From First- and Second-Year Foreign Language Instruction to CLAC:
A Quantum Leap or a Well-Trodden Path?

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Comparing Two Pedagogical Cultures in 1989 (FLAC, St. Olaf College): 1

Spanish in 1989 (1st through 5th semesters of study)

- Curriculum: Determined by textbooks and organized around a grammatical “infrastructure” enhanced by communicative activities focusing on the “self-referential”/daily life language needs (Semesters 1-3)

Other Disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, etc.)

- Curriculum: Determined by “content” (theme, period of time, geographical area, etc.)
Comparing Two Pedagogical Cultures in 1989 (FLAC, St. Olaf College): 2

Spanish in 1989 (1st through 5th semesters of study)

- Goal 1: Mastering grammar as framework for communication & more advanced study
- Goal 2: Developing some degree of “colloquial fluency” for real-world communication revolving around students’ daily lives (the “self-referential”) and survival/travel needs (➔ proficiency at ACTFL Intermediate range)

Other Disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, etc.)

- Goal: Mastering “content”
Comparing Two Pedagogical Cultures in 1989 (FLAC, St. Olaf College): 3

Spanish in 1989 (1st through 5th semesters of study)

• Within a “four skills approach” (speaking, listening, reading, writing), the “oral paradigm “ was privileged

• Primary input through listening (taped dialogues simulating oral discourse) and short readings (author-generated, tailored to language presented in textbook) (Sem. 1-3); longer readings (Sem. 4 & 5)

Other Disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, etc.)

• Input through listening (lectures) and reading (textbooks, primary sources or data, secondary scholarship)
Comparing Two Pedagogical Cultures in 1989 (FLAC, St. Olaf College): 4

Spanish in 1989 (1st through 5th semesters of study)

• Students “tested” on grammar and vocabulary (written exams) and ability to carry out simulated “real-world” tasks in speaking (based on “situation cards”)

Other Disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, etc.)

• Students “tested” through written (essay) exams and term papers
## Comparing Reading in Two Pedagogical Cultures in 1989 (FLAC, St. Olaf College)

### Spanish in 1989 (1st through 5th semesters of study)

- Texts: Author-generated readings in textbooks featured familiar vocabulary / verbs / grammatical features following grammatical “infrastructure” of textbook (with heavy marginal glossing)

- “Authentic materials” limited primarily to “realia” and excerpts from periodical press edited for language learners

### Other Disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, etc.)

- Texts: Textbooks, secondary scholarship, primary sources
Comparing Reading in Two Pedagogical Cultures in 1989 (FLAC, St. Olaf College)

Spanish in 1989 (1st through 5th semesters of study)

• Reading as a means of working with grammar & vocabulary in context
• Reading as input for oral production
• → Answering “display” questions (comprehension)
• → Stimulus for students to use certain grammatical features / talk about topics
• Reading for information (“facts” of culture, etc.)

Other Disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, etc.)

• Reading for meaning within disciplinary context
AHA “Statement on Excellent Classroom Teaching of History”

• “Course Content”:
  – “Historical facts” as “beginning” / not “final goal”
  – Need to present “analytical concepts characteristic of historical study” [that] “help historians organize evidence, evaluate its relation to other evidence, and determine the relative importance”
  – [See http://www.historians.org/teaching/policy/ExcellentTeaching.htm.]
AHA “Statement on Excellent Classroom Teaching of History”

• “Historical Thinking”:
  - Courses should “provide [students with] multiple opportunities to do the work of the historian” so that they…
  - “[become] aware of kinds of sources used”
  - “become adept at extracting meaning…, comparing…findings with other evidence…, formulating conclusions…, and testing these ideas against additional evidence and the ideas of other historians.”
  - “practice the art of interpretation”
AHA “Statement on Excellent Classroom Teaching of History”

• “Evaluation of Student Performance”:
  • Students present interpretations and analyses of evidence (oral or written projects, papers, etc.)
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  - “practice the art of interpretation”

• “primary Discourse” – “our culturally specific vernacular language (our everyday language), the language in which we speak and act as everyday (nonspecialized) people” (p. 160)

• “secondary Discourses” – varieties of language from a “more public sphere than our initial socializing group…within institutions that are part and parcel of wider communities…religious groups, community organizations, schools, businesses, or governments” (p. 161)

• “academic language” – “the set of words, grammar, and organizational strategies used to describe complex higher-order thinking processes, and abstract concepts” (p. 20)
Academic Language: Second-Year Spanish (St. Olaf)

- Language that allows students to deal with abstractions / ideas / concepts not embedded in their lives as “everyday people”
- Language for higher-order thinking skills and linked to evidence from sources (not just students’ own views or opinions on course topics)
- Registers appropriate for speaking to/writing for unfamiliar persons in variety of contexts
- Some vocabulary related to disciplines
Tasks Based on “El gigante del norte” & Types of Language Needed/Taught/Practiced

- Identifying genre / features of genre
- “The pages are from an atlas and have maps, diagrams, data, and (so forth)…”

- Identifying audience & elements that reach audience
- “The atlas seems to be for children because…”

- Analyzing the categories of information presented
- “The atlas provides information about geography…”
Tasks Based on “El gigante del norte” 2

• Analyzing the language of the text
  • “The word X has positive/negative connotations because…”
  • “The author uses many synonyms (cite examples) to emphasize the idea that.…”

• Analyzing the images & layout
  • “The photo of X illustrates (emphasizes, contradicts, etc.)…”
  • “The photos as a group give the impression that…”
Tasks Based on “El gigante del norte” 3

- Interpreting the overall message/perspective of the author
- “The atlas pages are objective/subjective because…”
- “The atlas presents a (positive, negative, neutral, stereotypical, complete, partial, etc.) representation of the U.S. because…”

- Expressing reactions to the author’s/text’s view
- Use of indicative/subjunctive to express certainty, doubt, reactions to content & design of atlas
Template: Looking at Logos from Target-Language Countries

Based on the logo, I think that [name of company] sells

/produces ____________ because the color(s)

_________________________ represent(s) ________________.
Reducing the Quantum Leap

• Create an “analytical mindset” in students to replace their “language learning mindset”

• Anchor content in analysis of “authentic texts” (use of higher-order thinking skills)

• Teach or “filter” academic language so that students can analyze through their still-developing “learner language”