

# The Development and Implementation of an Innovative, Research-Informed Spanish Curriculum

Gabriela C. Zapata, Alessandra Ribota, and Damián Robles García  
Department of Hispanic Studies  
[gzapata@tamu.edu](mailto:gzapata@tamu.edu)

# Outline

- Theoretical framework:
  - Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Learning by Design
  - Integrated Performance Assessment
- Information about Spanish Basic Language Program at TAMU
- Information about instructional materials
- Information about implementation
- Plans for the future



# Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

- Concept introduced by New London Group (1996) and later in work by Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope (Cope & Kalantzis 2009, 2015; Kalantzis & Cope 2010, 2012)
- Defined as “a framework that emphasizes the multiplicity of languages, genres, and modalities present in any given social context, and advocates a pedagogy that puts this multiplicity at the center of the curriculum, while also honing learners’ agency, all with a goal of generating active and dynamic transformation.” (Kumagai & López-Sánchez, 2016, p. 2)
- It allows us to guide learners in their understanding of “the inevitable fluidity of meaning, their different [expressions] and interpretations [to serve different purposes], the necessity to negotiate meanings socially...and the process of expressing a meaning in one mode, then another [synesthesia]” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012: Kindle locations 3573 and 3857).

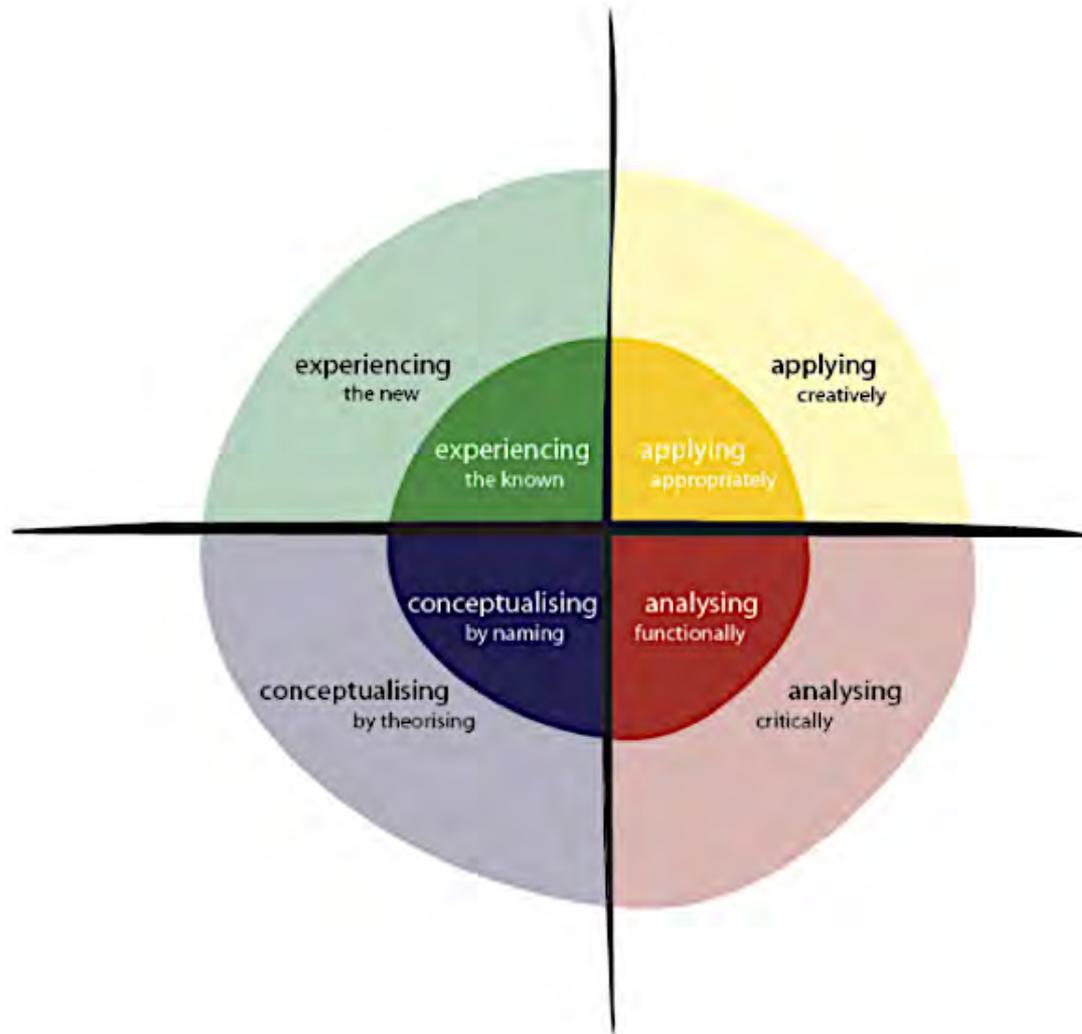


# Learning by Design

- Learning is interpreted as involving four interweaved knowledge processes—**experiencing**, **conceptualizing**, **analyzing**, and **applying**, and “as a dynamic process of discovering form-meaning connections through the acts of interpreting and creating written, oral, visual, audiovisual, and digital texts” (Paesani, Allen, & Dupuy, 2015, p. 23)
- Embedded in learning activities that allow learners to do the following:
  1. experience known and new meanings [departing from known experiences/concepts and exploring new situations and/or information];
  2. conceptualize meanings by naming [grouping into categories, classifying, defining] and with theory [formulation of generalizations and connections to concepts, development of theories];
  3. analyze meanings functionally [focusing on structure and function, establishing logical connections] and critically [evaluating different perspectives, interests, and motives];
  4. applying meanings appropriately [real-life applications of knowledge] and creatively [applications that are innovative and creative] (Kalantzis & Cope 2010, 2012).



# Learning by Design



Source: <http://newlearningonline.com/learning-by-design/pedagogy>



# Integrated Performance Assessment

- Main theoretical (and pedagogical) premise: Existence of a strong connection between classroom instruction and assessment;
- Example of what Wiggins (1998) calls “educative assessment;”
- In direct relation to the “assessment for learning” movement (Black et al., 2003; Brown, 1999; Stiggins & Chappuis, 2006): assessment instruments “must feature authentic tasks, or those that mirror the tasks and challenges encountered by individuals in the real world” (Adair-Hauck et al. 2013, pp. 25).



# Integrated Performance Assessment (Cont.)

- Defined as
  - “A multi-task or cluster assessment featuring **three** tasks, each of which reflects one of the three modes of communication—**interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational**;
  - All three tasks are aligned within a single overarching theme or content area;
  - It reflects the manner in which students naturally acquire and use language in the real world or in the classroom.” (Adair-Hauck et al., 2013, pp. 24-26)



# Integrated Performance Assessment and ACTFL

- IPA in direct relation to ACTFL's Communication Standards: Focus on the purpose behind communication (what are we using language for?).
- **Interpersonal communication:** It focuses on exchanging information, reactions, feelings, and opinions by negotiating and clarifying meaning.
  - Standard: Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.
- **Interpretive communication:** Goal is to answer the question: “What does the author, speaker, or producer of media want you to understand?”
  - Standard: Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.
- **Presentational communication:** To create a message (oral or written) for a specific purpose and for a specific audience.
  - Standard: Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers. (NSCB, 2015, p. 9)

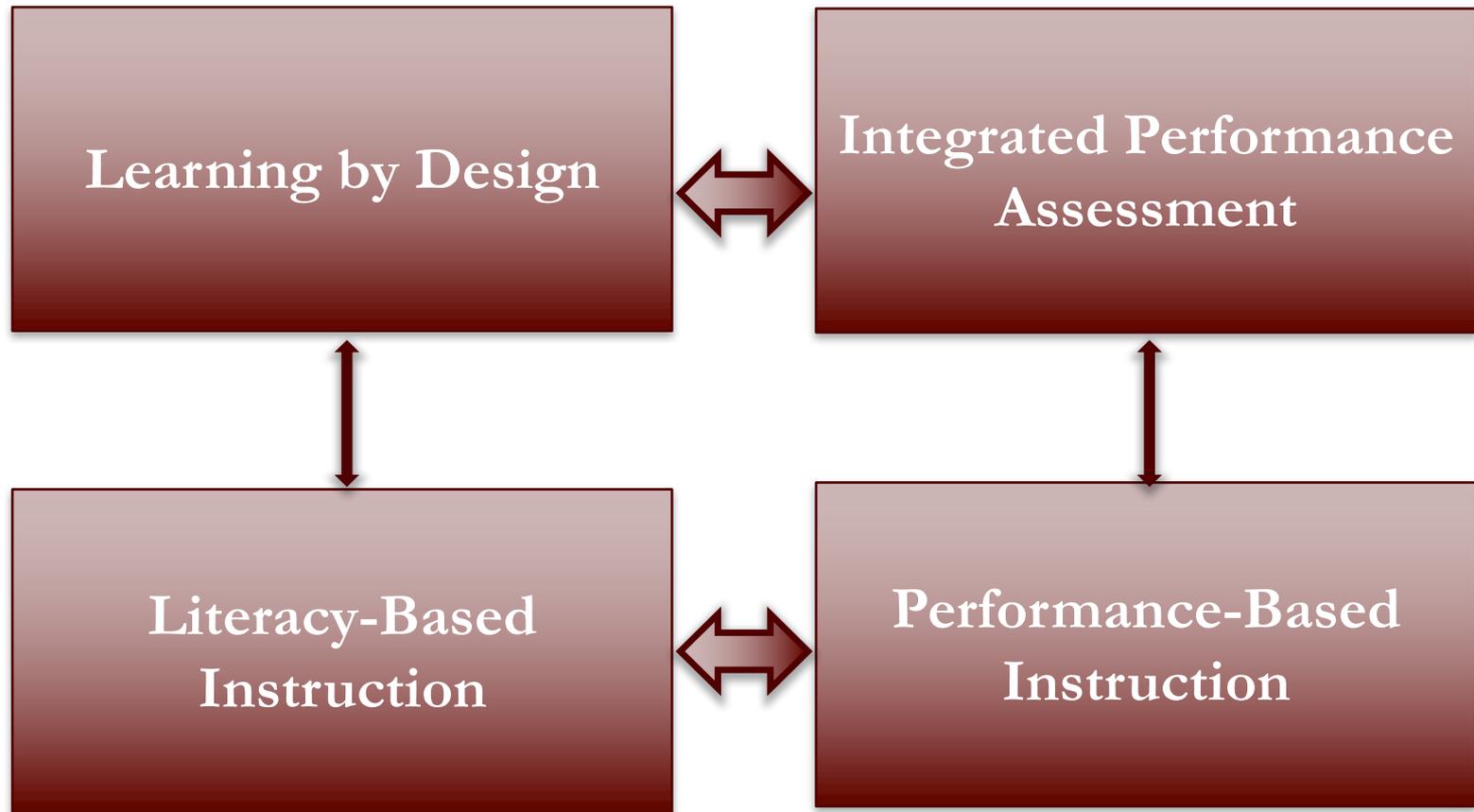


# Integrated Performance Assessment: Essential aspects

- Strong connection between students' class work and assessment;
- Students complete tasks in the three modes of communication (within a common theme);
- **Feedback**
  - ✓ Students are made aware of the ways in which they will be evaluated (what the expectations are).
  - ✓ Rubrics are discussed and used in class.
  - ✓ Students' work during the assessment period also becomes part of the IPA learning cycle.



# Theory and Instruction



# Spanish Basic Language Program at TAMU

- Four levels of language instruction in Spanish (NH, IL, IM, and IH—proficiency level expected in each course);
- Classes taught by 17 graduate students, 3 lecturers, and 2 tenured faculty members;
- Approximately 860 students per semester, in 33 sections with a limit of 26 students;
- The curricular changes presented are being implemented: Already in place: NH, IL, and IM classes.



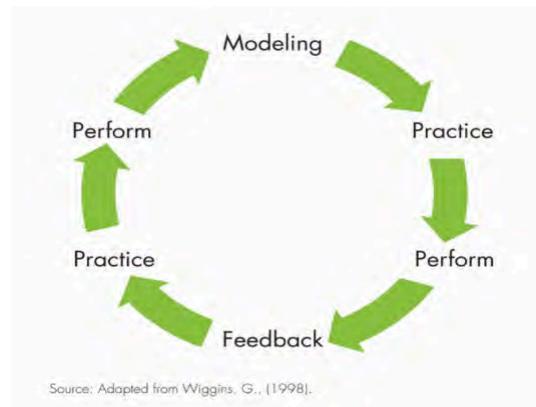
# Spanish Basic Language Program at TAMU (Cont.)

- Instructional materials:
  - Textbook:
    - *Plazas* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). The book is divided into four parts, and 4 chapters are included in each level of instruction. Content limitations tied to “processing limitations”: Guided by “Less is More” Hypothesis (Kersten & Earles, 2001)
  - Open-source class activities (Sample—Handout):
    - Based on multimodal, authentic materials and including the integration of the three modes of communication—interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational (IPA);
    - Students’ work guided by the Learning by Design thinking processes;
    - Performance-based: Tasks promote students’ active use of the language;
    - Designed by Program Director, and connected to the themes of each textbook chapter.



# Spanish Basic Language Program at TAMU (Cont.)

- Instructional materials (Cont.):
  - IPA assessment instruments: Formative assessment (performance-based)
    - The same kinds of tasks done in class;
    - Tasks: Interpretive (reading, listening, and viewing); presentational (writing); interpersonal (in pairs);
    - Strong connection between instruction and assessment (IPA).



# Spanish Basic Language Program at TAMU (Cont.)

- Instructional materials (Cont.): (Samples: Handout)
  - Readers in three levels of instruction, starting with level II (IL) [Literacy-based instruction; performance-based: Interpretive and presentational modes of communication].
  - Technology-based tasks that promote students' creative use of the language. [Learning by Design; performance-based: Presentational mode of communication].
    - Digital magazine (issuu)
    - Digital books (issuu)
    - Interactive posters (buncee)
    - Interactive Tours (Google Tours)



# Spanish Basic Language Program at TAMU (Cont.)

- Instructional materials (Cont.):
  - Technology-based tasks: Guiding principles for “becoming a better teacher in this new digital age” (Tapscott, 2009, p. 148):
    - “Cut back on lecturing—[Tied to performance-based instruction: Active use of the target language, learner-centered instruction];
    - Empower students to collaborate—[All projects require student collaboration: development of ideas, peer reviews, collaborative completion of project and its presentation];
    - Focus on lifelong learning, not teaching to the test;
    - Design educational programs according to the eight norms: choice, customization, transparency, integrity, collaboration, fun, speed, and innovation of [students’] learning experiences. Leverage the strength of Net Gen culture and behaviors in project-based learning.” (Ibid, p. 148)



# Keys to Success

- Clear objectives and outcomes
  - Make sure both instructors and students understand them.
- Scaffolding
  - Connected to High-leverage Teaching Practices (Glisan & Donato, 2017)
  - Guidance: Learning by Design—starting with “experiencing the known” and moving forward.
  - Technology support:
    - Choose platforms easy to use;
    - Engage students to help (extra credit opportunities);
    - Understand what projects will entail: Simplify instructors’ task.
- Classroom-based research



# Keys to Success

- Teacher training:
  - New instructors: Methods class: High-Leverage Teaching Practices (Glisan & Donato, 2017)
  - Workshops (at beginning of semester, as needed). Focus on 6 practices:
    1. “Use the target language as the vehicle and content of instruction;
    2. Design and carry out interpersonal communication tasks for pairs, small groups, and whole-class instruction;
    3. Design lessons and tasks that have functional goals and objectives, to include specifying clearly the language and activities needed to support and meet the communicative objective;
    4. Teach grammar as concept and use in context;
    5. Design and carry out interactive reading and listening comprehension tasks using authentic cultural texts of various kinds with appropriate scaffolding and follow-up tasks that promote interpretation;
    6. Provide appropriate feedback in speech and writing on various learning tasks.” (ACTFL 2015a, 2015b as cited by Glisan & Donato, 2017, p. 10)
  - Classroom observations
  - Instructional material for instructors
  - Support programs: Graduate Teaching Assistant Mentoring Program



# How are we doing so far?

- After one semester of implementation, better instructor and course evaluations:

		<b>Overall Inst.</b>	<b>Overall Course</b>
<b>NH</b>	<b>Mean</b>	4.76	4.65
– Fall 2016	<b>Median</b>	4.89	4.69
	<b>Mean</b>	4.60	4.52
– Fall 2015	<b>Median</b>	4.68	4.45
<b>IL</b>			
	<b>Mean</b>	4.76	4.65
– Fall 2016	<b>Median</b>	4.74	4.69
	<b>Mean</b>	4.32	4.25
– Fall 2015	<b>Median</b>	4.59	4.36



# How are we doing so far? (Cont.)

## Sample student comments:

### **NH: Comments to questions on course requirements, objectives, and overall quality:**

- “I love how much we have to speak. I believe that this is the best way to learn a language.”
- “I learned a lot and had fun.”
- “I learned more from this one semester than in all three years of high school.”
- “I felt immersed in the language, but it was never too overwhelming.”

### **IL: Comments to questions on course requirements, objectives, and overall quality:**

- “The change to only covering [fewer] chapters was so helpful because it takes a while for me to learn, especially with foreign language, so not covering a ton of material in a short time helped me to learn more.”
- “I vastly expanded my knowledge of the Spanish language with just a semester of this class.”



# What happens next?

- Classroom-based research: Taking place this semester:
  - **Integrated Performance Assessment in Novice High and Intermediate Low Spanish Classes:**

Investigates the connection between research-informed practices and assessment by examining the implementation of Integrated Performance Assessment in novice high and intermediate low L2 Spanish classes.
  - **The Role of Technology-Based Projects in Performance-Based Instruction**

Investigates L2 Spanish students' collaborative work when developing technology-based presentational projects (digital magazines and books, interactive posters, and Google Tours) in novice high and intermediate low and mid classes.
- Continue with the development of material, curricular revisions as needed, and teacher training.
- Long-term goal: Instructional material: Open-source and developed in house.



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Thank you!



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