



Pearson Prentice Hall Adds Vocal Collaboration to Foreign Language Texts with Wimba; Students Increase Oral Practice Outside the Classroom

"Wimba complements our texts by providing students with easy access to voice recording capabilities which allow them to practice pronunciation and oral skills."

-Bob Hemmer, Executive Editor and Program Manager, MyLanguage Labs, Pearson Prentice Hall

In foreign language classes, most instructors want to increase oral practice outside the classroom but often wonder how they can hold their students accountable for doing the work. For years, whether in a traditional language lab setting or in an online environment, there has been no integrated, practical way to ensure that students are doing oral practice, or for instructors to assess or aid in their progress. But recently, thanks for Pearson Prentice Hall and Wimba, now there is.

Pearson Prentice Hall developed MySpanishLab, a nationally hosted online learning and assessment system for elementary Spanish courses in July 2007 to accompany *¡Arriba! Comunicación y cultura 5/e*. Developed in close collaboration with Spanish instructors, MySpanishLab provides powerful, easy-to-use instructor tools that have been specifically developed to address the needs of language teaching. The core of each MySpanishLab course is an electronic version of the Student Activities Manual, which is integrated with a wide array of 24x7 language-learning tools and resources including a flexible gradebook, an interactive version of the student textbook, all the audio and

video materials to accompany each program, and perhaps most importantly, Wimba Voice.

With Wimba Voice a part of MySpanishLab, students can easily record verbal responses to homework assignments and then submit them to their instructors for review and feedback.

For example, a student taking a Spanish class sees an image depicting a police officer and a civilian. The instructions read: Look at the picture. You have just witnessed a crime and a policeman approaches you and asks questions. Greet the policeman, introduce yourself, and spell your name so he can take notes. Then tell the policeman your phone number and say goodbye.

Under the image of the police officer and the civilian is a 'record' button that, thanks to Wimba Voice, allows students to record their spoken assignment. Now the students can practice speaking in Spanish and then, once they've spoken to their satisfaction, can send the vocal spoken assignment to their teacher. Before Wimba, this was practically impossible to do.



Pearson Prentice Hall
MySpanishLab
Upper Saddle River, NJ
www.myspanishlab.com

WIMBA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- Wimba Voice

KEY BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

- Increase their oral proficiency
- Vocally respond to oral activities
- Receive audio feedback from teachers
- Enjoy asynchronous online communication with classmates & instructors

Bob Hemmer

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WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

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-Bob Hemmer, Pearson Prentice Hall

ABOUT WIMBA

Wimba develops web-based collaboration software designed for online education, language learning and live interactive communications. Our collaborative applications enable learning professionals to fully embrace the new wave of teaching and learning opportunities afforded by the Internet; regardless of geographic location, bandwidth or operating system. Our classroom collaboration solutions enable educators to conduct live, online classes, meetings, office hours and other collaborations, and our language learning tools add oral interaction directly into course content, webpages, study groups and assessments. With simplicity and power, Wimba adds new dimensions to online, accessible education, enhancing the learning experience for both students and instructors.

Submitting a vocal recording also enters a student's response into the MySpanishLab gradebook. With one click, instructors can listen to a student's verbal response and can even enter a grade in the gradebook. If instructors wish, they can also respond to their students with recorded verbal feedback!

With Wimba Voice in MySpanishLab, students:

- Increase their oral proficiency without leaving the online environment.
- Record their voices in response to oral activities from their Spanish Student Activities Manual.
- Receive audio feedback as instructors can access any or all of the students' recorded oral responses directly from the course gradebook, then listen, enter a grade, make comments in writing, or record a response in return.
- Engage in asynchronous online communication with their classmates or instructors.

"We wanted students and instructors to have a seamless integration of voice recording tools with their homework assignments," says Bob Hemmer, Executive Editor and Program Manager, MyLanguageLabs. "Wimba complements our texts by providing students with easy access to voice recording capabilities which allow them to practice pronunciation and oral skills. Wimba also provides instructors with a voice recording tool which allows them to respond orally to their students' work."

More than 150 instructors use Wimba Voice within MySpanishLab to teach more than 10,500 students throughout the United States. While most assignments occur weekly, some assignments are now offered multiple times per week.

Thus far, students and instructors alike have reacted "very well" according to Hemmer. He notes that instructors love that Wimba Voice has been integrated into Pearson Prentice Hall's language learning platform because there just no need to go outside our platform to use a Wimba tool.

Pearson Prentice Hall recently launched MyFrenchLab to accompany Points de départ and Rond-Point, MyItalianLab to accompany Percorsi, and 5 new MySpanishLab courses (*¡Anda! Curso elemental, Atando cabos 3/e, Identidades 2/e, Español escrito 6/e, and Estructura de los sonidos del español*). Wimba Voice has been added to each of these courses—all ready for use for fall 2008 classes.

"Convenience and greater accountability," replies Hemmer when asked what benefits students and instructors have seen from Wimba Voice with their language texts. "Instructors now know that students are really practicing oral skills."