World Languages and ELL Liaison Report prepared by Matthew Williams with Margarita Chavez

I.   Department Buy-In and Outcome Definition

In the decade that I have taught in the World Languages and ELL Department, I have learned that I can achieve more through cooperation with other faculty and with the Chair than I could ever do alone.   Consequently, as a new liaison this spring 2017 term, I sought out the Department Chair to determine the best way to support what faculty might already be working on. Her first suggestion was for me to consider a project just completed by department faculty to revise the student learning outcomes for online and face-to-face Spanish courses.

I contacted the faculty members to let them know what my new role would be this term and to ask if they would be interested in working with me to assess student learning using one of the newly revised SLOs. After some discussion, the four faculty members who teach Spanish 102 courses, both online and face-to-face, agreed to work with me.

I then asked the Spanish 102 faculty to choose for themselves which outcome would be the most important to assess this term. I used Google Forms to conduct a poll of the faculty, the majority of whom then opted for the following SLO: "*Students will be able to narrate events using present and past tense*".

Upon reflection, the time I spent reaching out to and considering the opinions of the faculty has made the outcome definition part of this process go very smoothly. Without faculty buy-in, this effort would have taken much longer and would have been much more difficult.

II.   Assessment Research and Design

I have designed a pilot assessment tool that will examine how students in Spanish 102 apply grammar rules for verb usage in the present and past tenses.

The test takers begin with a short list of irregular Spanish verbs that are in common usage. After they review these for a brief time, they move on to the two parts of the assessment:

Part One contains a task type that requires test takers to compose a sentence in response to a short prompt written in the target language. There will be eight items in this task type amounting to eight isolated sentences. This task will draw on knowledge of word structure, vocabulary knowledge, as well as knowledge of phrase and sentence structure. Of course, the responses must also be relevant to each short prompt. Since responses for this task type are limited to one

sentence, the test taker has the luxury of devoting a lot of attention to the actual structure of word formation and sentence formation and does not have to expend as much mental energy on the content of the response. Therefore, I anticipate that test takers will be able to demonstrate a high level of grammatical accuracy with their verb forms.

Part Two contains a task type that requires test takers to compose a short paragraph in response to a different prompt also written in the target language. Since response for this task type is much longer, the test taker is burdened by not only making vocabulary choices, structuring words accurately and composing grammatically well-formed phrases and sentences, but also by having to devote a lot of attention to transitions and other discourse-level features in an effort to best respond to the prompt. Therefore, I anticipate that test takers will demonstrate a somewhat lower level of grammatical accuracy with their verb forms.

They will be asked to provide their CCC student ID number and are told that the assessment results will not be used to affect their grades and will only be studied in the aggregate.

Currently, the Spanish 102 faculty are considering the draft version of the pilot and some of them have already provided helpful feedback that has allowed me to improve it.

III.   Pilot Assessment Tools and Processes

I anticipate being able to do the pilot in early May of 2017 using a google forms format. Once we have the results, I will be able to adjust the pilot to enhance its effectiveness in preparation for doing a full assessment study in the fall of 2017.

IV.   Administer Specific Assessment

Pilot Assessment: After receiving and incorporating feedback from faculty regarding task type design, I will invite them to volunteer a small number of online and face-to-face sections of Spanish 102 for the pilot. The plan is to use a google form containing the demographic question and the assessment tasks and provide all test takers with the link to it. I will then provide the faculty with the google form link and have them supply it to their students. (I imagine that making the link available via Blackboard would be the most efficient way to do that.) I anticipate being able to make the pilot assessment available to students in the first week of May, 2017. Test takers will have that week-long window of time to take the assessment once. After the deadline, the link to the google form will be closed and the data analysis process can begin.

Full Assessment: I anticipate being able to do a full assessment study in the fall of 2017. The plan is the same as the pilot--to use a google form containing the demographic question and the assessment tasks and provide all test takers with the link to it--unless the pilot experience reveals some unforeseen problems with that method. Test takers will again have about a week to take the assessment once. After the deadline, the link to the google form will be closed and the data analysis process can begin.

V.   Data Analysis

While assessing the outcome, "*Students will be able to narrate events using present and past tense",* could be done in any number of ways, I propose using the following criteria:

Task Type 1:

Morphological Level	Focus is on word form accuracy, in this case, of verbs
Syntactic Level	Focus is on word order accuracy

Task Type 2:

Morphological Level	Focus is on word form accuracy, in this case, of verbs
Syntactic Level	Focus is on word order accuracy
Discourse Level	Focus is on appropriate use of transitions to maintain coherence

Each of the above categories will be assessed using the following dichotomous Likert-type scale:

Score = 0	Score = 1
does not meet the outcome	meets the outcome

Pilot Assessment: This will be done in May of 2017, preferably before the end of the term. I will score the responses myself on the google form and enter the results into a spreadsheet in order to display them in table form.

Full Assessment: This will be done in later fall of 2017 after the administration of the full assessment. If some of the faculty who have been advising me during this study are interested in working together with me as raters, we will then hold one or more calibration sessions as we do the grading. If I am working alone on the scoring of the assessments, the process will obviously take longer, but inter-rater reliability will not be an issue.

VI.   Supporting Evidence-Based Change (Use of Findings)

Pilot Assessment: The plan is to share the results of the pilot assessment in a presentation during Faculty Development Week in August, 2017. I also plan to share the results with the entire World Languages and ELL faculty through the new departmental blog as well as in the faculty meeting at the opening of the fall semester.

Full Assessment: I will share the results on the departmental blog and, if asked, at the faculty meeting at the opening of the spring semester in 2018 once the data analysis portion has been completed.

Success Factors

I believe that one of the factors leading to the success of this study is and will be department faculty buy-in. The faculty have been instrumental in facilitating the process so far, and I anticipate that their help and advice will be critical to making both the pilot and the main assessment tools work well. Finally, I have great hope that faculty involvement in every step of this assessment process will translate to faculty feeling comfortable and even interested in 'closing the loop' by applying the results of the study to make evidence-based changes that serve to improve student learning in their courses.

Recommendations

None as yet.

Appendices

Pilot Assessment Tool Draft: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-q-qMSAMjakP2MC8-9CSNJyJpS3vr4_ap5N1SGhkzzo/edit