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# Making Sense of Instructional Classroom Technologies

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## Introduction to Study

With the Digital Literacy Age, teachers are faced with the challenge to incorporate technology into their classroom in order to engage the students of the "Millennial Generation." This study explores different technologies as well as how to implement those technologies into a Spanish class as a way to create an engaging and meaningful learning environment.

## Method of Study

- Qualitative self study.
- Implement various types of technology including iPad, SMART board, YouTube, online game sites (Conjuguemos), Course Management Site, Prezi, movie clips, and music videos
- Gather data via personal field notes, supervisor field notes, and student feedback

## Context of Study

**Who:** 27 students in my 7<sup>th</sup> hour Spanish III class.

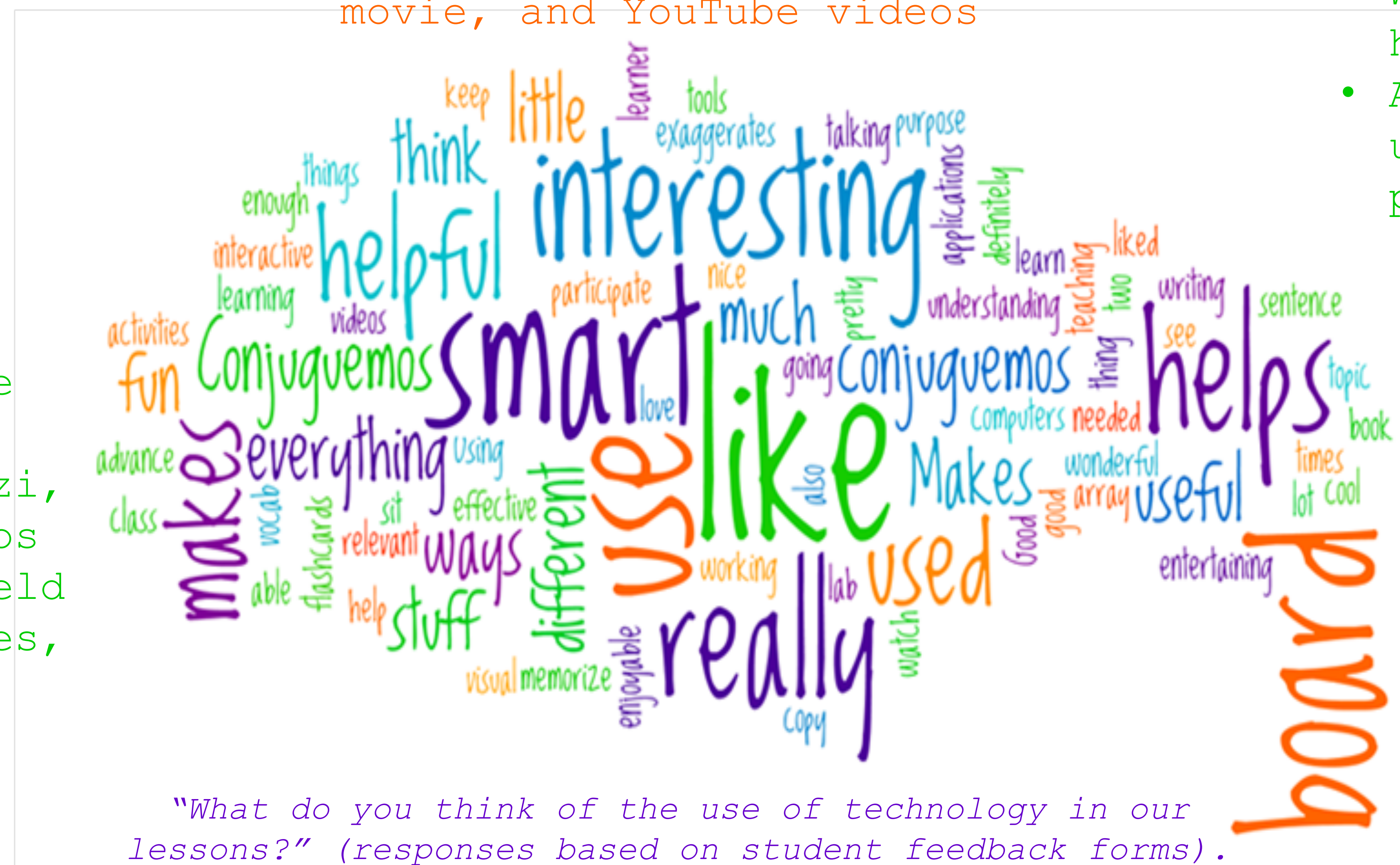
**Where:** A large high school fringe district.

**When:** August-December 2011 during my fifteen week student teaching experience.

## Findings

Through the exploration of technology, I developed the following Categories for Classroom Technology:

- **Functional:** technology used to enhance classroom management. Ex: iPad, SMART board.
- **Interactive:** hands-on technology. Ex: online game sites, CMS
- **Visual:** less hands-on technology that still engages students. Ex: music, movie, and YouTube videos



Based on student feedback and my field notes:

- Students enjoy the use of technology in the classroom.
- Student preferences differ teacher preferences (**Students:** online game sites, SMART board activities, review games, videos vs. **Teachers:** CMS, blogs).

## Classroom Implications

Based on the findings, the following are important classroom considerations when using technology:

- Find a balance between student and teacher preferences.
- When technology is used, teacher should be prepared so technology is seamless and doesn't detract from learning.
- When technology is used, it must have a purpose.
- A variety of technology should be used to reach different student preferences and learning styles

## Connecting Findings to Literature

- Students prefer a great deal of technology (Buzzard, 2011).
- Supplemental technology has the potential to enhance student learning (McCabe, 2011).
- Teachers fear of technology can lead to misuse or over-dependency on technology. It should not be used simply for the sake of using technology (Murat, 2011).
- Technology "provides students with more individualized learning experiences, which contributes to both autonomous and lifelong learning" (Murat, 2011, pg. 43).