Unlock the world.

CONTRASEÑA

Field Report: Alma College, Alma, MI

Dr. Deborah A. Dougherty

About Alma College: *Fifty miles north of Lansing and two and one-half hours northwest of Detroit, Alma College is a private liberal arts college that enrolls approximately 1,400 students and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. The college offers five degrees in 41 majors.*
Course Instructor: Dr. Deborah A. Dougherty
Courses: SPN 100 Foundations of Spanish (2 credits)
　　　SPN 201 Intermediate Span Language 1 (2 credits)
Sections: Multiple 7-week short courses
Instructors: 1
Students: 17
First implementation: January 2020

Why did you select to pilot *Contraseña*? What would you recommend most to instructors based on your experience?

I chose **Contraseña** because our program had already committed to an input-driven, standards-based curriculum for language acquisition. I've been very pleased with the comprehensiveness of the materials and the scaffolding that leads students to a personally meaningful project at the end of each unit.

How smooth was implementation? How has LingroLearning's Instructor Support compared with that offered by other publishing companies?

Implementation has been very smooth—from setting up the lessons and grade book on the instructor-end to purchase and use by students. The instructor support has been exceptional, answering any questions I or my students have had, even setting up an impromptu video call after business hours to share a screen and walk me through an issue that would have been complicated to try to explain through the chat function.

How has *Contraseña* contributed to higher levels of student engagement?

Most of my students are working with the **Aplicar** and **Comprobar** activities until they receive 95% or better. So far, I haven't had any complaints about the computer grading being "too picky"—a frequent complaint with other online supplemental materials. After the first Unit I didn't have any difficulties with students not properly submitting either.

How have the *proyectos* and social learning contributed to better learning outcomes?

Some students are more engaged with the social networking model than others. At this point, I am using the first six Units in a seven-week course, essentially as a rapid review for students who have had some previous study. Because of the pace, I haven't emphasized that component yet but plan to as we slow down to progress through the remaining Units at a presentation/practice pace rather than review. Overall, I have been pleased with the results of their projects. Much like with traditional tests, I think the learning that takes place occurs in the preparation prior to the test or project itself. I'm particularly pleased with the preparation steps that students work through to help them think about how to best select and organize the information they will present.

Field Report: California State University, Long Beach (Pilot)

Course Instructor: Leydi Ahumada
Courses: Spanish 101B Fundamentals of Spanish (4 credits)
Course Format(s): Hybrid and Fully Online
Sections: 3
Instructors: 2
Students: 75
Pilot: January 2019/August 2019

Leydi Ahumada

Why did you select to pilot *Contraseña*? What would you recommend most to instructors based on your experience?

Lo que más me gustó de **Contraseña** es la sección de **Proyectos**. Los estudiantes tienen la oportunidad de demostrar que han entendido las lecciones haciendo sus propios **proyectos** al final de cada unidad. Esto le otorga al instructor la seguridad de que está impartiendo correctamente la clase y los estudiantes se motivan más al ver y escuchar sus trabajos propios. Además, **Contraseña** tiene un gran contenido cultural. Los estudiantes estuvieron expuestos a arte y cultura tanto peninsular como latinoamericana. Desde **Las Meninas** de Diego Velázquez hasta **El eclipse** de Augusto Monterroso. Lo que más recomiendo a los instructores son los lesson plans que están preparados para 50 minutos de clase. Están muy bien organizados y complementados con actividades divertidas y beneficiosas para los estudiantes

How has *Contraseña* contributed to higher levels of student engagement?

Lo que los estudiantes más disfrutaron de **Contraseña** fueron los videos con las explicaciones en inglés y dibujos animados. Los videos son muy coloridos y ayudan a los estudiantes a crear conexiones entre lo que están viendo y lo que están aprendiendo creando así niveles más altos de retención del idioma.

In face to face and hybrid courses, how readily do students connect the out-of-class work with the in-class communicative practice? Are they doing the work?

El hecho de que los estudiantes tienen que hacer la tarea antes de la clase crea un nivel de responsabilidad más alto en ellos, ya que si no hacen su tarea no están listos para participar en las clases. En el momento en el que ellos entienden que para poder absorber un idioma nuevo necesitan participar constantemente se comprometen más a hacer sus tareas.

How have the *proyectos* and social learning contributed to better learning outcomes

La sección de **proyectos** es muy eficaz. A los estudiantes les encanta escucharse ellos mismos hablando español en videos y audios, ya que hablar español es su objetivo principal. El hecho de que puedan crear algo propio desde cero los motiva cada día más.

Field Report: Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Visiting Instructor: LK Phelps
Courses: Spanish 1003 Intensive Elementary Spanish (Face to Face)
Sections: 18
Instructors: 8
Students: 383
First implementation: August 2018

LK Phelps

Why did you select *Contraseña*? What would you recommend most to instructors considering the program for adoption?

The Introductory Spanish Language Program Director selected **Contraseña** because of its emphasis on student-centered, communicative and culturally-informed materials and activities. As an instructor with three years of experience utilizing this program, I have come to appreciate the variety of activities included in the **Conversar** section (activities to be used in-class) as well as the general logic behind how the course is structured. I feel that students are able to continuously build upon their skills throughout the course. In a related way, I would especially recommend the program to other instructors because of the ease with which I, as an instructor, can guide students throughout the learning process and allow them to take initiative to build upon their language-learning skills.

How smooth was implementation? How has LingroLearning's Instructor Support compared with that offered by other publishing companies?

While my experience interacting with other publishing companies in the past has been somewhat limited, I do feel that LingroLearning's instructor and student support has been consistently reliable and collaborative. As an instructor, I have especially appreciated that my feedback, suggestions and opinions have been valued and, in some cases, implemented in order to make improvements to the program.

How has *Contraseña* contributed to higher levels of student engagement?

I feel that **Contraseña** has contributed most to student engagement through the relevant **Conversar**, in-class activities, which allow students to practice grammar, vocabulary and cultural topics in a meaningful context. Students have shared that they like the centralized, "all-in-one" nature of LingroHub, as they are able to access a multitude of resources all in one place.

In face to face and hybrid courses, how readily do students connect the out-of-class work with the in-class communicative practice? Are they "doing the work?"

After an adjustment period of sorts, students begin to make meaningful connections between the out-of-class and in-class work. Once they do, I find many students not only make these connections but thrive with **Contraseña's** flipped classroom approach. I have been privileged to teach a small cohort of students over two semesters, and have especially seen these students progress in their effective use of the program. Students appreciate the variety in and creative nature of the project-based assessments. I have seen students with a range of learning needs and language abilities perform well with the **proyectos**.

Field Report: Randolph Macon College, Ashland, VA

Course Instructor: Dr. María José Bordera
Courses: Spanish 111/112 Elementary Spanish 1 & 2 Face to face (3 credits)
    Spanish 115 Intensive Elementary Spanish Face to face (4 credits)
    Spanish 211/212 Intermediate Spanish 1 & 2 Face to face (3 credits)
Sections: 13
Instructors: 7 (5 full-time, 2 part-time)
Students: 208
First implementation: August 2019

Dr. María José Bordera

Why did you select *Contraseña*? What would you recommend most to instructors considering the program for adoption?

We chose **Contraseña** for two reasons: the prohibitive cost of printed textbooks (an ongoing concern) and the pedagogy. Our previous materials were no longer clicking with the students; there was a misalignment between teaching with traditional materials and the skills and interests the new generation of learners bring. We felt an urgent need to find more cost effective, engaging course materials. **Contraseña** gradually transitions everyone to more innovative 21st-century communicative approaches.

How smooth was implementation? How has LingroLearning's Instructor Support compared with that offered by other publishing companies?

Using **Contraseña** was intimidating at first because it involved a drastic change from to what we had been using previously. Once we became accustomed to the rhythm, I felt curious and excited about what it had to offer. **Contraseña** offers seamless design and a fresh approach to foreign language teaching by keeping in mind the interests and learning styles of a very diverse student body. The pedagogy feeds off the communicative approach, but it does not stop there; it takes it to a new level and adapts to the learning needs and styles of the newer generation that is not learning the way many of us used to learn. Our students, while a bit intimidated at first, have loved using **Contraseña** because it makes them do what they really want to do: to speak the language without feeling afraid of tests that, often times, do not reflect their language skills. The support team is unlike any I have seen—they are the best, most courteous, helpful, efficient and competent in the field. Any time there may be an issue, they are working on it to resolve as quickly as possible.

How has *Contraseña* contributed to higher levels of student engagement?

Students have remained a lot more engaged with the program than I have ever witnessed before. The topics are fresh and the format and assignments are different, which connects with how they learn these days. While some come to class shy and unwilling to participate in activities at first, they build their self-confidence in the group setting. They also learn from each other and help each other as they complete the *Conversar* activities. Many comment on the LinguaMeeting coaching sessions that provide opportunities for further practice with a native speaker. In short, students say the activities are in sync with their interests.

How have the *proyectos* and social learning contributed to better learning outcomes?

A lot! This has been the trick in my view—the pedagogy is truly focusing on communication, in making meaningful communication happen. When there are breakdowns, students help one another problem solve those breakdowns.

Field Report: University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH .

Course Director: Dr. Jen Vojtko Rubí
Courses: Spanish 1001/1002 Basic Spanish 1 & 2 Hybrid and Fully Online (5 credits)
   Spanish 1011/1012 Extended Basic Spanish (all modalities) (4 credits)
   To come: 1013/1014
Sections: 116
Instructors: 34
Students: 2196
First implementation: January 2019

Dr. Jen Vojtko Rubí

Why did you select *Contraseña*? What would you recommend most to instructors considering the program for adoption?

We chose **Contraseña** for a variety of reasons including the price point, task-based activities and opportunities for authentic conversation in class from day 1. It is hard to pick one thing that I like the most. I'd have to say that it is a tie between the strategies that the students learn before each **Texto** and before each **Proyecto** and then the **proyectos** themselves. The **proyectos** allow for all of the students to have a voice in the classroom and I learn so much about my students! They take ownership of and pride in their projects because the audience is their peers. For instructors considering **Contraseña**, we have been able to successfully implement the program across contexts from 3-hour extended courses to 5-hour intensive hybrid courses to online courses.

How smooth was implementation? How has LingroLearning's Instructor Support compared with that offered by other publishing companies?

We had a traditional, 5-day a week program and transitioned to a flipped and hybrid program so we offered extensive training on both pedagogy and technology. Instructor Support has been above and beyond what I expected. The one-on-one instructor support and instructor office hours were great supports for my colleagues knowing that there was an actual person behind "tech support." The greatest value as a Coordinator has been the ease of communication and response time from LingroLearning.

How has *Contraseña* contributed to higher levels of student engagement?

Students are engaged from the moment they arrive to class. With the online preparation work, they all have the opportunity to start at the same place. In general, students experience success with the course because we focus on what they can do with the language and not just what they know about the language. Students have commented that they enjoy the in-class time because they are able to "practice and review in class instead of spending that time learning the material", the instructors are able to spend more "one-on-one time with students" and that it is a "collaborative course in the sense that you are able to work with your peers and hear from others in your class, which helps everyone to learn and grow more as students."

How have grades and course evaluations compared with those prior to using *Contraseña*?

We administered OPIs with four of our 1002 sections in the Fall 2019 semester (two traditional sections using a different textbook and two sections using **Contraseña**). In very preliminary findings, we found that 36% of the students in the traditional classes reached at least Intermediate Low, while 57% of those using **Contraseña** reached at least Intermediate Low. We still have a long way to go with preparing our students for Intermediate level Spanish, but almost all students in the **Contraseña** sections had only used **Contraseña** for that one semester.

Field Report: University of South Florida, Sarasota-Manatee, FL

Visiting Instructor: Michael Fehily, MA
Courses: Spanish 1120/1121 Beginning Spanish 1 & 2 (Face to Face and Fully Online)
Sections: 19
Instructors: 6
Students: 379
First implementation: January 2019

Michael Fehily, MA

Why did you select *Contraseña*? What would you recommend most to instructors considering the program for adoption?

Contraseña supports my three guiding principles of successful language teaching and learning: Prepare, Practice, Perform. I expect students to follow these three steps in order to achieve the learning goals set out for them in our courses here at USF. The organization and flow in each unit develops the skills and behaviors that will engage a student to carry out each step. The *Vocabulario* and *Gramática* visual presentations **prepare** the student to successfully complete the activities that follow. There are ample opportunities to **practice** what they have prepared. Finally, the *proyecto* offers them with the chance to show what they can do with the language they've encountered in the unit. They perform by incorporating all they have learned in a unit in a creative *proyecto*. For these reasons, I would recommend *Contraseña* to any instructor of Spanish without hesitation.

How has *Contraseña* contributed to higher levels of student engagement?

I have routinely received positive comments about the logical set up of the *preparar* sections (*Vocabulario* and *Gramática*) that are followed by meaningful practice activities while the material is still fresh in the mind. They have also enjoyed the challenge of completing the *proyectos*, which make real-world use of what they are learning. A hallmark of the program has been showing students what they can do in the target language, right from the beginning of the course when they complete their social media profile.

How well do students respond to demonstrating their learning through a project-based approach

The carefully worded directions before each *proyecto* provide students with a clear map of how to proceed. For some *proyectos*, I have customized the directions, recommending that they insert both the video/audio files along with a written "script" (ungraded) that corresponds to the video/audio file. This has worked very well for me and has made grading even easier since I know what the student is trying to communicate. Students have been so inspired by what they've created that they've permitted me to share completed *proyectos* as "modelos" with students the following semester. Students have found this very motivating. The assessment rubrics come to life. The social learning element in *Contraseña* has helped me to build a supportive community of learners, which is particularly noteworthy in my fully online sections.