

CASE STUDY

Mayfair Middle School and Mayfair High School at Bellflower Unified School District



Mayfair Middle School (MMS) and Mayfair High School (MHS) are public high schools that are part of Bellflower Unified School District in Los Angeles, CA

The focus of this case study was on novice learners in French and Mandarin classes as well as advanced learners in the Spanish classes. As part of instruction and assessment, teachers at both schools used Extempore twice a week for both speaking tasks and language assessments.

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"I can play back [my Extempore responses] and listen to how I articulated the French words and make adjustments." - Student

As mentioned, the instructors hosted assessments on the Extempore platform twice a week for student completion. To ensure consistency of both variables and materials, the language teachers at MMS and MHS used the same assessment formats and rubrics throughout the school

year. At the end of the school year, the teachers reflected on the benefit that the platform had in their classrooms: "This is the language lab we have been waiting for...students can practice the language anywhere, anytime and in all modes of communication," shared one instructor. Others noticed improvements in students' pronunciation, crediting consistent use of Extempore to host speaking activities and assessments. Finally, other instructors noted the versatility of the platform, citing "it has all the features to support language learners, and students receive effective feedback."

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Findings

At both MMS and MHS, the Spanish, French, and Mandarin teachers took detailed notes of student performance on assessments, comparing results from the second semester to the first semester across courses. Each class saw significant improvement among student performance.

- French 1 Period 2 had 50% of students score at the outstanding level (n=24) in the 2nd semester compared to 24% in the first semester (n=25).
- French 1 Period 3 had 52% of students score at the outstanding level (n=25) in the 2nd semester compared to 29.6% in the first semester (n=27).
- Pathway Spanish Speakers had 81.25% of students score at the outstanding level (n=18) in the 2nd semester compared to 44.4% in the first semester (n=18).
- Mandarin 1 Period 1 had 53.8% of students score at the outstanding level (n=13) in the 2nd semester compared to 25% in the first semester (n=16).
- Mandarin 1 Period 6 had 36% of students score at the outstanding level (n=25) in the 2nd semester compared to 50% in the first semester (n=14).

As a whole, these numbers show that 34.6% of 111 students performed at the outstanding level in the first semester, while 54.61% of students performed at the outstanding level in the 2nd semester.

While no causal link can be established between student performance and the Extempore platform, the integration of the platform can be seen as a valuable resource to accomplish learning goals for both students and teachers during the school year.



Extempore Activities

Teachers at MMS and MHS crafted and hosted a wide range of assessments on Extempore, taking advantage of the many features the platform has to offer. Example assessments and activities include:

- Basic question and answer audio recordings
- Interpersonal speaking with partners
- Individual presentational speaking

“Unlike considering Extempore like another tech tool, [teachers and students saw] Extempore as a teaching and learning tool.”

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Rollout Process

Because MMS and MHS participate in a 1:1 laptop program, and because all students, faculty, and staff have a G Suite for Education account, the rollout process was extraordinarily simple when compared to running and maintaining a physical language lab. All teachers in the department have individual instructor accounts, and all students sign in via Google single sign-on to both create and access their student accounts. This means that there are no passwords to create, remember, or recover, making for a user-friendly experience for teachers and instructors.

Student Perception of Extempore

In survey data collected from across the two schools, students showed their appreciation of the Extempore platform and commented on their experience using it during the pilot. Some students claimed that Extempore was one of the most effective tools for learning in their language classes and enjoyed being able to record themselves speaking on the platform.

Future Development Requests

Teachers at MMS and MHS within BUSD are excited to continue to use Extempore in their language classes. Teachers and students look forward to seeing a more efficient grading and feedback processes, while also anticipating new measures to track student progress.

