Teaching with Social Networks: Facebook, Twitter and Edmodo

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Since their emergence in 2004, Web 2.0 technologies have transformed the area of education in general, and learning languages, first and second/foreign) in particular. Web 2.0 technologies are presenting new opportunities for developing diverse online learning environments and enhancing **interactivity, participation and feedback** between students, their peer groups and teachers.


For language learning: iKnow.jp, Livemocha.com
Access to Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs and podcasts, are often blocked by districts, suggesting a need to revise current policies to keep abreast of technology developments and new applications. AUPs (Acceptable Uses Policies) protect districts from liability but do little or nothing to inform and educate users (teachers and students) or parents about what they are signing. For example, a prerequisite tutorial would be appropriate before signing an annual AUP.

- California ICT Digital Literacy Assessments and Curriculum Framework.
We also have to consider our students' expectations and competences. If not, an abyss may be opened between communication inside school and outside. Discussion boards and chats on some educative platforms are a little too different from the ones they use in normal life.
This generation needs to be educated in a different way; they are the digital native learners described by Prensky (2001). And digital immigrant teachers assume that learners are the same as they have always been, and that the same methods that worked for the teachers when they were students will work for their students now.
They do not only look for information, **they provide** it. They like to receive information through multiple channels, they multitask, and prefer to process photos, audio and video rather than text. They like to interact simultaneously with others, and to get instant rewards. **They want to learn just in time, not just in case** (Jukes and Dosag, 2004: 23).
Dad, can I use the computer for a second?

What for?

I need to log on to my school's website, download my homework and print it out.

Type type type type type

Do you know how to do all that?

It's already done. Thanks, Dad.

When I was your age, I had to walk ten miles through the snow to get the internet!
UNESCO ICT Competency Standards for Teachers

- Traditional educational practices no longer provide prospective teachers with all the necessary skills for teaching students to survive economically in today’s workplace.

- Classroom structure is different with the new student-centered approach. In their new role, teachers help students create, implement, and monitor project plans and solutions. Class periods and classroom structure are more dynamic, with students working in groups.

- 21st century skills: problem solving, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. Determine their own learning goals and plans.
Theoretical bases
Constructivism

- Social constructivism attempts to address the problem of how students naturally learn best. Today's technology can support these attempts. When used appropriately by an instructor, social software applications and Web 2.0 tools can effectively assist in creating a social constructivist learning environment.

- An environment of multidirectional interaction among instructors, learners and others in cyberspace allows the learners to enter into a cycle of constructing their own truths, testing them against the truths of others and their environment to see if they hold up, and reconstructing where necessary.

- Individuals exchange constructed knowledge with others in their context. Over time, both the learner and the cultural context are transformed. As a result, collaboration through a culture's language and subsequent communication is key to understanding a social constructivist model of learning.
Social constructivism stresses the fact that learning is a social activity, occurring when people work collaboratively. Learners gather knowledge to be internalized from a variety of sources in their environment. Sources can include electronic and print sources, first hand experiences and even a teacher in the traditional role of knowledge provider. However, a teacher's role should not be limited to that of knowledge provider, but should also include facets of coaching, guiding and facilitating.
Conectivism

- Conectivism. Learning is the creation and removal of connections between the entities, or the adjustment of the strengths of those connections. A learning theory is, literally, a theory describing how these connections are created or adjusted.

- The constructions of meaning and the creation of connections among specialized communities are important activities.

- Taking decisions is a learning process. Choosing what to learn, and the meaning of the information received, is basic in this changing reality.

- Future leaders will be the ones able to be nodes in these knowledge webs.
**Expanded School** (as it is shown in this documentary about a particular experience in Spain)

- Expanded school. Education may happen in any place, at any time. Human approach, integral formation, implication on people’s lives...

- Interdisciplinarity. Expanded School is an alive organism, settled on two basis: school and the community or learners and instructors (home). It has always existed, but now it travels on technological rails.

- School does not have the monopoly on education.

- Before it had the pedagogical tools.
**Invisible learning** (concept explained in a book by Cobo, Univ. of Oxford, and Moravec, Univ. of Minnesota)

- **Formal learning-Informal learning-fortuitous learning**

- Informal learning is different from the formal contexts of school and universities, being described as:
  
  - occurring outside of the formal, structured school or university environment
  - a lifelong process, given that humans spend more time outside, than inside, school
  - happening across a variety of mediums, such as television, the internet and museums
  - linking to formal learning in an unplanned way
  - voluntary
- We need to “remix” ways of learning, including creativity, innovation, collaborative learning...

- Do it yourself. Contents generated by the user, problem based learning, permanent learning...

- Learning inside a wide frame of abilities in this globalized world.

- This proposal includes a wide range of competences, knowledges and skills.
Content and language integrated learning.

Content-based instruction

- Effective opportunities to use the new language skills, rather than learn them now for use later.
- Stimulating content.
- Delivering information at the right time & situation, compelling the students to learn out of passion.
- Class is learner center rather than teacher centered. Students are actively engaged in the learning process.
Other ...

- Edupunk.
- Edupop.
- ...
DATA

- 79% of American adults said they used the internet and nearly half of adults (47%), or 59% of internet users, say they use at least one of SNS. This is close to double the 26% of adults (34% of internet users) who used a SNS in 2008. Among other things, this means the average age of adult-SNS users has shifted from 33 in 2008 to 38 in 2010. Over half of all adult SNS users are now over the age of 35. Some 56% of SNS users now are female.

- Facebook dominates the SNS space in this survey: 92% of SNS users are on Facebook; 29% use MySpace, 18% used LinkedIn and 13% use Twitter.

- Fully 95% of all teens ages 12-17 are now online and 80% of those online teens are users of social media sites.

- Twitter adoption among teens pales in comparison to their use of social network sites as a whole. Yet, the number of teen Twitter users has doubled over the last two years; 16% of online teens now use Twitter, up from 8% the first time we asked this question in late 2009. Teens and adults now use Twitter at similar rates, as 12% of online adults are Twitter users.

- Fully 65% of adult internet users now say they use a social networking site like MySpace, Facebook or LinkedIn, up from 61% one year ago.

WHY SHOULD WE USE THEM?

- Learning platforms have less plasticity to create a learning web including recreational and creative elements.

- They develop students’ autonomy.

- Students are more used to them.

- When they write on the network, they do it on a more natural way. (This is specially useful for the language classes).

- They have audiovisual support.

- More topics than the curriculum ones are discussed.

- Learning is a social process.

- Collaborations.

- Classes become conversations.

- Learning is achieved in a continuum: formal-non formal-informal-fortuitous.
Facebook Use by Age Group

- 13 to 17: 10%
- 18 to 25: 13%
- 26 to 34: 23%
- 35 to 44: 29%
- 45 to 54: 18%
- 55 to 65: 7%

Source: Branded and InsideFacebook.com
Teen social network and Twitter use – trends over time
Based on teen internet users

Social impact of widespread use of social networking sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Twitter. Do these technologies isolate people and truncate their relationships? Or are there benefits associated with being connected to others in this way? Pew Research Center found that social networking sites are increasingly used to keep up with close social ties.

- The average user of a social networking site has more close ties and is half as likely to be socially isolated as the average American
- Facebook users are more trusting than others.
- Facebook users have more close relationships.
- Internet users get more support from their social ties and Facebook users get the most support.
- Facebook users are much more politically engaged than most people
- Facebook revives “dormant” relationships.
- MySpace users are more likely to be open to opposing points of view.
GENERAL OBJECTIVES THAT WE MAY INCLUDE, RELATED TO THESE TOOLS:

- To learn how to use Facebook, Twitter and Edmodo.
- To develop and reinforce collaborative abilities.
- To create a learning community and interact with the rest of mates.
- To generate a climate of trust and motivation.
- To use the language and to discuss about the content outside the class time.
- Be more conscious of the importance of autonomous learning.
INSTRUCTOR,
ARE YOU AFRAID OF...?

- Losing the control (too many messages and of non scholar topics).
- Lack of preparation.
- Don’t cover the content.
- Lack of prepared materials.
- Intrusion of people not belonging to the class.

BEAR IN MIND THE ADVANTAGES...

- Motivation.
- Team work.
- Autonomous learning, interacting with others.
- Fostering of communication and mutual knowledge.
- Fostering of retentio; students learning by doing.
- Writing skills and new technologies use.
- More time and space to learn.
- Integration of contents (various disciplines and origins).
- Specialized groups.
- Free resource.
If you are going to work with young adults or kids (it is necessary to be 13 to use F. and T., but they are doing it anyway, so you may want to teach them how to use them correctly), REMEMBER...
- Pew Internet: 38% of students ages 12 to 14 said they had an online profile of some sort.
- 61% of those, ages 12-17, said they use social networking sites to send messages to friends, and 42% said they do so every day. That’s where their social world is...
Although most of our students, especially in secondary schools, colleges and universities are permanently connected to the Internet, and most of them use or will use social networks, it is a common mistake to assume that they are competent users of these tools. They lack information, they are not cautious when they interact on the net, and sometimes they feel frustrated because technology do not always keep its promises.
Internet Safety

Our goal is to operate in safe places on the Internet. As you travel in cyberspace, be on guard for any inappropriate web site or for anyone who appears to be cyberbullying. For any questionable situations, follow these rules:

1. **Stop**
   Stop what you are doing. Don’t keep clicking.

2. **Screenshot**
   Take a screenshot. Save a copy and print a copy.

3. **Block**
   Anyone offensive should be blocked and removed as a friend if he or she is on your friends list.

4. **Tell**
   Tell your teacher or network administrator (or your parents if you are at home) about the situation and give them a copy of the screenshot. When you have a problem, do not stop speaking out until you find someone who can help you.

5. **Share**
   After talking to your parents and/or teacher, if the incident is appropriate to discuss, share it with others to promote internet safety.
Best Practices for Digital Citizenship

- Be present. Participate in classroom discussions and contribute your unique voice to the conversation.

- Use appropriate grammar instead of texting language.

- Use a respectful tone of voice when posting. Refrain from posts that tease, bully, annoy, spam, or gossip.

- Keep conversations on topic.

- Keep private information private. This includes telephone numbers, addresses, emails, etc.

- Be sure to get permission before posting photos or videos showing yourself or classmates.

- Show what you know! If you've found information or have an idea that's related to our classwork, share it on Edmodo.
FACEBOOK AND TWITTER
We can use it for...

1- Discussion board/Class announcement.
2- Summaries.
3- Share links.
4- Following a famous character and document the progress.
5- Time tweet. Choose a famous person from the past and creat an account.
6- Micro meeting.
7- Micro writing-progressive and colaborative writing to create short stories.
8- Twitter Pals.

9- Concepts and vocabulary.
10- Polls and surveys http://twtpoll.com/
Spanish linguistics classes (graduate course, California State University, Bakersfield).
Enhancing communication: Interpersonal
Questions
Incorporation of other tools. Enhancing culture:
Products
Twiigo, a tool to create groups in Twitter.

(Examples from graduate Spanish linguistics class, and undergraduate Spanish language class)
Vocabulary discussion
• Interaction among instructor, students and parents.
General evaluation criteria, and rubric for microblogging comments (if you want to give a grade for participating).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTENT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sends relevant content with new ideas. Well written to stimulate dialogue and commentary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most original contributions provide new resources or ideas that add value to the discussion. Most entries are written to stimulate dialogue and commentary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A few original entries provide new resources or ideas that add value to the discussion. Repetition of ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No new ideas or resources, and add no value to the discussion. Entries are poorly written and do not stimulate dialogue and commentary.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consistently responds with positive, respectful, and succinct comments while providing a meaningful addition to the discussion. Entries are appropriate for the assigned discussion topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most responses are positive, respectful, and succinct comments while providing a meaningful addition to the discussion. Entries are appropriate for the assigned discussion topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some responses are negative and disrespectful and/or provide little value to the discussion. Responses are inappropriate for the assigned discussion topic.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FREQUENCY</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exceeds the required number of contributions per week. Creates and sends messages more frequently than required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meets the required number of contributions per week. Sends messages as often as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Falls short of meeting the required number of contributions per week. Creates and sends messages somewhat less often than required.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>/3</td>
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**RUBRIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HYPERLINKS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes accurate hyperlinks to resources related to the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes hyperlinks to resources that enhance the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some entries include hyperlinks, but not all resources are relevant to the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entries either contain no hyperlinks or selected resources have no relevance to the topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDIOVISUAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes very helpful photos, podcasts, or videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes some helpful photos, podcasts, or videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes photos, podcasts, or videos, but some are not relevant to the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not include audiovisual, or the ones included are not relevant at all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAMMAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writes with no errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes with minor errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes with major errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. (3 or more errors per contribution).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes with numerous major errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. (More than 5 errors per contribution).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Amount and quality of information (correction, relevance and origin).
- Temporal distribution of information (continuity, integration and complementarity of contributions to the group).
- Creativity (usage of photos, videos and links to other websites).
- Level of interaction and participation with other “friends” in the group.
**SOME RESULTS**

- High participation.
- Enthusiasm.
- Management of their space (responsibility, creativity, eagerness to discover new resources).
- Improvement of interpersonal relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ answers</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you have a Facebook account before?</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think it was easy to work with Facebook?</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you learned technology?</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you paid attention to grammar?</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that using Facebook helped your Spanish?</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to work with Facebook again?</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Students’ opinions:**

“I did enjoy because I talked to other students that I did not know much, and at the same time I was learning.”

“The course made me join Facebook, and it’s fun to talk to people in Spanish, even though I don’t know much.”

“It was fun to use Facebook to work. It was good to be able to communicate in real time when I was working in a project, and I even talked about it with other people, not in the class.”
It is a social learning platform for teachers, students, and parents.

Teachers are also able to post grades, assignments and quizzes to students. Students can submit homework and view their grades and any comments the teacher may have posted about their assignment. Teachers can also create polls and post topics for discussion among the students. Teachers can differentiate and individualize learning through the creation of sub-groups within a course. After each course period is completed; the teacher closes out the network and creates a new one for the next course.

Edmodo also has iOS and Android apps available through the Apple App Store and Google Play (respectively).
Examples from teaching students (primary educ.), Universidad de Cantabria, Santander, Spain, and undergraduate students (First Year Experience Course, CSUB 101, and Passion Course CSUB 103 *Violence Against Women*)

Edmodo user guide
In this first example, and old version of Edmodo, and in Spanish, we can see the links attached to the posts shared on the wall. They are kept on a folder by the program: 

**Library.** To add materials and manage links.
Main interface, like a blog, to make comments, post links...
We may create assignments, that will appear on the calendar.
Quizzes (multiple choice, true-false, short answer, fill in the blank and matching), and polls.
Check if the assignments are turned in. Add comments for the student.

Assignment
I started reading this book not knowing what it was about. And to my surprise I really love this book so far. I love the honesty of her realities... The honesty of her dreams. I love how she lives and doesn't care what anyone says. Her father is a little frustrated with her because he wants her to be married. Her house is so cute. She has created a place where she can relax and be happy at. I enjoy reading about all of the sexying hand items that she owns. I think she uses “she” because she feels that is referring to her old self.

Comments
Me - yes, interesting ideas. the "she" is maybe to take distance and be able to tell personal things with a perspective... or/and maybe because she is another person now. we change
I hadn't read the book... until a couple of weeks ago, and I also liked it. I love how she describes the feelings that kids have, and the way the talk... we are supposed to talk and get the juice from every chapter... so we'll continue every week.
Sep 21, 2012 | Edit | Delete

(type your note here...)

Add Comment
Me to CSUB 101

HOUSE ON MANGO STREET-Chapters 1-4 (pages 3-13)

1. "The House on Mango Street"
In describing her house, or where she lives, what does Esperanza convey about her self-
identity? How is the description of her house different from other information about her and
her family's identity, such as a name, an occupation, or a physical description?

2. "Hairs"
What binds the family together in The House on Mango Street?

3. "My Name"
What does Esperanza find shameful or burdensome about her name? Why might Cisneros
have chosen this name for her protagonist?

4.

Show Full Post

Sep 21, 2012  Reply  Tag

Jannessie B. - I love how she speaks about her home. It inspires me to want to
make a comfy/fun home instead of a neat freak show house. I love how she loves
on broken things or things others consider trash. I feel that with great taste she
has a cute looking home. Her name... She sadly discovers it mean sad things in
Spanish, but at least it means hope in English. I feel like she does represent hope
because she is always looking for more to life than kit what's expected. So far I am
enjoying this book.

Oct 1, 2012
Enhancing communication: Presentational.
Tip: you can create and award badges. See the one below.
Information of each student, in About. We can also see participations for each students in Activity (posts and replies), and grades in Progress.
Poll (did you like to use Edmodo? Yes(Sí) or No (No). In this case, the poll was done with the Teaching students in Spain; in general, students like to have a place less cold than Blackboard to interact.
Generation Y students learn differently to previous learners...

- With these social media you can fuel your classes, because they enable you to chat about the subject (but also about life).
- Students connect with their peers in a personal way, what is good for the collaborative learning that we try to foster.
- Students relax in these social rooms and tend to use the language in a real way. They do not have the pressure of having to write a lot, and they are able to communicate in real time when they are working in a project.
- They are more used to these tools, and they participate more than in the learning platforms. Technology is part of these social networks, and it serves to create innovative assignments.
- Classroom modes of delivering information are repositioned. We are not the experts, nor the only providers.
References

- Fernández Ulloa, Teresa (2012): “Facebook y Twitter en la enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera”. In Catalina M. Alonso García and Domingo J. Gallego Gil: Tecnologías emergentes, Madrid: UNED.


- ---- “Connectivism: Socializing open learning”