Teacher-researcher collaboration:
Technology for bridging the language-content gap

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
Rationale

Disjunction between lower- and upper-level FL courses: Language-based vs. content-based

Teacher-researcher partnerships to facilitate course development: A language expert + a content expert

What technology-based tasks in third-year Spanish courses will help prepare students for advanced TLU situations?

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
What **role** did technology—and teacher/student attitudes about technology—play in teaching and learning in third-year Spanish writing courses?

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
Key literature

Language development in blended courses (Luo, 2005)

Language-content integration (Mohan, 2011, Slater & Mohan, 2006)

Classroom-based research: Grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) Classroom ethnography (Tsui, 2010) Functional discourse analysis (Halliday & Martin, 2014)

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
Methods

**Context:** Two sections of third-year Spanish writing courses. Curriculum redesign: culture- grammar- & writing-focused lessons

**Participants:** One teacher, one researcher, nine key student informants

**Data:** 70 hrs of classroom/online observations, ~50 hrs of interviews, textual documents (PPTs, teacher lesson plans, student texts)

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
Ethnography

“... watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions through formal and informal interviews, collecting documents and artifacts ... in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry” (Hammersely & Atkinson, 2007, p. 3)
Teacher-researcher contract

Contract Gleason

I, Jesse Gleason, agree to uphold the following contract regarding the data collection in two of Dr. [redacted] Spanish 301 courses in the World Languages Department at Iowa State University during the Spring semester of 2013. I will use the collected data from [redacted] courses to fulfill the dissertation requirement for the Ph. D. in Applied Linguistics and Technology at Iowa State University.

1) At all points, [redacted] reserves the right to end her participation in this compilation of data if she senses that it negatively interferes with her students’ learning.

2) Only the students that accept to participate will do so. [redacted] will not force them to participate. They can also cancel their participation if they do not feel comfortable about it at any point.

3) Communication between the researcher, Jesse Gleason, and the instructor, [redacted] is key. Jesse Gleason vows to inform [redacted] of every step of data to be collected prior to its collection. She will also inform [redacted] of the time and format of the collection of data. [redacted] reserves the right to approve every step that has to deal with her students.

4) The researcher, Jesse Gleason, will tell [redacted] in advance if she plans to make an administrative request, or to have a dialogue with other faculty and administrators involving [redacted] classes. If at any point [redacted] considers that she has not been appropriately informed, she reserves the right to cancel her participation in this project.

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
“New” technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Lesson Type</th>
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“Culture” days

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Culture videos

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<tr>
<th>Heritage Learners of Spanish</th>
<th>FL Learners of Spanish</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I really like watching videos... when she shows the videos, it’s something you can relate to, in my situation... yeah, when she puts up videos that we can relate with or that I can relate with, [but] I don’t know how many other students knew about Luis Fonsi.” (Isla, Int 1)</td>
<td>“It was difficult to pick up what they were saying and then have us talk in our little groups, everyone just sort of stares at their group awkwardly, it’s hard to get a conversation started.” (Craig, Int 1)</td>
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“Grammar” days
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<th><strong>Netsupport</strong></th>
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<td>“I really like when she goes through what people have written and corrects it because then <em>it kinda gives you an idea of what you’re doing wrong too</em>, so if you did the same thing that that person did, you’re like oh this is how you do it instead of her having to explain it to every person, <em>it gives me more examples to go on.</em>” (Mary, Int 2)</td>
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<td>“I think the technology has personalized their experience...I think that <em>they feel closer</em>, what I always believe is that the technology always helps me to get closer to their writing experience and I think that has been achieved.” (Teacher, Int 9)</td>
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Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
"Writing" days

primero esbozo

composición uno

El mundo es un lugar grande con una mezcla de culturas, étnicas, y personas diferentes. Tristemente, las medias de comunicación no reflejan esta diversidad. Como es difícil para niños de latino origen a tener un fuerte sentido de orgullo en sus culturas. Porque ellos son pobresmente representados en la media, ellos sólo pueden asociar sus orígenes étnicos con "latinos" quien no son una representación exacta, o son más anglo-americanos que latino. Esta cuestión es importante porque los niños son la próxima generación representarán latino y sus historias. Ellos necesitan saber cómo se representan y tener orgullo en lo para estar un representación exacta.

Según el E.E.U.U Census, hispánicos son la minoría más rápido crecimiento. Todavía, Teaching Literature, escrito por Jamie Pehl, dice que se representan en los medios de comunicación como degradante, insensible, racista y muy, muy inexacto. Nosotros vemos a los
Google Docs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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<td>“I think it’s very <strong>efficient</strong>, time-wise, it’s somewhat more <strong>reliable</strong> than Word, I think it was <strong>beneficial</strong>; I feel it’s <strong>easier</strong> to write out on a computer, you start learning how to better process your ideas.” (Cerise, Int 2)</td>
<td>“Sometimes <strong>it can be hard for</strong> me...to <strong>really connect</strong> and say okay, why was that wrong... sometimes if the comment’s on the side it’s <strong>easy for me</strong> just to make the change really quickly and not really think about what the change meant or what I did wrong...it’s really so much faster to do it but...it’s <strong>almost too fast in a way</strong>.” (Kerry, Int 2)</td>
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Overview: Technology’s role

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>To Alleviate</th>
<th>As a Motivator</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Concerns</th>
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<td><strong>Sub-Themes</strong></td>
<td>To lighten the teacher’s load</td>
<td>Netsupport as a motivator</td>
<td>Oral feedback</td>
<td>Missing important lessons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To lighten the students’ load</td>
<td>Technology keeps students engaged</td>
<td>Written feedback</td>
<td>Speeding up the learning process</td>
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<td>Screen time during videos</td>
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To alleviate workloads

Teacher makes certain that students understand corrective feedback the first time around (via Google Docs, f2f)

Participants like the ease, accessibility, user-friendliness, sharing capabilities, and collaboration features of GD

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As a motivator

Netsupport sharing gives students incentive to improve their performance

Google Docs engages students in tasks that they might otherwise have to do autonomously

Large amount of class time spent on “doing” writing and “doing” grammar
To facilitate feedback

Focus on meaning in addition to form(s)

Process- and product-focused

“I feel like it’s a lot more convenient for the teacher and for the student...instead of just print it off, turn it in, get it back, retype it, then print it out again, turn it in” (Mike, Interview 2).

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Student concerns

“How do you know if you know that or the computer knows that for you?” (Cerise, Int 1)

“I might just make the change that the computer suggests without knowing or reflecting on why that was a mistake.” (Craig, Int 2)

“It’s really easy to just ‘check out’ during videos in class.” (Kerry, Int 1)
Moving forward

Technology - Tasks - Language Development

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu
Questions?

Jesse Gleason - University of Florida - jgleas@ufl.edu