second edition of *Rond-point* has preserved most of the elements of the first edition, in particular its rich selections of authentic materials, a variety of smaller tasks leading to more ambitious larger tasks, the concept of recycling of main grammar points throughout the textbook and the focus on developing communicative competence in pair work and group work configurations. At the end of the book, verb charts with auxiliary, semi-auxiliary, and irregular verbs conjugations have been included for further reference.

Several important additions and improvements have been made in response to suggestions by instructors on both sides of the Atlantic. Thus, the second edition features an improved learning sequence and a reorganized format of several chapters. A new preliminary chapter (“*Point de départ*”) has been included. Four completely new chapters have been added or enhanced and some of the photos have been revised. Grammar and vocabulary lists are now placed at the end of each chapter. Other features include streamlined directions, new authentic selections, and Amplifier Dynamic Study Modules, a learning tool developed from the latest research in neuroscience and cognitive psychology on how we learn best.

*Rond-point* comes with an on-line component, *My French Lab*, which allows students to practice skills on their own outside of the classroom. It includes an e-Text, numerous online activities, student support, and a collection of learning tools, all in one program. Instructors can personalize their courses and remotely support students’ progress by controlling and updating content, creating new activities, setting preferences, and customizing the grade book or the assignment calendar.

*Rond-Point* is primarily a task-based textbook that allows students to learn the language in an active way. Students will practice their speaking skills in the context of organizing information, making choices, drawing conclusions, giving advice, interviewing classmates, and forming personal opinions. This active-packed way of learning will no doubt contribute to creating a highly communicative and interactive class room. While collaborating and interacting with one another, students will be able to assimilate grammar, vocabulary and culture in order to create meaning together in French in a truly communicative context. Last, but not least, students using *Rond-point* will be exposed to the learning process in a pedagogically sound and holistic way: not only

in terms of language skills development—reading, writing, listening comprehension and speaking—but also in terms of cultural knowledge and intercultural competence.

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**Giusti, Ada. *Integrating Service Learning and Volunteer Opportunities*. Marion, IL: The American Association of Teachers of French, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-9885-496-5-4. P. 129.**

In recent years French programs everywhere have transformed themselves to better reflect changing student needs and interests, as well as budget cuts and a transition to a younger professorate with new interests and a different set of teaching priorities. For starters, most departments have undergone a makeover and adopted a new name, “French and Francophone Studies.” However, the name change is more than just cosmetic since curricula today span the entire French diaspora and cover not only literature but also a wide range of other genres, such as cinema, art, history, politics, economics, international relations, and business culture and communication to the point where senior members of the profession may wonder / old timers wonder if there is anything “old school” left in the curriculum. Moreover, joint degree programs are becoming commonplace and it is not uncommon, even at the undergraduate level, for small departments to offer several tracks. My own department recently adopted three concentrations: the traditional literature track (though much slimmed down and less focused on traditional genres and masterpieces), society and culture, and professional language. Also, joint degree interdisciplinary studies, in international studies and business have changed the way we do business and no doubt will help many programs that struggle to survive. Finally, in just the last five years or so service learning and internships have emerged as hot new trends in foreign language education (and indeed in higher education in general). Our colleagues in Spanish have been pioneers in this regard, perhaps because the many large Hispanic communities across America make it easier to find real-life opportunities outside the classroom. The situation for French is more challenging, though there certainly are viable possibilities in Maine, New York City, and Louisiana, just to name a few examples of venues where French is more visible, be it in the form of the language and culture, heritage, or the presence of Francophone businesses.

Now, to improve opportunities in service learning, students should also look to study abroad, in France or in some other Francophone country. Traditionally, study abroad has been limited to language and culture, but there is no reason why students should not also take an internship or volunteer to work for a local NGO. The number of American students studying abroad is significantly up over the last decade and France is still the fourth most popular destination for American students (after the UK, Italy and Spain [xi]). They have everything to gain: valuable linguistic, cross-cultural, and even professional experience. One might think that students already gain this kind of experience by going abroad in the first place; however, research shows that not all students improve their language and intercultural awareness (xi). In point of fact, many students who study abroad socialize among themselves and never mingle with the natives.



The book under review here explores how study abroad programs can incorporate service learning and thereby improve students' language and cultural skills as well as their overall experience. It is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1 looks at International Service Learning (ISL), giving a plethora of useful examples along the way. ISL is defined as "a pedagogical approach that combines academic instruction and community-based service in an international context" (1). ISL can be delivered in a variety of course modules, the most convenient of which is probably the "combo": students take an academic course at their home institution that includes a faculty-led service trip abroad. The travel component could be completed during spring break, J-mester, or Maymester. A variation of this model would be a course taught by the resident director of a study abroad program in France. Students would work with a local partner to complete the service component and submit a journal, a paper, and a reflection essay as part their evaluation. The author provides detailed examples of how to structure all three assignments, making this book a hands-on guide to service learning in France. In point of fact, there are any number of variations possible (limited only by the human resources of the home institution and the energy of the faculty director), simply because each service project would be different and require a different set-up and assessment protocol. A student looking for some teaching experience obviously has different needs and would prepare differently than a student who chooses to work in a soup kitchen, for example. The former, ideally, would be an education major but still need to learn about the French educational system; the latter would need to study up on issues concerning immigration and social marginalization. The author reviews the profiles of fourteen French NGOs, among them Restos du Coeur and Secours Catholique, which have a long history of working with potential volunteers and work hard to find the most suitable match. Both volunteers and NGOs have to feel that the partnership is mutually beneficial. For this to happen though both sides have to be able to communicate their needs clearly, which necessitates an infrastructure that many educational institutions and volunteer organization do not have. It is unlikely that an American school's study abroad program director will be able to help students every time but experience in the field accumulates over time and before long will result in the network necessary to ensure long-term success.

Chapter 2 focuses on volunteer work and builds on the author's personal experience in the field and "offers students practical information that will enable them to become effective international volunteers as well as successful learners" (xiv). The author looks at traditional study abroad programs and discusses how students can improve their language, social, and academic skill sets to take full advantage of their international experience and not be frustrated by the many nuisances of dealing with the many unknowns of study abroad, including the arcane bureaucracy typical of most Francophone countries. To begin, students should prepare for study abroad by taking a short prep course at their home institution typically offered by the study abroad office; if such a course is not available, there are numerous online alternatives. Again, numerous links and examples are provided. Moreover, students need to work on their French language skills before they travel abroad. To this end ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are provided at the end of the volume so that students can determine how they rank and what they need to do in order to improve. However, they really need to go through evaluation by an ACTFL certified instructor, I think.

The advice offered here is of a general nature and concerns anyone preparing to study abroad and not only potential volunteers. All students need to develop realistic expectations and goals and try ahead of time to define their own weaknesses and address them. Volunteering abroad requires considerably less time than SL and therefore might be more appropriate for some students and the dividends can be just as significant in terms of developing linguistic and cultural competence. But the practical hurdles to overcome before securing a position can be enormous and therefore a resident study abroad director is ideally suited to help place students, though ambitious students can also just show up at a local NGO.

Chapter 3 introduces no less than fourteen French NGOs, providing a complete profile of each one, outlining exactly what they are looking for in terms of qualifications, linguistic, and otherwise, and what they can offer in return. A useful bibliography rounds off each profile, capped by student testimonials. Most of these NGOs, some of them with an international reputation, have offices across France—making it easy for student to “hook up” even if they do not happen to be studying in Paris. These NGOs are: Amnesty International (fighting for human rights everywhere); Artisans du Monde (a fair trade organization inspired by Oxfam); Association des Cevennes pour l’insertion, les loisirs, et l’éducation (targeting low-income neighborhoods in Montpellier and providing afterhours education in English and French); Association des paralysés de France (defending people with disabilities); ATD-(Aide à toute détresse) (serving people living in economic, social and cultural poverty), Établissement français du sang (working with the donation of blood); La Cimade (assisting refugees and asylum seekers); les Restos du Coeur (distributing hot meals to people in need and fighting social marginalization); Médecins du monde (providing health care to those in need in 55 countries, as well as at 22 centers in France); Secours Catholique (providing social services, emergency relief to refugees, tutoring, food distribution, thrift shops), Secours populaire français (running distribution, relief services and after-school programming); and Société Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (serving hot meals, making home visits, running thrift shops, doing community development, and engaging in poverty alleviation). Describing each organization in detail would take up too much space but American students looking for a volunteer organization can rest assured that the organizations presented here are carefully vetted and will make a bona fide effort to accommodate all volunteers, including those without any professional qualifications.

Chapter 4 introduces readers to service learning in a host of Francophone countries other than France, specifically in Africa (Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal), but also in Belgium and Switzerland and, like Chapter 3, provides a list of nonprofit organizations that can serve as a helpful first step for anyone interested in volunteering outside France. Chapter 5, finally, helps students identify scholarships and financial aid to undertake their trip abroad. They will be surprised to learn how many, oftentimes unclaimed, scholarships exist and need to consult this list before deciding that they cannot afford to go abroad. In addition, the author provides an extensive bibliography that will make it easy for users be they students, teachers, or administrators to identify appropriate resources and educate themselves about the opportunities currently available.

To the best of my knowledge this book is a first of its kind and may be a godsend to all instructors looking to inject a dose of fresh blood into a stagnant or dying French program by encouraging students studying abroad to engage in Service Learning. Anyone interested in Service Learning should also look at Jacqueline Thomas’s edited volume of essays titled

*Étudiants sans Frontières. Concepts and Models for Service Learning in French*, also published by the AATF and reviewed in issue no 73 of the NECTFL Review.

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### **Publisher's Response**

We would like to thank Tom Conner for his thoughtful and detailed analysis of *Integrating Service Learning and Volunteer Opportunities*. This volume and its predecessor, *Étudiants sans Frontières. Concepts and Models for Service Learning in French*, were published by the American Association of Teachers of French as guidebooks for French faculty, and indeed teachers at other levels, to incorporate Service Learning into their French programs.

The author's extensive experience in volunteering abroad herself as well as in creating opportunities for students provide invaluable motivation to those seeking to follow in her footsteps. As educators seek to develop students' proficiency in French, providing opportunities for them to use their language skills in real-life situations helping others can be a life-changing experience for the student and breathe renewed life into a French program. The student testimonials provide a backdrop that not only illustrates the principles of Service Learning but demonstrates how students fared during their volunteer experiences.

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**Zwanziger, Elizabeth, Brittany Goings, Elizabeth Rench, and Brittany Selden Griffin. *APprenons*, Second Edition. Freeport, ME: Wayside Publishing, 2015. Student Edition ISBN: 978-1-938026-89-8. Pp. 558. For pricing and ordering information, visit <http://www.waysidepublishing.com/french-programs/apprenons-2nd/>**

In May 2012, the College Board administered new AP World Language and Culture Examinations in French, German and Italian with the aim of allowing students to demonstrate the strength of their foreign languages skills in the areas of interpretive communication, interpersonal writing, presentational writing, interpersonal speaking, and presentational speaking within the context of the interdisciplinary topics of Global Challenges, Science and Technology, Contemporary Life, Personal and Public Identities, Families and Communities, and Beauty and Aesthetics. In 2014, Spanish followed the new examination format. From the early to the higher levels, to best prepare a student of French in the twenty-first century in regards to these five distinct skill areas and within the six prescribed interdisciplinary topics, it is essential to find the appropriate core textbook to serve as a foundation from which both the instructors and students are able to build a corpus that exposes students to the multiple aspects of today's rich and varied Francophone world as well as motivates and prepares students for the transition from the high school to the college/university French course. As the format AP World Language and Culture Examinations in French, German, Italian and Spanish is still relatively new, textbook publishers are working hard to meet this new market

demand. One such publisher is Wayside Publishing that is rolling out the second edition of *APprenons* to coincide with the start of the 2015-2016 academic year.

*APprenons* is comprised of the following chapters: *Je me présente*; *C'est drôle, l'école*; *On y va!*; *Mon boulot, ma vie*; *Je t'aime*; *Suivez le rythme du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle*; *L'esprit écolo*; *À votre goût*; *Les chemins de la culture*; and, *Ce qui embellit la vie*. Each of the ten chapters has four "leçons," three in the textbook and the fourth available exclusively on-line on the *APprenons* Learning Site. Important to note is that the *APprenons* Learning Site will provide some AP tasks from each chapter's *Leçon 1*, with additional grammar and vocabulary tasks, all AP tasks from each chapter's *Leçons 2* and *3*, and for each chapter's *Leçon 4*, discussion forums for cultural comparisons with the option for students to record responses. Moreover, for each chapter, there are two exercises for each AP task type (e.g. *APprenons* offers a total of twenty interpersonal speaking tasks). All AP tasks can also be done on the *APprenons* Learning Site. What distinguishes *APprenons* from other textbooks are the following:

1. Specific references to the AP tasks. That is, tasks are named so teachers and students do not have to guess as to which tasks specifically prepare them for the AP exam.
2. Complete integration of all themes and subthemes outline by the College Board. Integration of the themes provides students an authentic experience similar to the one on the AP exam as themes are integrated on the exam.
3. Authentic sources with the AP exam instructions.
4. Extensive scaffolding to accommodate the multi-level classroom (e.g., Tips and Tricks – *Annexe A: Préparez-vous pour l'examen*).

The *APprenons* Teacher Edition will have a correlation guide for the AP themes and the National Standards for Foreign Language Education listed in the beginning of the text. In addition, teacher resources will include all audio and video files, answer keys, audio scripts, student writing samples, blank maps for each of the thirty-two Francophone countries presented in *APprenons* so that students can practice their interdisciplinary skills in geography, and recommended extension activities. Of particular significance, the *APprenons* Learning Site will have a cutting-edge comparative recorder, allowing students to record a conversation in one single file with the ability for teachers to provide feedback at a specific time of the recording. Teacher feedback can be either recorded or typed. The *APprenons* Learning Site will also provide external links for further exploration of the AP Themes and a classroom forum for assigning activities and for posting messages, new assignments, links, and documentation. Finally, the *APprenons* grade book will review objective items, (e.g., multiple choice questions, matching, and cloze items) and has a function to allow the instructor to provide feedback for subjective items, such as essays and recordings.

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## Italian

Celli-Merlonghi, Franca, Ferdinando Merlonghi, and Joseph, A. Tursi. *Oggi in Italia*. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2016. Includes: Workbook and Lab Manual, Instructor's Manual, Learning Center, Text Audio Program. Textbook ISBN: 13:978-1-285-87444-9; 10: 1-285-87444-7; 13. Workbook ISBN: 13: 978-0-495-90032-0; 10: 0-495-90032-x. Sam Audio CD ISBN: 13: 978-0-495-90046-7; ISBN 10: 0-495-90046-x.

As the authors state in the introduction, *Oggi in Italia* provides students with a sound basis for achieving competence in the Italian language in the four basic skills: listening, writing, speaking, and reading. To these four skills, I would add cultural competence. After all, the book presents many opportunities for students to learn about Italian culture; each chapter has various cultural readings in the target language. Moreover, each chapter has a section dedicated to Italy's different regions and their culture. This section is accompanied by an excellent video with pre-listening activities, which introduce the vocabulary in context and after-listening activities designed to check students' comprehension. The length of the videos is about right for beginning students. These videos are all entertaining and lively. Moreover, in the Learning Center, instructors are provided with the video scripts.

The text comprises 19 chapters and provides an in-depth description of Italian grammar and its equivalents in English. Furthermore, *Oggi in Italia* introduces both chapter vocabulary and grammar structure through a dialog (recorded), followed by questions to test students' comprehension and to have them practice new grammar structures. These questions are followed by a set of personal questions, based on the topic of the dialog, which students are supposed to ask each other. Although the questions, by asking preferences, information and so forth, set up a communicative practice, the formal register does not reflect a culturally authentic situation since Italian students typically use the informal register to communicate. The activities on grammar points vary a lot and appear to be very pedagogical: fill-in-the-blank sentences (where the verbs to be used are given on top and not in parentheses); logical completion of sentences; matching exercises and open ending exercises that require students to negotiate, plan or share information in the target language. The workbook activities are similar to the ones in the textbooks providing also plenty of activities for creative / open-ending writing. The lab manual provides many opportunities to improve students' pronunciation and listening and comprehension skills.

As far as the introduction of grammar points is concerned, the text presents, first, the verbs "to have" and "to be," followed by nouns and gender; number, articles and adjectives are next; verbs of the first conjugation follow along with verbs of the second conjugation; only in the fifth chapter are students introduced to the verbs of the third conjugation with the irregular verbs "to go" (*andare*) and "to come" (*venire*). It may be useful for students to have all three conjugations at the same time so that they are not limited to the verbs they want to use when practicing with the open-ending exercises. It may also be helpful to introduce the verb "to go" earlier for the same reason. Next the text introduces the simple past, irregular participles and the present and simple past of the irregular verbs, to drink (*bere*), to say (*dire*) and to leave (*uscire*); reflexive verbs—present and past tense; the imperative; formal and informal discourse; the verbs

“can,” “must” and “want” (but in the present tense only). The imperfect is introduced three chapters after the simple past, giving students plenty of time to learn how to use it with both “to be” and “to have” as auxiliary verbs. The text continues with object markers, future, conditional, comparatives and superlatives, and subjective.

The chapter vocabulary list is not overwhelming for students, presenting the right amount of new words for memorization in each chapter. The authors present various activities for vocabulary acquisition. The activities vary from very controlled exercises—where students are asked to substitute a given word with one of the list—to word association and open-ended practice. Activities on grammar points in the same chapter often use words from the vocabulary list, further reinforcing their acquisition. Each vocabulary list has the audio for students to hear the right pronunciation.

The authors also have created a very well-organized and comprehensive on-line learning center easily accessible by students and instructors. The learning center provides many resources for the instructor such as test programs, activities, app to record the instructor’s voice, effective power points, media library and flash card for the vocabulary. Flash cards are supported by audio and they are an effective way to review new words with students in class. Both videos and audios present speakers from different geographical regions of Italy providing the students the opportunity to listen and understand a large variety of local accents. Power points are designed to review important grammatical points, vocabulary, language expressions, and also to help students start converse.

*Oggi in Italia* can be used for four years at the high school level or for the first three semesters of college. This is a solid and well organized package comprising a textbook, workbook/lab manual and on-line learning center that will benefit instructors and students alike. Students will find the audios and the videos to be very helpful in order to enhance their listening and comprehension skills as well as their knowledge of Italian culture. The study of grammar and vocabulary is set up to improve students’ communicative skills, which are reinforced through workbook/ lab manual activities to be done at home.

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#### Publisher’s Response

Thank you to Giordana Kaftan for her very thoughtful review of *Oggi in Italia*. Her input is an important part of the text book review process at Cengage.

As the reviewer noted, the *Oggi in Italia* program highlights culture as a crucial component of language learning, which is illustrated in the “*Conoscere l’Italia*” and “*Viaggi in video*” sections. These sections offer students the opportunity to engage with various regions of Italy through short readings and videos featuring authentic language and a variety of support activities.

The iLrn Learning Center™ (Cengage’s online learning platform) for *Oggi in Italia*, as mentioned, houses a variety of instructor and student resources. We are happy that the reviewer had the opportunity to examine the instructor PowerPoints, which not only

reinforce grammar and vocabulary, but also serve as a jumping-off point in class for student discussion. We know that students love the media library and flashcards, so we are glad that their value was acknowledged here.

We would like to point out that iLrn also offers the ability to assign and grade all of the text, workbook and lab manual activities in an online environment, so instructors can tailor the technological component to fit their own individual course configuration. If instructors would like to review a chapter of *Oggi in Italia* or sign up for a 30-day trial, they can visit <http://www.cengage.com/ilrn> to get started or inquire with their local Cengage Learning Consultant.

Cara Gaynor, Product Assistant  
Lara Semones, Senior Product Manager  
Cengage Learning

**Melucci, Donatella and Elissa Tognozzi. *Piazza: Luogo di incontri* (includes a one-year pass to the program *iLrn Heinle Learning Center*). Florence, FL: Cengage Learning, Inc., 2015. Testing Audio CD, ISBN: 9781285098319. SAM Audio Program, ISBN: 9781285097022. DVD, ISBN: 9781285098357. *iLrn* Instant Access Code, ISBN: 9781285096667. Teachers' Edition ISBN: 978-1-285-07695-9. For more information, orders and pricing information visit: [www.cengage.com](http://www.cengage.com).**

Veteran authors Donatella Melucci and Elissa Tognozzi have made an important contribution to Italian language learning with *Piazza*, a beginning-level Italian program. This introductory level program targets more than the simple needs of beginning learners of Italian by enriching the basic language terms through advanced but thoughtful practice. Interestingly, this textbook can be suitable for different educational levels. Most appealing is the book's innovative pedagogical design, intelligent use of technology, and varied array of cultural exposure. The authors have carefully selected contexts in which students are expected to communicate using original tools, like Italian materials extrapolated from the Italian society. In this way students are engaging in situations that go beyond traditional book-based knowledge.

*Piazza* is comprised of twelve chapters (*capitoli*), and an initial introductory chapter, *capitolo preliminare*, and so would be appropriate for programs taught in four semesters. Additionally, in order to help students prepare for the chapter examinations, at the end of the textbook and on the *iLrn* website, are: tear-out chapter reviews, study cards, self-quizzes, and downloadable flash cards. An interesting addition is the *Intermezzo* section, which provides a comprehensive review of the previous three chapters, helping students reinforce their knowledge.

Each *capitolo* is divided into five color-coded parts. Purple is for *Nel cuore della regione* and *Andiamo in piazza!*, which begin each chapter by providing a map of different regions and photos with the important piazzas from the region discussed in the chapter. The regions emphasized in *Piazza* are: *Campania* and *Puglia* (first chapter); *Veneto* (second chapter); *Piemonte* and *Valle d'Aosta* (third chapter); *Umbria* and *Marche* (fourth chapter); *Toscana* (fifth chapter); *Emilia-Romagna* (sixth chapter); *Sicilia* and *Sardegna* (seventh chapter); *Trentino-Alto Adige* and *Friuli-Venezia Giulia*

(eight chapter); *Calabria* and *Basilicata* (ninth chapter); *Lombardia* and *Liguria* (tenth chapter); *Abruzzo* and *Molise* (eleventh chapter); and *Lazio* (twelfth chapter.)

Orange includes the *Vocabolario* and *Angolo culturale*, which provides a list of the terminology and activities to facilitate conversation skills. Green is the grammar section, which is divided into an introductory part, *Lingua dal vivo*, introducing the dialogues, which can be used both as listening and/or reading exercises. In these dialogues the grammatical structures are highlighted, creating subsequent grammar sections, *Strutture* (4 *Strutture* sections for each chapter except the preliminary one). Furthermore, each *Strutture* section stages numerous exercises in the *Pratichiamo* part to guide the students through the learning mechanism. In blue there are readings and writings, respectively, *Leggiamo* and *Scriviamo*, introducing authentic readings from Italian publications. In light blue, at the end of each chapter are activities, the *Tiriamo le somme!* part includes two sections, *Insieme in piazza*, which gives ideas of a role-play to encourage students to practice their oral expression, and *Presentazioni orali*, for a further cultural exploration of suggested subjects.

One of the hallmarks of *Piazza* is the video program, filmed directly in Italy, which is customized according to each chapter subject. To engage students, these activities include three sections: before, during, and after viewing the video (*Prima, Durante, e Dopo la visione.*)

A very important component of the book is the Student Activities Manual (SAM), accessible in iLrn: Heinle Learning Center at <http://www.cengagebrain.com>. These activities assist students with their oral conversation and pronunciation skills, helping to increase students' awareness of intonation, differences in pronunciation with the double forms, stressing accents, and different pitches regarding questions and affirmation.

In conclusion, *Piazza: Luogo di incontri* is a unique and rich beginning level Italian textbook. *Piazza* provides teachers with good suggestions and study plans to teach Italian grammar, greatly promoting an in-depth understanding of Italian culture.

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### **Publisher's Response**

Thank you very much to Barbara Ottaviani Jones for her thoughtful review of *Piazza*. Her feedback is vital to the development and revision process.

One of *Piazza's* greatest strengths is its communicative focus, and as the reviewer pointed out, the pedagogical design of the program enables students to gain a thorough knowledge of grammar structures while engaging in communication in the target language through a variety of open-ended activities. The Student Activities Manual, as mentioned, also provides valuable communicative practice through pronunciation activities, in addition to vocabulary and grammar exercises.

Another of *Piazza's* greatest strengths is its rich cultural content. I am happy that the reviewer appreciated how the contextualization provided in the “*Nel cuore della regione*” sections draws students into the different regions of Italy, while “*Angolo culturale*” brings the target language to life through engaging activities that encourage



cross-cultural comparison. As mentioned, the unscripted “*Videoteca*” segments filmed in Italy also immerse students in Italian culture via authentic language relating to the vocabulary, structures, and theme of each chapter. These cultural sections are accompanied by links to virtual tours of piazzas, as well as “Share It!” discussion forum activities on the iLrn Learning Center™ (Cengage’s online learning platform), encouraging students to connect with culture in an even more meaningful way.

The iLrn for the *Piazza* program features additional exclusive student resources such as an interactive eBook containing, grammar tutorials, audio flashcards, a personalized study plan and links to all the video and audio content for the *Piazza* program. All of the materials in the text and SAM activities are assignable and gradable on iLrn, offering additional flexibility for flipped, hybrid, and online courses. If instructors would like to review a chapter of *Piazza* or sign up for a 30-day trial, they can visit [Cengage.com/iLrn](http://Cengage.com/iLrn) to get started or inquire with their local Cengage Learning Consultant.

Cara Gaynor, Product Assistant  
Lara Semones, Senior Product Manager  
Cengage Publishing

## Spanish

**Alonso García, Nuria, Lynn A. Sandstedt, and Ralph Kite. *Espacios*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Boston: Heinle, Cengage Learning, 2014. Includes: Student Activities Manual (SAM), SAM Audio CDs, DVD, PowerLecture CD-ROM. ISBN: 978-1-285-05236-6.**

*Espacios* is a two-semester intermediate Spanish program, which is described by the authors as a “program that explores grammar, vocabulary, and opportunities for communication within the context of a variety of vocabes: themes, countries, and media.” As the quote indicates, grammar and vocabulary are the main components of instruction, which is conducted through cultural content. The book is divided into ten chapters and each chapter includes cultural readings, vocabulary presentations, grammar explanations, a short movie, a literary reading, and *Exploración*, a project-based concluding activity. *Espacios* will work well with students who are simply completing a graduation requirement as well as students who might be interested in pursuing a major or minor in Spanish. The textbook can be used in a regular classroom and in hybrid courses thanks to the integrated online system iLrn.

*Espacios* offers a complete program. Instructors receive an annotated textbook, which comes with the answers to all the activities and a DVD with the short movies. Also, there is a PowerLecture package that includes the Testing Audio CD and the Instructor’s Resource CD, which contains sample syllabi, the SAM audio scripts, short film scripts, PowerPoint Presentations, and a test bank. Student resources include the Student Activities Manual (SAM), which is accompanied by five CDs. Also, students can purchase access to the Premium Website, where they can find tutorials, self-tests, flashcards, and videos; and to iLrn: Heinle Learning Center, a course management system.

*Espacios* is divided into ten thematic-based units. The themes covered are the origins of Spain, Hispanic American identity, Hispanics here and there, family life, gender and society, customs and beliefs, economy issues, revolutions and protests, education, and urban life. There are six sections in each chapter: *Expansión de vocabulario*

(vocabulary expansion), *Enfoque cultural* (cultural focus), *Estructura* (grammar), *Corto de cine* (short movie), *Espacio literario* (literary space), and *Exploración*. The fact that *Espacios* is divided into very distinctive sections makes it easier for the instructor to decide which components to focus on. Also, since each chapter includes a wide array of materials, the instructor can easily choose what to cover in class and what to assign as homework. *Espacios* offers a great deal of flexibility in terms of what to cover and how to organize the course.

Each chapter begins with *Expansión del vocabulario*, where new words and expressions are presented. This section also introduces students to vocabulary strategies such as cognates, word families, synonyms, word formation, idioms, regionalisms, and polysemy. Next, several readings exploring the central theme of the chapter are presented. For example, in Chapter 1, which focuses on the origins of Spain, there are three short readings: one devoted to the Romans, one to the Visigoths, and one to the Arabs. Each of the readings is followed by a series of comprehension and opinion questions.

Grammar is one of the main components of *Espacios* and, as such, it is featured prominently in each chapter. Three or four grammatical structures are presented in each chapter. The book covers what the authors define as “core intermediate structures,” ranging from preterite and imperfect to the use of the subjunctive mood, passive voice, and relative pronouns.

*Espacios* has a very traditional approach to vocabulary and grammar. New vocabulary is not contextualized and is always introduced by means of lists of words and phrases with their translations. This applies to both useful vocabulary presented at the beginning of each chapter as well as vocabulary presented before each literary reading. As for grammar, explanations are entirely in English. Formal presentations are followed by a series of activities that range from drill-like activities to communicative and open-ended activities. Rewriting sentences, filling in the blanks, and constructing sentences are some of the tasks provided as a way to practice the different grammatical structures. Communicative activities often require that students ask and answer questions, create sentences using the given prompts, or recite sentences to each other. In general, there is little or no opportunity for students to actually create with the language when grammar is the main focus. Also, grammar sections feel rather disconnected from the rest of the chapter. The fact that the short movie is presented in the middle of the grammar section also contributes to this sense of disconnect.

The three remaining sections, on the other hand, offer students ample opportunities to truly engage and create with the language. *Corto de cine* is a section devoted to short films produced in different Spanish-speaking countries. Before viewing the actual movie, students can prepare by completing a series of pre-watching activities. After watching, there are some comprehension and interpretation questions as well as pair and group activities. The final activity in this section is a *minidrama*, which requires students to develop and act out similar scenes. These short movies are all very recent and deal with topics and issues that students can easily relate to. For example, the *corto* in Chapter 2 brings up issues such as body image and our current obsession with weight, while the last *corto* discusses new technologies and the possibility of travelling through *wormholes*. These short movies expose students to different accents and present them with topics and situations that are current and can easily spark discussion.

Each chapter also includes a literary space, where students explore readings from across the Spanish-speaking world. These readings cover different time periods and genres. In this section, students learn about reading strategies such as predicting from the title, rephrasing, identifying key words, the use of poetic figures, and predicting meaning from familiar words. At the end of this section, students are asked to write a similar text. In this section and in *Corto de cine*, there is information regarding which standards are addressed in each activity.

One of the most innovative and original features of *Espacios* is *Exploración*, the culminating activity at the end of each chapter. The authors state that *Exploración* “invites students to try their own personalized in-depth exploration and expression.” Here, students are asked to learn about the culture and customs of a country in order to complete a project. For example, in Chapter 1 students have to research Celtic music in Spain and then create a  *mashup* of music, and in Chapter 7 they have to learn about ethno-tourism and design a touristic brochure. All these projects are original and have the potential to truly engage students and to make them active learners. *Espacios* invites students to share these projects by using a blog feature called *Share It!* available on the iLrn: Heinle Learning Center. Being able to share their projects will be appealing to current and future college students, who are used to sharing on social media.

As can be seen, *Espacios* approaches culture in a very original manner and asks students to consider and research cultural aspects beyond the ones normally found in textbooks. For example, when discussing music in Spain it focuses on Celtic music, common in regions in the Northwest, rather than flamenco; and, when discussing Peru, it invites students to learn about less-known ethnic groups. As the authors state, they want to “provide students with more than simple strands of cultural information [...] and a way for them to connect and consider it, to be motivated to reflect upon culture so as to gain a more in-depth perspective.” This innovative and engaging approach to culture is what separates *Espacios* from other comparable textbooks.

As already indicated, *Espacios* offers more than just a textbook. The program also includes a Student Activities Manual (SAM), available in paperback or online. Each SAM chapter is divided into four sections: laboratory exercises, which require listening to different sound tracks, grammar activities, creative activities, and writing activities. What makes *Espacios* SAM unique is the writing section *El arte de escribir* (The Art of Writing). This section introduces students to different styles and types of writings —informal texts such as emails, description, narration, persuasive and opinion pieces, etc. For those students interested in furthering their studies in Spanish, it is of the utmost importance that they refine their writing skills since writing essays is often required in upper-level courses.

*Espacios* offers students the opportunity to learn about the Spanish-speaking world while developing communicative skills. This unique program creates a culturally-rich environment where meaningful language learning can happen.

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## Publisher's Response

Thank you to Professor Isabel Álvarez for such a comprehensive review of *Espacios*.

As Professor Álvarez pointed out, one of *Espacios*' most relevant aspects is its interdisciplinary approach to vocabulary and grammar within the context of different spaces in which students can immerse themselves in the culture of the various Spanish-speaking countries. The program's goal is for students to gain a more meaningful knowledge of Spanish, not only as a language, but also as a cultural system. Another of the unique features of the program is the thematic unit within each chapter. In *Espacios*, each chapter opens with a cultural topic, which is discussed in general terms with the support of a reading segment that provides historical background called "*Enfoque Cultural*." Each theme is explored from different cultural angles, through literature and short film. We are happy that the reviewer noticed how the "*Espacio Literario*" and "*Corto de Cine*" sections offer students plenty of opportunities to engage with the language and be active learners.

In addition, as the reviewer mentioned, the project-based learning approach, with end-of-chapter projects called *Exploración*, is another of the program's beneficial highlights. These projects invite students to engage with the language through an in-depth cultural exploration of the different countries presented throughout. In addition, students have the opportunity to share their projects with their peers through the discussion forum feature on the Cengage Learning online platform, iLrn. We are glad to hear the positive feedback on the project activities.

As the reviewer noted, *Espacios* offers a wide array of supplementary material, available for both instructors and students through our robust and easily accessible online platform, iLrn. Designed to enhance the students' language learning experience, iLrn features an audio- and video-enhanced eBook, short film and cultural video segments, an interactive VoiceBoard, and numerous grammar tutorials. In addition, iLrn provides instructors with a variety of tools—an instructor dashboard, calendar and the customizable grade book allows assigning, tracking and grading, and thereby facilitating course management.

We are happy to have the opportunity to share all that *Espacios* has to offer to both students and instructors. And, we are delighted that, in conjunction with the online learning platform, *Espacios* can be adapted to meet the needs of both, face-to-face or hybrid courses. If instructors would like to review a chapter or sign up for a 30-day trial, they can visit <http://www.cengage.com/ilrn> to get started or inquire with their local Cengage Learning Consultant.

Angie Rubino, Product Assistant  
Lara Semones, Senior Product Manager  
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**Blake, Robert J. and Eve C. Zyzik. *El español y la lingüística aplicada*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016. ISBN: 9781626162907.**

Written in Spanish, *El español y la lingüística aplicada* is designed for advanced undergraduate students interested in developing their linguistic knowledge of Spanish as well as for pre-service and in-service teachers of Spanish. The authors outline the

core principles of second language acquisition (SLA) and its relationship to teaching and learning. Attention is given to matters such as the nature of language competence, input, and the impact of study abroad on second language (L2) development. Aspects of Spanish that are difficult to acquire are discussed. Careful attention is given to how language teachers might incorporate varieties of Spanish into their classroom instruction. The book consists of a preface, an introduction, and eight chapters. Each chapter includes reflection and discussion questions, and two or three task-based activities that allow students to explore the material further.

Chapter 1 is a comprehensive overview of what it means to know a language. The authors trace the historical development of the concept of “language competence,” from matters of behaviorist principles through Chomsky and Universal Grammar, to Krashen and comprehensible input. Canale and Swain’s work on communicative competence, Schmidt’s “Noticing Hypothesis,” and Long’s “Interaction Hypothesis” are also discussed. The two most influential language proficiency assessment scales, from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), are then considered. The chapter concludes with an interesting discussion of the similarities and differences of a native speaker versus a heritage language user. The notion of the native speaker as the target goal for L2 learners is questioned. More realistic goals for L2 learner performance are then outlined.

Chapter 2 addresses the issue of whether input is sufficient for language acquisition. The authors consider the nature of naturalistic L2 learning versus classroom instruction, explicit versus implicit instruction, attention to form, and task-based instruction. VanPatten’s input processing instruction, an approach that attempts to draw learners’ attention to form in input-oriented tasks and activities, is also discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of difficult-to-acquire language features in Spanish such as grammatical gender and word order. In Chapter 3, the authors attempt to determine the number of words an L2 learner of Spanish should know in order to be considered proficient. The authors conclude that a language learner must know about 8000 words in order to read. Cognates, degrees of knowledge, and idiomatic expressions are also discussed as important aspects for a proficient L2 learner. Chapter 4 examines how the structure of the Spanish language presents challenges for L2 learners whose L1 is English. The authors discuss how in Spanish one does not need to express an explicit subject. Direct and indirect pronouns and their possible misinterpretations are also reviewed. The authors contrast basic word order SVO with other possibilities in Spanish OVS, VS, and OVS. The chapter concludes with an interesting question about whether L2 learners of Spanish perceive the personal “a” in Spanish.

Chapter 5 describes two of the most difficult aspects of Spanish grammar for L2 learners: the acquisition of the preterit and imperfect and the subjunctive. The authors give essential background information on important linguistic concepts such as time, aspect, and mood. Their discussion of grammatical and lexical aspects are certain to provide the reader with a better understanding of how to approach the teaching of narration to intermediate and advanced L2 learners. The chapter’s discussion of the challenges that the subjunctive presents to L2 learners is also insightful. In Chapter 6, the authors take on the matter of linguistic variation across the Spanish-speaking world.

Background concepts such as geolect, sociolect, and register are defined. The authors then discuss phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic variation. Address forms in Spain and Latin America are also discussed, as is the pluralization of “*haber*” in some varieties of Spanish. The chapter concludes with a series of recommendations for how to incorporate linguistic variation into the classroom.

Chapter 7 focuses on the question of whether technology can help L2 learners. The authors present a theoretical framework for the integration of computer-mediated language learning. Best practices for designing an online course are also discussed. Chapter 8 addresses the important question of how study abroad contributes to L2 development. In their discussion of previous studies, the authors note that there is significant variation in linguistic outcomes during study abroad. Special attention is given to study abroad as a conducive environment for the acquisition of pragmatics and intercultural competence. The discussion of pragmatics offers a number of important linguistic strategies that could be discussed with students during pre-departure. The chapter concludes with several suggestions for enhancing the study abroad experience.

This is an outstanding text for advanced undergraduates interested in developing their linguistic knowledge in Spanish as well as for pre-service and in-service teachers of Spanish. The authors have created a well-written, accessible, and informative introduction to applied linguistics in Spanish. The content of this up-to-date book is engaging and it promises to generate interesting class discussions.

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**Blanco, José A. and Philip Redwine Donley. *Panorama: Introducción a la lengua Española*. 5th edition. Boston, MA: Vista Higher Learning, 2017. Includes: Instructor’s Manual and Supersite Access. ISBN: 978-1-68004-331-0.**

*Panorama* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) is an overall engaging, fun, and student-friendly textbook that focuses on teaching Spanish through real-life exercises and culture-rich resources. The word *Panorama* translates as “outlook” in English and that is exactly what this textbook offers, that is, a comprehensive view of Spanish language and culture. This new edition is truly “better than ever,” as the preface states, and it offers exciting new features, such as online synchronous activities to practice communication and oral practice and easy-to-use online resources to make language learning more convenient and easier for students. All of these online resources are offered on the *Panorama* Supersite. In addition to the excellent ancillary tools offered students, Blanco and Donley also incorporate equally excellent resources for Spanish educators, making this textbook the complete package for a successful first-year Spanish language program.

The book is organized into 15 thematically-based chapters or *lecciones*, each of which focuses on a different aspect of life. The textbook’s chapters cover the following topics:

*Lección 1: Hola, ¿qué tal?*  
*Lección 2: En la universidad*  
*Lección 3: La familia*

*Lección 4: Los pasatiempos*

*Lección 5: Las vacaciones*

*Lección 6: ¡De compras!*

*Lección 7: La rutina diaria*

*Lección 8: La comida*

*Lección 9: Las fiestas*

*Lección 10: En el consultorio*

*Lección 11: La tecnología*

*Lección 12: La vivienda*

*Lección 13: La naturaleza*

*Lección 14: En la ciudad*

*Lección 15: El bienestar*

These 15 *lecciones* are divided into five sections: (1) *Contextos*, (2) *Fotonovela*, (3) *Cultura*, (4) *Estructura*, and (5) *Adelante*. *Contextos* (contexts) presents vocabulary in meaningful situations through expansive and full-color illustrations. *Fotonovela* (photo story) follows the adventures of a group of students living and traveling in Mexico. Students can read the *fotonovela* in each chapter and have the option to go online and watch the video. *Cultura* (culture) introduces different aspects of the Hispanic culture incorporated into the lesson theme for each chapter. This section expands cultural coverage to the people, traditions, customs, trends, and famous people in Hispanic culture. *Estructura* (structure) presents Spanish grammar in a graphic-intensive format and provides directed and communicative practice for each chapter. This section incorporates fun and engaging activities that students can use to practice grammar through language and culture. Lastly, *Adelante* (forward) is a section that focuses on developing students' reading and writing skills by incorporating short clips and listening exercises and presenting all the nations of the Spanish-speaking world.

Every single page of this textbook gives students the choice of using online resources to practice the content. Moreover, each of these sections and chapters provides ample support online through the *Panorama* Supersite, which makes the learning experience as varied as possible in order to meet student needs and incorporates additional resources for extra practice. The Supersite is an online tool that supports the textbook, but it also incorporates real-life innovative activities for students in each chapter to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The new Supersite online resource is an easy-to-use ancillary that can even be appealing to educators who do not feel comfortable with technology. Every time the educator logs in, he or she can play an introductory video to the Supersite that explains in detail all of its features. Furthermore, the Supersite's layout is very user friendly. There are five main links on the page, which appear on the top right side and also in a board style layout at the middle of the page to facilitate easy access. These five main menus are: (1) Courses, (2) Content, (3) Calendar, (4) Grades and (5) Communication. The courses dropdown link gives you the option to see and change the different courses the instructor is facilitating. The content dropdown menu has activities, assessments, vocabulary tools, and additional resources that educators can use to improve the learning experience of students. The calendar link gives the option of assignment a due date for assignments. The grades menu provides grading reports and has a feature where

educators can directly respond to students' help requests with a set of recommended exercises. Lastly, the communication menu has a direct link to technical support and it also gives the option to create written announcements or voice board to communicate with all the students. This resource is designed to facilitate communication between the facilitator and the learner, and it even provides a feature to chat with the class.

From the perspective of a foreign language educator, I find *Panorama* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) to be as educator-friendly as it is student-friendly. This textbook provides a wealth of teaching information and teaching tips that educators can use to positively impact their classes and present information using interactive approaches. The Instructor Supersite feature allows instructors to assign activities to students and track their progress through a well-conceived course management system. The testing program provides many vocabulary, grammar, activities, board games, and chapter quizzes, tests, and multi-lesson exams. In addition, all the resources and information presented in *Panorama* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) are aligned with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards, which means that Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities are embedded throughout the textbook and its ancillaries.

As a Spanish educator with experience teaching at the elementary, middle and high school and university levels I find *Panorama* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) to be one of the most complete, adaptable, interactive, and innovative programs on the market today. Its greatest strength is its fresh approach and culture-embedded resources used throughout the book to make language learning and teaching an enjoyable experience. Its versatility gives students the opportunity to learn in class and online at their own pace and with ample synchronous and asynchronous support. At the same time, educators also benefit because we can easily accommodate our teaching styles to meet our students' needs, using an ample array of face-to-face and online resources. *Panorama* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) is an easily adaptable package for students and educators that focuses on learner-centered, culturally-enriched, and technology-enhanced resources, and I expect it to be much liked by Spanish educators and students alike.

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### **Publisher's Response**

I am honored to respond to Professor Luis Javier Pentón Herrera's glowing review of Vista Higher Learning's *Panorama: Introducción a la lengua española*, Fifth Edition. I am grateful to him for pointing out so many of the program's strengths, of which my colleagues and I are so proud. I was thrilled, for instance, to see that Professor Pentón Herrera recognized that *Panorama* offers a complete package for a successful Introductory Spanish curriculum. Of special delight to me was his description of the *Estructura* strand's incorporation of fun and engaging activities that students use to practice grammar through communication and culture as opposed to the series of lackluster exercises that grammar practice in competing programs typically entails. Professor Pentón Herrera also points out the fact that all of the content and resources in *Panorama*, Fifth Edition, are aligned with ACTFL Standards; in other words, the



Five Cs are embedded throughout the student textbook as well as throughout all online and print components.

I was also excited to read Professor Pentón Herrera's praise of the merits of the *Panorama* Supersite, which indeed makes the learning process as varied as possible in order to meet student needs and incorporating real-life and innovative activities for practicing the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing) along with culture. Of particular importance is his recognition of the Supersite as easy to use and appealing even to instructors who feel uncomfortable with technology. They, as well as their students, always have access to detailed how-to videos that explain the Supersite's features and functionality, not to mention access to content via user-friendly layout and navigation. For the instructor, a robust and well-designed course management system rounds out the wealth of resources available online.

Communication between instructors, students, and Vista Higher Learning is crucial to student progress and success, and Professor Pentón Herrera points out that the *Panorama*, Fifth Edition, Supersite allows students to leave help requests for instructors and allows instructors to respond to students individually but also leave announcements for the entire class for greater efficiency. In addition to this, the Supersite also features a direct link to VHL Tech Support.

Professor Pentón Herrera concludes his flattering review by observing that the *Panorama*, Fifth Edition, program is as educator-friendly as it is student-friendly, allowing every instructor to easily complement their students' language ability, general knowledge, and interests with his or her own particular teaching style. Indeed, as Professor Pentón Herrera observes in one of his concluding remarks, one of the *Panorama* program's greatest strengths is its fresh approach and culture-embedded resources that make learning and teaching Spanish an enjoyable experience.

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**Goodall, Grant, and Darcy Lear et al. *Conéctate*. New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-07-721136-3.**

*Conéctate* by Grant Goodall and Darcy Lear et al is an introductory Spanish textbook complete with an online component, workbook/laboratory manual and DVD. Each component contributes to and facilitates the teaching of Spanish at the introductory level.

The ebook can be found within the online component at [connect.mheducation.com](http://connect.mheducation.com). Logging in and creating sections is quick and easy. There are sixteen chapters, organized by themes ranging from “*En la clase*” to “*La amistad y el amor*.” Each chapter begins with a list of learning outcomes. Chapters are divided into sections titled “*Comunicación*,” “*Vocabulario*,” “*Estructura*,” and “*Conéctate*” (a synthetic collection of reading, listening, writing, speaking and music centered exercises). Each chapter ends with a list of vocabulary. The online component makes assigning and grading homework assignments very efficient, as students are provided with instantaneous feedback on most exercises. Students are able to observe the language within given

contexts and establish patterns for use independently. This is possible through the carefully coordinated “*Estructuras*” and “*Actividades analíticas*.”

The workbook/laboratory manual is divided into the corresponding sixteen chapters of the textbook. Communication, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and culture exercises are present in each chapter. There are also specialized sections titled “*Conozcamos a...*,” an introduction to a Spanish-speaking student, and “*Para saber más*,” which expands on a point seen earlier in the chapter. A careful overview of the first chapter, “*En la clase*,” illustrates why the workbook/laboratory manual is such an essential companion to the ebook. “*En la clase*” begins with three exercises on introductions, delineating the use of “*tú*” versus “*usted*.” The pronunciation section introduces the vowel sounds and emphasizes the phonetic nature of the language. Several listening exercises follow that give the student the opportunity to observe what they have just read about the nature of the language. The vocabulary is presented using pictures that are associated with each letter of the new alphabet, continuing with the phonetic concept. Presenting more pictures for identification then tests vocabulary, so it is acquired by association rather than rote memorization. Finally, vocabulary is tested once again but through listening exercises. A brief but useful section of cognates follows. Grammar is then presented and tested contextually. The student is presented with more pictures and asked to identify if the object is masculine or feminine, at once testing for vocabulary and the newly acquired grammar skills. The lesson then moves to plural forms and the verbs “*ser*” and “*tener*.” After several contextualized exercises, including a dialogue, the lesson moves onto possessive adjectives. The last grammar exercise ties the previous ones together through listening comprehension that asks, “*¿Quién es el dueño?*” In this exercise, previously utilized pictures are presented and the student is asked to listen and identify who owns them. The “*Cultura*” section of this first chapter asks the student to organize the names of Spanish speaking countries by region. The next section introduces the student to a native speaker. The final section returns briefly to the grammar presented on singular nouns and articles by giving more information on work endings as related to gender and nouns.

The DVD contains both the segments pertaining to the textbook and the workbook. Segments are presented by native speakers.

All the components of *Conéctate* come together to form a dynamic system, which provides ample material for teaching Spanish at the introductory level. Exercises are plentiful and varied. Grammar points are repeated throughout, ensuring a higher success rate for the student. Multiple opportunities to view the material ensure that the text builds on itself in a trajectory that is developed for success. The text and corresponding components are well organized and accessible to both the professor and the student. The material is presented in a clear, engaging way, making the system both easy to use and effective.

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## Publisher's Response

McGraw-Hill Education is delighted to have the opportunity to respond to Dr. Shuggi's review of *Conéctate*, a first edition, Introductory Spanish text authored by Drs. Grant Goodall and Darcy Lear and published by McGraw-Hill Education in January, 2015.

In her review, Dr. Shuggi describes the program as “complete,” “efficient,” “well organized,” “easy to use,” and “effective,” and she outlines the various components that make up the program: the main text, eBook, Workbook/Lab Manual, DVD, and the online platform, McGraw-Hill Connect™. In addition to the ins and outs of the program components, we would like to highlight three unique and exciting aspects of *Conéctate*'s approach and methodology that are critical to appreciating the program and the impact it can have on your classroom and your students.

First, *Conéctate* concentrates on what Introductory Spanish students can reasonably be expected to learn, allowing for sustained engagement with the material that respects the natural process of language acquisition. There is an intentional focus on meaning and form that puts in action the best practices of second language pedagogy.

Second, vocabulary and grammar in *Conéctate* are taught using an active learning approach, nudging students to discover new vocabulary and language rules through a carefully balanced mix of inductive and explicit presentations and hands-on learning. Students are engaged in their own learning and are inspired to learn more and do more with their Spanish.

Third, *Conéctate* is built around an extensive collection of spontaneous, authentic, and unscripted video with Spanish speakers from all over the world. This stunning video was shot in Spain, Panama, Miami, Argentina, Costa Rica, and Mexico, and exposes students to a wide variety of people in each country who discuss topics that are familiar and engaging to students. Through this video and through presentations, activities, and notes, interesting culture is integrated throughout every section of every chapter of *Conéctate*, leading students to explore the Spanish-speaking world from the perspective of Spanish speakers themselves.

These three properties of *Conéctate* spark the curiosity of students and help them move toward communicative and cultural confidence and proficiency.

McGraw-Hill Education World Languages is committed to publishing high quality, foreign language print and digital materials, and we are proud to include *Conéctate* among our many successful programs. We again thank Professor Shuggi for sharing her review of *Conéctate* with the readership of the *NECTFL Review*.

Kim Sallee

Senior Brand Manager, World Languages

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**Marinelli, Patti J. and Karin Fajardo. *Conectados*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2016. Includes: Instructor's Manual, CD-ROM, Testing audio CD, and student pamphlet. ISBN: 978-1-305-25850-1.**

*Conectados* is a dynamic but very compact textbook designed for students enrolled in introductory Spanish courses. The entire program consists of a textbook, a DVD containing stories and short documentaries, an audio CD with listening comprehension

quizzes, and an online classroom called the iLrn Heinle Learning Center. This innovative curriculum was designed to meet the needs of today’s language learners with a unique blend of online and in-class activities that connects students with the Spanish-speaking world at large. The textbook’s colorful and spirited physical appearance is a reflection of the approach the authors use to introduce Spanish as a world language. The title, *Conectados*, translates to “connected” in English, which is an ideal title for a program designed to appeal to the millennial generation living in a world in which language bridges communication in our everyday lives as well as on the Internet.

Among the highlights of this program are the fresh approach to language learning, the flexibility it offers learners and instructors, and its overall ambition to show that Spanish will help students to stay connected in today’s world. In fact, this program caters to millennials and to the younger generation of Spanish learners, but it can also be very attractive to learners from other generations. The program uses current technology, which allows for a combination of delivery methods, immediate feedback and learning through discovery rather than class room lectures. The activities and resources used in the textbook and its ancillary are fun, engaging and collaborative in nature. The pictures, videos, and presentation of the content reflect a constructivist approach where the learner is at the center of the program and learning becomes a self-regulated process.

*Conectados* is easily customizable for use in face-to-face, hybrid, flipped, or fully online courses. The annotated instructor’s edition provides a step-by-step explanation of how this program can be managed depending on the delivery option. The course delivery options section also offers instructional guidance on how facilitators can use all the resources from this curriculum in a one-, two-, or three-semester course. The tips offered for all delivery options is to build an interactive learning community within the classroom, whether online or face-to-face, and to provide activities where students engage in active learning. Even though the four domains of language learning are fully addressed in this program, *Conectados* is exclusive in how speaking and listening, especially, are identified as absolutely fundamental. Building interpersonal communication and social interaction are two additional features that make *Conectados* uniquely tailored for today’s Spanish language learners.

The curriculum consists of 12 chapters preceded by a *lección preliminar* (preliminary lesson). The *lección preliminar* is 8 pages long and focuses on helping learners set personal goals for learning Spanish, learn strategies for success, and initially approach Spanish communication by learning how to say hello and ask someone’s name. The 12 chapters feature themes learners need in order to reach the intermediate level of proficiency on the ACTFL scale. The 12 chapters cover the following topics:

- Capítulo 1: ¡Vamos a conocernos!
- Capítulo 2: La vida estudiantil
- Capítulo 3: Entre familia y amigos
- Capítulo 4: ¡Buen viaje!
- Capítulo 5: Todo en un día
- Capítulo 6: La buena comida
- Capítulo 7: De compras
- Capítulo 8: Nuestras tradiciones
- Capítulo 9: La salud y el bienestar

Capítulo 10: El mundo laboral

Capítulo 11: Hacer turismo

Capítulo 12: ¡Adelante!

Each chapter is divided into five sections, namely: (1) *comunicación*, (2) *vocabulario*, (3) *gramática*, (4) *cultura y conexiones*, and (5) *estrategias y destrezas*. Each section is accompanied by user-friendly icons and descriptions of the goals for each section and chapter. *Comunicación* is the first section and introduces learners to the chapter's content through background information and interactive activities. *Vocabulario*, the second section, presents the vocabulary words for the chapter in context and includes exercises where students can practice their comprehension. *Gramática*, the third section, presents information through short, guided discovery activities to make grammar learning manageable and encourage inductive reasoning. *Cultura y conexiones* is the fourth section and consolidates all the information previously taught in the chapter in the form of videos and news reports. Lastly, *estrategias y destrezas* focuses on developing reading and writing as well as pronunciation. It is important to note that the *vocabulario* and *gramática* sections are divided into three steps or subsections within the chapter, which makes it easier to retain and practice the information studied.

The iLrn Heinle Learning Center is an online resource that can be used to complement the textbook. The iLrn offers instructors a plethora of resources, such as Powerpoint slides, audio-embedded testing, study tools, partner cloud integration with Blackboard, as well as the capability to assign activities, grade tasks and assess students' progress. This online accompaniment follows the five-step learning path which divides lessons into digestible amounts of material and devises learner-centered activities that promote communication and foster a sense of community. The five-step learning path is an approach to present information in five different steps in order to facilitate understanding, retention and practice. The overall appearance of iLrn is organized and neat; this online classroom does not look at all cluttered and makes it possible for the learner to easily navigate the software.

As a Spanish educator with experience teaching at the elementary, middle and high school and university levels, I find *Conectados* to be one of the most innovative and millennial-focused programs on the market today. As a millennial learner myself, I appreciate all the customizable, flexible, and interactive components of this outstanding program because I know that my students will benefit from them. Its greatest strength draws on the fresh approach the authors use to teach Spanish in today's technology-driven world where learning a language focuses on making connections above all. The program's versatility gives students the opportunity to learn in class, online, or in hybrid courses through self-study. At the same time, educators also benefit because we can easily accommodate our teaching styles to meet our students' needs, the type of delivery option of our classes, and even the length of our course. *Conectados* is a customizable program for students and educators that focuses on millennial learners' world view and approaches language learning as an opportunity to make connections in our globalized society. I expect this book to be very well-received by students learning Spanish, particularly by the millennial generation.

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### Publisher's Response

Cengage Learning would like to express its thanks to Mr. Pentón Herrera for his thorough and positive review of *Conectados*. We are proud of the fact that this program was designed from the start to support a variety of implementations and to take full advantage of the strengths of each of the possible instructional contexts, whether online, blended, or classroom.

Mr. Pentón touches on one of the hallmarks of the *Conectados* approach, the five-step learning path that guides students through learning and using the language in meaningful ways, both online and in the classroom, to improve student learning outcomes. Prior to new presentations, there is a Ready? activity, designed to activate learner prior knowledge. Each Learn it! section, vocabulary and grammar topic presentations, includes a low-stakes Try it! activity for students to confirm that they have learned the topic at hand. Practice it! activities give students computer-graded practice with the target forms, followed by Use it! activities, which are more open ended. Finally, Got it? review activities provide students the opportunity to confirm their learning. This five-step path (Ready?, Learn it!, Practice it!, Use it! Got it?) guides students through learning and effectively prepares them for classroom or online communication activities with partners and in small groups.

In addition to the expected tests and quizzes, there is an innovative online assessment for each chapter based on ACTFL's Integrated Performance Assessments, which is designed for students to demonstrate their abilities in the Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational communication modes.

As Mr. Pentón notes, *Conectados* was designed with today's learning in mind, provides flexibility for instructors and their learning context, and approaches language learning and language teaching from a global point of view.

Mark H. Overstreet  
 Product Manager, Introductory Spanish  
 Cengage Learning

**Thomson, Robert Stuart.** *Love Songs in Spanish for Enjoyment and Learning. Accompanied by 1 CD.* Victoria, BC: Godwin Books, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-969677-49-9. Pp. 136. For pricing and ordering information, visit <http://www.godwinbooks.com/> or contact the author directly at 250/370-7753 or [rthomson@islandnet.com](mailto:rthomson@islandnet.com).

The author of two books on opera (*Italian for the Opera* [1991] and *Operatic Italian* [2009], reviewed in the January 2011 issue of the *NECTFL Review*), as well as a book for high school students to help them explore their inner and outer worlds (*Great Songs for the English Classroom* [1980]), Robert S. Thomson has recently published *Love Songs in Spanish for Enjoyment and Learning*, which is much more than a collection of twenty-four love songs. Inspired by his own experience of teaching himself Spanish through listening

to Mexican love songs, Thomson decided to write an educational book on the songs: “There came a time when I wanted to read some good books on these songs and their background. Who wrote them? Who were Eydie Gorme and Vicente Fernandez? To my surprise there was nothing available. There were a few biographies of composers and recording artists but no one book containing the information I wanted: the Spanish lyrics, a good translation, notes on language difficulties, and observations on the poetic elements: similes, metaphors, personification, pathetic fallacies, etc. I would also include notes (with photos) on the composer, the librettist, and the recording artist, not to mention a CD which would save readers the trouble of searching for recordings on Youtube” (V). Thomson suggests that working on songs leads to an improved accent (and sense of rhythm), an expanded vocabulary (including idioms) and greater cultural insight. He encourages students to listen to songs over and over again, repeating the lyrics until almost memorized. Spanish instructors wanting to infuse their classes with a unique approach towards learning Spanish, students wanting to gain an edge by learning informal language and travelers that wish to connect in Spanish with people in Latin America or Spain will enjoy Thomson’s latest book.

The free CD included with the book allows the adopter to enjoy the music as Thomson envisaged it to be enjoyed. Encompassing several genres and representing a variety of Spanish-speaking countries, the collection of twenty-four classic love songs, their composers, and the artists who sing them are: *Solamente una vez* by Agustín Lara (Mexico, 1935) and sung by Manuelita Arriola; *Amor, Amor, Amor* by Gabriel Ruiz (Mexico, 1944) and sung by Eydie Gorme and the Trio los Panchos; *Nocha de ronda* (Mexico, 1935) by Agustín Lara and sung by Eydie Gorme and the Trio los Panchos; *¿Quizás? ¿Quizás? ¿Quizás?* by Osvaldo Farres (Cuba, 1947) and sung by Nat King Cole; *Cielito lindo* by Quirino Mendoza y Cortes (Mexico, 1882) and sung by Los Mariachis Vargas; *Angelitos negros* with lyrics by Andrés Blanco (Venezuela, 1948), music by Manuel Álvarez Maciste and sung by Vicente Fernández; *Siboney* by Ernesto Lecuona (Cuba, 1928) and sung by Plácido Domingo; *Cucurrucucú Paloma* by Tomás Méndez (Mexico, 1927) and sung by Lola Beltrán; *Historia de un amor* by Carlos Almarán (Panamá, 1956) and sung by Eydie Gorme and the Trio los Panchos; *Sabor a mí* by Álvaro Carrillo Alarcón (Mexico, 1959) and sung by Eydie Gorme and the Trio los Panchos; *Caminito* by Peñaloza and Filiberto (Argentina, 1925) and sung by Carlos Gardel; *Miraron llorar a este hombre* by Homer Aquilar Cabrera (Mexico, 1979) and sung by Vicente Fernández; *Piel canela* written and sung by Roberto (Bobby) Capo (Puerto Rico, 1953); *¿Y qué hiciste del amor que me juraste?* By Mario de Jesús Baez (Dominican Republic, date not indicated) and sung by Javier Solís; *Di que no es verdad* by Alberto Domínguez and performed by Trio los Panchos; *Se me olvidó otra vez* by Juan Gabriel (Mexico, 1974) and sung by Lola Beltrán; *Granada* by Agustín Lara (Mexico, 1932) and sung by Plácido Domingo; *La Paloma* by Sebastián de Iradier y Salaverri (Spain, 1863) and sung by Nana Mouskouri; *Hey!* (Spain, 1979) by J. Iglesias/G. Belfiore/M. Balducci/R. Arcusa/F. Adur and sung by Julio Iglesias; *Mi Buenos Aires querido* by Gardel and Le Pera (Argentina, 1934) and sung by Carlos Gardel; *El día que me quieras* by Gardel and Le Pera (Argentina, 1934) and sung by Carlos Gardel; *A media luz* with music by E. Donato, lyrics by C. Lenzi (Argentina, 1924) and sung by Julio Iglesias; *Que nadie sepa mi sufrir* with music by Ángel Cabral, lyrics by Enrique Dizeo (Argentina, 1936) and sung by Plácido Domingo; and, *Las Mañanitas*, origin unknown.

Thomson claims that the most fertile period for great popular songs is 1930 to 1955. He also asserts that these songs are poems in their own right and deserve to be treated as such. For this reason he has specific recommendations: students need to find parts of speech, analyze the text, and search for subtexts (e.g., pp. 5-6 and 11-12). Moreover, Thomson comments on the connections between the songs and movies. For example, *Angelitos negros* is a poignant story about racial prejudice as reflected in a certain kind of religious painting. Thomson provides information on the movie (e.g., its date, where it was made, etc. (27-28). He also tells the story of how he spent an afternoon in Costa Rica researching just one line in one song (28). Multiple comments on the lives of composers, lyricists and recording artists enrich *Love Songs in Spanish for Enjoyment and Learning*, such as the fascinating story of how Agustín Lara wrote the idealistic *Solamente una vez* to convince a beautiful lady singer in his touring troupe not to pack up and return to Mexico (4). Equally significant are Thomson's comments on musical aspects: the significance of the change from minor to major keys and the atmosphere created by the instruments, e.g., the Moorish complexity of the trumpet's embellishments in *Granada* (73-74).

For the translation of the song lyrics from Spanish into English, Thomson uses the classic interlinear format so that the Spanish words align with the English, thereby helping readers to make connections. When the Spanish idioms cannot be translated well, Thomson has recourse to explanations. His main emphasis is always on fostering the comprehension of the language in depth. Sometimes he also comments on connotation, deceptive cognates, etc. in order to illuminate the song.

While each chapter provides the lyrics in Spanish and English, as well as general notes, language notes, and relevant photographs, six of the twenty-four chapters provide additional support materials. *Solamente una vez* includes "How to approach each song;" *Amor, Amor, Amor* has "What to appreciate in the songs;" *Cielito lindo* provides background information on "Endearments in Spanish;" *Cucurrucucú Paloma* provides a special section on Lola Beltrán; *Historia de un amor* offers "Historical origins of love songs" as these songs date back to the *siglo de oro* and perhaps beyond; and, *Miraron llorar a este hombre* contains a section dedicated to Vicente Fernández. Of potential interest to American students will be to learn about American artists, such as Eydie Gorme and Nat King Cole, and how they came to sing love songs in Spanish. Rounding out the collection is a "Suggestions for teachers" section that provides two methods for presenting the songs ("The Integral Text Method [both Outline and Details]" vs. "The Cloze Method (both Outline and Details)," instructions for preparing the Cloze Method lesson with illustrative examples, and recommended projects and reports for class presentation. Also included is an appendix with asides, one to Charles Aznavour's *Hier encore* as a comment on *Hey!* and another to Theodoro Cottrau's *Addio a Napoli* (as part of a discussion on the origins of nostalgia in the Argentine tango) and a short bibliography.

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## Publisher's Response

Godwin Books would like to thank Dr. Eileen Angelini for her positive and insightful review of *Love songs in Spanish for Enjoyment and Learning*. In my opinion most of the songs in this book contain the essential elements of poetry: powerful imagery and reflections which seem to spring from real life experiences, some painful and some joyful. A strong undercurrent of very Spanish passion pervades the book.

The suggestions for teachers (pp. 109-117) will, I hope, prove useful. If you choose the cloze outline approach, it is important to prepare in advance a class set of cloze outlines and have in place suitable equipment (CD player, white board, felt marker, alternatively an overhead projector and acetates if you prefer.) The cloze outline is a neat way to teach (or review) a specific language point (verb tenses, agreement of adjectives, etc.). It can be done in fifteen minutes: (1) Introduce the song then play it; (2) teach the relevant Spanish phonemes then listen to the song again; (3) play the song a third time while students fill in the blanks; (4) elicit from students the correct answers; (5) play the song a final time and lead a guided discussion of it.

Songs are a hot medium for teaching and songs such as these can be a powerful way to motivate students. Their beauty, depth, and charm will do the trick. Some students will want to get the book and work on their own. This will give their Spanish a competitive edge and, maybe even more important, help them to understand that mystery of mysteries: love.

Robert Thomson

Author

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