

FACEBOOK-BASED TASKS

Simple, autobiographical profile
writing assignment for a Spanish course for beginners
(applicable to other languages supported by FB)

TARGET GROUP

Beginners, A1/ A2

CONTEXT

(Ex: in class, online etc.)

Virtual learning environment

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Systematizing students’ acquired knowledge during a beginners course
- Learning how to present oneself in a virtual environment
- Engaging in informal written conversations
- Handing in formal written tasks

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

[Facebook](#), other Internet sites

CONTENT

Steps:

1) The students should enter basic information in Spanish, including a written description of themselves, their university, and their family. For this purpose, Facebook is a good fit, because much of the basic information included in the Facebook profile is related to material that is usually covered in a beginners course: *la escuela, la universidad* [school, university], *el empleador* [employer], and *la información básica* [basic information].

2) Once the students have completed their profiles, they are asked to “friend” the instructor and the other students in the class and to begin posting target language messages on one another’s pages.

3) Beyond the formal, graded writing assignment completed in Facebook, the students are also asked at various times throughout the semester to post informal assignments.

For instance, you can have students write about their favourite athletes without referring to the person by name. Then, other students read these posts and attempted to identify the individual based on the descriptions given.

ASSESSMENT

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS’ WORK

TEACHER SELF-EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY

ADDED VALUE

(Increase in value created by the use of the ICT tool)

- It allows students to engage with peers, classmates in a familiar format and for an academic purpose.
- It provides opportunities for informal conversations in the target language.
- Facebook platform allows for access to authentic materials and the sharing of culturally relevant photos, videos, and music.
- The nature of the student-to-student and student-to-instructor interactions is more multidimensional than in traditional writing assignments.
- Usually, the traditional writing assignment is accompanied by onetime feedback and assessment from the instructor whereas in the Facebook environment, feedback can be delivered more dynamically. It can be more easily given and can be done so immediately.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Example provided by Joe Terantino and Karen Graf

Source: Terantino, Joe and Karen Graf. (2011) [‘Using Facebook in the Language Classroom as Part of the Net Generation Curriculum’](#), The Language Educator