

**Los Angeles Valley College
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle Report
Courses and Programs**

Discipline: Spanish, French	Department: Foreign Languages
Program/Course: Spanish 1, Sections 1608-Arias (16 students); 1605-Francés Benitez (16 students); French 1, Section 1301-Merrill (26 students)	Semester/Year: Spring 2008
SLO Representative: Rafael Arias	Department Chair: June Miyasaki

Student Learning Outcome Assessed	<p>Spanish 1 and French 1 Linguistic SLO: "Using the vocabulary and structures learned, students will be able to perform elementary everyday communicative functions in the target language orally and in writing. Evidence of attainment of the SLO may include (but is not limited to) the written preparation and oral performance of role plays, sketches, audio/video portfolios, presentations, etc., in the target language. These may be presented as a live sketch or dramatized in audio/video format and will include provisions for self-assessment and revisions."</p>
Description of Assessment Method	<p>DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT METHOD Evidence of SLO attainment for this pilot program included: 1. Oral presentations in the target language (Francés-Benitez); 2. Taped oral communicative situations (Arias); 3. Dialogues written in the target language and performed orally without cues (Merrill).</p>

	<p>A linguistic rubric and a scoring instrument (see attached) were developed to 1) assess the students' linguistic output; 2) achieve consistency among the raters; 3) keep records of the scoring for the students and for the purposes of this pilot assessment program.</p> <p>The Rubric was designed to provide data on 5 language indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Content: Ability to formulate and prepare a communicative function. 2. Comprehensibility: Ability to make oneself heard and understood; 3. Fluency: Ability to express oneself orally; 4. Accuracy: Ability to use grammar and vocabulary correctly; 5. Presentation skills: Ability to demonstrate/dramatize the language sample/linguistic evidence. <p>In order to differentiate between different levels of achievement, every indicator was rated as: 1 (Complete/excellent); 2 (Generally complete/acceptable); and 3 (Incomplete/Poor). User-friendly explanations of the ratings were provided to the three raters as part of the rubric (see attached document). A student obtaining a score between 7-15 points was considered as having achieved the SLO; students obtaining a score between 1-6 were considered as not having achieved the SLO.</p>										
<p>Assessment Results</p>	<p>ASSESSMENT RESULTS</p> <p>The three raters reported that 100% of the students (58/58) achieved the linguistic SLO in their classes. The maximum score for each indicator was 3. The average score breakdown by language indicators for the 56 students assessed for this pilot is as follows:</p> <p>INDICATOR AVERAGE SCORE</p> <table data-bbox="716 1120 1071 1299"> <tr> <td>Content</td> <td>2.78</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Comprehensibility</td> <td>2.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fluency</td> <td>2.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accuracy</td> <td>2.55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Presentation Skills</td> <td>2.64</td> </tr> </table> <p>DISCUSSION</p>	Content	2.78	Comprehensibility	2.62	Fluency	2.6	Accuracy	2.55	Presentation Skills	2.64
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	<p>It was not surprising that 100% of the students achieved the SLO for the three sections that took part in this pilot. Since the FL Department stresses communicative language teaching, most students that complete the semester are generally able to perform communicative functions at the basic level in the target language by the end of the semester. The lowest scores for all three sections were Accuracy (2.55), Fluency (2.6), and Comprehensibility (2.62). Content and Presentation skills obtained the highest scores. The data obtained also showed some alignment by languages: The scores for the two Spanish sections indicate that Comprehensibility and Fluency are the lowest indicators for Spanish, whereas the French scores indicate that Presentation skills and Content were the lowest indicators for French. It is not clear whether this discrepancy is due to the students' linguistic performance or to raters' differences in using the scoring instrument.</p> <p>Since students were given the opportunity to prepare/write their dialogues/presentations before their linguistic performance, Content and Presentation skills have the highest scores for the 3 sections. One possible interpretation of these results is that the professors in this pilot study corrected students' presentation drafts, pointed out grammatical errors, and gave feedback on the students' presentations before their oral assessment. This "process writing approach" gives students opportunities to correct their written and grammatical output and to hone their presentation skills before their oral performance.</p> <p>The students were also given opportunities to rehearse their dialogues/presentations orally. However, (oral) accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility (which obtained the lowest scores) are more performance-oriented indicators. It is possible that , although students' written presentations/communicative situations were generally free from grammatical errors, the oral performances of the projects were less accurate in terms of pronunciation and the students' ability to express and make themselves understood in the target language.</p>
<p>How Results Were Used for Course/Program Improvement</p>	<p>HOW RESULTS WERE [MAY BE] USED FOR COURSE/PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT</p>

To the question “What changes could be introduced in this course to increase the FL 1 oral SLO success rate for all performance indicators?” the three instructors offered these suggestions:

1. Classroom practices:

Increase the use of speaking (pair work and whole class) in the classroom.

Focus on pronunciation practice.

Conduct more reading aloud activities in the classroom.

2. Logistics:

Introduce the activity with a group “practice dialogue” so individual students know what would be expected of them.

Give students a longer time frame by starting work on this project earlier in the semester.

HOW THE RESULTS WERE [MAY BE] USED TO IMPROVE THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS ITSELF

Reflecting on the assessment process itself, it is plausible that the different scores for “accuracy” may have been related to the raters’ different understanding of the scope of the term. Some raters seem to have used the ‘accuracy’ indicator to rate pronunciation, whereas others seem to have rated pronunciation under “comprehensibility”.

In order to achieve some faculty consensus and consistency in their assessment of the students’ SLO achievement, it would be advisable to in future FL SLO assessments to:

1. Clarify and/or redefine the language indicators included in the rubric in order to improve raters’ understanding of the language indicators to be assessed.

2. Improve raters’ scoring reliability/consistency.

3. Rework the scoring instrument in order to achieve a more cogent language scoring breakdown.

Report Submitted by Rafael Arias