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Learning to Speak Through Writing: The Case for Microblogging in the Language Classroom

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Learning to speak through writing

The case for microblogging in the language classroom

New Insights into the Study of Conversation
Applications to the Language Classroom

University of Granada, Spain
May 26 – 28, 2010

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What is microblogging?

A microblog entry could consist of nothing but a **short sentence fragment**, or an image or embedded video.

As with traditional blogging, microbloggers post about topics ranging from the **simple**, such as "what I'm doing right now," to the **thematic**, such as "sports cars."

Some microblogging services offer features such as **privacy** settings, which allow users to control who can read their microblogs, or alternative ways of publishing entries besides the web-based interface. These may include **text messaging**, instant messaging, E-mail, or digital audio.

From [WIKIPEDIA](#)

Microblogging platforms



Setting up Twitter in the classroom



People whose tweets YOU read, in this case, your students

People who read YOUR tweets.



How does it work?

What's happening?

140

New! Add a location to your tweets. Turn it on - No thanks

Latest: Estoy probando HootCourse. #SP151 about 1 hour ago

Tweet

Home



amandae10 Si, un poco! Pero tambien estoy emocionada.

about 12 hours ago via txt



SPCONV @amandae10 ¡Qué bien! Ya me voy la semana que viene. ¿Estás nerviosa?

about 12 hours ago via Echofon in reply to amandae10



amandae10 Hola profesora! Como estas? Y si quiero seguir tuiteando!

about 13 hours ago via txt



SPCONV @mcjenna91 ¡Hola! Muy bien. Me voy a España el lunes. Y en dos semanas vienen @amandae10 y @nabrienaaaaa.

about 13 hours ago via Echofon in reply to mcjenna91



mcjenna91 @SPCONV ¡Hola Profesora! mañana comenzaré a buscar un trabajo para el verano, cómo está tu verano?

about 15 hours ago via web in reply to SPCONV



SPCONV Hola chicos, ¿van a querer seguir tuiteando en el verano? A veces se me olvida esta cuenta... Díganme para que no se me olvide.

about 16 hours ago via Echofon

Home

@SPCONV

Direct Messages

This is called an @reply or a mention. You can check these tweets in a different area as well so you know who talks to you or about you

Trending: Mexico

Change

Celia Lora

Acosta Chaparro

#jefediego

#bdsf

#notadeexcelsior

Ceratti

Santa Martha

2

Two students replied

1

What were students **required** to do with Twitter?

1. Write at least four tweets and one @reply per week trying to use some of the vocabulary words studied in class*.
2. Complete a weekly questionnaire about their weekly tweets



The image shows a screenshot of a Google Forms questionnaire titled "Tweets semanales". The form is displayed in a web browser window. The URL in the address bar is <http://spreadsheets0.google.com/viewform?hl=en&formkey=dHhncnpYQjB0NGZaLXVDUmhqVVFHWmcl>. The form contains the following text and fields:

Tweets semanales

Aquí tienen que hablar de los tweets semanales. Recuerden que necesitan cuatro al menos y un @reply

*** Required**

Nombre y Apellido *

¿Cuántos tweets escribieron esta semana? *

¿Cuántos @replies escribieron esta semana? *

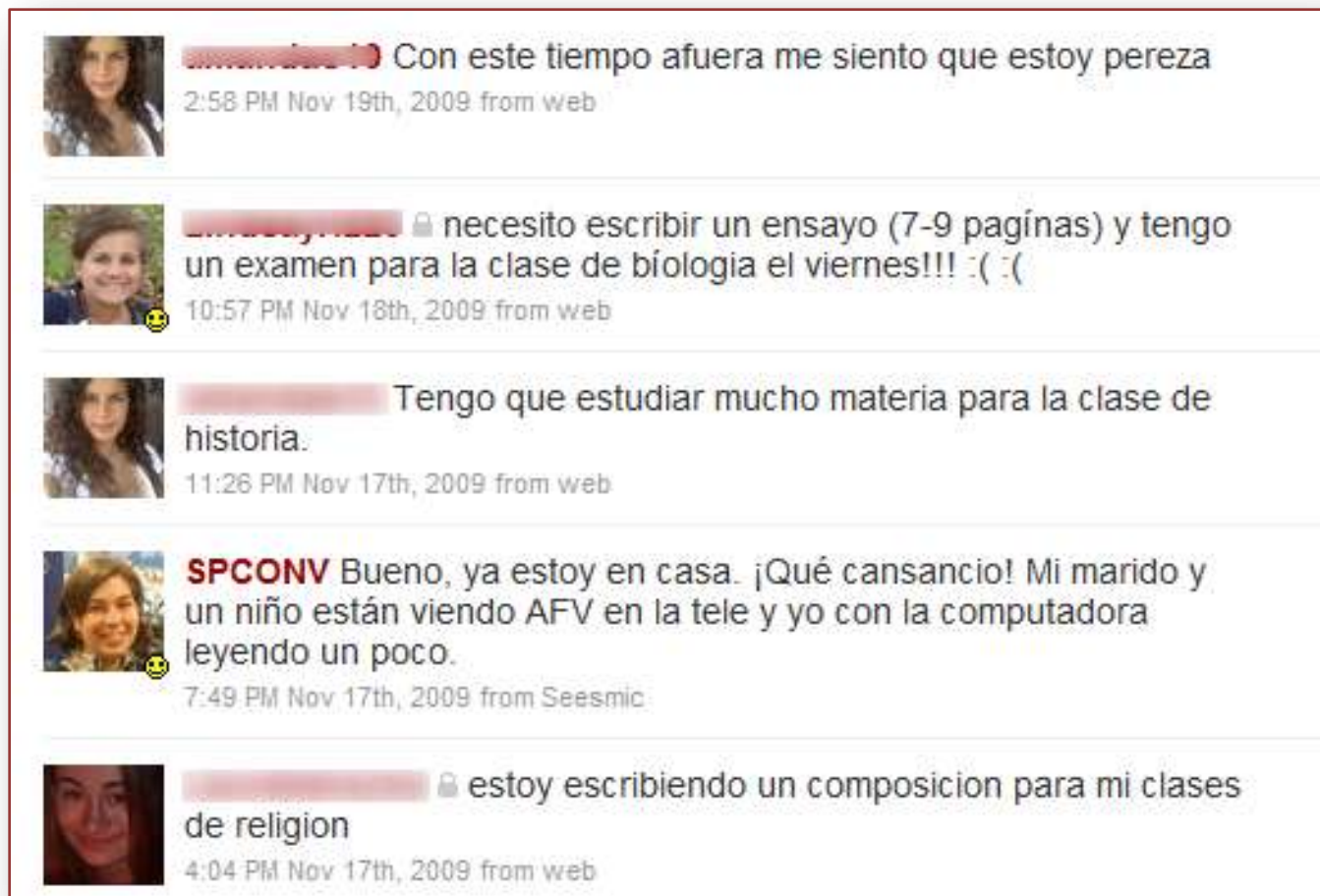
¿Cuántas palabras del vocabulario incluyeron en los tweets? *

Escriban sólo las palabras, separadas con comas

* Based on Antenos-Conforti , 2009

How was Twitter used in the end?

1. The normal Twitter use, to talk about what's happening.



2. To have “spontaneous” conversations outside of class



si ! pero no necesitas de preocupar porque muchos de los ninos son influenciado por sus parientes !

9:30 PM Nov 16th, 2009 from bxt



SPCONV @ [redacted] Menos mal. Mis niños tienen 9 y 12.

9:29 PM Nov 16th, 2009 from Tweetie in reply to Sousan12



[redacted]: ninos de las edades 12 a dieciseis #



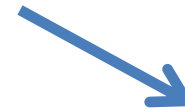
SPCONV @ [redacted] ¿De verdad? ¿Niños? ¿De qué edades? (Estoy asustada por mis hijos ahora).

7:49 PM Nov 16th, 2009 from Tweetie in reply to Sousan12



[redacted]: Yo estoy escribiendo un informe en el tema de niños y alcohol.. #

More examples of these conversations among students



Fui el doctor y averiguo que fracture el pie.

Apr 15, 2010 10:22:14 AM

@kayla1294 ! Esto es muy malo! ¿Como lo fracturaste?

Apr 16, 2010 1:35:55 AM

@c2gaby Yo me cai en ello el sabado.

Apr 16, 2010 9:02:29 AM

@kayla1294 ¿Te pusieron un emplasto o una bota?

¡Me gustaría no tener clase hoy y pasar todo el día trabajando en el jardín!

Mar 18, 2010 9:40:59 PM

@c2gaby Cultiva legumbres o flores?

Mar 19, 2010 12:42:59 PM

@amy12barnett Flores porque no tengo bastante luz para cultivar legumbres

Hoy yo estaba buscando mi camisa en el armario pero estaba debajo de mi cama.

@amanda10 un lugar muy extraño para una camisa.

@amanda04 jajaja yo se, pero yo cero que yo nunca puse la camisa en el armario porque lo dije en mi silla y cero que se cayo al piso

@amanda10 jaja, estoy seguro que mi suelo come mis ropas porque yo nunca puedo a encontrar nada

3. To practice vocabulary

In class

Después de que una semana del tiempo en clase que ella todavía se sienta aislado sola y....

2:35 PM Nov 20th, 2009 from web

El hombre esta aislado por que ello no confiar en nadie, y no piensa que conocimiento de el mundo tiene valor en su vida.

2:33 PM Nov 20th, 2009 from web

No fue a tiempo a mi clase de historia porque del mal tiempo, y tenía prisa a sentarme.

2:33 PM Nov 20th, 2009 from web

Tenia prisa la muchacha porque no quería perder el cuento de su profesora que tenia mucho conocimiento y para la muchacha era muy valioso.

2:29 PM Nov 20th, 2009 from web

Yo me sente a comer en un resturante con mis amigas porque teniamos tiempo para hablar de algunos cuentos.

2:29 PM Nov 20th, 2009 from web

Outside of class

mi correo electronico de shu siguen sin funcionar

11:19 AM Apr 27th via web

Mi computadora no funciona...que sorpresa. En cuanto la quiere funcionar, puedo terminar mi tarea.

10:02 PM Apr 26th via UberTwitter

¡No puedo imprimir mi tarea porque la imprimadora no está funcionando!

6:27 AM Mar 18th via web

¡Espero que el examen del lunes pasado no sea un fracaso!

5:48 AM Mar 25th via web

Que es la cosa que recuerden mas de su infancia?

11:21 PM Apr 24th via web

5. To talk about homework or tasks in class I wanted them to do

amandae10 Profesora que es la tarea para mañana?

4:26 PM Apr 22nd via web



SPCONV @amandae10 Se me olvidó ponerla. Si tienen tiempo, lean "Ay Papi no seas cocacolero"

10:33 AM Apr 23rd via Seesmic in reply to amandae10



SPCONV Un artículo sobre inmigración interesante del que podemos hablar en clase: <http://is.gd/bF2DQ>

11:46 AM Apr 23rd via Seesmic



SPCONV Y este vídeo acompaña la noticia: <http://is.gd/bF2T2>

11:50 AM Apr 23rd via Seesmic



SPCONV Completen el cuadro: <http://docs.google.com/Doc?docid=0Ac7s6zM29u55ZGZycHBiNzhfN2Nm3JqamRk&hl=en>

2:34 PM Nov 17th, 2009 from Seesmic

What about corrections?

- a) Through a Direct (private) Message (DM) on Twitter
- b) When possible, repeating the corrected version in the following tweets



What kind of vocabulary was used in the students tweets?



Student #1



Student #2

What about native speakers' tweets?



In what other ways can
students learn from Twitter?



juanes

Buen domingo a todos !

about 2 hours ago via Twitterrific

<http://twitvid.com/YTJKS> - guitardiando... #fb

about 15 hours ago via API

Familia como están, Buen sábado a todos ! #fb

about 24 hours ago via Twitterrific

Toda mi fuerza natural para Cerati ! #fb

6:09 AM May 20th via Twitterrific

toda la energía positiva para Cerati !! #fb

8:21 AM May 19th via Twitterrific

aqui estan los 20 seg de #Yerbatero here's a 20 second preview of my new single #Yerbatero <http://bit.ly/juanes1> #fb

10:56 AM May 18th via web

muchachos! hoy les pondre un link pa que escuchen 20 seg de "yerbatero" mi nuevo sencillo. esten pendientes . abrazoo #fb

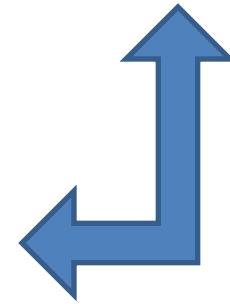
8:45 AM May 18th via web

<http://www.elnuevodia.com/wap/noticia/ultimahora/705916/> #fb

6:01 AM May 18th via Twitterrific

pero nos une la musica muchachos, cada quien es libre de pensar como quiere. respetemonos como hermanos e hijos de la misma tierra. #fb

Students get **real** input



They can follow famous people who may be of interests to them

And also they can follow regular native users, with whom they can communicate



mcrueda

[Follow](#) [Lists](#) [Settings](#)

Cerrando por hoy.... hasta mañana.
about 4 hours ago via TweetDeck

[@musita2](#) Buenas noches , que lo pases bien mañana
about 4 hours ago via TweetDeck in reply to musita2

Y eso? qué has hecho XDDD?RT [@similiki](#): [@mcrueda](#) A ver,que creo que sigo castigada
about 4 hours ago via TweetDeck

RT [@toulux](#): Pues aunque sea con retraso FELICIDADES!!
<http://twitpic.com/1p8835> [@musita2](#): Por faaa, vuelve a encender la velas, #er5
about 4 hours ago via TweetDeck

[@musita2](#) XDDDDDD cuándo fue tu cumple? mujer eso se avisa.
about 4 hours ago via TweetDeck in reply to musita2

Necesitas ayuda pa soplar las velas? RT [@toulux](#): MUCHAS FELICIDADES!!! [@petitsetmaman](#) <http://twitpic.com/1p8662> Sopla las velitas!! #er5



AliyCia

[Following](#) [Lists](#) [Settings](#)

Your lists: [spanish-teachers](#)

Um beijo. Doce - Bem bom... 🎵
<http://blip.fm/~qqgq5>
about 1 hour ago via Blip.fm

[@alnhoeus](#) Besos. Para ti y para tus chicos. :)
about 1 hour ago via TweetDeck in reply to alnhoeus

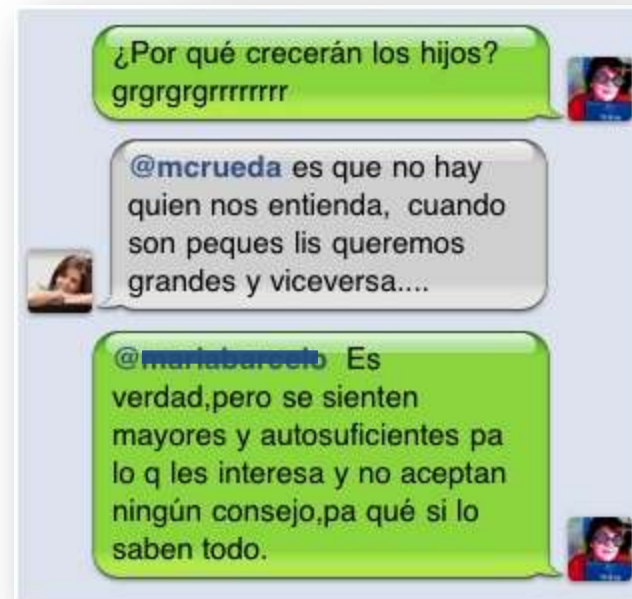
[@Althoe](#) De todo un poco. :) Besos, Alejandro.
about 1 hour ago via TweetDeck in reply to Althoe

Acabando de cenar. Cerrando máquinas y pa' la cama, que hoy no puedo más. Un día intenso de trabajo. Y muy feliz. Nos leemos mañana!
about 2 hours ago via TweetDeck

Hemos visto 1 video donde se hablaba de nuestro gusto por hablar, de lo q sea, siempre tenemos opinión y la defendemos con pasión. #claseele
about 3 hours ago via web

[@camikant](#) Gracias por ayudarnos en clase. No conozco la peli. Los colombianos habéis hecho aportes muy originales! #claseele
about 3 hours ago via web in reply to camikant

And see how they
communicate with other
native speakers



How are twitter interactions similar to “real” conversations?

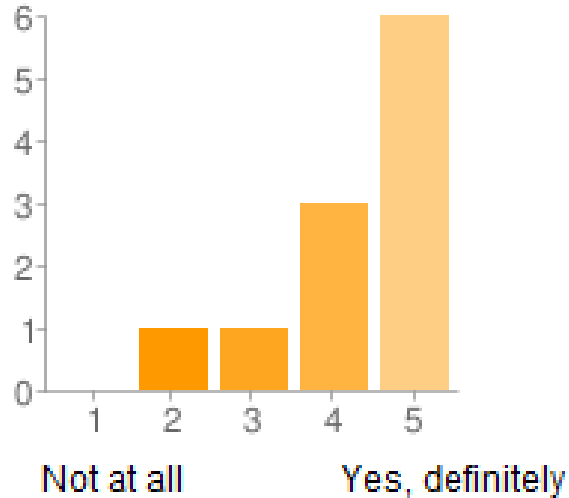
- Short
- Deal with everyday life topics
- Colloquial language used, including pragmatic markers (*hala, hale, qué va*)
- Similar words are repeated often (*pues, bueno*)
- Native speakers even “attempt” to add prosody (*guauuuu, ufffff, sííí, bueeeno*)

How is it useful for language students?

- Time management: mostly asynchronous but can also be synchronous
- Mobility: Students can use their cell phones to interact
- Stress reduction: The affective filter is lowered

Students' opinions about Twitter

Do you feel it is a good way to practice vocabulary? Why?



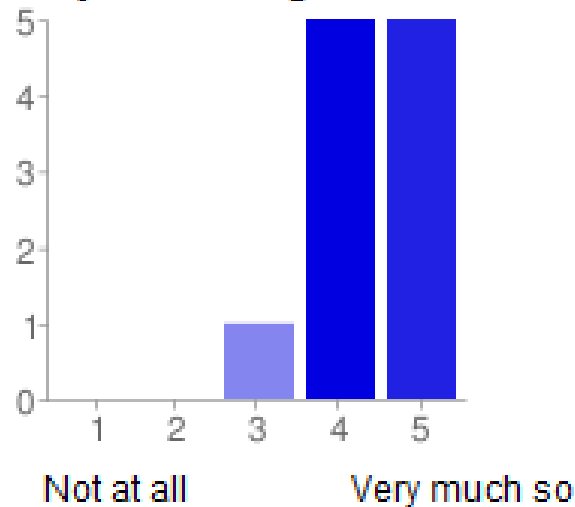
Because **just memorizing words isn't enough**, applying them to real parts of your day helps the words to stick in your head forever, not just for a quiz.

Twitter is something that **relates to our life** since it is similar to other **social networking sites** and it was **easy** to use.

I was able to see the different ways vocabulary words were used and **seeing it from someone else's perspective** and not just mine was very helpful.

Students' opinions about Twitter

Did you like using Twitter this semester?



I liked twitter because it allows you to **incorporate spanish in your every day life**. It is easy to manage and really does help with your spanish and using the vocabulary from the class.

I like it because it was a way to **continue thinking in spanish** outside of the classroom. Instead of only talking in spanish for 2 1/2 hours a day, it was continued throughout the week

I enjoyed Twitter because it was an **easy way to contact** my classmates and the professor. It also allowed me to practice my Spanish outside of the classroom and with my classmates. Twitter was also easy to use and I **recommend it for other Spanish classes** or just regular classes so that they can contact one another.

For more information:

- [Microblogging on Twitter. Social Networking in Intermediate Italian Classes](#) - Enza Antenos-Conforti
- [“Tweaching” with Twitter](#) - Jennifer Rafferty’s Digital Pedagog’s Blog
- [Twitter in Education: How & Why](#) - David Hopkins

¡¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!!

Thanks to my friends:

- [@AliyCia](#)
- [@Mcrueda](#)

For questions, or comments, you can reach me at

mundayp@sacredheart.edu

[@mundaysa](#) (PLN)

[@SPCONV](#) (Spanish classes)