

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTS OF BLENDED LEARNING IN STUDENTS' SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Definitions:

HYBRID V. **FACE-TO-FACE** EDUCATION COURSES



Substitute some in-class instruction for online instructional components.



Most common contemporary form of university language instruction; learning experiences occur primarily in the classroom environment.

Benefits of hybrid instruction in the language environment:

1. Convenience of online course delivery helps students to learn at their own pace.
2. Amount of in-class time is decreased; increases teacher prep time & student work flexibility.
3. Helps the university to counter scheduling and other time constraints; more students potentially could be enrolled in language courses.
4. Building of language familiarity through multiple modes; i.e. in-class & online instruction.

Research overview:

Examination of hybrid learning in a Spanish 102 course.

- What do learners in a Spanish class report they believe about how they learn in an hybrid learning environment?
- What do learners in a Spanish class report they believe about Spanish before and after taking the course?
- ✦ Determine if hybrid education is a worthwhile alternative in university language instruction

Participants:

- 18 hybrid students in a 102 Spanish class.

Methodology:

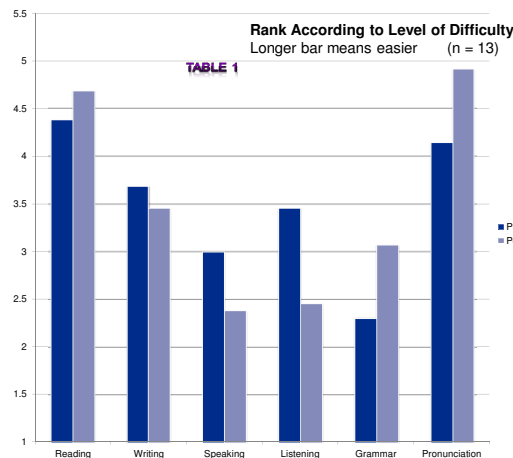
Exploratory study involving a newly developed Spanish 102 hybrid course on the UWEC campus.

- Students complete two (Pre and Post Course sampling) 20 minute belief surveys regarding hybrid learning and Spanish language learning.

- Students are asked to complete 10 five minute surveys regarding their engagement in particular tasks throughout the semester.
 - 5 surveys given in-class.
 - 5 surveys given after completion of online work.
- Students' final exam scores are compared to students in the traditional F2F environment on common final.

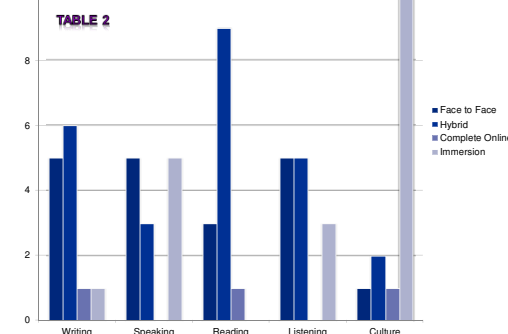
Preliminary Findings:

1. Increase in Perceived Language Proficiency: Hybrid students rate themselves as slightly more proficient in Spanish after course completion ($M = 4.9$) compared to pre-course analyses ($M = 4.4$) on a 1 to 10 scale where 10 is 'Very proficient' and 1 is 'Developing'.
2. Language Skills: As shown in **Table 1**, this pilot study may suggest that after course completion:
 - Participants in the hybrid format may view reading, grammar, and pronunciation in the target language as being less difficult.
 - Students may perceive writing, listening, and speaking in the target language as being more difficult.



3. Grammar Best Learned In-Class?: Preliminary results signal that when learning grammar, hybrid students may prefer to learn through an in-class format as opposed to solely online; students are better focused, feel more skilled with the task, are less confused, and are better able to connect previous instruction to new material through in-class instruction.

In my opinion, the best way to learn _____ is through...
Frequencies reported (n = 13)



4. As shown in **Table 2**, initial findings from this small scale study show that students prefer a hybrid Spanish format for the learning of reading/writing, but do not prefer it for the learning of culture/speaking.
5. Comparable Final Exam Scores: Comparative common final exam scores between the two cohorts reveal a slightly higher average score among hybrid learners
 - Hybrid Class Average 87.61% (n=18)
 - F2F Class Average= 84.60% (n=28)

Analysis:

- After course completion, students felt their overall Spanish proficiency improved, and more specifically, their reading abilities.
- Students perceive distinct advantages and disadvantages to hybrid courses.
- Much work is still needed to fully understand the various aspects of hybrid courses and their effect(s) on second language learning.

Suggestions:

- Further comparative research between F2F learners and Hybrid learners with a larger research cohort is recommended.
- A qualitative study to further analyze participants' beliefs about hybrid learning is needed.

Select References:

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