

READING STRATEGIES IN A SECOND LANGUAGE SPANISH CLASSROOM

by

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requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching.

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Summary of Project

This project will seek to provide an answer to the question “*What are the most effective reading strategies to use in a middle school comprehensible input Spanish classroom?*” As a practicing classroom teacher, it makes the most sense to me that this be in the form of a website. Teacher websites and blogs have been hugely helpful and influential to me as I have begun my teaching career, especially recently, when everyone has been struggling with how to adapt to distance learning. I wanted to create something that could be of immediate use and interest, and I think a website is the best way to go about that. Additionally, I am the sort of person who loves collaborating and striving towards how things can be better, and a website that allows me to reflect on my own practice and knowledge while simultaneously outlining how others can work on their own practice is something that appeals very much to me personally, while also meeting my strengths as a communicator and as an educator of all stripes- not merely an educator of children!

Project Description

The project itself is going to take the form of a website. This website will be a series of posts and tools grounded in the theoretical framework discussed in the literature review, with an emphasis on reading strategies that can best assist middle school students with reading in a beginning Spanish classroom. I have also compiled a list of resources that I use in my own classroom and that I find helpful. In this project, I will be using information I have learned to best assist my students to inform the writing of different posts all based on what teachers can do to improve their students’ reading in Spanish. For example, some of the things that I will carry forward into the implementation of the project are activating the students’ prior knowledge,

using familiar forms to them, and working to develop an understanding of where a piece may be missing from their initial language instruction in earlier levels of instruction.

I will be using Wordpress for my website design. Wordpress will host my domain name as well as give me tools to edit and polish a website. I chose them for their ease of use- I am a teacher, not a website builder, and I wanted something that would be easy to learn and aesthetically pleasing. Wordpress also allows me to access Pexels free images, which I used to add visual interest in my various posts and pages on my website. I chose the domain name missprofe.com because it reminds me of my initial interest of my students' use of Spanish and English, and how I could help them better achieve success through leaning on their knowledge of their first language.

This project will seek to synthesize the four areas of focus that I discuss in my paper- How language is taught, how language is learned, reading strategies, and middle school specific pedagogy. How language is taught and how language is learned may seem like very similar topics, and I do believe that they are very linked. To me, these themes are like two sides of the same coin- different, but inextricably linked. Much of the topic of how languages are learned comes into play in how languages are taught, but I wanted to cover a few more things to ensure that both teaching and learning of language receive the attention that they need, since there are some crucial differences that necessitate the formation of two separate categories. Reading strategies and middle school specific pedagogy are necessary due to the nature of the project, which is focused on reading, and on the intended age range- middle school students.

Rationale and Design Choices

I first became interested in this project through the course of my own teaching. I noticed that my students sometimes struggled with reading texts in another language, and I became interested in what the best practices and research said about reading in a second language.

Part of the rationale is my own interest in the subject, but also the need of the students to be competent readers in a second language class. the need to get students engaged due to their own interests, and not merely because the teacher says they must do the work for the class. Building engagement so that students want to do the outside learning, practice, and repetition that will increase their language acquisition is something that I wanted to include heavily in my project, in the form of a website.

Since the website is designed to be used by teachers of Spanish, I wanted to make sure to include those resources that I use in my classroom, and those who have inspired me and influenced my thinking as a teacher. In Appendix A, you can see a list of sources from the website that are things that I like and use in my own classroom.

Audience and Setting

The website is intended to be used by teachers of Spanish, particularly those who teach at the middle school level. Although the blog will speak largely of my own experiences and findings from my literature review, it will have the possibility to be used by teachers who are teaching Spanish to all ages.

Excerpts

The website can be found at www.missprofe.com. Below are some selected screenshots from the website.

BLOG

by WENDY GORMAN - SEPTEMBER 23, 2020 - EDIT



Uncategorized

TALKIN' TO MYSELF

One of the things that can help students improve as readers is for them to see the process of how to read a text. The ability to go through a text and ask themselves questions about it has been shown to improve their comprehension. Yes, please! I'll take it! However, sometimes, despite our best efforts, [...]

November 25, 2020



Uncategorized

YOU WANT ME TO READ WHAAAAT?

This is a common response I get from my Spanish students when I pull up a text written all in Spanish. They look at it, see that it is an entire PARAGRAPH written in Spanish, and panic. 'I can't do it!' they cry. 'That's a lot of Spanish!' they yell. This is a perfect time [...]

November 11, 2020



About Me

Hola, y bienvenidos 😊 This is a blog by a Spanish teacher, for Spanish teachers, about the trials and tribulations (and joys) of teaching in a middle school Spanish classroom. My particular interests are reading and classroom management, although honestly there is a little bit of everything!



These are a list of things I use in my class that other teachers might find helpful.



Photo by Elements Digital on Pexels.com

Image: Wall to wall bookshelf filled with books of varying sizes and shapes.

Curriculum

Digital Spanish Curriculum Bundle

Somos Flex units, designed to be used with distance learning, plus other useful digital resources. Produced by Martina Bex and the Comprehensible Classroom.

[Click here](#)

Carbanzo

Digital leveled readings in the form of a yearly subscription service. Aligns with Somos and Somos Flex.


[Click here](#)

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THEORY AND RESEARCH

by WENDY GORMAN - OCTOBER 27, 2020 - EDIT



Here is some of the theory and research that has most influenced me as an educator. These are academic texts that really shaped my thinking about not only how to teach, but also about what it means to be a teacher. I encourage anyone to check these out!

How Languages are Learned– by Nina Spada and Patsy Lightbown

Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition– by Stephen D. Krashen

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning: Classroom Practices for Student Success– by Sherroky Hollie

SHARE THIS:

Supplemental Resources for the Project

The Comprehensible Classroom

Martina Bex's blog, the creator of Somos, with many useful articles and resources. Good for both general Comprehensible Input content and Somos specific content.

The Deskless Classroom

Elicia Cardenas, Director of Training for The Comprehensible Classroom, also has a blog which, on a variety of comprehensible input related topics, such as language acquisition, deskless classrooms, and more.

Digital Spanish Curriculum Bundle

Somos Flex units, designed to be used with distance learning, plus other useful digital resources. Produced by Martina Bex and the Comprehensible Classroom.

Fluency Matters

Publisher of levelled readers for language students. They publish both physical books and e-courses. I used one of their e-courses when my school first went online and it was very useful

Garbanzo

Digital leveled readings in the form of a yearly subscription service. Aligns with Somos and Somos Flex.

LyricsTraining

Website that automatically removes words from songs and has students play a game to put them back in. I use this as an individual practice and as a whole class activity.

Mundo Guyi

Youtube channel/personality with Spanish zumba songs and dances. I use these as rewards/movement breaks.

Magister Bracey's Comprehensible Latin

The blog of a comprehensible input focused Latin teacher, which focuses on the ways in which our classrooms can be made more equitable through comprehensible input.

A Natural Approach to the Year

A book by Tina Hargaden and Ben Slavic outlining how to approach teaching specifically in a world language classroom

Somos: Original

Comprehensible input-based curriculum by Martina Bex designed to be taught in person in a classroom.