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**COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY INSTRUCTION TO ENCOURAGE
STUDENT OUTPUT IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE**

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative research study examined the observed behaviors and reported experiences of 24 second year Spanish students at the high school level when implementing communicative strategy instruction in an effort to encourage student output in the target language. In order to help students succeed in the communicative language classroom setting, in which full participation in the target language is expected, students were explicitly taught several communication strategies and were then provided with opportunities to practice them frequently in the form of partner, group, and whole class communicative activities using the target language. The students' native tongue, English, played just as important of a role as the target language as it was used in direct strategy instruction and student self-reflection. The data from this study suggests that a communicative language classroom may lead to higher levels of student success in comprehension of the target language, increased levels of participation in the target language, and higher levels of student enjoyment, confidence, and progress in speaking the target language.

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RESEARCHER STANCE

My childhood experiences growing up in a Hispanic community in Southern California instilled within me a great interest in and enthusiasm for the Spanish language. After moving to New York during middle school, I continued to fuel that passion by taking Spanish classes all through middle and high school, eventually deciding at the university level to study Secondary Education with a concentration in the language. The thrill of being able to speak and understand another language that I often heard around me, along with the excitement of learning about other cultures and their different lifestyles, always made Spanish my most favorite subject area. I hoped to become a teacher who could share with my students the same love for the language and appreciation for the global community that my teachers instilled within me.

Today I am in my seventh year of teaching high school Spanish. Of the nearly 170 students I see daily in my Spanish classes, I ask myself how many feel that same passion and excitement that I felt in high school for the Spanish language. Am I filling their daily 41 minutes in the Spanish classroom with activities that they find personally relevant, or am I too focused on the grammar and vocabulary of the curriculum that they need to know for the district-wide mid-term and final exams? I see my classroom as a place where my students and I work together to gain the academic knowledge of the course and practice the material while also striving for personal relevance to the content. I want my

students to leave my classroom with a personal connection to the material, not just the ability to recite vocabulary words and phrases that will never serve any future purpose.

The main goal that I have for all of my students is that they feel comfortable speaking the language, whether they do so with their friends for fun outside of the classroom, communicate with native Spanish speakers in our own community, or eventually travel abroad and become immersed in the language. My ability to speak the language gave me the confidence needed to live for the summer in two different countries and to take part in a service trip to another, where I witnessed several different ways of life, helping me to appreciate even more the luxuries I often take for granted. I hope to help my students develop a sense of global awareness by showing them that there's much more to the world than the suburban enclave in which they live and go to school. While the chances of all of my students living abroad as I did are slim, I do believe that there is a very good chance that each of them will at least once in their life experience a situation in which the ability to understand and speak Spanish will be helpful. If I take on a communicative approach to my teaching and directly teach my students the strategies they will need to succeed in the immersion-type setting 41 minutes a day, 5 days a week, hopefully I will produce language learners who are willing to take risks both in and outside of the classroom, now and in the future.

What are the observed behaviors and reported experiences of second year

Spanish students when implementing communicative strategy instruction to encourage student output in the target language? I have decided on this as my research question to challenge both myself and my students. In my seven years of teaching, I have never been able to consecutively conduct several entire class sessions in the target language with this second year group. I do expect to hear common phrases in the target language, and in past years my students and I have had a couple of “Spanish only” days, but what purpose does that serve when it lacks consistency? I confess to finding excuse after excuse for reverting back to English in the classroom simply because it is easier, blaming their limited vocabulary bank or the complex grammar content. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages suggests that we teachers, along with the students as well, use Spanish 90% of the time in the classroom (Burke, 2010). I have to admit that these second year students and I are nowhere near that point. Of course I know that if I want my students to use the language with one another and with me, I need to set the precedence from the very beginning. Also, I need to provide them with the skills and strategies needed to communicate with one another in the target language as much as possible. By implementing communicative strategy instruction with these second year learners, I hope to create students who are avid participators willing to freely speak the target language with their classmates and within the world around them.

As a result of taking on a more communicative approach with a group of

second year students who were not taught using this method during their first year of study, I would expect a fairly good outcome in terms of the progress of the students' language learning. Although forty one minutes in a "sink or swim" environment is nowhere near comparable to actually being put in an immersion situation like that of being in another country, it is my professional duty to try my best to create a similar environment for my students. I expect students will advance in terms of their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities based on the small amount of research I have read so far. By November or December, they will hopefully understand the written and spoken language much better than they did at the start of the school year. Since I am more concerned with their speaking skills, I will pay closer attention to their class participation and communication in the target language with me and with other classmates. I anticipate students will use the target language more freely without fear of saying something incorrectly, develop skills like circumlocution, and hopefully participate more often.

My anticipated outcomes might not be the reality at the end of my study, and I must be open to that possibility. Although Spanish 2 is an elective course, many students choose to enroll in it because some colleges look highly upon students who study a language. Not every student is excited to be in my classroom and I have even had past students who refused to speak the language no matter how hard I tried to motivate them. While some simply spoke English at all

times instead of the target language, other shy students didn't speak at all and accepted low participation grades the entire year simply because I could not break them out of their shell and get them to raise their hand or ever speak in class. While it is my belief that each child may reach a different level of language acquisition due to several varying factors perhaps beyond my control, I do believe that every child is capable of learning and speaking a second language. I hope to create students who want to speak the language, but I will surely encounter obstacles along the way that will affect my anticipated outcomes of the study. I must remain open to unexpected outcomes, along with the varying opinions and experiences of each of my participants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

“Research indicates that effective language instruction must provide significant levels of meaningful communication and interactive feedback in the target language in order for students to develop language and cultural proficiency” (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2010). ACTFL suggests that second language teachers and students use the target language for approximately ninety percent of instructional time (ACTFL, 2010). English, however, is still the dominant language in most World Language classrooms today and not enough meaningful, communicative activities in the target language are being included to help students advance to higher levels of proficiency (Burke, 2010). Research suggests that there are several necessary components to a communicative approach to language teaching that can promote second language acquisition and produce communicatively competent students. A comfortable language learning environment conducive to language acquisition and that encourages student output in the target language is one in which students have multiple opportunities to hear the target language (Chambers, 1991; Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Grove, 1999; Krashen, 1982; Pachler, Barnes, & Field; 2009) , to speak it themselves and communicate with others in authentic activities (Chambers, 1991; Doughty & Pica, 1986; Gibbons, 1993; Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Lee, 1995; Swain, 2005), and to receive explicit

instruction and guided reflection on language strategies (Ceo-DiFrancesco, 2003; Chamot & Küpper, 1989; Cohen, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1987).

Communicative Competence and Performance: A Communicative Approach

To be most effective, a second language learning program must emphasize from the very beginning the importance of getting one's meaning across, and not on grammatical accuracy (Canale & Swain, 1980). Canale and Swain (1980) label *communicative competence* as the relationship and interaction between the knowledge of the rules of grammar, known as *grammatical competence*, and the knowledge of the rules of language use, or *sociolinguistic competence*. *Communicative performance*, on the other hand, is the implementation of these competencies during the actual language production and comprehension. A communicative approach to language teaching must include both grammatical and sociolinguistic competence, addressing both communicative competence and performance. While communicative competence cannot be directly measured, communicative performance can be assessed by observing students' ability to use the language in "real second language situations and for *authentic* communication purposes" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 6).

Canale and Swain (1980) list five guiding principles for developing a communicative approach to second language teaching. First, a communicative approach must integrate the grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competencies, emphasizing the equal importance of each. *Strategic competence*

is the knowledge of communication strategies to be used when there is a breakdown in the grammatical or sociolinguistic competencies (Canale & Swain, 1980) or the coping strategies that one uses to compensate for his lack of understanding of the rules (Savignon, 1997). In 1983, Canale added a fourth component of *discourse competence*, the knowledge of how ideas and sentences connect to form a meaningful whole (Savignon, 1997). Canale and Swain's (1980) second principle to the communicative approach is to base one's teaching on the needs of the learners and the language that they would most likely need to function in an authentic setting, focusing less on the grammatical and sociolinguistic competencies that native speakers possess and that second language learners will most likely never attain. Canale and Swain (1980) also stress the importance of providing students with the opportunity to interact often with highly competent speakers of the language to be able to assess their own communicative performance, but recognize that this is an extremely challenging piece for second language teachers to bring into the classroom. The fourth principle encourages explicit instruction of more confusing grammatical pieces that students cannot easily compare to their native language, but stresses the importance of including them in a communicative context that is more easily understandable and relatable for the students. Lastly, Canale and Swain (1980) encourage a cross-curricular approach to developing communicative competence, mentioning direct instruction on grammatical categories and rules of discourse

within the first language program, along with the possibility of teaching students the culture of the language being studied within the social studies curriculum and instruction.

Oral Proficiency

Sandra Savignon (1997) and Michael Canale and Merrill Swain's work (1980) has proven to be very influential for those teachers and researchers who want to know what it takes to teach and learn a language, but the idea of communicative competence and its four components does not fully answer the question of "What does it mean to know a language?" There has been a shift in the last three decades from competency to proficiency (Fares & Zinke, 2008). Proficiency is the "ability to use the language to perform language functions within a variety of contexts/contents and with a given degree of accuracy" (Shrum & Glisan, 2000, p. 173). The first attempt at defining levels of competency and proficiency for the language teaching community nationwide was published in the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* in 1982 by ACTFL, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The guidelines defined levels of language proficiency but did not link them to classroom instruction or content, so later in 1996 came the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*, listing what world language students should know and be able to do (Fares & Zinke, 2008). The first of the standards' five goal areas is communication, followed by cultures, connections, comparisons, and

communities. Language classrooms of the past focused solely “on the *how* (grammar) to say *what* (vocabulary),” but “the current organizing principle for foreign language study is *communication*, which also highlights the *why*, the *whom*, and the *when*” (ACTFL, 1996, p. 3). “*Knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom* – all the linguistic and social knowledge required for effective human-to-human interaction is encompassed in those ten words” (ACTFL, 1996, p. 3).

Levels of proficiency to be expected of students depending upon years of language study have been consistent with studies conducted after students’ two years of studying the language, but mixed results have been shown with studies of students after their fourth year (Shrum & Glisan, 2000). As cited in Shrum and Glisan (2000), studies by Glisan and Foltz (1998) and Huebner and Jensen (1992) with Spanish 2 students upon completion of their second year of study rated students from Novice-Mid to Novice-High. Students at the Novice level can communicate minimally using memorized lists and phrases in the context of informal settings and may sometimes be difficult to understand even for those used to dealing with non-native speakers (Shrum & Glisan, 2000). More specifically, the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines C Speaking* (1999) state that a learner at the Novice-Mid level may

- use a limited number of isolated words and memorized phrases;

- use two or three words at time when responding to direct questions;
- pause frequently to search for simple vocabulary;
- resort to repetition, words from their native language, or silence; and
- may be understood, but with great difficulty, by those accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.

Learners at the Novice-High level, on the other hand, are able to

- handle a variety of communicative tasks, but cannot sustain performance;
- hold conversations about predictable topics, including basic personal information, activities, preferences, and needs;
- ask very few formulation questions when prompted to do so;
- appear fluent and accurate due to their knowledge of learned phrases; and
- can generally be understood by those accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers as frequent misunderstandings can be resolved with repetition or rephrasing.

Teacher awareness of and familiarity with proficiency levels can help with establishing course objectives and content, as well as determining what students

should be able to do upon completion of a course or an entire program of study (Shrum & Glisan, 2000).

Second Language Acquisition

According to Krashen (1982), adults develop competence in a second language in two ways. The first way is through language *acquisition* by using the language for real communication, subconsciously like children do when they first learn language, while the second way is through language *learning*, or the formal instruction in the rules of the language and how to use them. His Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis acknowledges the existence of the two different processes and claims that adults can still acquire a second language just as a child does his first, but the hypothesis does not imply that adults will achieve a native level of performance. It also does not tell which aspects of the language are acquired and which are learned. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) further expands upon the idea of language acquisition as it states that learners acquire language by understanding input that is slightly above their current level of competence. This hypothesis claims that a learner can naturally move from stage i , his current competence level, to $i+1$, his next level of competence, simply by understanding the input he hears and comprehending the unlearned structures. Language teachers encourage student understanding as they provide context using pictures, realia, and movement, but most important is the *comprehensible input* teachers provide as they modify their speech and make adjustments that may include

speaking a little slower and using language that is slightly less complex (Krashen, 2003).

While Krashen's input hypothesis in the 1980s argued that comprehensible input was the only necessary component for second language acquisition to take place, during the same decade Merrill Swain developed the *output* hypothesis, arguing the importance of the act of producing language (Swain, 2005). Her notion of *comprehensible output*, as opposed to Krashen's *comprehensible input*, recognized the negotiation of meaning between two interlocutors as a key component to language acquisition. That negotiation of meaning, however, had to be much more than simply getting one's meaning across in order for it to lead to acquisition as it had to include a message "conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately" (p. 473). Now more than thirty years after her original research, Swain (2005) revisits the idea of comprehensible input, as she believes that past research has interpreted the theory's sole focus as the product itself, the language produced, but the theory is actually focused much more on the process involved when producing language. Three functions to output in connection to second language acquisition are the noticing/trigger function that explains the importance of the learner's conscious recognition of his own linguistic inadequacies, the hypothesis testing function that recognizes output as the learner's trial run to test his hypothesis of how to say or write an idea, and the metalinguistic (reflective) function that highlights the value

of reflecting on language produced by others or self. The shift in the view of output as a product to output as a process further argues the idea that speaking and writing are tools that help construct and deconstruct knowledge, helping learners comprehend and reshape their thinking and learning (Swain, 2005).

Also of importance for today's language teachers is Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that certain affective variables directly relate to second language acquisition and achievement. According to Lightbrown and Spada (1999), *affect* refers to aspects such as motivation, needs, attitudes, and emotional states and the *affective filter* is the imaginary wall that learners often put up in response to those affective variables, preventing them from acquiring the language of the comprehensible input. The affective filter of learners who are tense, angry, anxious, or bored, for example, will block the input and prevent acquisition from taking place. Teachers and students can easily relate to this hypothesis as it may explain why some learners may be more successful than others, even when given the same exact learning opportunities, or why individuals who tried to learn a language were unsuccessful due to situations in which they felt stressed or uncomfortable (Lightbrown & Spada, 1999). Learners with the right attitude will be willing to seek more input, confidently try to interact with native speakers, and be more receptive to the input they receive (Krashen, 1982).

A Comfortable Language Learning Environment

A student's attitudes toward second language learning and his own confidence levels in learning the language directly influence his success rate. A classroom that is supportive and allows students to feel comfortable in taking risks with the language without fear of failure can help them feel greater levels of confidence and in turn develop a more positive attitude toward language learning (Gibbons, 1993). Language teachers can easily recognize the more motivated students by their active participation and the interest they express in the content. Teachers can encourage increased student motivation by creating a classroom in which the content is interesting and relevant to students' ages and ability levels, the learning goals are challenging yet attainable and clear, and the environment is supportive and non-threatening (Lightbrown & Spada, 1999).

Teacher and student expectations for the language learning environment must be discussed and made clear, as seen in Tsou's 2005 study on the effects of *participation instruction* (PI). Tsou defines PI as a strategy that includes raising students' awareness of the importance of participating in the language as well as providing students with the strategies necessary to know how to do so. Tsou hypothesized that PI would lead to an increase in students' oral participation in class, while also improving their speaking proficiency. One of two English as a Foreign Language classes at a Taiwanese university served as the experimental group in which PI was implemented over the course of twelve weeks. During the

first two weeks, the teacher informed the students of the importance of participation in teacher-led discussions, paused often to encourage questions and comments from students, and provided direct instruction on communication strategies to use in class discussions. Students in the experimental group participated more both during the PI period and until the end of the semester, expressing feelings of satisfaction and excitement with the experience and reporting raised interest levels in language learning. When the teacher's and students' classroom expectations are aligned and when students are aware of expected classroom participation behaviors, then students can feel more comfortable and confident when participating in the target language (Tsou, 2005).

The classroom itself can be filled with various support materials to aid the students in participating in the target language. Pachler, Barnes, and Field (2009) list several strategies for language teachers when supporting student competence in the target language in the classroom. In terms of the classroom environment, they recommend that students be taught the key phrases used daily in the classroom, such as "What is the word for...?" and "Can you help me?" These may also be displayed throughout the room or in lists in the students' books. Real-life expressions should also be included, such as phrases of disbelief and compliments for classmates. A *request-box* in the classroom can be a great addition as it allows students to write down a phrase that they wish to learn in the target language, and then the teacher instructs the entire class on how to say that

phrase so everyone can use it in the future. One last suggestion for creating a comfortable learning environment involves rewarding the students' spontaneous use of the L2, including use of phrases learned in previous lessons and attempts at creating new combinations of words or structures, whether successful or not.

The Teacher's Role: Comprehensible Input

Second language acquisition research suggests that the classroom should be a place where students are given the opportunity to experience input, output, interaction, and negotiation of meaning in the target language to promote gains in target language proficiency (Wilkerson, 2008). Maximum exposure to the target language can benefit students' linguistic confidence and competence, and the students' exposure to the language as provided by the teacher is essential in supporting the language learning process (Pachler et al., 2009). Halliwell and Jones (1991) remind language teachers that students do not need to understand every word stated in the target language and that they will understand the teacher's intended meaning if she uses modified, comprehensible input. They suggest that when using the target language to explain an activity to students, teachers should use shorter phrases that still maintain the same intended meaning, emphasizing key words, using miming or gesturing to convey ideas, and using cognates and phrases the students already know. Continuously asking if the students understand, asking them to translate the teacher's ideas back into English, and switching in and out of the target language are not recommended

(Halliwell & Jones, 1991).

Teacher talk, what teachers say and ask, is crucial in the development of listening skills and student exposure to the target language (Chambers, 1991; Grove, 1999). The easiest phrases to keep in the target language are the classroom commands given to students because they are constant and reinforced daily. Also, other students who may not understand will likely find it easy to imitate others; students do not have to respond verbally; and teachers can easily provide visual clues or demonstrations. Sometimes these visual clues may even be more effective than the modified language, and in some cases written instructions can be of value as the students can see the words and exercise their reading skills. Minor disciplinary interventions, such as asking a student to be quiet or to sit down, can also be kept in the target language and it should only be necessary to revert to English in extreme cases (Chambers, 1991). The students need to be familiar with hearing, understanding, and using the target language as much as possible and that will not happen if the teacher continually translates ideas into English after starting them in the target language, or if the teacher immediately resorts to English at the first sign of student confusion instead of attempting to modify the language and explain again (Pachler et al., 2009).

Upon observing and conferencing with five university level professors teaching elementary language courses at two colleges in the southeastern United States, Wilkerson (2008) concluded that university faculty may benefit from

training on how to teach in the target language as the majority spoke English or frequently code switched between Spanish and English. One of the five professors, Rachel, modeled several strategies that demonstrated solutions to the problem of constant dependency upon the native tongue by the other participants. On the first day of class Rachel and the students discussed, in English, the importance of interacting in the target language and the protocol they would use for the rest of the semester. She showed her students that she was aware of their concerns and reassured them that that she would respond to their needs. As the semester continued on, Rachel spoke English at the start of the period to talk through the goals and activities planned for the day's lesson, as well as at the end of the period to review the day's events and point out examples of newly learned structures. Her English at the start of the lesson prevented communication breakdowns or hesitations during the activities in the target language, keeping the flow of the lesson and preventing the need for any English intervention.

Encouraging Student Output in the Target Language

Students must be directly taught phrases in the target language that they will need to use on a daily basis, as well as have them in some sort of list that they can reference frequently (Chambers, 1991; Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Pachler et al., 2009). Requests, asking for help, apologies, and also evaluative statements that express how they felt about an activity should be taught and encouraged in the target language. It is more likely that students will develop their speaking

abilities if the predominant language in the classroom is the target language and if they are given chances to practice speaking with one another (Chambers, 1991). In the previously mentioned study by Wilkerson (2008), the novice level university class that had the most success remaining in the target language contained students who knew several Spanish phrases in order to be able to ask the professor for clarification, to repeat or clarify, to ask others students for assistance, and to refuse a turn to speak.

Information gap tasks, or required information exchanged tasks as defined by Doughty and Pica (1986), require participants to communicate authentically since each person has a piece of information not known to the other. In a study of adult students and teachers from three intermediate English as a Second Language classes, Doughty and Pica (1986) set out to measure the levels of modified interaction carried out in three different interactional patterns: teacher fronted, small group, and dyad. They define *modified interaction* as interaction that is altered to aid comprehension of the intended message's meaning, either linguistically or conversationally. The object of the task was to plant a garden according to a master plot. Each student possessed his own portion of the master plot and without showing his plot to anyone else, had to explain to the rest of the group in English which flowers to plant and where.

Ten-minute samples from each of the three different interactional patterns were transcribed and the modified interaction that took place was later analyzed,

including the use of *clarification requests* (listener asks for further explanation of a term), *confirmation checks* (listener repeats what he thinks he has heard), and *comprehension checks* (speaker asks the listener if he understands). The researchers found that interaction was higher in the group activities than in the teacher-fronted lesson, but no clear difference was distinguished between the group and the dyad interaction patterns. During the teacher-led lesson, Doughty and Pica (1986) noted a smaller number of confirmation and comprehension checks, and a lower number of clarification requests than seen in the group and pair setting. An informal observation of one of the participating teachers suggested that the accuracy of students' boards was greater in the group and dyad settings than in the teacher-fronted lesson. Therefore, the lower number of requests and checks could be due to students' lack of understanding and possibly their reluctance to ask for further clarification or confirmation in an effort to not call attention to their lack of understanding. Doughty and Pica (1986) concluded that the study's results indicate a greater amount of modified interaction can occur when students are required to exchange information with one another, for example when completing activities such as information gap tasks in which students must interact with one another to acquire missing pieces of information.

Acquisition activities, in which students are intrinsically interested to find out the content as opposed to focusing on the grammatical form it contains, can be used to introduce new vocabulary, provide comprehensible input, allow for

student oral production, and lower students' affective filters by promoting social interaction and group belonging (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). One specific affective activity outlined by Krashen and Terrell (1983) is the use of interviews as students are divided into pairs and given a specific set of questions to ask one another. Activities that focus on the students themselves and their feelings, hopes, and opinions, tend to be most successful. During the interviews, students are provided with meaningful interaction in the target language and are given the opportunity to express themselves in a low-anxiety situation. The student *interlanguage*, or modified interaction (Doughty & Pica, 1986), along with the teacher talk after the activity, provides valuable comprehensible input (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

Brunschwig (1994) lists the same benefits cited by Krashen and Terrell (1983) for pair interviews, but links them instead to whole-class interaction activities. One example of a whole-class activity is a scavenger hunt in which students have to find other students who meet certain criteria, thus requiring the participants to walk around the room asking questions using the target language. Learners are motivated when they get to know their classmates by using the target language and when the focus is on the message rather than the form. The goal is for students to feel comfortable using the language without fear of accuracy or pronunciation. Whole-class interaction can provide for great speaking practice in the target language while also reinforcing certain grammatical structures, tenses,

or vocabulary words and phrases. It can be a non-threatening approach as students are interacting with their peers and thus fostering positive group dynamics, whether they are learning about one another for the first time or learning more about each other as the year goes on (Brunschwig, 1994).

Error Correction

In many language learning classrooms, grammatical accuracy has gained much more importance than meaningful communication, which has led to high levels of error correction (Shrum & Glisan, 1999). Errors are natural and should be expected, and teachers should draw students' attention to persistent errors while also being cautious to not provide excessive feedback that might negatively affect student motivation (Lightbrown & Spada, 1999). Shrum and Glisan (1999) list several strategies that help remind the teacher how to deal with the grammatical mistakes elementary and intermediate level language learners will naturally display as they express their opinions in the target language. A classroom in which the teacher places a greater emphasis on meaning as opposed to form reduces anxiety and frustration for both the teacher and the learner. The teacher's role is to act as a participant observer during group interactions and provide assistance when necessary, followed by serving as the leader of the debriefing session after the activity. She can call the students' attention to *strong errors*, those errors that interfere with meaning and would most likely prompt a native speaker to correct or ask for clarification. Less attention should be paid to

students' *weak errors*, those errors in grammar or pronunciation that do not affect meaning and would most likely not be corrected by a native speaker. Shrum and Glisan (1999) suggest discussing both strong and weak mistakes with students, and then having them work in groups to identify and label the errors themselves in contextualized examples provided by the teacher. In their groups they can then use problem solving skills to fix the errors.

In addition to making students aware of strong and weak errors, teachers can also introduce the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines* and discuss with the students, in the native language, the different levels and language functions listed under each level (Shrum & Glisan 1999). Next, the teacher can play a sample Oral Proficiency Interview of a young adult in English and have the students discuss at which level they believe the speaker is and why based on what the learner was able to do in the recording. The class can discuss what tasks the interviewee would need to work on in order to reach the next level of proficiency. By completing an activity such as this one, the instructor highlights the importance of the language functions and grammatical structures found within the students' curriculum and as Christenbury (1996) argues, "grammar and usage cannot be taught effectively if students see no real need for it and if teachers cannot persuade them to see the need" (p. 12, as cited in Shrum & Glisan, 1999).

Cooperative Learning: Task-Based Activities

Higher achievement, increased retention rates, and development of interpersonal skills are just a few of the many benefits of cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1987, as cited in Shrum & Glisan, 2000). In a foreign language class in particular, cooperative learning activities also help students develop the skills needed to negotiate meaning with others in the target language (Honeycutt & Vernon, 1985, as cited in Shrum & Glisan, 2000). An interactive classroom in which students are working cooperatively is not teacher-centered and the dialogue between the students and between the teacher and the students is authentic. In a two person conversation, there are opportunities for the students alternatively to take on the roles of speaker and listener and to use the language to further their thinking. Teachers must regularly incorporate small-group, task-based activities so students can have direction and purpose in their talk (Gibbons, 1993). Long and Porter (1985) list five pedagogical arguments for the use of group work in second language learning, including increased language practice opportunities, improvement of the quality of student talk, increased individualized instruction, positive affective climate, and student motivation. In the aforementioned study by Doughty and Pica (1986) of English as a Second Language students and their garden plot activity, the dyad and group settings created for a greater amount of modified interaction, along with a higher number of confirmation and clarification requests and comprehension checks, than in the

teacher-fronted lesson. The frequency of student interaction in the group and dyad activities was also greater.

For an activity to be labeled as communicative, there must be a clear purpose and need for using the language to complete the task (Gibbons, 1993). *Communicative activities* can include problem-solving activities, information-sharing activities, rank-ordering activities, enquiry and elimination activities, and barrier games. Barrier games provide each student in the pair with information that the other needs to complete the task, but there is some sort of barricade between the students that blocks them from seeing one another's papers. Gibbons (1993) suggests asking the following questions to determine whether or not an activity is communicative: "Is talking necessary? Is interaction necessary? Are the content areas of the curriculum being reinforced? Is thinking involved? Are all children in the group involved, either in speaking or listening?" (p. 41).

Communicative activities are a key component to *task-based instruction*, which requires the students to use the target language as a means to an end as opposed to within a meaningless drill (Lee, 1995). Task-based discussion activities show the communication process as a negotiation of meaning between at least two participants, focusing on the learners' use of the language instead of the instructor's. According to Lee (1995), the following steps should be taken when creating a task-based discussion activity:

- Identify what information the students will receive as a result of the interaction.
- Break the topic into subtopics.
- Create concrete tasks for the students to complete, such as lists, charts, and tables.
- Decide what linguistic support the learners will need and build it into the activity.

In a study based on Lee's (1995) principle components to task-based activities, Myers (2000) gave a communicative activity to 23 first semester French students at the university level. The desired outcome of the activity was for each student to be able to classify another classmate as "intellectual," "sporty," or "inactive" upon interviewing him/her about his weekend activities. Students were not directly told that the activity included the grammatical component of the French *passé composé*, and the researcher set out to monitor the different approaches taken by each self-selected group of two, three, or four students to complete the task, as well as the levels of meta-task talk used to recognize and discuss the grammatical component. Throughout the semester the students had previously completed activities similar to this one, and most groups for this activity were made up of the same composition as groups formed for other daily, informal exercises.

Most groups worked cooperatively, focusing their efforts on the

negotiating of meaning and remaining consistently engaged in the task. Group members spent much of the time talking about the task while completing it, naturally re-organizing their approach as they began to uncover the grammatical piece to the activity and negotiate meaning. Communicative negotiation with other classmates helped guide the students in learning a new grammatical concept, allowing students to interpret and adjust the activity accordingly. Laughter and other emotive clues during the task-structured communication led the researcher to conclude that students enjoyed interacting with one another as they commented on each other's weekends and categorized one another's styles. Task-based activities allow students to have fun practicing the language and help them see it as a vital tool for communication with others (Myers, 2000).

Use of L1 in the Language Classroom

Encouraging students to use the target language as much as possible does not mean that the use of L1, the student's native language, should be avoided at all costs (Cook, 2001). In her study of 23 French students, Myers (2000) concluded that it was the communicative negotiation in the native tongue with other classmates that helped guide the students' learning of the new grammatical component of the French *passé composé*. While the amount of L2, the language being studied, varied with each group, L1 served as an essential tool to help students formulate their own understanding of the grammar component of the activity. The students' attention had not been directed towards the grammatical

component of activity, so as the group members spent much of the time engaging in meta-task talk, they naturally began to uncover the grammatical piece and negotiate meaning using both languages. In this study, English served as an important tool in the students' understanding and completion of the task. L1 should not be feared in the language classroom as it can actually encourage learning and further understanding (Myers, 2000).

Cook (2001) also agrees that the use of L1 provides necessary support for students to help each other, explain tasks to one another, negotiate group roles, or check their understanding or language production against their peers. It can be used to provide instructions or explanations to the students, link prior knowledge in the L1 to new L2 knowledge, create collaborative dialogue between classmates, and encourage other language use strategies like *code-switching*, when words and phrases from both languages are used simultaneously in the same sentence. Code-switching is frequently used in the real world when both parties share the same languages, and students should be encouraged to see the value in this highly-skilled 'bilingual mode' of language as compared to the 'monolingual mode' where both languages are seen as separate entities (Cook, 2001). On the other hand, the previously mentioned study by Wilkerson (2008) reported successful results in Rachel's university level elementary Spanish class when the two languages were in fact viewed as separate from one another. English was also viewed as an important tool in the Wilkerson (2008) study, but it was only

used at the start and end of the lesson and not combined with the Spanish as Cook (2001) recommends.

Bringing the L1 back from exile may lead not only to the improvement of existing teaching methods but also to innovations in methodology. In particular, it may liberate the task-based learning approach so that it can foster the students' natural collaborative efforts in the classroom through their L1 as well as their L2. (Cook, 2001, p. 419)

Language Use Strategies

One of the most effective pieces to a foreign language curriculum can be explicit strategy instruction included to heighten learners' awareness (Cohen & ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, 2003). Strategy training, teaching students how to apply language learning strategies, strives to help students do the following:

- self-diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in language learning;
- become aware of what helps them to learn the target language most efficiently;
- develop a broad range of problem solving-skills;
- experiment with familiar and unfamiliar learning strategies;
- make decisions about how to approach a language task;
- monitor and self-evaluate their performance; and

- transfer successful strategies to new learning contexts (Cohen & ERIC CLL, 2003, p. 1)

Second language learner strategies include language *learning* strategies, those with the goal of aiding learner knowledge in the target language, and language *use* strategies, which are those that focus on how to use the language with the knowledge that the learner already has (Cohen, 1996). Furthermore, language learning and use strategies can be labeled as cognitive (deal with the identification, storage, and retrieval of information), metacognitive (focus on the pre- and post-evaluation of learning activities), affective (regulate motivation and attitude), or social (include actions taken by learners when interacting with others) (Oxford, 1990).

Chamot & Küpper (1989) list questioning as a social strategy, which constitutes asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing, or examples. They then link social strategies together with affective strategies to include cooperation as students work together with peers to problem solve, bring together information, check their learning, and search for feedback. Rubin has a different definition for social strategies as his examples would fall under affective strategies for Oxford (1990). Rubin (1987) calls social strategies the activities in which students to provide themselves with the opportunity to practice their knowledge and be exposed to the target language, such as listening to the television or the radio in the target language, initiating conversations with natives, and reading extra books

(Rubin, 1987). The strategies to be used in this study would be categorized by Rubin (1987) as communication strategies. For Rubin (1987), these are the strategies used to stay in a conversation when there is a difference between what the learner knows and what he intends to communicate. A few of the strategies he mentions as communicative are use of synonyms and cognates, gestures or mime, and circumlocution or paraphrase, along with asking for assistance, questioning, repetition, and indication of comprehension. By constant exposure to natural conversation in the target language, students will enhance their learning as they have more opportunities to hear and practice their own knowledge of the target language (Rubin, 1987).

Cognitive strategies are techniques used when interacting with the material being learned (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), manipulating it mentally or physically (Chamot & Küpper, 1989). Several examples of cognitive strategies relating to students' oral production may include

- repetition – repeating a chunk of language (a word or phrase) in the course of performing a language task;
- note-taking – writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form to assist performance of a language task;
- substitution – selecting alternative approaches, revised plans, or different words or phrases to accomplish a language task;

- personal elaboration – making judgments about or reacting personally to material presented;
- summarization – making a mental or written summary of language and information presented in a task;
- translation – rendering ideas from one language to another in a relatively verbatim manner;
- transfer – using previously acquired linguistic knowledge to facilitate a language task; and
- inferencing – using available information: to guess the meanings or usage of unfamiliar language items associated with a language task; to predict outcomes; or to fill in missing information (Chamot & Küpper, 1989, p. 16).

In a study of fifty-five intermediate language learners at the University of Minnesota (Cohen, 1996), students who participated in a strategies-based instructional approach experienced more positive results as compared to the students who participated in a standard ten week language course with no strategy instruction. The findings of this study suggest that if language instructors introduce and reinforce strategies that can help students' development and production of oral language, students may improve their performance on language based tasks. Also supported by this study is the idea of including language strategy instruction alongside the content of the curriculum and within daily

speaking activities. By doing so, students will become used to the instructor constantly incorporating language strategies in with the language content (Cohen, 1996).

Language Strategy Instruction in the Classroom

Effective second language learners have a range of metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies they use while experiencing input and producing output in the target language. Less effective language learners possess fewer strategies, using them less frequently or also using them inappropriately. Language strategy instruction must be taught in conjunction with the curriculum and course content so that teachers can instruct students on how and when to use language learning strategies correctly, and so students can practice them in context over an extended period of time (Chamot & Küpper, 1989). In their guide *Language Strategy Instruction in the Foreign Language Classroom: Speaking*, Chamot, Küpper, Thompson, Barrueta, and Toth (1990) guide teachers step by step through implementing language strategy instruction in one's own classroom. Chamot et al. (1990) summarize their strategy instruction guidelines using nine points:

- Integrate strategy instruction with regular coursework.
- Select material that is neither too easy nor too difficult, but that represents a stretch.

- Teach strategies that are most effective with the language skill(s) to be practiced.
- Start instruction with a discussion of what it's like to read (write, listen, or speak) in one's native language.
- Teach strategies to beginning level as well as to more advanced students.
- Don't try to teach too many strategies at the same time. Keep it simple.
- Model the strategies for students by thinking aloud about your own mental strategies.
- Make the instruction explicit. Mention the strategies by name. Give the strategies names in the target language.
- Practice strategies throughout the school year.

In addition to these listed suggestions, there are further steps the instructor must take in terms of speaking strategy instruction. The purpose of speaking strategy instruction is to teach students to become more communicatively competent as they become gain a better understanding of the speaking process and its components. Speaking strategies can help students learn to plan before speaking, maintain a conversation, and reflect of their own speech. The teacher must remind the students that speaking requires planning and conscious attention to word choice and language rules, which is why speaking in a foreign language is

such a difficult and complex task. She must reassure them that they will become more proficient in speaking the target language as they continue to study and practice, and should provide the students with frequent practice that has authentic, real-world connections. Novice level students can start off small with tasks that may include single function activities, such as practicing greetings, which can then be tied into larger tasks like role-playing. Upon completion of language tasks, students should reflect on their successes in completing the task, discuss which strategies they used and how well they worked, and list other strategies that may have also been helpful (Chamot et al., 1990). As students share with one another their own language-learning successes and obstacles, their shared experiences may lead to increased self-awareness as well as higher levels of self-confidence and responsibility for their own learning (Ceo-DiFrancesco, 2003).

Conclusion

In order to increase students' oral proficiency and communicative competence, it is essential that language teachers follow research-based best practices that create an environment conducive to language learning and acquisition. It all starts with the classroom itself. The learning environment needs to be one in which students feel comfortable speaking the language and are therefore willing to take risks, all the while receiving appropriate support and encouragement from the teacher and fellow classmates (Gibbons, 1993; Krashen, 1982; Lightbrown & Spada, 1999; Tsou, 2005). Constant exposure to

comprehensible input (Chambers, 1991; Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Grove, 1999; Krashen, 1982; Pachler, Barnes, & Field; 2009), coupled with daily opportunities for student output and communicative activities in the target language (Chambers, 1991; Doughty & Pica, 1986; Gibbons, 1993; Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Lee, 2005; Swain, 2005), can lead to higher levels of proficiency for our students. For even further advances in communicative competence, language strategy instruction must be included within the daily content and curriculum to reach for an even deeper student understanding not only of the language, but also of themselves as language learners (Ceo-DiFrancesco, 2003; Chamot & Küpper, 1989; Cohen, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1987).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Setting

This research was conducted in a large, public high school in eastern Pennsylvania that is made up of almost 3,000 students in grades nine through twelve. Being the only high school serving the many towns in the entire suburban district, the socioeconomic levels of the students vary greatly. Starting in eighth grade students may enroll in one of the three languages offered, including French, German, and Spanish, or they may also take Latin at the high school level. Elective language courses at the high school fulfill the graduation requirement of two courses in the Arts and Humanities field. All language courses at the high school meet for forty-one minutes daily for the entire academic year. Levels 1 through 3 of Spanish are open to students of all academic levels; however, students then decide between College Preparatory Spanish 4 or Honors Spanish 4 at the end of their third year of study. Spanish 2, the level at which this study took place, typically consists primarily of freshmen who took Spanish 1 at the middle school level with only a select few students who repeated Spanish 1 at the high school level or who began their studies later than the average student.

Participants

Twenty-four students in my seventh period Spanish 2 class participated in this study, including one junior, three sophomores, and twenty freshmen. At the start of the study, the nine male students and fifteen female students ranged in age

from thirteen to seventeen years old. As previously stated, a Spanish 2 class is made up of students across all academic levels as it is an elective course. In addition to their World Language course, some of my students were enrolled in other main content area courses at the Applied and College Preparatory levels, while others took a couple or several Honors level classes.

Data Gathering Methods

In order to evaluate the effects of communicative strategy instruction on the target language output of second year Spanish students, I collected data from various sources to ensure validity and reliability. These data sources, collected over the course of twelve weeks, include my own observations and anecdotal notes, inquiry data from student surveys and interviews, and student artifacts.

Observational data and reflective memos

Most of my data came from my own observations in the form of a field log. It was extremely difficult to function as an outside observer while at the same time running the classroom and teaching the lesson; therefore, the method of recording quick notes and student quotes during the class period and later writing more notes and reflections afterward (Johnson, 2008) worked best for me.

Fortunately I had a prep period right after the class period in which I was closely monitoring the effects of the intervention. Therefore, I could immediately sit at my computer, continue my detailed field notes for the day, and not miss recording any of the day's occurrences. At this time I was also able to jot down some

immediate reactions and reflection statements only several minutes after the lesson. I printed these observations and reflections and placed them in my field log, along with the other data sources, in chronological order as the study continued.

Student surveys and questionnaires

By administering online surveys and paper questionnaires, I could look deeper into the thoughts and opinions of each of the participants as they rated various statements regarding language learning and responded in writing to open-ended questions pertaining to the intervention. The online survey (Appendix D) was given first at the very start of the study, prior to any intervention, and then again upon conclusion of the data collection. Students ranked their level of agreement with eleven statements relating to listening and speaking in Spanish class, and also their language learning preferences. A text box for additional comments in the survey allowed them to list any other thoughts or reactions they had to the statements or topic. Students were aware that the surveys were not anonymous and I encouraged their honest feedback. I printed each participant's survey responses so that I could then place them in my field log. Alphabetical order was extremely helpful when I needed to find a certain student's results at a later date. Approximately six weeks after the first survey, I gave out a questionnaire (Appendix E) for students to fill out immediately after a communicative activity they had completed with their partner. These questions

prompted them to reflect on their usage that day of any of the learned strategies up to that point, along with the successes and challenges faced that day when communicating solely in the target language with their classmate. The survey and the questionnaire were a quick way of gathering data from twenty-four students at once, and that could then be analyzed and crosschecked with other data at a later point in time.

Interviews and participant checks

Several times throughout the period of data collection, I collected data by means of individual and whole class interviews. I had several scripted questions that I knew I wanted to ask the students upon completion of certain activities, just like I was able to do with the questionnaire; however, spoken instead of written responses on paper allowed the conversation to continue in whatever direction the students or I wished for it to go. Two weeks into the study, the students and I had a whole class discussion so that I could gather some data and verbatim reactions to how they felt when holding a conversation in the target language for four minutes with their classmate. Interview sessions allowed me to conduct member checks (Hendricks, 2009) to verify with the participants my interpretation of their survey and questionnaire responses, as well as ensure that any conclusions that I myself had come to were indeed accurate. During the last week of the study, I sat in small groups with the students and used some guiding interview questions (Appendix F) to have one final conversation with them and gather my very last

pieces of data before the culmination of my study.

Student artifacts

In my field log, I maintained all pieces of student work that had a direct relationship to the intervention. One of the first projects that took place during the study was the presentation of the ideal house that they and their group members constructed. Instead of taping or video-recording the students' presentations and then transcribing their speech, which would have been something totally foreign to them as we had never done that before, I chose to informally jot down the most common errors I heard during the presentations. This way, they were able to present in front of the class as they had already grown accustomed to, without the fear of their voice being recorded. I later reflected in my field log on what the students were able to say as they got up and spoke in front of the class.

Two months into the study, the students had to retell in their own words a story that they themselves had read several times and had also illustrated after reading. They had to fold their paper so that only their drawings were visible, and they told the story to their partner while he jotted down notes on what he heard. Although this was just a simple worksheet (Appendix G) that corresponded with one of the strategies I taught them, I choose to keep it since I also had them write a small self-reflection on the back of the paper before leaving class that day. They listed their struggles and successes during the activity, along with their

reaction to any of the strategies they used to help them. Just like the surveys, these quick written reactions helped add more data to my collection in my field log.

Student assessments: checklists and rubrics

Some student artifacts found in my field log are better labeled as checklists and rubrics. During a group discussion in the target language using sports vocabulary, students easily self-monitored their own speaking and listening by filling in tally marks on the checklist I provided for them (Appendix H). At the end of that same class period, they filled out a self-assessment of their participation in the group that day (Appendix I) and checked off how often they completed a certain task, while also adding additional comments when applicable. I also asked them to complete the phrase, “Having a conversation with my classmates in Spanish is...,” so that I could obtain more verbatim student reactions to the intervention.

I created a short, twenty point rubric (Appendix J) that was used to formally assess their oral performance during a conversation with me. Each student took part in an individual interview with me, in the target language, so that I could monitor his pronunciation, grammatical structure, use of vocabulary, and fluency. Students were given the rubric several days prior to the assessment so that they would be aware of the exact expectations, and also students were given the chance to practice with one another several times prior to doing the

formal, twenty point assessment with me. These rubrics, along with the student checklists, give insight into their levels of performance and the effects of the intervention on their oral performance in the target language.

Trustworthiness Statement

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of this study, I have followed several ethical guidelines. I have obtained approval and written permission to conduct my study from Moravian College's Human Subject Internal Review Board (Appendix A). The principal gave me written consent to conduct my study (Appendix B), and the students and their parents both signed the parental consent form as well (Appendix C). In the letter I explained that participation was completely voluntary and that any participant could withdraw from the study for any reason and without penalty. This letter also stated that I would use only the data of participants who had agreed to participate and who had also obtained parental consent. Anonymity of all participants was guaranteed by the use of pseudonyms, and all data were kept in a safe and confidential place throughout the study before being destroyed upon conclusion of the study. For the benefit of my readers, while writing about my study I have included a thick description of the setting, participants, communicative strategies and interventions that took place, and research methods I used (Hendricks, 2009). A prolonged observation period furthered the credibility of my study as it helped paint a clearer picture of the overall effects of the intervention (Hendricks, 2009).

In order to ensure the validity of my research, I have used multiple data sources so I could then be able to triangulate my findings. Multiple data sources provide a more accurate glimpse into the study itself and its findings, thus enhancing the credibility of my research findings (Johnson, 2008). The majority of the data I collected was observational data in the form of anecdotal records. As I analyzed the data, I crosschecked that observational data found within my field log with student artifacts and inquiry data taken from surveys and student conferences. Triangulation of data ensures that I am representing the truth as accurately and objectively as possible. Trustworthiness of my findings was achieved as I crosschecked information and conclusions through the use of multiple sources of data (Hendricks, 2009). Direct quotes from the students themselves, taken from surveys, conferences, and teacher observations during the study, have been used as low inference descriptors. Including verbatim accounts of what the participants said has helped prevent inaccurate reconstructions of what truly happened or erroneous interpretations of the participants' perspectives.

Inquiry data also includes the results of the student survey issued twice during the study, once at the start of the study and again at the end of the data collection to see if and how students' opinions changed regarding their language learning experiences. I interviewed and held conferences with students to conduct participant checks and delve deeper into the students' ideas much more than a survey would allow. Member checks (Hendricks, 2009) allowed me to discuss

with the students my interpretation of their perspectives and verify that the conclusions I had drawn were accurate representations of their thoughts, actions, and ideas. I have also utilized negative case analysis (Hendricks, 2009) to further validate my research as I analyzed data that worked against my study and anticipated findings. To not include these findings would be unethical, so I have included and analyzed them to further understand my research findings.

For my readers and for my own self-reflection, I have identified any researcher bias that I may have towards the setting of my study, its participants, second language learning, and the research process (Hendricks, 2009). My thoughts and beliefs naturally shine through in the research I conducted and the methods I incorporated into my daily activities as part of my study; therefore, it was necessary to bring them to the forefront and also constantly refer to them as I collected and analyzed data. The research I present will be more credible if I have been honest in my beliefs and how those beliefs affect my research (MacLean & Mohr, 1999). As I first began to develop this study, I used peer debriefing (Hendricks, 2009) to discuss these beliefs and their connection to my research plan with other colleagues and fellow teacher researchers. The continued use of peer debriefing as I collected and analyzed my data provided me with other insights from outside sources and led to conclusions that I myself perhaps wouldn't have seen as a participant in the research. These individuals were a

constant support as I collected data during the fall and also when I analyzed it and brought it all together in the spring to tell this story.

RESEARCH NARRATIVE

¡Bienvenidos!

Standing at my open door with a friendly smile on my face and a pile of index cards in my hand, I greeted the 24 eager students entering my classroom by saying, “*Hola. ¡Bienvenidos a todos! Por favor, toma una ficha y siéntate.*”

Using a PowerPoint slide with visuals that transitioned onto the screen as I needed them, I walked the students through the process of taking out a pencil, writing their name on the top line of the index card, and passing their cards to me, all while speaking only the target language. Intrigued by the fact that I hadn’t yet used a single word of English, I had each student’s complete attention and I loved the fact that they were following along so well.

Next, we went through a couple of questions on the screen and I modeled with visuals and explained in Spanish how the activity would unfold. I instructed them to all stand up and to sit on top of their desks, which immediately got the students excited about what we were going to do. I would start by passing the ball to one of the students. That student would answer the question on the screen and then pass the ball on to another student, who would then also answer the same question. After several students had answered the one question, I changed the slide to a different question. Following the rule that they could not pass the ball to someone who had already spoken, almost each student got the chance to speak within the shortened class period of 10 minutes. Before our time was up, I

prompted them to sit down while I passed out their first homework assignment. In case any student was confused, there was a slide in English reminding them that they should have handed in an index card at the start of class and that they would complete their first homework assignment, the pink student information sheet, for the following day. All of this had already been said in Spanish, but the slide in their native tongue made it so that there was no confusion as to the expectations for tomorrow.

Fast forward three days later and we're only in our second day of school as a result of two days off due to flooding. It was just like starting all over again, except this time we'd have a class period pretty much in all English. As the students entered the room that second day, this time for a regular 41 minute class period, I noticed that many of the boys already knew one another and began to socialize immediately upon finding their assigned seats. I thought, "This could either work out in my favor since they're already comfortable with one another, or this could create for some behavior problems if I don't work through this in the right way." I reintroduced myself, in English, and reminded them of the previous school day's occurrences. Before I could go any further, several students immediately asked if I would always speak Spanish. I used that opportunity to share with the class my goals for the semester.

First, I asked my students if they understood most of what was going on in those first 10 minutes we were together on the first day. Several shook their head

to say yes, while others laughed and looked at one another as if to say, “She’s crazy.” I told them that my personal goal was to get them to speak Spanish with one another more than any of my other Spanish 2 students in the past six years had ever done. My assumption, I said, was that most of them probably took this class because they want to be able to speak the language and I promised them that they and I would work together to give them the skills they will need to hold a conversation in Spanish. I reminded them that it would take some time and that no, I did not expect us to have full class periods of Spanish just yet. We would take the one year of language learning they had under their belts and expand upon it throughout this next academic year, learning the content while also paying special attention to communication skills that would help us create an immersion-like setting. I made a brief mention of my research project after talking about my goals, but wanted to save most of the details for after we had been together a few more days.

It was at this point that we reviewed the participation rubric (Appendix K). The students silently read the highest column on the rubric, underlining the key words and phrases in each box that seemed most relevant or important to them. I explained that for the rest of the semester, the person to their side would be their *compañero(a) de clase*, or “class buddy,” with whom they would talk at least a couple of times a day. Today, that conversation would be in English as they discussed what each of the five categories meant to them in their own words. We

reviewed this as a class and I stressed the last, shaded category which was labeled “Use of Spanish in Class.” I told them that this would be the most challenging of the five categories, but that I was there to work with them and help them reach those full 10 points. We discussed the notebook they all had to bring to class and how in several days, on the front inside cover, we would list key phrases we already knew. Then, as the year continued and as we added in newly learned phrases, our list would help us focus on using as much Spanish as possible with our classmates. I hoped that I made it clear that this was a team effort and that we were in this adventure together. Most students shook their head and gave me a look that seemed like they were saying, “Ok, I think I can do this.” We ended the day by making nametags that contained images that represented ourselves, but that we could also discuss in Spanish the following day using vocabulary that we already knew. This was my chance to circle around the room, feel out the group as a whole, and start to get to know my 24 participants.

The following day, we began the day’s lesson by only using the target language as I greeted the class and told them to take out their nametags, all of course while modeling the taking out of the nametag and putting it on my desk. I then modeled what they would do next: introduce themselves to their partners, explain their images on the card using phrases such as “I like” and “I have,” and then switch roles. They figured out the activity without me using a single word of English! Plenty of volunteers raised their hands to share what they said to their

partner, and several more raised their hands to tell me about their partner in the third person. I think they must have gotten the hint as I held up the bright yellow participation rubric we had gone over the day before and I said, “*Acuérdate de participar. ¡Es muy importante que participes mucho en esta clase!*”

Next, we took a slight break from the Spanish to finish up a short conversation about the class rules and procedures, and then ended the class with a review of the phrases they would hear me use. I put a list of phrases up on the screen and without providing any sort of visual or context clues, asked them to see if they and their partners could remember what these meant as a result of hearing them daily last year. They copied them down and discussed, but most pairs could only get three or four out of the nine. So, before we reviewed them, the next step was to advance onto the next slide that had a couple of more words to give each command some context. The light bulbs started to go off and they now knew what almost each command meant. After we went through the list and volunteers shared the translation for each command, I told the class that I had already used most of these commands in the short 3 days we had together. However, these commands were often supplemented with me acting out the commands, which is what most likely helped their understanding. We ended the class with the idea that while most of the lessons would be conducted in the target language, we would learn to use our visual clues and other context clues to help understand the meaning behind language that might be new to us.

La primera encuesta

I was eager to bring in the computer cart as soon as it was available so that the students could take the online survey I made up. I couldn't wait to see how they would rank and respond to the eleven statements about speaking, listening to, and learning Spanish. Table 1 shows the overall results of the student survey. Reading their responses to the open-ended portion after each group of statements gave me some insight into their learning preferences and I also noticed the strategic awareness that some of them already possessed prior to the official start of the intervention (Figure 1).

El plan

When I created the plan for my research study months before its implementation, I established a general plan that included conducting class primarily in the target language, creating a comfortable language learning environment to encourage and increase student output in the target language, and finally teaching students the communicative strategies they would need to communicate in Spanish with the limited amount of vocabulary they knew. It was the last task that I was most worried about. I felt that I couldn't decide on the exact strategies I would incorporate and exactly when I would incorporate them until I got to know my students and their needs' a bit better. The students' responses to the survey helped me map out a plan for introducing communicative

Table 1

Student Responses to Online Survey in September

<u>Survey Statements</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
I can understand most of what is said during Spanish class.	25%	<u>75%</u>	0%	0%
I feel anxious when people in class (students or teacher) speak to me in Spanish.	4.2%	<u>37.5%</u>	<u>37.5%</u>	20.8%
I can communicate proficiently in Spanish about topics I have learned.	25%	<u>54.2%</u>	16.7%	4.2%
I feel anxious when I have to speak in Spanish.	16.7%	37.5%	<u>41.7%</u>	4.2%
I speak in Spanish when working cooperatively with my classmates and try not to switch to English.	13%	<u>39.1%</u>	34.8%	13%
When I speak in Spanish, I try to think about the words I am going to say before I feel comfortable saying them aloud.	<u>70.8%</u>	20.8%	8.3%	0%
I am aware of and know how to use different strategies that can help me when I am trying to express myself in Spanish and can't think of the word or phrase I want to use.	20.8%	<u>54.2%</u>	20.8%	4.2%
I have discovered the strategies that work best for me to succeed in learning Spanish.	25%	<u>41.7%</u>	20.8%	12.5%
I would rather my teacher use Spanish instead of English in the classroom.	4.2%	37.5%	<u>50%</u>	8.3%
I try to use Spanish outside of the classroom when I can.	8.3%	<u>37.5%</u>	29.2%	25%
I enjoy learning Spanish.	<u>45.8%</u>	<u>45.8%</u>	4.2%	4.2% ^S

strategies in an order that I thought would work well based on the students' levels and the strategies' difficulty levels. Naturally there was specific curricular

Student Attitudes toward Listening to, Speaking, and Learning Spanish

What frustrates my participants?

- I cannot understand most of what is said, but I can figure some out by context clues of what I do know.
- I understand the little words of Spanish, but not full sentences.
- When I see Spanish terms and verbs on paper, I know what I'm doing. But when in class I sometimes feel weird talking in Spanish because of pronunciation.
- Sometimes I feel uncomfortable talking in Spanish in front of the class if I don't know how to pronounce words correctly.
- Sometimes I know the words, but I can't put the sentences together.
- When I am spoken to in Spanish, I get nervous.
- I understand most of what you say, but I get frustrated when I don't know what you're saying.
- Sometimes I don't understand what the teacher is saying if we didn't learn the vocabulary words she is saying.
- I feel uncomfortable speaking in front of the class, even if I know the answer.
- I get a little nervous when I'm talked to in Spanish because I don't want to say something wrong.
- Spanish is hard for me.
- I don't really know how to speak Spanish for long enough to talk to friends, but I can figure some words out to say.

What motivates these second year language learners?

- I can talk to someone in Spanish well.
- I love learning Spanish, and it is easier for me to learn when people around me are speaking it. I would love it if I could be fluent.
- I love to learn Spanish because I really want to know another language.
- I can kind of understand what is said during class.
- Communicating in Spanish is a lot more fun than in English.
- I'd like to feel more comfortable talking in Spanish 2.
- I really enjoy learning Spanish because my family is going to Puerto Rico because my grandparents have a house there, so I'd really like to know more words so I can communicate with people while I am there.
- My friends and I talk in Spanish a lot for fun.
- I am confident when I know what I am saying and know the topic well.

Strategic awareness – Some students already have it!

- I like thinking about what I'm going to say in Spanish before I actually say it.
- When I struggle to get my point across in Spanish, I usually tend to go back and forth from Spanish to English.
- I can figure out what the teacher is saying based on context clues and gestures.
- Flashcards help me a lot when I am learning new vocabulary words.

Figure 1. Pastiche of students' additional comments in online survey

content that I was also responsible for teaching over the twelve weeks of the study, so I laid out the plan based on how well the communicative strategies would work alongside the curricular plan. We would start with useful phrases (*las frases útiles*) and cognates (*los cognodos*), and then hopefully work our way through gestures (*los gestos*), repetition (*la repetición*), circumlocution (*la circunlocución*), and finally guessing (*adivinar*). I anticipated the native tongue would play an important role in the discussion and student self-assessment of the strategy usage; however, I would introduce the strategies in the target language and we would call them by their Spanish names.

Dime más

One week into the study, the students appeared to comprehend very well the commands I used when speaking to them, so I was eager to start focusing on the phrases they themselves would need to learn to say in order to communicate with one another. After all, both they and I were more interested of their use of the language than their understanding of mine.

As we reviewed the verb *gustar* using an activity in the textbook, I required them to push their creativity even further than what the book was asking for. I read the example in Spanish from the book:

Estudiante A: “¿Te gusta alquilar DVDs?”

Estudiante B: "Sí, me gusta alquilar DVDs." /

"No, no me gusta alquilar DVDs."

I then said in English, "So, if Elena turned to Elisa and asked, 'Hey, do you like to rent DVDs?' would Elisa respond with, 'Yes, I like to rent DVDs' or 'No, I don't like to rent DVDs.'? No way!" It was great to hear a little chuckle out of them. I acknowledged that the textbook activity was helpful in that it provided practice with the structure, but told them that I was about to present them with a challenge that I knew they would be able to successfully take on. I had their full attention and my confidence in their abilities seemed to motivate them. So, I gave a couple of example responses in Spanish including, "*No, no me gusta. Yo prefiero ir al cine. Voy a Rave con mis amigos.*" Then, with tons of enthusiasm, I tried out, "*¡Sí! Me gusta mucho Redbox. ¡Sólo cuesta UN DÓLAR!*" More laughter from the students - awesome! So I challenged them to add the *where, why, how often,* and *with whom* type of information to each of their responses as they completed the speaking activity.

As I walked around, Eduardo started to look in the back of his book and said to Jaime, "Oh man, how do you say 'sometimes'?" I took the chance to jump in and say, "Well, let's try this. How about 'not a lot'?" He said, "Oh, I don't know that." So I tried, "What about 'a little'?" To which he replied, "No idea." So we talked about the three phrases, but Eduardo was most content when we finally reviewed the original word he wanted. I couldn't wait to teach my

students the strategy of circumlocution to show them that there are so many different ways to say one thing! On the other hand, I was nervous since I absolutely thought Eduardo would know “*no mucho*” or “*un poco*” and was surprised that my assistance was of no help too him. How long would it take for their year of Spanish 1 knowledge to start to come back and for them to remember all the content they learned last year? I knew they wouldn’t remember everything, but it really seemed like I had a lot of work cut out for me.

Frases útiles: una competencia

As a review on the day before our “useful classroom phrases” quiz (Appendix M), we had a small competition in this class versus my other two classes. The goal was to be the class that took the least amount of people to go through all of the phrases on the slides. The slides described situations in English like “You need a pencil” or “You want to use the restroom,” and the student whose turn it was had to say the necessary Spanish phrase. If he or she did not know, then it got passed onto the next student. Julio was absent that day, so it started with Rosa. She knew “*¿Puedo ir al baño?*” right away. Next, Teresa even knew that really hard phrase “*Estoy confundida.*” I was so impressed! Sandra’s turn was next. The slide said, “Tonight’s homework assignment is not written on the board.” She said, “*Escribe la tarea, por favor*” with a questioning look on her face as to say, “I’m trying, but I don’t know if this is right...” I showed my excitement to the class and stated just how impressed I was with her ability to

create a phrase on her own. I told the class that a phrase such as that one was a perfectly acceptable replacement of the “¿*Cuál es la tarea?*” phrase. Maybe my fears that I felt with Eduardo didn’t really apply to all of the students in my room. They just might be able to work with their one year of knowledge to try out circumlocution and other strategies as we get to them. While they didn’t beat my other class as they lost by just one student, they did a pretty good job of getting through the review.

At that point, we began our journey with the “¿*Quién soy yo?*” project (Appendix N). This project included an interview and a presentation about each student’s classmate, not about him or herself. I hoped to continue to foster the partner relationship that we had already begun to form during those first three weeks of school. With their *frases útiles* at their side, they interviewed one another using the interview sheet provided to them and their own answers to the questions they had completed for homework two nights prior. I told them that I’d be monitoring their use of Spanish as I walked around the room and that it was part of their 5 point participation grade included in the project. For some students, this 5 point grade helped set the tone for a serious exchange during which they pushed themselves to use only use the target language. About half of the pairs stayed in “Spanish mode” with each other and with me throughout the interview. Other partners, for example Raúl and Manolo, Pepe and Julio, and Eduardo and Jaime, struggled quite a bit to use only Spanish with one another. It

was hard to keep them in the target language even for a short 10 minute activity in which the answers were already in front of them. How would I get them to do it for 41 minutes? How could I make them converse with one another in Spanish *all the time*? Would it ever be possible to create this immersion-type setting that I desired when they could instead easily express themselves in English and be understood?

The students later presented their posters about one another, only using the key words on the poster to guide their presentation. This was their first official speaking assessment in this class, so naturally some students were nervous. However, I thought they did a fantastic job of using only the key words on their poster to guide their presentation. We practiced several times in class, and it was clear that many of them had also practiced at home the necessary phrases of “*Se llama...*,” “*Es...*,” “*Tiene...*,” and “*Le gusta...*” and were therefore ready to simply plug in the pieces that were waiting for them there on their poster (Figure 2). Some students even chose to leave every word off their poster, except for their partner’s name, and solely rely on visuals. I truly believe this project was a great start to building a relationship between two individuals who would work together for an entire marking period. Students appeared to have felt some added responsibility in that their poster was not about themselves, but rather about their partner, and their desire to not disappoint one another was evident. These presentations also fostered the group relationship as an entire class since while



Figure 2. Student constructed poster for *¿Quién soy yo?* project

they listened to each presentation, students wrote down one thing they learned about each student. The posters were then hung in the back of the room for all to see and stayed there for a couple of months (Figure 3). This display was a great way of representing and acknowledging every single student in the class.

Una charla, sólo en español

Close to two weeks into the study, I challenged them to talk with their partner for as long as they could in Spanish. They were to discuss their upcoming weekend, since I figured that would be something they could easily chat about in Spanish with the vocabulary they knew. After some modeling, of course, I set the stopwatch on the projector screen and sent them on their way. I stopped the clock



Figure 3. Display of students' posters for *¿Quién soy yo?* project

at four minutes as I could tell that most of them were at the point that they couldn't think of anything else to say at all...silence! Four minutes? Not too bad!

Next, I led a group discussion so they could verbalize their feelings about the activity. Some of the responses to the first question I asked, "What were the challenges you and your partner faced when trying to have a conversation all in Spanish for four minutes?" included:

Pepe - It was hard to say the right verb. I kept saying "yo tengo" when I knew I didn't mean that and that I meant to say something else.

Jorge - I got stuck on the smaller words like “is,” “are” and “on.”

Catarina - It was hard when there were words that we don't know yet. I wanted to say something but I couldn't.

Then I asked, “What did you and your partner do well during the 4 minute conversation?”

Raúl - We used a lot of phrases we remember from last year.

Alejandro - We had the right sentence structure, like the subject-verb order for phrases like “yo voy.”

Catarina - We asked each other some questions that we knew how to say from last year, like “¿De dónde eres?” even though we already knew the answer.

Lola - I could respond in Spanish right away to the question. I didn't have to stop and think too much about what it meant in English.

When asked how many honestly had some awkward moments of silence, all groups raised their hands. We then took that opportunity to add more to our list of “*frases útiles*” on the front cover of their notebooks. We listed question words, and then I asked them to revisit the conversation they just had and choose a portion of it to share with the class, while also modeling a good use of a question word to keep the conversation going. Their examples of how they could have continued their conversation by using questions words were very good. So many students wanted to share; however, we ran out of time. At the end of that

lesson, I couldn't wait to teach them some of the other phrases I had planned on giving them to use with their partner.

Estrategia #1: los cognados

I knew that the simplest of the strategies to introduce to my students would be cognates. While some students might not know the exact terminology for them, they are easily able to understand words in Spanish when they look similar to English words they are familiar with. Today I posed the question, “*¿Qué es un cognado?*” before watching a video that would introduce the new vocabulary for parts of the house and furniture. I got some blank stares. So, I wrote the word on the board. Still no one seemed tempted to raise their hand to answer my question, so I asked, “*¿Puedes decirme un ejemplo de un cognado?*” With that, hands began to fly up in the air, especially once the first few students gave their examples. Students listed all sorts of cognates they remembered from Spanish 1. I then defined a *cognado* to the class as “*una palabra que es similar en inglés y en español.*” They agreed, and I then went on to explain how this strategy of recognizing cognates can help us when we come across new vocabulary words while reading or listening to Spanish. I instructed the students, while I modeled on the board, to title their paper with “*Los cognados en el video.*” During the introduction to the new vocabulary, they would write down any cognates that they heard or saw, as the video had small pop-up bubbles of the new words as they are said in the dialogue. To review the words we heard, one student

told the class one word that he heard during the video. The students were to draw a check mark next to the word if they, too, had it on theirs. If not, they had to add it to their list. We continued with this until we couldn't list anymore. In a small section on the inside cover their notebooks, near their *frases útiles*, we ended the day by writing the title "*Las estrategias*" and listing our first one: *los cognados*.

Más frases útiles y estrategia #2: los gestos

To add to our master list of "*frases útiles*," we began class one day by adding the "*en grupos*" phrases. I had them guess what some of them meant. Nobody could guess the "*te toca*" and "*me toca*" phrases, but they were easily able to figure out the meanings of the others. I then introduced "*los gestos*" as our second official *estrategia*. As I wrote the word on the board, before I could even say a word, María, Pepe, and Natalia raised their hands. As I looked at Natalia, she said, "It looks like *gesture*. Is it?" I gave her a smile and exclaimed, "*¡Sí! Un cognado, ¿verdad?*" I had them turn to their neighbor and discuss in English what gesturing/miming is and how we might use gesturing in this class specifically. Next, all in Spanish, they would use the new phrases of the day to decide who would go first in the gestures activity we were about to do. Each of them would take turns acting out one of the new vocabulary words. They would use "*no comprendo*" if they didn't understand their partner, and they would use "*terminamos*" to tell me when they were done. The staying all in Spanish component of the activity was not very successful as I heard phrases in English

like “That’s a hard one to act out” (Andrea) or “I don’t get it” (Eduardo). Overall, the strategy was understood and the students enjoyed acting out the new words. I then told a story using vocabulary that they would not get for another couple of weeks and asked them to raise their hands every time they understood the phrases I was acting out. They understood phrase like “iron clothes,” “take out the trash,” and “sweep the floor,” all because I acted out the ideas. We talked about how if our partner doesn’t understand us and says “¿Cómo?” or “No entiendo,” we can supplement our words with gestures so that the person can better understand the idea we are trying to communicate. We discussed how miming could be used to avoid the “¿Cómo se dice....?” phrase and the English translation of ideas, although I reminded them how much I did also enjoy hearing them use those phrases, too.

Un tropiezo: ¡tratemos de nuevo!

Three weeks into the study, I had my most disappointing day up to that point. As the students walked in, the sign was turned to “*Sólo español*” and I explained in Spanish that we’d try out the entire class period in the target language. Most students gave me a worried look, but some didn’t seem all that worried about it. Eduardo yelled out “*no trabajar*” to try to tell me that it wouldn’t work, but I ensured him that we’d try our best and that I was sure we could do it. Each student got a card that had a Spanish vocabulary word from our current list at the top, and at the bottom had an English word that did not match

the top word. If they saw someone acting out the Spanish vocabulary word that they had at the top of their card, they would yell out the vocabulary word. Then, they would use gestures and miming to act out the other word, the English word, at the bottom of their card. They understood my explanation, but they didn't understand that they were only supposed to yell out the word if they themselves had the card with the word. That rule was easily explained and understood, and the activity continued.

It was the lack of creativity and enthusiasm that was disappointing. Catarina had the first card to act out after my example, which for her was “to skateboard.” She got up and turned bright red and said in English, “I don't know how to act this out.” I tried to give her some encouragement, but she continued to say that she didn't know, so I ended up acting it for her. Was that the right thing to do? I'm not really sure. Perhaps I should have made sure they could act out their word BEFORE we started, but my thought was that I picked words that could all be acted out with just an ounce of creativity. Lola didn't know how to act out “dresser” and Raúl didn't know right away how to act out “stairs,” until Manolo whispered something to him and Raúl got extremely excited, came to the front of the room, and acted out walking down a flight of stairs. Some students did a great job. There were several pauses that were clearly a result of the lack of understanding or of knowledge of vocabulary, as some students didn't know the meaning of the Spanish word on their card. So, as I tried to discourage students

like Pepe from yelling out, “Come on, who has dresser?” I had to intervene during long pauses and say, “¿Quién tiene la cómoda, o dresser en inglés?”

I was determined to try the activity again the next day, and to make some alterations to guarantee its success. Competitions tended to excite and motivate them, so I made it a competition against my other two classes to see what class could complete the chain of cards in the quickest amount of time. We also moved all of the desks so we could stand in a circle instead of all sit at our individual seats. I hoped that avoiding the requirement to come up in front of the entire class and to instead simply stand in a large circle with all of their peers would help them feel more comfortable. Before playing for the second time around, I also gave them one minute to prepare themselves. Since I made sure when handing out the cards that nobody’s corresponding card was on either side of them, they were able to ask the people next to them the Spanish word’s meaning or ask for suggestions of how to act out the word at the bottom of their card. Once we began, I ensured that the sign at the front of the room was switched to “*Sólo español*” which helped avoid students yelling out when it was not their turn. (This sign, which had been hanging at the front of the room since the first day of school, signaled for the students the expected language of communication at that moment. The one side has a picture of the Spanish flag and the words “*Sólo español*,” while the other side states, “*Se puede hablar inglés... ¡sólo si es ABSOLUTAMENTE necesario!*”) I couldn’t wait to see how it would go this

time, and I had high hopes since they knew how to do the activity and also knew what vocabulary words to expect. So, how did it all go? SUCCESS! Nobody was “too cool” to act out their word, as had been the issue for some the day before, and most even put forth more effort than on the previous day. Although a couple of students did get stuck on a word or two, I was much happier with these results than with yesterday’s outcome.

We then went into a walk-around-the-room activity (Appendix O) where each student had a unique question that he needed to ask five other students, documenting their responses on the paper provided. I had already prepared them for this activity the day before, so I think that helped it run a little more smoothly. I modeled using the *frases útiles* and asked them to especially try to use the gestures strategy if their classmates didn’t understand them; however, I hardly saw any students use gestures when speaking to their classmates. For example, Alejandro had the question “Do you have to go upstairs to get to your room?” He definitely used the gestures appropriately for stairs, but then kept supplementing with “to get to your room” in English. I tried to demonstrate how he could say and act out something like “*tu cuarto*, (pointing to the person), *¿necesitas escaleras* (acting out stairs like he was already doing)?” So he said, “*Sí, sí*” but then went back to exactly what he was doing before once I walked away from him. Pepe looked at me as I was walking around the room and said in English, “I’m actually getting it.” To which I replied, “*¡Fantástico!*” I applauded them

after they returned to their seats, flipped the sign back over to the “*Se permite hablar inglés*” side, and said, “So many of you remained in Spanish mode for the entire time! Great job, guys!” They, too, applauded themselves. Overall, today’s lesson was a success and made me feel much better after the failure we experienced the day before.

¡Mucho inglés!

For nearly a full week, I felt as though I wasn’t being completely loyal to my research as the students used a great deal of English to complete the “*Nuestra casa ideal*” project (Appendix P). I had to remind myself, however, that the native tongue can play a very important and useful role when students are working together and dialoguing about learning. Throughout the week, they worked together to construct their ideal house, write a few paragraphs about it, and finally present their house to the class. The key grammatical concept behind the project was not only the house vocabulary, which they seemed to have mastered pretty well over the previous three weeks, but also the grammatical concept of *ser* versus *estar*. Understanding the difference between these two verbs that both mean *to be* often presents much difficulty for the students as there is little connection to be made to the English language.

The houses were super creative and unique (Figure 2); however, the presentation portion of the project did not yield the results I had hoped for. Students still expressed an extreme amount of nervousness despite my

reassurance that I was simply looking for them to informally say a few things in front of the class about their room, just as they often do with their *compañero de clase*. The speaking component to the rubric was only one, 10 point category. The house itself was worth 40 and the paragraph was worth 32, so I thought that would help them realize that the presentation was not the largest piece of this project. I was not looking for a long, memorized speech. I wanted them to look at their room and just talk about what they saw. I asked that they mention the items they had in their room (which they were allowed to label-reminiscent of the partner presentations at the start of the year) while also mentioning the color of an item or two (to assess their use of *ser*) and the location of an item or two (to assess their use of *estar*).



Figure 4. Example of student constructed house for *Nuestra casa ideal* project

If I would have kept an official count of the accurate uses of *ser* and *estar*, my numbers would be disheartening. So many students either did not have a verb form in their sentences at all or continuously used “*es*” when stating an item’s location instead of “*está*.” They missed the main point! The project made me seriously reflect on the goals we have as a department and the ways in which we assess our students. If one of my students went to Puerto Rico and asked “¿Dónde *es* el aeropuerto?” he would still be understood. However, my job is to help him say instead, “¿Dónde *está* el aeropuerto?” when looking for the airport. By this point in my research, it had taken a lot of work to get them to the comfort level that many of them were at. I did not want to bring attention to or deduct points for each and every tiny mistake that I heard them say. This is why I used the particular wording that I did in the rubric. Getting the main meaning across and communicating in Spanish is the key. I want my students to not be afraid to make a mistake when speaking and research suggests that by not correcting every little error in student speech, students are encouraged to express themselves more freely in the target language.

Estrategia #3: la repetición

I was ready to introduce them to another strategy to add to our list, so I continued on with *repetición*. When I asked them to discuss in English, with their partner, why this might be a good language learning strategy for us, Andrea said, “Well, you know how you said we have to hear and say a word like 70 or 80

times to learn it? So that's *repetición*." Pepe repeated the same idea as Andrea, and others were hesitant to share what they and their partners said to one another. I then gave the example of getting directions to a friend's house, reminding them that what they'd most likely do is repeat each step as the friend gives it, just to make sure that they have it right. I asked them to try out *repetición* as they completed the next activity: Partner A would have his back to the screen and Partner B would have to try to describe to him the scene that he saw (Figure 5). Partner A would be sure to use *repetición* to clarify his understanding of his partner's description.



Figure 5. Scene on PowerPoint slide for *repetición* partner activity

When I asked what other phrases they might need while they were completing this activity, without hesitation some yelled out “*Repíteme, por favor*” and “¿*Cómo?*” It was music to my ears to hear them yell out these phrases without hesitation. They really had them down! The activity went very well and though I was glad to see the students use *gestos*, especially with the directional words, I didn’t hear them utilize the new strategy of *repetición* very much. I realized that it may have been too much to ask at once, having them draw the images quickly while also at the same time try to repeat phrases. So, I made a plan for the next day that I thought would help us practice *repetición* a bit more.

Más repetición

On this second day of highlighting *repetición* as a strategy, we managed to spend nearly the entire class in *sólo español*! The students performed fantastically today and were really focused, especially during the “Match Mine” communicative activity I did in which one partner had to describe to the other partner the names of the rooms in a floor plan and what furniture was in each room. To start today’s lesson, each student received a small stack of the furniture pieces that would be used in the communicative activity so that they could review prior to the main activity. They then did exactly what I modeled for them in the target language. They held the cards in their hand and Partner A said, “*Tienes una cama?*” to which Partner B replied, “*Sí, tengo una cama,*” and they both placed their photo of *la cama* on their desks. They took turns doing this to ensure

that each student knew what each picture was called and that they were not missing any pieces. I then had them turn their desks to face one another and a barrier was placed between them. This barrier was easily made up of two manila folders held together with paper clips and separated at the bottom half. They both had the same bird's-eye view of a floor plan, but Partner A had the names of the rooms and Partner B had a blank line for each room to then write its name. Partner A also had one minute to place the 8 pictures of various pieces of furniture in whichever rooms he wanted, which he would then describe to Partner B so that Partner B could try to lay out the furniture correctly. I modeled exactly what would happen between A and B, being sure to also model how *repetición* should be included.

They successfully communicated with one another and most partners were able to easily understand how to label the rooms and where to place the furniture. Also, I did hear more usage of *repetición* compared to yesterday's lesson; however, I heard a lot of fragmented ideas instead of full sentences. For example, they communicated by using phrases like “Número 5, el cuarto. La cama a la derecha.” It was reminiscent of the activity the day before since the students again had used a high amount of vocabulary with little focus on grammar. After the day's lesson, I had somewhat of an epiphany. I referenced the “Oral Proficiency” section of my literature review to remind myself of what ACFTL says I should expect of my students.

My second year Spanish students would most likely fall in the Novice-Mid category at this point in their language studies. The *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines C Speaking* (1999) state that a learner at the Novice-Mid level may be able to communicate minimally using a limited number of isolated words and memorized phrases, pause frequently while searching for the correct word in the target language, and resort to silence or words in the native tongue when unable to think of the vocabulary word. So, should I worry so much about their grammatical accuracy if they should really only be expected at this level to use a limited number of words and phrases? Was I a little more worried than I ought to have been, or for that matter were my students? During our class discussion on September 23, they too expressed concerns with the fact that they have difficulty finding the verbs they want to use when they are speaking. Most of my students at this point seemed to fit perfectly into ACTFL's descriptors of Novice-Mid and Novice-High level students. I decided that I was worrying just a little more than necessary and therefore, made it a goal to focus more on celebrating the achievements and progress we had made up to that point.

Estrategia #4: la circunlocución

The time to teach *circunlocución* had finally arrived! I was so excited to teach them the strategy that I had been most looking forward too. All along I had thought that this would be the most exciting and useful strategy. I hoped it would help teach the students to not immediately revert back to English when confronted

with the challenge of not knowing the exact Spanish word they wanted to use. First, they spoke with their *compañero de clase* for 4 minutes using *sólo español* and the conversational questions I had written on the board. Prior to setting the students free for that four minute chat, I modeled some responses to the questions on the board and also asked them to have out their *frases útiles* lists. I think these 4 minutes went much better than last time - not too much awkward silence as I walked around checking their vocabulary lists.

Then, in Spanish, I had them recall the strategies we had learned up to that point. I started them off with *los cognados*, and then wrote the other two on the board as Luisa told me *los gestos* and Alejandro told me *la repetición*. I then explained that we were about to learn a fourth strategy. I had several photos in my hand of various items from their Spanish 1 vocabulary. I would use key phrases associated with *circunlocución* in my descriptions and then reveal each photo once someone guessed the correct vocabulary word. After I stated each of my descriptions, I called on a student who had his hand raised to guess an answer. Students understood all of my basic descriptions and had no trouble recalling the vocabulary word in Spanish for each item. Below is the scripted dialogue that took place during the activity.

Señorita Dischley - *Es una cosa que necesitas para escribir.*

Jorge - *el lápiz*

Señorita Dischley - *Es un grupo de personas; un papá, una mamá y los hijos.*

Lola - *la familia*

Señorita Dischley - *Es el lugar donde tú participas en la clase de educación física.*

Raúl - *la escuela*

Señorita Dischley - *Más específico, Raúl.*

Raúl - *el gimnasio*

Señorita Dischley - *Es el lugar en tu casa donde tú preparas la comida.*

Andrea - *la cocina*

Señorita Dischley - *Es una persona que trabaja en la escuela.*

Natalia - *la maestra*

After Natalia had guessed my last description, we finally moved the sign to the English side and reviewed what had just happened. Lola said, “You gave us hints” and Andrea said, “You described words.” I told them that the fourth strategy was called *circunlocución*, and we added it to our list. Of course we had some fun repeating the word together as the students wanted to keep practicing the tricky pronunciation of the new word. Luisa said “I’m just going to take a guess here and say that the strategy has something to do with going around, like the words in a sentence, to figure out what word you’re missing or trying to use.” *¡Fantástico!* I explained that I applauded their use of “*¿Cómo se dice...?*” but that I couldn’t always be their *diccionario humano*. Therefore, we needed to try

to work with the words that we already knew to express what we didn't know how to say. So, we listed a bunch of phrases together:

Es una cosa que... It's a thing that...

Es una cosa para... It's a thing for...

Es una persona que... It's a person who...

Es el lugar donde... It's the place where...

Es una actividad que tú haces cuando... It's an activity that you do when...

They tried out one example with their old vocabulary list from the last chapter, full of words they had already mastered. Upon listening to their partner's description of the word, they each had to guess the vocabulary word that he or she was attempting to describe. I was happy to see that the students appeared to understand how to use the phrases. Next, we tried one together with their newest vocabulary list. This would be their example to follow as they completed their homework assignment for the night. On their own, they had to take ten vocabulary words from the new list, words they hadn't yet acquired, and write ten descriptions using the circumlocution phrases we listed.

Tarea con circunlocución: UN DESASTRE

Oral instructions and only one example in class with a newer vocabulary word the day before were not nearly enough to ensure the students' success with the *circunlocución* homework assignment. I was extremely disappointed and frustrated as I walked around and checked the homework. Some students didn't

define any of the new vocabulary words and instead picked words from Spanish

1. They said, “Well, that’s what we did in class so I thought that was what the homework was supposed to be.” Others clearly used online translators, or many wrote sentences that didn’t follow our examples at all. For example, Jorge wrote, “*Una actividad bailar.*” When I asked him to explain this one circumlocution example to me, he said, “I used one of the phrases and *bailar* is the vocabulary word. Why? Is it wrong?” To which I replied, “Look back at this example at the top of your paper. The word is not in the description, and the description is a bit more specific. Maybe you could have written, ‘*Bailar – una actividad que haces con la música en una fiesta.*’” I thought that the lesson went well the day before, and that the students in fact understood how to use the key phrases; however, I must take partial blame for the lack of success in last night’s homework. I gave oral instructions, assuming that the several examples from the notes taken in class and the key phrases that they all had listed would be sufficient. Clearly, that was not enough for all but about five students in the class.

I had to completely change my plan for today’s lesson, which included sharing their examples with their partners and guessing what words they were describing. I could not even attempt do that activity with the work that the students had in front of them. My new plan for the next day was to show them more examples of circumlocution and to hopefully make them realize that using what they already know is all that I was asking them to do. I think that they

understand what I'm looking for, but at the same time they don't realize just how much they do know. They are so eager to quickly rely on a translator or dictionary to look up the words they want to use but don't know how to say yet, but also it is especially difficult for the struggling students who remember little vocabulary from last year.

Circunlocución...¡otra vez!

To rewind a little and get the students to try circumlocution again, the next day I gave each student a card when he walked in the room. On that card was an example of circumlocution. I decided to use old vocabulary so that they already knew all the words being described and to ensure that not knowing the matching vocabulary word would not be a problem. Within the definitions, I did not use a single word that they did not know. Normally in class they hear and read several words and phrases they don't know. This is part of the comprehensible input that I use to keep the language just slightly above their current level. However, with this activity, I wanted to show them model definitions that they themselves could write.

I modeled the activity all in Spanish, then sent them on their way to walk around with the card they had, read it to a classmate, tell him if he had the right word OR explain the word further if the person was confused, and finally exchange cards so that each student walked away with a new card. Hearing the excitement in each student's voice when he or she guessed the right vocabulary

word was so thrilling for me, and for the students. I even saw some of them using *gestos* as they explained the card if their partner wasn't getting it.

The students walked around and shared their cards with one another for about 10 minutes, and upon return to their seat I said to them in Spanish that these cards were examples of what I'd like to see in their circumlocution phrases in the future. I could see them nodding their heads, signaling to me that they understood.

I realized, as a result of yesterday's failed homework assignment, that if I want to do anything similar in the future, I need to give more guidance, scaffolding, and modeling. I decided that making our own definitions to future vocabulary words in class, together, as opposed to outside of the classroom and on their own, would be the next, most appropriate step for us to take to continue practicing circumlocution.

Estrategia #5: adivinar

There was one final strategy left in my research plan to introduce to my students before my research concluded in the next few weeks. Upon completion of a vocabulary quiz, the students silently read one of four *mini-cuentos* (Appendix G) from the Spanish 1 resources of our *Avancemos* textbook series. These stories are provided by our textbook publisher in a supplementary package and are to be used with "Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling," a language teaching method also known as TPRS in the language field. I myself

had never used these stories, but thought they might be the perfect way to introduce the students to *adivinar*, the strategy of guessing. The stories contained a great deal of vocabulary that the students had never been introduced to, as compared to the readings in our textbook that are consistently right at the students' level.

After they read and before I told them anything about what we would be doing, we reviewed the four strategies we had learned up to this point. Again, it was so rewarding for me to witness their strategic awareness and to hear them list all the strategies by name in the target language. I introduced *adivinar* and in English, we discussed how one often has to guess the meaning of a word based on context clues. I then sent them back to the story they had just read and asked them to find and share with their *compañero* a word or two they may have guessed on, based on context clues. Their *compañero* had the same story since I had purposefully handed out matching stories to each pair of students. After we discussed as a class the ways in which they used *adivinar*, they had some time to visually represent the six parts to the story by drawing the ideas in the small boxes provided. I explained that when we returned to class the next day, we would work on summarizing, an additional language skill, as we would tell the story in our own words using only our photos drawn on the paper.

So the following day, after practicing retelling the story with their partner, they had to then sit with someone else who had a different story than theirs and

retell the story using only their photos. I had them fold the bottom portion of their paper back so that the six sentences were not showing. As the one student told the story, the other needed to take notes on the back of his story paper, which was simply a blank sheet of paper. Then, after they were done, the listener had to read back to the storyteller the information he had in his notes. The storyteller looked back at the original story and checked off all of the pieces of information that he did mention when retelling his story. The process repeated as the other student now retold his story, as his partner listened and took notes. When all partners were done, I asked them to use the additional space on the back of their paper to answer two questions. I asked, “What were the challenges you faced when retelling the story in your own words? Also, what were your successes, meaning what do you think you did well?” I collected this piece of student work to then add to my data collection.

Several students praised themselves for using strategies learned up to that point. Jaime, Dolores, Luisa, Natalia, Tomás, and Aleja demonstrated their own strategic awareness as they described how they used utilized cognates, circumlocution, gestures, and guessing to help them during the activity. While some students thought they did a good job retelling the story in their own words, others listed the same skill as a challenge for them. Jorge wrote, “I did well with putting the sentences together. I enjoyed it,” but Elena listed “putting the sentences into my own words and figuring out words I hadn’t heard of” as her

challenge. Not knowing the “little” or “small” words needed to complete their sentences bothered several students like Luisa and María. I also enjoyed that some students, like Alejandro for example, focused more on the listening aspect of the activity and listed their comprehension as their success. Alejandro wrote, “It was easy to understand what *mi amigo* was saying.”

Expresa tus opiniones

I decided that it was time to introduce the students to a few more phrases so they could more easily express themselves in the target language. I created an input-style worksheet (Appendix Q) to introduce the students to the phrases “*Yo pienso que...*,” “*Para mí...*,” “*Yo estoy de acuerdo...*,” and “*Yo no estoy de acuerdo...*”. The students were very interested in the activity, most likely since I was asking for their own opinions on exciting and personal topics. I did preface the activity by explaining, in Spanish, that there would be a few words that they had never seen before. I reminded them to use the *adivinar* strategy and to not get stuck on every single word; however, some students couldn’t help but to call me to their desk and ask, “¿*Qué significa _____?*” I could see that some of them still weren’t comfortable with simply guessing and that they couldn’t control their desire to constantly know the exact meaning of a sentence, word for word. They were using the strategy of guessing every day while listening to the comprehensible input I provided when speaking in the target language, so why weren’t they willing to do the same thing when it came to seeing the language on

paper? I realized that only continued practice with and exposure to authentic material would help get them to a higher comfort level when guessing based on context clues.

On the back side of the worksheet, students were prompted to complete sentences that labeled various items as better than others. For example, they completed the sentence, “*El restaurante _____ es mejor que _____ porque...*” The plan was that they would read the sentences to each other in a few minutes after listing their ideas, and use the new phrases of the day to react to one another’s opinions. The students got really into the activity and although I asked them to do it silently and reminded them that we would have our “mini-debates” within the next few minutes, their excitement triggered the use of English and it was very hard to get them back into Spanish only. So, I used that time to turn the sign back to the English side and reminded them that it was okay to use English if they were stuck or were helping a neighbor, but asked them to regain their focus and get back on task. This brought their focus back a little, and soon enough they were ready to discuss. I modeled the mini-debates they were about to have with their *compañeros*, adding in phrases like “*Es ridículo*” and “*estás loco*,” which helped to get a little rise out of them. The activity was a very successful one and I told them how I hoped they would use these phrases on a regular basis when chatting with their classmates in the target language while waiting for class to begin, as well as when working with their *compañero* during and after completing

assigned activities. I said that throughout this newer marking period, I was going to pay special attention to the final category on their participation rubric (Appendix K), “Effort – Use of Spanish in Class,” and that the following day I would listen carefully for their use of the target language as they entered the classroom and hopefully set their brains to “Spanish mode.”

Un estudiante frustrado

After being told the day before that I expected them to be very focused on their use of Spanish at all times, the amount of Spanish I heard them use with one another when they walked in the following day was wonderful! I had to laugh when I heard Elena say “hi” to me and Andrea say to her, “*No no, Elena. ¡HOLA!*” The warm-up tied the opinion phrases from the day before in with the new vocabulary. As I walked around to check their homework assignment, the students completed the four sentences on the screen.

1. *Yo pienso que _____ es el deporte más aburrido.*
2. *Para mí, el mejor equipo es los (Eagles/Yankees/etc.). (Q “Yo no tengo un equipo favorito.”)*
3. *Mis amigos y yo **pensamos que** jugar al _____ es muy interesante.*
4. *Para muchas personas, el _____ es más interesante que el _____.*

Jorge, Elisa, and Aleja were absent the day before, so we reviewed the phrases we learned the day prior. Two were already on the screen, so I added on the board “(No) *estoy de acuerdo*” and without any English at all, we as a class

helped the three absentees understand the meaning of the phrase. I said, “*Si yo estoy hablando con Jaime y yo le digo ‘No estoy de acuerdo contigo, Jaime,’ ¿significa que mi opinión es SIMILAR o DIFERENTE que la opinión de él?’*” Jaime said immediately, before I could take any volunteers, “*Es diferente.*” I repeated the explanation of this new vocabulary phrase, and the three absentees said, “*Sí,*” when asked, “*¿Entienden Uds.?’*” So, we moved along and I modeled the conversation that I wanted to hear between the partners as they discussed the four sentences. I added in funny ideas like “*¿Los Phillies? No, no...jellos son horribles! Los Giants tienen más talento,*” hoping I could encourage the students to take some risks with the language and really get into the activity. It was awesome to hear students like Andrea and Pepe yell out (yes, yell...they got into this one) their personal opinions to their partners.

We took a slight break with the sports vocabulary and discussed the cultural component to their homework. As a class, we had been doing a great job of staying in the target language that day until we had a breakdown of communication in the group. I introduced the country’s name and its map in Spanish, then I asked if anyone had ever traveled there, stating for myself, “*Yo nunca fui a la República Dominicana. ¿Unos de Uds. fueron allí en el pasado?’*”, gesturing “the past” by pointing to the calendar and pointing to the map. There were no hands, and usually I have one or two students who have been there. I rephrased the idea and said “*Vacaciones en la República Dominicana - yo no. ¿Y*

ustedes?” Pepe yelled out “*Sí, sí*” and Aleja also raised her hand. I asked Aleja, “*¿Fuiste en el pasado o vas en el futuro?*” to which she replied, “*Futuro, julio.*” Jorge then began yelling “*No, Italia, no, falso*” and I could not understand what idea he was trying to communicate to Pepe. Pepe and Jorge, who were sitting only one seat away from each other, started to yell ideas back and forth at one another. I interrupted, and tried to help Pepe express in Spanish when he was there, asking during what year he went and trying to write years on the board to help him understand. He finally yelled out in English, “I swear I went there!” and Jorge yelled, “No, but that’s like when you said you went to...” I ran over to the sign, turned it to the English side, and Pepe started yelling that he DID go there, named a resort, and said he could prove it if I would look it up on Google. All of the students were laughing, including Pepe and Jorge, so although I was worried for a slight second, I soon realized that nobody was being picked on in any way. It really showed something with the group dynamics, I believe. I said, “Ok, Pepe. Thank you for sticking with me as we were trying to communicate with one another. I understand that you were getting frustrated and finally just wanted to make sure we all understood your point.” He shook his head and smiled, reassuring us that he would bring in some proof from his trip, and we went back into *sólo español* after everyone finally calmed down.

We picked up with a short introduction to the new vocabulary by reading a couple of pages in the textbook and I brought back in *circunlocución*, the

strategy that they had the most difficulty with. On the board I had the key phrases we learned that go along with circumlocution and I asked, “¿*Qué estrategia es ésta? ¿Recuerdan?*” Teresa and María both raised their hands, which shocked me since I wasn’t expecting anyone to remember the name of or the pronunciation of that difficult word from so long ago. Teresa did a great job pronouncing *circunlocución*, and from there I gave them one example with the word *piscina*. I did switch the sign back to the English side for the following activity as I asked them to work with their partners to come up with examples of circumlocution for five of the new vocabulary words found in our reading before we left that day.

Discusiones en grupos

I set up the desks into groups prior to the students’ arrival. I guided the first couple of students, in Spanish, towards their appropriate desks as they walked in. The rest of the students figured out where they were seated based on where others had already sat down. It was essentially their normal seat; however, desks were turned sideways to face one another. I did move around a couple of students to fill in some gaps and to avoid having one small group of two.

I got them settled by asking them to take out their homework and homework card, a paper I stamp each time they show me a completed assignment, hopefully earning them bonus at the end of the marking period if they have all or close to all of the stamps. I then explained what they were to do on the worksheet they received (Appendix H) while I walked around to check their homework. I

told the students that the desks were set up in groups because in about ten minutes, they would use the ideas they were first completing on their own to then have a group discussion. This was all done in the target language, of course, and students followed along very well. I modeled aloud an answer to number one on the worksheet and reminded them to ask their group members in Spanish for help if they were stuck on a word or phrase. I began to walk around to check for the homework and I eventually reached Eduardo, who had yet to fill in the assignment name and date in the box on his homework card. I reminded him in Spanish exactly what to write and he asked, “¿Cómo se escribe cuaderno?” I spelled out the letters for him in Spanish, and he followed along perfectly. As I began to walk towards the next student, I heard him say to his group, “That was totally awesome! I wrote down what she told me to write down and I understood everything she was saying!” I couldn’t help but smile.

Once I was done checking all of their homework and walking around the room to see that they had all seven questions answered, I explained the next activity, which was a conversation about sports using the focus questions they just answered. I switched the sign over to the “English side” so we could discuss the checklist at the bottom of the page. We reviewed each of the strategies as a class and listed examples of Spanish phrases that we could use to complete each task. I explained to them my expectation that they would complete the checklist and self-monitor during the conversation. I also said that it was okay to go off topic, for

example if the group all of a sudden found itself in a heated debate about the best teams of a certain sport, but that a fellow group member should try to bring the group back on task once they had exhausted the topic. I made a general statement to all students, encouraging them to play different roles throughout the conversation. I encouraged them all to try and take on the leader role for part of the discussion, but to also then try and sit back for a while and allow someone else to step into that role, too. As soon as they were ready, we switched the sign back over to *sólo español* and I began my stopwatch, which was not on the screen for them to see this time.

Six minutes and ten seconds later, I stopped the clock as I noticed at least half of the groups had said all that they could about sports. Not too bad, I thought. I asked them to turn their desks to face forward again so that they could not see one another's papers, and I then had them complete the "Self-Assessment of Participation in Group" rubric (Appendix I) on the back. It consisted of a chart with seven tasks and the students had to check off whether they completed each task often, sometimes, or rarely that day in their group discussion. I encouraged additional comments as well, and it was in this area that some of the students listed the Spanish phrases they used or explained to me exactly what they did to successfully complete the task. I added, for my own interest, the last part of the self-assessment in which the students had to complete the phrase, "Having a conversation with my classmates in Spanish is..." Overall, the students'

responses echoed similar sentiments. Words like “fun,” “interesting,” and “enjoyable” were also paired with “difficult” and “hard.” The primary concern I noticed from most students was their frustration with not being able to fully express in Spanish what they wanted to say during the conversation. The students reported enjoying the experience, calling it “helpful,” “a good way to learn,” and “a good challenge” (Figure 6).

La encuesta, una vez más

Thanksgiving recess came upon us so quickly and before I knew it, it was just about time to conclude my data collection. I knew all along that I wanted to administer the same survey that I gave at the beginning of my study so that I could compare September’s results with December’s (Table 2).

Overall, the data showed positive changes in students’ opinions over the course of the twelve week study and their open-ended responses revealed some of their final thoughts on their own progress as learners. While there were many more positive responses than negative ones written in the open ended portion about the progress made and their newly found comfort levels with speaking and using strategies, I had already collected so much data that highlighted the successes of the intervention. Therefore, I thought that further analysis of the comments that recognized my students’ struggles upon conclusion of the intervention might be a great way to conduct negative case analysis (Figure 7).

Having a conversation with my classmates in Spanish is...

...really **fun** because it is fun to speak in a different language that we have been learning for a while. It is also **helpful** because you can ask questions to learn more from your group. –Julio

...**easy** and **difficult**. It is **fun** and **very helpful**. –Pepe

...**good** because I learn how to speak the language. –Jaime

...**difficult**. It is very tempting to speaking English because it goes much faster than trying to come up with words/phrases in Spanish that really express what I want to say. –Rosa

...**fun** and **helps me understand** more words in Spanish. –Jorge

...**harder than I thought** because I don't know the word for everything, and I want to say it in English. –Camila

...**a good challenge**. It shows you how far you've come since the beginning of the year and Spanish 1. –Eduardo

...**fun** and **interesting...a good way to learn**. –Elena

...**hard** and **easy** because you have to actually know and understand what others are saying. – Dolores

...**interesting**. Some people try to keep the conversation going even if they don't know how to say something in Spanish. Some people don't understand what's being said. Some can talk really well in Spanish. – Sandra

...**fun** and **enjoyable** when I remember my phrase and am decent at least. It's **horrible** when I forget some words. –Raúl

...**somewhat easy**, but it's **hard** to comprehend what others are saying because they don't know what to say, so they just put words together. –Alejandro

...**fun** when everyone knows what to say. –Tatiana

...**interesting** and **fun**. Finding new ways to explain or clarify is difficult, but also amusing. –Luisa

...**difficult**, but **fun**. I like to do it, but sometimes it gets annoying because I want to say things that I don't know in Spanish. –Manolo

...a different approach to learning. I think it is a **good way to learn**, but it would be more effective if people weren't so "embarrassed" about talking. It would be interesting to work with a native speaker. –María

...**fun**. We listen to each other well. We also give more information when we talk. –Natalia

...**not as difficult** as I thought it would be. At some parts, I was stuck and trying to think of a word in Spanish. –Elisa

...**really fun** because it helps you use the words. –Catarina

...**becoming easier** as we learn more vocabulary and phrases to use. –Tomás

...**sometimes hard** because I now understand, but I just don't know how to say things in Spanish. –Aleja

...**pretty difficult**. Some people don't understand you and you don't understand them. Knowing English, I really wanted to just speak it, but I know I had to stay in Spanish. –Lola

Figure 6. Pastiche of students' reactions to a group discussion in Spanish

Table 2

Students' Responses to Online Survey in December

<u>Survey Statements</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
I can understand most of what is said during Spanish class.	<u>50%</u>	45.5%	4.5%	0%
I feel anxious when people in class (students or teacher) speak to me in Spanish.	4.5%	31.8%	<u>40.9%</u>	22.7%
I can communicate proficiently in Spanish about topics I have learned.	<u>54.5%</u>	45.5%	0%	0%
I feel anxious when I have to speak in Spanish.	9.1%	<u>36.4%</u>	<u>36.4%</u>	18.2%
I speak in Spanish when working cooperatively with my classmates and try not to switch to English.	40.9%	<u>50%</u>	9.1%	0%
When I speak in Spanish, I try to think about the words I am going to say before I feel comfortable saying them aloud.	<u>59.1%</u>	38.4%	9.1%	0
I am aware of and know how to use different strategies that can help me when I am trying to express myself in Spanish and can't think of the word or phrase I want to use.	<u>59.1%</u>	36.4%	4.5%	0%
I have discovered the strategies that work best for me to succeed in learning Spanish.	42.9%	<u>47.6%</u>	9.5%	0%
I would rather my teacher use Spanish instead of English in the classroom.	22.7%	<u>40.9%</u>	31.8%	4.5%
I try to use Spanish outside of the classroom when I can.	27.3%	<u>40.9%</u>	31.8%	0%
I enjoy learning Spanish.	<u>68.2%</u>	27.3%	4.5%	0

A Pastiche of Students' Final Challenges & Concerns

Listening

- Because you speak so fluently in the language, I have to stop and then try and play back what was being said to me. It takes me a lot longer to determine what is going on sometimes. –Lola
- I get confused easily with a lot of the words. –Raúl
- I'm kind of in-between. I don't get nervous when people speak Spanish, and I understand a lot of what is said in class, but sometimes I'll miss something. –Sandra
- When other peers speak to me, I have difficulty understanding what they are saying. –Catarina

Speaking

- I feel like I stutter a lot when I have to speak in Spanish because I can't think of words fast enough to make a conversation flow naturally and not have a ton of awkward silence when trying to reply. –Rosa
- I feel I can do a good job in talking in Spanish, but verb conjugation and use of smaller words like "a" can sometimes be tricky. Sometimes I feel my fluency is negatively affected because I am trying to ensure proper sentence structure. –María
- I have trouble sometimes remembering the things we use in class and putting them into sentences. –Camila
- I struggle with some things, and some of the strategies are a little tough still. –Raúl
- I'm afraid of saying the wrong thing, so I think before I say it. –Lola
- I still feel like I'm saying something wrong when I speak out loud. I feel a little anxious when I have to talk in front of everyone. –Andrea

Learning

- I haven't really learned the strategies that work best for me. When understanding, repetition seems to help and so do gestures, but sometimes I don't get what is trying to be said. –Rosa
- I don't particularly like Spanish, but I want to learn it. –Sandra
- I still think it is strange staying in that "Spanish mode," but I feel like I have made progress and now speak in Spanish at home. –Catarina
- It is hard to use Spanish outside of school because almost everyone I know doesn't know the language. –Lola

Figure 7. Pastiche of students' additional comments in final online survey

The numbers in the previous table, along with this honest open-ended feedback from my participants, help shed some light on the concerns that the students still had upon conclusion of the data collection period and the official end to the intervention. Confusion when listening to the target language and with the strategies themselves, continued fears and hesitation when speaking Spanish, and comments of disinterest in the subject or using the language outside of the classroom prove that this was not a miracle intervention and that the participants still had concerns about listening to, speaking, and learning Spanish.

Las últimas entrevistas

With one week left in my data collection plan to conference with my students, I thought that a group conference would allow me to have one last chance to sit down with my students and conduct any final participant checks that I felt necessary, or for them to add in any closing remarks about their three month experience. I felt extremely ill those last few days, but as most teachers often do, I managed to come into work and push through it. I began to lose my voice on the morning of the second to last day of data collection. How appropriate – just in time for my group conferences, during which a voice is pretty essential. I should also add that up to this point, I had only ever suffered from a bit of hoarseness when sick and had never, ever lost my voice entirely. There's always a first for everything, I guess! By the time the afternoon came around, my voice was almost entirely gone. Coincidentally, I had already created a lesson plan that lent itself to

a more student-centered afternoon as I was planning on sitting them in groups so that I could conduct conferences. So, the plan went on as scheduled and the students were very cooperative. To start the class on that second to last day that I was able to collect my final data, I had each student discuss with his *compañero* the five questions I had projected onto the screen, which were the questions I would ask during the group conferences that day. I explained that I would put them in groups to complete some vocabulary activities and that when I came around to their group, they and I would have a small group discussion relating to this three month journey and their language learning. I would use the five questions (Appendix F) they just discussed to help guide our conversation; however, we could discuss any topic at all for which they wanted to provide honest feedback and opinions. The students were so kind during those conferences and so cooperative, keeping the discussion going by bouncing ideas off of one another with little prompting from me.

Unfortunately, my last day of data collection was spent at home and in the doctor's office, trying to regain my voice and regain my health. I lost my chance to sit with the last two groups, who I had promised I'd speak with the following day after only getting around to four of the six groups the day before. I would venture to guess, however, that they would repeat some of the same ideas I documented from the other sixteen students. I am glad, though, that I did get to sit with most of them and ask them some enlightening questions. The question

that the groups were most interested in was question #4: *If you were to cross paths tomorrow with someone outside of this class who only speaks Spanish, do you feel that you possess the necessary communication skills to be able to communicate with him/her? Why (not)?* Most students thought they could get by with the help of context clues, but expressed concerns of natives talking too fast or using slang words that they didn't know. Some more interesting responses were those of Raúl, "I would be freaked out. I don't know enough to have a full conversation," and Milano, "I could communicate with them, but I can't be friends with them because I don't know how to say enough." There was also evidence of differing opinions relating to our class work, for example with the partner and group conversations we had nearly every day in Spanish. Andrea said that she really enjoyed being asked to speak in Spanish with her classmates often; however, Morgan found it difficult to speak in a group and keep the conversation going when her group members weren't able to say much on their own in Spanish. The most common response to several of the questions was the phrase, "I feel more comfortable speaking now," which of course I was extremely glad to hear. Jorge said he felt comfortable speaking with his girlfriend's family, Luisa told me that she began to speak Spanish at her lunch table with her friends for fun, Milano felt better now than in September about listening and speaking in Spanish, and Rosa said that she just liked Spanish overall a lot more now.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Sources

I utilized various data sources throughout the course of my twelve week study so that I could better analyze the effects of the communicative strategy instruction on the target language output of my second year Spanish students, as well as ensure the validity and reliability of my findings.

Observational data and reflective memos

By the end of my study, I had typed up and inserted into my field log seventeen different reflective memos. Also dispersed among the data were my observational data, including notes I had quickly jotted down during the actual lessons. As previously stated, the available time I had to myself immediately after the class in which I was conducting my study served as an important time period to document any of the day's events that I was unable to write down in my observational notes while the lesson was taking place. These memos proved to be most helpful when it came time to remember the details of all of the various occurrences during those twelve weeks. It was because of these observational data that I was able to narrate a more complete story and hopefully best describe for the reader the exact process of the intervention and the outcomes of the research.

Student surveys and questionnaires

The online survey (Appendix D), given once at the start and again at the end of the data collection period, required students to rank their level of agreement with eleven statements regarding their language learning preferences, as well as listening and speaking in Spanish class. Within the narrative section of this research report, exact percentages for each the four levels of responses to each of the statements have been listed in two tables (Table 1 and Table 2 on pages 54 and 95). Table 3 uses the average rating given by the students for each of the statements to show how the participants' responses at the start of the study compare to their responses twelve weeks later.

By the end of the study, half of the students strongly agreed that they could understand most of what was said in Spanish class, and all but one student slightly agreed as well. Anxiety levels when being spoken to in Spanish and when having to speak Spanish in class were both lower upon the conclusion of the study; however, the numbers of students who agreed that they thought about what they were going to say before actually saying it stayed at the same level. All students either strongly or somewhat agreed that they were able to communicate proficiently in Spanish about topics they had learned. Twenty percent had previously disagreed with that last statement in September. 91% of the class now reported speaking Spanish when working cooperatively with classmates, which was a huge jump from 52% back in September. Nearly all students now agreed

Table 3

Students' Responses to Online Survey: September versus December

<u>Survey Statements</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
<i>I can understand most of what is said during Spanish class.</i>				
<i>September</i>	25%	<u>75%</u>	0%	0%
<i>December</i>	<u>50%</u>	45.5%	4.5%	0%
<i>I feel anxious when people in class (students or teacher) speak to me in Spanish.</i>				
<i>September</i>	4.2%	<u>37.5%</u>	<u>37.5%</u>	20.8%
<i>December</i>	4.5%	31.8%	<u>40.9%</u>	22.7%
<i>I can communicate proficiently in Spanish about topics I have learned.</i>				
<i>September</i>	25%	<u>54.2%</u>	16.7%	4.2%
<i>December</i>	<u>54.5%</u>	45.5%	0%	0%
<i>I feel anxious when I have to speak in Spanish.</i>				
<i>September</i>	16.7%	37.5%	<u>41.7%</u>	4.2%
<i>December</i>	9.1%	<u>36.4%</u>	<u>36.4%</u>	18.2%
<i>I speak in Spanish when working cooperatively with my classmates and try not to switch to English.</i>				
<i>September</i>	13%	<u>39.1%</u>	34.8%	13%
<i>December</i>	40.9%	<u>50%</u>	9.1%	0%
<i>When I speak in Spanish, I try to think about the words I am going to say before I feel comfortable saying them aloud.</i>				
<i>September</i>	<u>70.8%</u>	20.8%	8.3%	0%
<i>December</i>	<u>59.1%</u>	38.4%	9.1%	0%
<i>I am aware of and know how to use different strategies that can help me when I am trying to express myself in Spanish and can't think of the word or phrase I want to use.</i>				
<i>September</i>	20.8%	<u>54.2%</u>	20.8%	4.2%
<i>December</i>	<u>59.1%</u>	36.4%	4.5%	0%
<i>I have discovered the strategies that work best for me to succeed in learning Spanish.</i>				
<i>September</i>	25%	<u>41.7%</u>	20.8%	12.5%
<i>December</i>	42.9%	<u>47.6%</u>	9.5%	0%
<i>I would rather my teacher use Spanish instead of English in the classroom.</i>				
<i>September</i>	4.2%	37.5%	<u>50%</u>	8.3%
<i>December</i>	22.7%	<u>40.9%</u>	31.8%	4.5%
<i>I try to use Spanish outside of the classroom when I can.</i>				
<i>September</i>	8.3%	<u>37.5%</u>	29.2%	25%
<i>December</i>	27.3%	<u>40.9%</u>	31.8%	0%
<i>I enjoy learning Spanish.</i>				
<i>September</i>	<u>45.8%</u>	<u>45.8%</u>	4.2%	4.2%
<i>December</i>	<u>68.2%</u>	27.3%	4.5%	0%

that they were aware of communication and learning strategies, with not a single student strongly disagreeing to those two statements. There were still students in December who did not want their teacher to use Spanish instead of English, but the number changed from 58% in September to 37% in December. The number of students who reported trying to use Spanish outside the classroom was at 68%, up from 46% in September, and the students who strongly agreed with the statement, “I enjoy learning Spanish,” went up from 46% to 68%, with many students moving from the “slightly agree” category. Two students had disagreed in September, one slightly and one strongly, and now only one student somewhat disagreed.

The December data suggest that students at the conclusion of the study possessed a greater strategic awareness, used more Spanish in the classroom, felt more confident in their speaking abilities, and had a greater interest in learning and using the language outside of the classroom. Overall, the data showed positive changes in students’ opinions over the course of the twelve week study and their open-ended responses revealed some of their final thoughts on their own progress as learners.

Several questionnaires (Appendices E, G, and I) were collected throughout the study and placed into the field log. These informal surveys were a great way to quickly collect documented responses from all participants at once, usually pertaining to their feelings and comments on their performance in a certain

activity we had recently completed. I could later analyze and compare these student responses with the other forms of data I had also collected.

Interviews and participant checks

I documented within my field log the questions and the student responses during the individual and whole class interviews. Direct quotes from students helped provide insight into their personal thoughts on their successes and challenges when speaking and listening to the target language. At several points throughout the study, I had several informal conversations with students that helped me to see language learning through their eyes. The small group discussions at the end of the study also allowed students to reflect on their thoughts on the progress we had made over the course of the twelve weeks.

Student artifacts and assessments

Student work completed in class, including both formal and informal assessment, was added to the field log whenever possible. The photos themselves of the formal assessments “*¿Quién soy yo?*” and “*¿Nuestra casa ideal?*” have been included to better describe the projects themselves to the reader of this document; however, my documentation of their performance when using the target language was then analyzed and cross-referenced with their responses to surveys and questionnaires and my observational data. By keeping each student’s rubric (Appendix J) from the 20 point speaking assessment near the end of the study, I had evidence of their pronunciation, grammatical structure, use of

vocabulary, and fluency when speaking. I also kept their 40 point participation rubrics (Appendix K), for which a grade was given at the end of the first marking period. These rubrics, along with the student checklists and self-assessments I collected, gave more data that could show insight into their levels of performance and the effects of the intervention on their oral performance in the target language.

The Coding Process

Within the field log I maintained over the course of the twelve week study, I placed my observational data and reflective memos, all results from student surveys and questionnaires, the data I acquired from interviews and participant checks, and all student artifacts and self-assessments that were directly connected to the intervention that took place during the study. I noticed several common themes in the data as they began to emerge throughout the course of the study, most of which I had already been anticipating as a result of writing my literature review. Upon conclusion of the study, I formally analyzed the data and looked deeper to uncover more codes and patterns.

I carefully coded all of the data in my field log using the anticipated codes I had pulled from my literature review, along with the newer codes I began to notice within the data. Next, I created a table in which I could list each code alphabetically, link any related codes to the side of each code, and finally create a running record of the page numbers in my field log where each code could be

found. This coding index allowed me to group together similar codes that I could then separate and place into bins based on their similarities (Figure 8). From these bins I was able to create theme statements that I thought best represented the findings of my research (Figure 9).

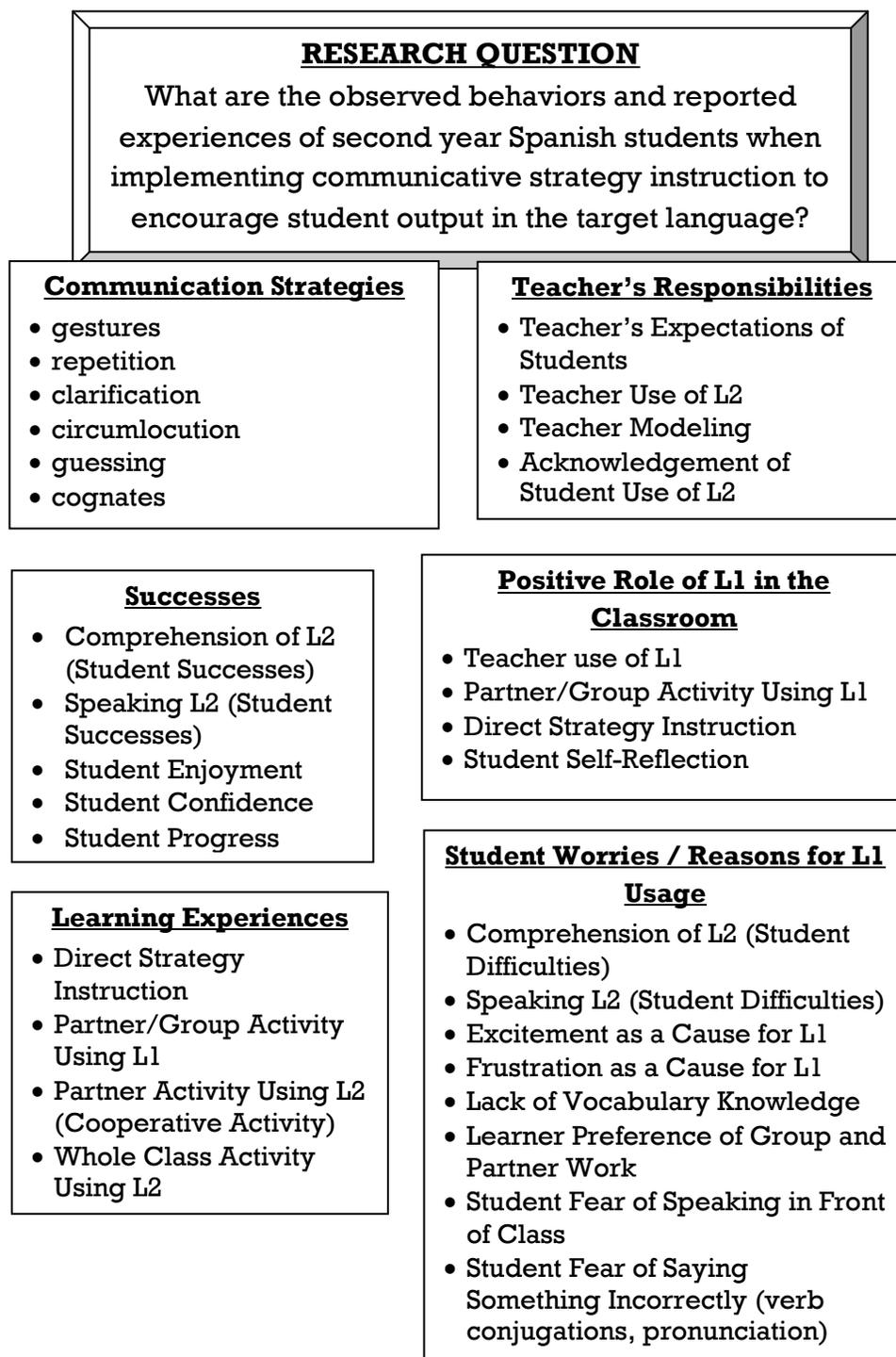


Figure 8: Coded bins

Theme Statements

- 1) The teacher of a communicative language classroom plays an important role in the success of the students' oral production of the target language as she sets forth clear expectations, provides students with comprehensible input, models the language and strategies herself, and acknowledges the students' use of L2.
- 2) In order for students to be able to fully participate in a communicative language classroom in which frequent oral communication in the target language is expected, they must be explicitly taught communication strategies such as gestures, repetition and clarification, circumlocution, and others.
- 3) In addition to the explicit strategy instruction, students must have opportunities to practice using those strategies in daily interaction with one another in partner, group, and whole class communicative activities using the target language. An interactive classroom is one that is much more student-centered than teacher-centered.
- 4) Although the main focus of the communicative language classroom is to keep the communication in the target language, the native language can and should be welcomed into the classroom as it aides in direct strategy instruction and student self-reflection.
- 5) A communicative language classroom may lead to higher levels of student success in comprehension of the target language, increased levels of participation in the target language, and higher levels of student enjoyment, confidence, and progress in speaking the target language.
- 6) Students' L1 usage during an L2 communicative activity may be a result of excitement, frustration, or lack of vocabulary in the target language, but rarely does it signify a disinterest in speaking the target language. Students fear speaking in front of the class, mispronouncing words, and saying things incorrectly, and feel much more comfortable when speaking in daily peer interaction than in teacher-centered instruction.

Figure 9: Theme statements

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of my research was to study the overall effects of communicative strategy instruction on second year language learners. For six years I witnessed countless Spanish 2 students who were so quick to use English almost the entire time they were in Spanish class, only using the target language when required within a structured speaking activity. The social interaction in my room was rarely in the target language, and this year I wanted to encourage oral production of Spanish as much as possible with this group of Spanish 2 students. The following statements represent the themes that emerged throughout the course of the study relating to the planning and implementation of communicative strategy instruction, the effects of the intervention on student output in the target language, and finally possible reasons for and advantages to the use of the native tongue in the language classroom.

The Teacher's Responsibilities in the Communicative Classroom

The teacher of a communicative language classroom plays an important role in the success of the students' oral production of the target language as she sets forth clear expectations, provides students with comprehensible input, models the language and strategies herself, and acknowledges the students' use of L2.

In two different studies, Tsou (2005) and Wilkerson (2008), the language instructors took time out at the start of the course to discuss with their students the expectations for and importance of participation in the target language in the classroom, and the data suggest the higher levels of student participation and interest in language learning were a result of student awareness of expected classroom behaviors. Rachel, a university faculty member in the Wilkerson (2005) study, reassured her students of her awareness of and concern for their needs as language learners. The teacher in the Tsou (2005) study paused often to encourage student participation and discussion, and provided direct instruction on communication strategies the students would use in class discussions.

On the first full day of school, I informed my students of my research plan and the language learning and speaking goals I had for them for the year. My expectations were made clear in a forty point participation rubric (Appendix K) that I had them discuss in detail with their new *compañero de clase* on that first full day of school. Upon examination of the rubric, they were able to verbalize, in their own words, the expectations I had for various aspects of the classroom routine and structure. I stressed that this communicative language learning experience would be a team effort and that we were in this journey together, all playing an important role in one other's learning. Explicitly teaching communication strategies to my students was a new experience for me, while

participating in a language class with such high expectations for speaking the target language was new for most, if not all of them.

Teacher-provided student exposure to the target language is essential (Pachler et al., 2009) and although students will not understand every single word used, activities should be explained entirely in the target language as the teacher emphasizes key words, uses miming or gesturing, and purposefully uses cognates and phrases students already know (Halliwell & Jones, 1991). In the past, I did try very hard to immerse my students in the target language as much as possible, but sometimes resorted to English translations of stated ideas because it was quicker and easier. This time around, I made a conscious effort to focus much more on keeping nearly all of my output in the target language, remembering the suggestions from the research I had read. Language teachers must provide slightly slower, modified speech in the target language that is just above the students' level of understanding and supplemented with pictures, realia, and movement (Krashen, 2003). Students will not become familiar with hearing, understanding, and using the target language if the teacher constantly translates ideas into English when faced with student confusion (Pachler et al., 2009).

Not only did I model the use of the language itself on a daily basis through comprehensible input, but I also modeled the communicative activities and language learning strategies in action to create further awareness for the students. In my own reflective memos, I have documentation of exactly how I modeled

every communicative activity, from quick partner discussions to much longer group sessions, before setting the students free to do them on their own in partners or groups. I also have evidence in my reflective memos of times when I mentioned the strategies by name and thought aloud for the class, as if I were a student reflecting on my own strategy use. The modeling of the strategies took much more of an effort than the comprehensible input, which came much more naturally for me. My observational notes from lessons, along with student self-assessments, have many examples of the students themselves calling the strategies by name and describing them in the target language, perhaps as a result of my modeling.

Applause and positive reinforcement were frequent occurrences in our daily lessons, as documented in my observational notes and reflective memos. Rewarding students' spontaneous use of the target language, for example when applying recently learned phrases or attempting to create new structures, helps create a more comfortable learning environment (Pachler et al., 2009). The students eventually began to echo the positive reinforcement phrases they heard me use in class, and I overheard them acknowledge their partner's efforts with phrases like "*Muy bien*" and "*Fantástico*," to name a few. I also tried to make them realize their own successes by asking them, in short questionnaires and self-assessments, to discuss their own strengths and achievements in their language learning. Students told how they successfully used a specific strategy during an

activity, or revealed how well they thought they had progressed, as seen in the final online survey.

Direct Instruction in Communicative Strategies

In order for students to be able to fully participate in a communicative language classroom in which frequent oral communication in the target language is expected, they must be explicitly taught communication strategies such as gestures, repetition and clarification, circumlocution, and others.

As I set out to implement communicative strategy instruction for the first time ever in my classroom, I didn't quite know where to begin. I read a lot of research that listed strategies and the importance of student strategic awareness, but it was up to me to figure out exactly how and when I would incorporate the strategies I myself had picked out to be the most useful for my second year students. The guide *Language Strategy Instruction in the Foreign Language Classroom: Speaking* (Chamot et al., 1990) suggests integrating strategy instruction with regular coursework, teaching one strategy at a time as to not overwhelm the students, mentioning the strategies by name in the target language, and practicing them throughout the year. I developed a plan that would start with *las frases útiles* and *los cognados*, and then continue on with *los gestos*, *la repetición*, *la circumlocución*, and finally *adivinar*.

Students must be taught the key phrases used daily in the classroom, and these phrases should also be displayed throughout the room or listed in the student's notebook. Real-life expressions of disbelief and compliments for other classmates should also be included (Pachler, et al., 2009). The lists of *frases útiles* (Appendix L) that the students kept on the inside front and back covers of their notebook proved to be very useful, as seen in my observational notes. I recorded instances in which the students often referenced these lists and had them out in front of them during communicative activities at the start of the study. By the end of the study, most students had acquired most of the phrases and could often be overheard using phrases like “*yo primero*,” “*a ti te toca*,” and “*terminamos*” with little hesitation or thought as to what they were saying. These are common classroom phrases that I had never before heard any of my students use, most likely since they are neither listed in the textbook nor taught as an added curricular component.

A communicative approach must reinforce strategic competence, the knowledge of communication strategies that one uses to compensate for lack of understanding or a breakdown in communication between two speakers (Canale & Swain, 1980). Throughout the course of this study, I documented how I introduced and explicitly taught all strategies, as well as exactly how the students practiced them within the curricular content we were studying at the time. A combination of English and Spanish was used when explicitly teaching the

strategies, English being used more when introducing the strategy for the first time and asking the students to self-reflect in group and class discussions. The research from a study conducted at the University of Minnesota (Cohen, 1996) suggests that when language instructors introduce and reinforce strategies that help students' oral language development and production, students may improve their performance on language based tasks. The study compared the reported experiences of 55 intermediate level participants in a strategies-based instructional approach to other students who participated in a standard ten week language course with no strategy instruction.

Student-Centered Communicative Activities

In addition to the explicit strategy instruction, students must have opportunities to practice using those strategies in daily interaction with one another in partner, group, and whole class communicative activities using the target language.

In order for students to advance in their levels of communicative performance, students must be provided with opportunities to use the language in authentic language situations, for real communication purposes (Canale & Swain, 1980). To encourage higher levels of target language proficiency, second language acquisition research suggests that students be given the chance to experience input, output, interaction, and negotiation of meaning (Wilkerson, 2008). Throughout this study, daily interaction with peers was one of the most

essential components to the research plan. From the very beginning with the first strategy of *frases útiles*, I had students start class several times with a short conversation with their partner in the target language about personal, relevant topics. I also make mention, in my reflective memos, of times when I altered several speaking activities found in the textbook, ones that highlighted the use of the vocabulary we were studying at the time, so they would be less structured and less predictable. I changed them to be much more open ended and to allow for authentic student responses and not artificial, scripted dialogue.

Once introduced to a new strategy, the students were given multiple activities through which that strategy was utilized and reinforced. The strategies' names and purposes were continuously reviewed as we moved on to learn and practice other new strategies. I used all three, partner, group, and whole class activities, during the study. My observational notes show that my classroom became a much more student-centered learning environment as I would model the strategy or the activity, but then the students would break off into their pairs or groups for the activity. Even the whole class activities were still structured in a way that all students were involved at once, like the "walk around the room" activities we would often do in which everyone was an active participant. The practice of each strategy was in the target language; however, the student reflections and self-assessments of their use of communicative strategies were in

English.

Positive Role of L1 in the Language Classroom

Although the main focus of the communicative language classroom is to keep the communication in the target language, the native language can and should be welcomed into the classroom as it aides in direct strategy instruction and student self-reflection.

If I had attempted a complete immersion type of setting and hadn't allowed English in the classroom, there is no way I would have attained nearly half of the insight I did into my students' learning experiences. We often used L1 to discuss with one another our challenges and accomplishments, whether in whole class or small group discussions or quick chats with their partners. All surveys and student questionnaires were also in the native language so the students could fully express their thoughts and reactions. Yes, they were able to name the strategies in Spanish and some could describe them in the target language, but they needed to be able to use English to express their strategic awareness when I asked about it in interviews and in surveys. My observational notes also contain records of times when students used a lot of English with one another, for example during the week that they were building their *casas ideales*. Other times, there were random, short discussions in English with their *compañeros de clase* about the usefulness of a newly introduced strategy, for example. Cook (2001) agrees that English can be used by students to provide

support to one another, explain tasks to each other, negotiate group roles, and check their understanding against their peers.

As previously stated, I myself used L1 to set forth my expectations of student participation in the target language at the very beginning of the study. I also have evidence in my field log of times when I used English with the students to either introduce a strategy or lead a reflective discussion about a strategy. For example, when I introduced *repetición*, I told the students to imagine listening to a friend and taking down directions to his house, a place they had never been to before. I reminded them that they most likely would repeat the instructions back to the person in order to make sure they had them down correctly. Small discussions like this one wouldn't have been as effective in the target language if the students wouldn't have understood everything I said. Cook (2001) reminds us that the teacher can use L1 to provide instruction or explanation to the students, link prior knowledge in the L1 to new knowledge in the L2, and encourage language use strategies. L1 should not be feared in the language classroom as it can be used to encourage learning and further understanding (Myers, 2000).

Successes of Communicative Strategy Instruction

A communicative language classroom may lead to higher levels of student success in comprehension of the target language, increased levels of participation in the target language, and higher levels of student enjoyment, confidence, and progress in speaking the target language.

Doughty and Pica's (1986) study cited higher levels of modified interaction, including clarification requests and confirmation and comprehension checks pair and group activities, than in teacher-directed instruction, Cohen's (1996) study links improved student performance on language based tasks to strategies-based instruction, and Tsou's (2005) direct instruction on communication strategies led to higher levels of participation and interest in language learning. My study was made up of a communicative language setting, coupled with direct strategy instruction to provide students with the skills they needed to succeed in the communicative setting. Interesting and relevant content for the students, combined with clear and attainable goals and a supportive and non-threatening environment, can lead to higher levels of student motivation (Lightbrown & Spada, 1999). The data collected in my field log, including observational records, student surveys and questionnaires, interviews and participant checks, and student artifacts and assessments, suggest higher levels of student comprehension, participation, enjoyment, confidence, and progress in speaking Spanish as a result of the intervention.

After students had a structured group discussion about sports approximately two weeks before the conclusion of my study, they completed the "Self-Assessment of Participation in Group" (Appendix I) and rated how often they completed each task or skill. It was most interesting to read their responses to the final statement at the end of the document: "Having a conversation with my

classmates in Spanish is...” (see Figure 6 on page 78). Overall the students reported having enjoyed the experience, expressing high comfort levels while speaking the target language but at the same time acknowledging that it was challenging. Many labeled the activity as “helpful,” “a good way to learn,” and “a good challenge.”

This group discussion was a practice round for their individual, formal assessment in which I would have a short conversation with each student about sports. In that conversation, I would measure each student’s pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, and fluency. The twenty point rubric (Appendix J) was given to the students prior to the individual interview with me, and we went through it together to clarify all expectations. I told them that I was also looking for their use of any of the strategies we’ve learned, when applicable. I let them know that I’d be looking for them to keep the conversation going by using some of their *frases útiles*, along with any other strategies that might apply during our conversation. Also, I encouraged them to use the recently learned phrases for expressing opinions, as to keep the conversation natural. In my field log I kept the students’ rubrics, to then be able to later analyze their scores. I was extremely pleased with their ability to hold a conversation with me in Spanish, and the average score was 18.7 out of 20 points. The most common area in which students lost one point was in the structure category, as their structure was “good; only a couple of occasional errors.” Throughout the course of the study, I placed

a strong emphasis on communication and little focus on error correction while they were speaking with me or their classmates. I knew that students needed to be supported and encouraged to speak the language without fear of being corrected all the time. Language classrooms that are supportive and allow students to take risks without fear of failure can lead to greater levels of confidence, thus developing a more positive attitude towards language learning (Gibbons, 1993).

I was excited to conclude my study with the final online survey, which contained the exact same statements as the first online survey given at the start of the survey. I anticipated that the data would suggest that the intervention was successful, and that my students were more confident when listening to, speaking, and learning Spanish. In the data analysis section of this document, Table 3 on page 102 shows a full, detailed comparison and in depth analysis of the findings from the September and December surveys. There are several pieces of data within Table 3 that suggest higher levels of participation in Spanish, along with an increase in student enjoyment, confidence, and progress. Prior to the intervention, 52% of students reported speaking Spanish when working cooperatively with classmates. That number jumped to 91% in the December survey. The number of students using Spanish outside of the classroom rose from 46% in September to 68% in December, and coincidentally the same percentages were reported in the amount of students who strongly agreed with the statement, “I enjoy learning Spanish.” Students’ self-perceived progress was evident in December as half of

the students strongly agreed that they could understand most of what was said in Spanish class, and all but one student slightly agreed. Anxiety levels when being spoken to in Spanish and when having to speak Spanish in class were lower, and all students agreed to some extent that they were able to communicate proficiently in Spanish about topics they had learned. Only 20% of students had agreed with that last statement in September. Overall, the data from the December survey, when compared with the responses from September, suggest that students used more Spanish with their classmates, were more interested in learning and using the language outside of the classroom, and possessed higher levels of confidence and a greater strategic awareness.

Student Worries & Reasons for Use of L1 during L2 Activities

Students' L1 usage during an L2 communicative activity may be a result of excitement, frustration, or lack of vocabulary in the target language, but rarely does it signify a disinterest in speaking the target language. Students fear speaking in front of the class, mispronouncing words, and saying things incorrectly, and feel much more comfortable when speaking in daily peer interaction than in teacher-centered instruction.

The story in the narrative section of this document about how Pepe tried to convince the class in Spanish that he had in fact been to the Dominican Republic, while Jorge tried to argue with Pepe and say that he hadn't, shows how a student can arrive at a point of frustration when he is unable to fully express himself in

the target language and starts to speak English to make sure that he gets his point across and is understood. During a partner activity, Eduardo's lack of vocabulary prevented him from staying in the target language during his discussion with Jaime. He couldn't remember how to say *a veces*, and my attempt to walk him through the process of coming up with a synonym failed as he couldn't recall Spanish 1 words like *mucho* and *poco*. In the student questionnaire (Appendix E) about the barrier activity with furniture pieces, nine students listed having difficulty with the vocabulary during the communicative activity or wanting to practice vocabulary more in class to be better prepared for *sólo español*.

Several of my reflective memos contain my own personal frustrations I expressed throughout the study of times when I asked them to speak only the target language with one another, and gave them all of the pieces that they would need to do so, but I still heard them using English. Alejandro's constant desire to translate part of his question instead of rephrase it in Spanish during the "walk around the room" interview activity (Appendix O) was an example of one of those times. Natural reactions were often overheard in English, too, like statements of frustration and statements of excitement. In that same reflective memo about Alejandro, I also mention when Pepe looked at me and said in English, "I'm actually getting it!" Reaction statements like this one in the L1 never bothered me, and I often responded with a positive response in Spanish. It was also very hard to keep the students speaking only Spanish when completing

an activity that really peaked their interest, like when we were practicing the phrases for expressing opinion and they were filling in their opinions to prepare themselves for mini-debates about the best restaurants and television shows (Appendix Q).

As seen in the pastiche that I put together about my students' attitudes toward speaking, listening, and learning Spanish (Figure 1 on page 55), their frustrations about speaking were most telling and helpful in developing this final theme statement. Several of their open-ended survey responses to the final online survey (Figure 7 on page 96) showed me that they do enjoy learning Spanish, but that there are still areas in which they feel they struggle and look forward to continued practice.

THE NEXT ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE

This document narrates the experiences only at the beginning of the journey that my students and I began at the start of the school year. Our adventure is not yet over as we've continued our focus on communicative language teaching and learning past the official data collection period. Constant focus on the use of the target language in the classroom, references to the communicative strategies, and student self-assessment and reflection are still all vital components to our Spanish 2 classroom and will be until the end of the year. Throughout this story, I've told of various ways in which this research study affected my students; however, there would be a missing piece to the story if I did not explain the ways in which this teacher action research experience has changed me and the ways in which I teach Spanish to students who are in their second year of language learning.

I truly feel that the standard for communicating in the target language when in the language classroom must be made clear from the very first year of language studies. Although I have not taught Spanish 1 in several years, I wholeheartedly believe that immersion in comprehensible input as provided by the teacher and clear expectations for the students' use of the target language must become the norm from the very beginning of the students' language learning experience. In terms of classroom phrases and language use strategies, there is much more that students should be taught from the very beginning in order to be

able to communicate fully in the target language, to the best of their ability. Our job as language teachers is to provide them with these essential tools. The list of common classroom phrases I used (Appendix L) goes way beyond the expected phrases like “*¿Puedo ir al baño?*” and “*¿Cómo se dice...en español?*” Phrases such as “*A ti te toca*” and “*¿Cómo?*” are phrases students should use every day in the language classroom; however, they need to be added as a curricular component at the start of the year. I plan on doing this in all of my classes at the start of the year from now on.

I myself devised the list of strategies to be used in this communicative strategy intervention. The order in which I introduced them, in my eyes, began with the easiest and ended with the most complicated. The final strategy, *circunlocución*, was and still is very difficult for my students to grasp. Again, this is an area that needs to be focused on beginning in the first year of language study. This reinforces the idea that students need to be constantly exposed to the comprehensible input that we teachers can provide for them. While it might be very difficult for them to create definitions and descriptions in Spanish 1, there is no reason why they cannot be exposed to descriptions the teacher gives for the new vocabulary words. I, too, have been guilty of giving students assessments in which there are pictures and the students simply write the word below each picture. On one hand, I acknowledge that rote memorization is necessary in the language classroom and is a valuable skill. However, could we move past

assessments with photos, even in their first weeks of study, and try giving students definitions of the words? This skill would naturally have to be practiced in class, first. For example, instead of simply asking the student to write *el lápiz* under a photo of a pencil on a formal assessment, a teacher can write, “*Es un objeto que necesitas para escribir.*” If students could become accustomed to seeing these definitions from the very beginning, they will be more likely to have less difficulty later when asked to begin writing definitions on their own.

Since it was part of the study, I created curricular activities that included the strategy that we were studying at the time. This was very time consuming and required much more extra planning on my part. While it was extremely valuable, taking time out at least every other day to list the strategies together and take so much extra time out to focus on the strategies themselves might not be realistic for all language teachers due to curricular constraints. I think the most important idea to walk away with from this experience is the general idea that strategies are so extremely useful in the language classroom and that students need to be explicitly taught their names and how to use them, and then they must be provided with continued chances to practice them. It would take several time periods throughout the start of the year, and as the year continues on, to introduce the strategies and teach the students how to use them. After that, however, all that is required could be a quick mention of the strategy, a brief review of how to utilize it, and then a simple reminder to the students to try and use the strategy in a

particular activity that the teacher already had planned for the day. Little to no extra planning is required in this situation.

Prior to this teacher action research study, I had never asked for so much feedback from my students regarding their opinions about our progress and their learning experiences. I am considering giving some sort of survey to all of my students at the start of the next academic year, to be able to look deeper into their opinions on language learning and find out a little bit more about each of the students who will sit in my classroom for the next ten months. Occasional check-ins in various forms are helpful, as well. Sadly, it is so easy to fly through a 41 minute class period each day and forget to pay more attention to the individuals filling the seats on our classrooms. It is important to remember to talk *with* them, not just *at* them. They are the ones truly experiencing what is going on in the classroom and with their feedback and suggestions, it becomes easier to see why and how we can create the most effective learning experience possible for them. Group conferences, individual conferences, and even small informal assessments at the bottom of in-class worksheets are all valuable opportunities to gather feedback from your students and change your plan accordingly or continue along the same path if it is working well.

I conclude this study feeling very satisfied with the overall effects that the communicative strategy instruction intervention had on my students' learning experiences; however, I am still left pondering several questions that I may

further research throughout the end of this academic year, or with a new group of participants next year. What other level-appropriate communicative strategies might also be taught in the second year language classroom? While all were very successful, except for *circunlocución*, I wonder what other strategies could be useful for my students. Also, might there be a more effective way of getting students to remain in “target language mode” than a sign at the front of the room? I did not choose to penalize students for their use of the native tongue when it was not necessary, so would they have pushed themselves even further if points were at stake? Could a daily or weekly assessment on overall oral performance in class be more effective than an assessment at the very end of the semester?

Implementing communicative strategy instruction this year in my classroom was a great achievement that took a lot of time and energy. I look forward to doing it all again next year, with the ability to now dive in even deeper and answer some of the questions that have come to mind while reflecting on my work this past year.

Teacher action research is a continuous process. Learning from one’s students never officially ends and it is important to recognize the value in this. The impact that we teachers have on our students is amazing. I work with young adults every day and have the power to enhance their minds and open them up to a whole new world of possibilities daily. I strive to help them reach their full potential and try to do whatever I can to help them succeed. They, too, encourage me to push myself more and more and become a better teacher. If I were content

with my teaching and the impact I was having on my students, then I would have never come to Moravian and pursued a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I feel that I have become a much better teacher than I was seven years ago, when I began, which of course is natural in any field. With more experience in the field, you hopefully learn more about yourself and become a more effective worker.

Just as I did when I was fully absorbed in my data collection and experiencing the study when it was going on, I am still excitedly spreading the word to other department members in my building about the successes and challenges of the research study that I conducted. By writing this thesis, I look forward to spreading the word of my research story's successes far beyond just the teachers in my building. I hope that by reading about my experiences, other teachers around the world can connect to my story and take away new ideas that they might use in their own classroom. I will soon present my research to other fellow teacher action researchers at the national level, at the Teacher Action Research Convention 2012 in San Diego, California. Next, I will set out to write a shorter version of this thesis for an academic journal, to hopefully reach yet another audience of fellow language teachers. The word about the great work we teacher action researchers do in our classrooms must be spread to other individuals who can benefit from reading about our and our students' experiences.

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Appendix A: HSIRB Approval Letter



June 27, 2011

Jessica Lynn Dischley
[REDACTED]

HSIRB proposal by Jessica Lynn Dischley for Richard Grove

Dear Jessica Lynn Dischley:

The Moravian College Human Subjects Internal Review Board has accepted your proposal: "A Communicative Approach to Language Teaching." Given the materials submitted, your proposal received an expedited review. A copy of your proposal will remain with the HSIRB Chair.

Please note that if you intend on venturing into other topics than the ones indicated in your proposal, you must inform the HSIRB about what those topics will be.

Should any other aspect of your research change or extend past one year of the date of this letter, you must file those changes or extensions with the HSIRB before implementation.

This letter has been sent to you through U.S. Mail and e-mail. Please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone (610-861-1379) or through e-mail (browerg@moravian.edu) should you have any questions about the committee's requests.

George D. Brower
Chair, Human Subjects Internal Review Board
Moravian College
610-861-1379

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Appendix B: Principal Consent Form

PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

August 30, 2011

Dear [REDACTED]

I am currently working towards a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Moravian College. This program is based on teacher action research, helping me to create the best learning experiences for my students as I investigate and implement teaching strategies research has proven to be most effective. The final requirement of this program requires that I conduct a systematic study of my own teaching practices. The title of my research is *A Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*. During this study I will conduct class primarily in Spanish to create an immersion-type setting. The purpose of my study is to improve the comfort level of students when speaking Spanish and to further develop their oral proficiency in the target language. I hope to achieve these goals by directly teaching and modeling for my students the communication strategies they will utilize to succeed in the immersion-type setting.

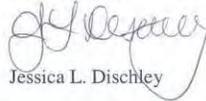
I will use primarily Spanish to conduct class and students will be asked to do the same. Students will be explicitly taught strategies that will help them communicate with me and with their classmates in Spanish as much as possible. English will be used when appropriate and necessary, especially when reflecting on the communication strategies and our learning progression.

This study will take place in a Spanish 2 class from September 7 until December 7, 2011. I will gather data to support my study through observations, student surveys and interviews, and student work samples. I will only use information collected from students who have parental permission to participate in the study in any written reports of my research. All of the students' names will be kept confidential, as will the name of the school district and any participating faculty members. Any child may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. In the letter to parents, I have listed all of my contact information as well as the contact information of the Guidance office. This way, if a parent or child does not feel comfortable contacting me directly to discuss or withdraw from the study, the student's guidance counselor can serve as an additional resource to be contacted. If a child is withdrawn, I will not use any information pertaining to him or her in my study.

My faculty sponsor is Dr. Joseph Shosh. He may be contacted at Moravian College by phone at (610) 861-1482 and by email at jshosh@moravian.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about my in-class project, please feel free to contact me at school. If not, please sign and return the bottom portion of this letter. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Jessica L. Dischley

I attest that I am the principal of the teacher conducting this research study, that I have read and understand the consent form, and received a copy. Jessica Dischley has my permission to conduct this study in her Spanish 2 course at Emmaus High School.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

8 / 31 / 11
Date

Appendix C: Parent and Student Consent Form



Dear Parents/Guardians,



My name is Jessica Dischley and I am your child's Spanish 2 teacher for the 2011-2012 school year. I am currently working towards a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Moravian College. This program is based on teacher action research, helping me to create the best learning experiences for my students as I investigate and implement teaching strategies that research has proven to be most effective. The final stage of this program requires that I conduct a systematic study of my own teaching practices. The title of my research is *A Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*. During this study I will conduct class primarily in Spanish to create an immersion-type setting. The purpose of my study is to improve the comfort level of students when speaking Spanish and to further develop their oral proficiency in the target language. I hope to achieve these goals by directly teaching and modeling for my students the communication strategies they will utilize to succeed in the immersion-type setting.

I will use primarily Spanish to conduct class and students will be asked to do the same. Students will be explicitly taught strategies that will help them communicate with me and with their classmates in Spanish as much as possible. English will be used when appropriate and necessary, especially when reflecting on the communication strategies and our learning progression.

This study will take place until approximately the middle of December. I will gather data to support my study through observations, student surveys and interviews, and student work samples. I am asking for your permission to use the data gathered pertaining to your child's involvement in my written reports for my research; however, participation in this study is entirely voluntary and will not affect your child's grade in any way. All student names will be kept confidential, as will the name of the school district and any participating faculty members. Any student may choose to not participate or may later withdraw from the study at any time without penalty using any of the contact methods I have listed below. Parental consent to withdraw oneself from the study will not be required. If a student is withdrawn, I will not use any information pertaining to him or her in my study. Should you or your child wish to speak with an outside party about your child's participation in or withdrawal from this study, please call [REDACTED] and ask to speak with your child's guidance counselor. He or she will be aware of the research I am conducting in my classroom and will be more than happy to discuss your child's participation with you.

Should you have any questions regarding my research, please feel free to contact me. Our principal, [REDACTED], has approved this study and may be reached at [REDACTED] should you wish to speak with him. My faculty sponsor at Moravian College is Dr. Joseph Shosh. He may be contacted at Moravian College by phone at (610) 861-1482 and by email at jshosh@moravian.edu. I am asking that you please return the attached form at your earliest convenience, complete with the appropriate signatures and dates. I thank you so very much for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Jessica L. Dischley
Spanish teacher, [REDACTED]

Appendix C (cont.): Parent and Student Consent Form

Please sign, date, and return this form to Ms. Dischley at your earliest convenience. As stated on the previous page, please feel free to contact me or any of the other listed parties if you have any questions or concerns regarding this research study that will be conducted in your child's Spanish 2 class this fall.

STUDENT CONSENT

I, the student, attest that I have received a copy, read, and understand this consent form. *Please initial the appropriate line below.*

_____ I am willing to participate in Ms. Dischley's action research study.

_____ I am not willing to participate in Ms. Dischley's action research study.

Student name: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

If the student listed above is willing to participate and is a minor, parental consent for participation is also required.

PARENTAL CONSENT

I attest that I am the child's legal guardian and that I have received a copy, read, and understand this consent form. *Please initial the appropriate line below.*

_____ I am willing to have my child participate in Ms. Dischley's action research study.

_____ I am not willing to have my child participate in Ms. Dischley's action research study.

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Initial Online Survey

STUDENT SURVEY - Administered using www.surveymonkey.com

Listening in Spanish Class

- 1) I can understand most of what is said in Spanish during class.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 2) I feel anxious when people in class (students or teacher) speak to me in Spanish.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*

Speaking in Spanish Class

- 3) I can communicate proficiently in Spanish about topics I have learned.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 4) I feel anxious when I have to speak in Spanish.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 5) I speak in Spanish when working cooperatively with my classmates and try not to switch to English.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 6) When I speak in Spanish, I try to think about the words I am going to say before I feel comfortable saying them aloud.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 7) I am aware of and know how to use different strategies that can help me when I am trying to express myself in Spanish and can't think of the word or phrase I want to use.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*

Language Learning Preferences

- 8) I have discovered the strategies that work best for me to succeed in learning Spanish.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 9) I would rather my teacher use Spanish instead of English in the classroom.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 10) I try to use Spanish outside of the classroom when I can.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*
- 11) I enjoy learning Spanish.
strongly agree *somewhat agree* *somewhat disagree* *strongly disagree*

Appendix E: Student Questionnaire after Communicative Activity

Me llamo _____

Hoy es el _____ de _____, 20_____

Think about the communicative activity we completed in class today as you respond to the following questions.

What phrases (*frases útiles*), if any, did you use with your partner today?

What were the difficulties you experienced?

Which parts of the activity were easy for you?

Were there any particular strategies that were helpful in completing the activity?

What could we do/practice/learn in class that could help us be better prepared for longer time periods of *sólo español*?

Appendix F: Small Group Interview Questions at End of Study

STUDENT INTERVIEW/CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

Student(s): _____ Date: _____

_____ Individual interview or _____ Group conference

- 1) When we first started the school year, how did you feel about conducting class primarily in the target language? Have your feelings changed? Why (not)?

- 2) How did you feel in September about your overall strengths in Spanish class? How do you feel now? If there has been a change, what do you think caused that change?

- 3) How did learning *language use strategies* help you? Which strategy do you feel most comfortable using? Which has turned out to be the most useful for you?

- 4) If you were to cross paths tomorrow with someone outside of this class who only speaks Spanish, do you feel that you possess the necessary communication skills to be able to communicate with him/her? Why (not)?

- 5) What do you feel most proud of in terms of your capabilities in this class? What do you want most to continue to work on?

Appendix G: *Mini-cuento* Example (1 of 4)

Nombre _____ Clase _____ Fecha _____

Minicuento 1

Página del estudiante

PASO 2-CUENTA CUENTOS

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.

1. A Manolo le gusta tomar **vitaminas** todos los días en la mañana.

2. Un día va a tomar sus vitaminas, pero **no las encuentra**. ¿Dónde están sus vitaminas?

3. De repente encuentra sus vitaminas encima de su escritorio y dice: “¡Ajá! ¡Aquí están mis vitaminas!”

4. Manolo **las toma** y todo está perfecto. **Va a trabajar**.

5. Una hora más tarde, Manolo está enfermo del estómago.

6. ¡Pobre Manolo! ¡**Tomó** la medicina del perro!

¡Avancemos! TPRS
Level 1 Unit 2

Lesson 2

23

Appendix H: Student Worksheet to Prepare for Sports Discussion

Me llamo _____ Hoy es el _____ de noviembre, 20_____

Responde con frases completas en español:

- 1) ¿Te gustan los deportes? _____
- 2) De todos los deportes, ¿cuál es tu favorito? _____
- 3) ¿Te gusta jugar a los deportes con amigos? ¿A qué deporte les gusta jugar? _____
- 4) ¿Participan tus amigos en un deporte en EHS? ¿Cuáles? _____
- 5) ¿Participas en un deporte en la escuela? _____
- 6) ¿Miras los deportes en la televisión? ¿Qué deporte te gusta mirar? _____
- 7) ¿Prefieres OTRA ACTIVIDAD más que los deportes? ¿Qué prefieres o qué te gusta más? _____

During this group conversation, it is essential to participate and make your voice heard; however, it is also just as important to listen to others.

Monitor your speaking/listening: Make tally marks on the line provided to keep track of how many times you do each of the following activities.

- _____ agree / disagree
- _____ ask for clarification
- _____ repetition: repeat back the idea to the speaker to check your understanding
- _____ give an opinion
- _____ ask for more information

Appendix I: Student Self-Assessment of Participation in Group

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPATION IN GROUP

Student: _____ Date: _____

How often did you do the following things in your group today?

Put a check in the appropriate box and add comments to each task to further explain your choice.

TASK (*in Spanish)	Often	Some- times	Rarely	Comments:
1. I listened to others in my group.				
2. I summarized what others said.				
3. I asked for information.				
4. I gave information.				
5. I gave an opinion.				
6. I agreed or disagreed.				
7. I asked for clarification.				

Complete the following idea:

Having a conversation with my classmates in Spanish is...

**Adapted from a form on page 74 in Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners. O'Malley/Valdez Pierce. © 1996 by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. (Page may be reproduced for classroom use.)*

Appendix J: 20 point Oral Interview Rubric

RUBRIC FOR ORAL EVALUATION

Student: _____ Date: _____

	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Pronunciation</u>	Near native pronunciation and intonation	Good effort to simulate native intonation and pronunciation	Occasional errors do not interfere with comprehension	Poor pronunciation impairs comprehension	Barely comprehensible; idea unclear
<u>Structure</u>	Excellent; virtually free of errors	Good; only a couple of occasional errors	Several errors but still comprehensible	Errors impede comprehension	Grammatical inaccuracies cause confusion
<u>Vocabulary</u>	Precise, varied use of old and new vocabulary	Adequate use of old and new vocabulary	Functional, not very varied	Limited to basic ; inaccuracies	Limited response; not enough to assess
<u>Fluency</u>	Excellent flow to speech; any pauses in speech are natural	Occasional pauses when speaking but close to natural	Incomplete ideas; lack of flow from one idea to next	Ideas are choppy, incomplete, and lack transition	Fragmented speech; barely comprehensible

Appendix K: Participation Rubric for Entire Marking Period

Nombre: _____ Clase (hora): _____ Semestre: _____

	5	4	3	2-1
Readiness for Class	You are in your seat, ready to go when the bell rings. On your desk you have your book, notebook, HW assignment, HW card, pencil, and any other necessary materials for that day. Prior to class you used the restroom, drank water, etc.	There are only a couple of times that you have not been ready for class when the bell rings. (See first box for a description of what it means to be "ready.")	There are several times that you have not been ready for class when the bell rings. (See first box for a description of what it means to be "ready.")	You are constantly unprepared when the bell rings. (See first box for a description of what it means to be "ready.")
Focus on Learning While In Class	You consistently pay attention in class and take on an active role in your learning. You are helpful to your classmates and do not distract the learning of others.	You pay attention in class. Occasionally your full attention is lacking and you are not fully focused. Your actions may occasionally interrupt the learning process of your other classmates.	At times you are "lost" and unaware of what we are doing in class as a result of not paying attention. Your actions might be labeled by others as a distraction to their learning.	You rarely pay attention in class and lack focus on the material that we are learning as a group. You interrupt the learning process of others.
	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1
Frequency & Quality of Participation	You are an avid participant. Your hand is constantly raised and you participate on a daily basis, a few times per class when possible. You answer open-ended questions in class and offer your ideas/opinions.	You participate frequently, at least once or twice a class when the opportunity presents itself. Sometimes you offer ideas during class discussion; however, you tend to raise your hand for those "quick" 1 or 2 word answers.	You may participate on occasion; however, you don't participate enough and it is often difficult to evaluate your abilities in both English and Spanish.	You never raise your hand in class (or perhaps only a couple of times throughout the semester); therefore it is extremely difficult to evaluate your abilities in both English and Spanish.
Collaboration with Others	You are always on task during partner and group activities. You contribute your own ideas and also respect the ideas of other group members, encouraging all parties to participate. You try to push your group to get the most out of the activity.	You are mostly on task during partner/group activities, but have been reminded once or twice to "focus." You work well with others and contribute thoughts and ideas.	You sometimes need to be reminded to remain on task OR you sometimes carelessly rush through activities. You may work well with others, but sometimes sit back and let others do all the work.	You give minimal effort during partner/group activities and are often off task. You do not work well with others.
Effort-Use of Spanish in Class	You switch to "Spanish mode" for the entire class period. Simple requests are <u>consistently</u> made in Spanish. You <u>initiate conversation</u> in Spanish with teacher and other classmates. As you learn more new phrases for communicating with others, you try to use them daily. As the year goes on, you try to elaborate beyond single sentence responses and try to communicate more complex ideas in Spanish.	You are in "Spanish mode" for the entire class period. Simple requests are consistently made in Spanish, but sometimes English is used when Spanish could have been used. You speak with the teachers and other classmates in Spanish as much as possible.	You only use Spanish when necessary in the classroom and during activities. Simple requests are sometimes made in Spanish, but not as often as they could be. Questions are sometimes asked/answered in English when Spanish could have been used.	Spanish is rarely used when speaking with the teacher or classmates. You speak as little Spanish as possible during class, partner, and group activities.

Nota: _____ / 40

Appendix L: List of All *Frases Útiles* Used in Research Study

Master List of All *Frases Útiles*

Categorías

Aclaración → Clarification
Necesidades → Needs
Permiso → Permission
Preguntas → Questions
En Grupos → In Groups

Aclaración

1. ¿Cómo se dice "cat"?
2. ¿Qué significa "gato"?
3. ¿Cómo se escribe "gato"?
4. Tengo una pregunta.
5. No comprendo (entiendo).
6. Estoy confundido(a).
7. ¿Qué página?
8. Repite, por favor.
9. ¿Cuál es la tarea?

Necesidades

1. No tengo...
lápiz / mi libro / mi tarea...
2. Necesito...
lápiz / otro papel / un libro...
3. Necesito ayuda.
4. ¿Tienes...?
5. ¿Me prestas...?
6. Estuve ausente.

Permiso

¿Puedo / Me permites...

1. ir al baño?
2. ir a tomar/beber agua?
3. ir a la enfermera?
4. ir a mi armario?
5. ir a la oficina de ____?

Preguntas

1. ¿Quién?
2. ¿Qué?
3. ¿Cuál?
4. ¿Cuándo?
5. ¿Dónde?/¿Adónde?
6. ¿Por qué?
7. ¿Cómo?
8. ¿Cuántos?

En grupos

1. Yo primero.
2. A ti te toca.
3. A mí me toca.
4. (No) terminamos.
5. No comprendo...
6. ¿Cómo?
7. ¿Y tú?
8. Yo también.

Appendix M: Student Quiz on *Frases Útiles*

Prueba #1: Frases útiles
Español 2

Nota:
____ / 24 pts.

Me llamo _____
Hoy es el ____ de _____, 20__

Given the following situations, what would you say in Spanish? **Do not repeat phrases.*

Frases individuales (necesidades, permiso, aclaración):

- 1. You have a question. _____
- 2. You need to know the page number. _____
- 3. You need to borrow a pencil. _____
- 4. You forgot your homework. _____
- 5. You are confused/don't understand. _____
- 6. You want to say "cool" in Spanish. _____
- 7. You're having trouble spelling "guay." _____
- 8. You don't know what "guay" means. _____
- 9. You didn't hear what someone said. _____
- 10. You want to know what the HW is. _____
- 11. You need to go to the restroom. _____
- 12. You need to go to the office. _____

cool =
"chévere"
o "guay" 😊

Crédito extra: _____

Appendix N: ¿Quién soy yo? Student Activities and Project

¿Quién soy yo? – Español 2

So that we can all get to know one another, each of you will be assigned to another classmate who you will each interview, create a poster about, and put together a short presentation. ☺ This project will include a poster and an oral presentation in front of the class.

PARTICIPATION: 5 puntos



- ✓ use of Spanish during interview with classmates
- ✓ following along during presentations on worksheet provided
- ✓ use of Spanish with presenters (asking questions in Spanish so they repeat information you may have missed)



POSTER: 20 puntos

DUE: _____

Create a visual that encompasses **all** of your partner's responses to the questions you asked. Each image may have **one key word in Spanish** (NO complete sentences).

***Requirements: 10 puntos**

- ✓ at least 1 visual for each question
- ✓ only "key words"
- ✓ use of oaktag provided in class (or something of the same size)



***Neatness & Creativity/Originality: 10 puntos**

PRESENTATION: 25 puntos

EVERYONE READY TO PRESENT ON: _____

You will tell the class about your *compañer@ de clase* by explaining the images on your poster using **COMPLETE SPANISH SENTENCES**. The key words you included will help you; however, you must practice at home exactly how you will present (specifically the structure of the sentences you will use). ****You can't use anything other than words on the front of the poster.*

***Fluency/Preparedness: 10 puntos**

***Comprehension/Grammatical Accuracy: 10 puntos**

***Pronunciation: 5 puntos**



Appendix N (cont.): *¿Quién soy yo?* Student Activities and Project

Hoy es el _____ de _____, 20_____



¿Quién soy yo? – Español 2

1) ¿Cómo te llamas?

2) ¿Cómo eres (3 adjetivos)?

3) ¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?

4) ¿Cuántos años tienes?

5) ¿Cuál es tu color favorito?

6) ¿Cuál es tu clase favorita?

7) ¿Cuál es tu comida favorita?

8) ¿Tienes hermanos o hermanas?

9) ¿Qué te gusta hacer durante el verano?

10) ¿Algo más? *Escribe algo adicional.*

Appendix N (cont.): *¿Quién soy yo?* Student Activities and Project

Las presentaciones

Nombre: _____

- 1) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 2) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 3) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 4) Se llama _____. Es _____.
- 5) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 6) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 7) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 8) Se llama _____. Es _____.
- 9) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 10) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 11) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 12) Se llama _____. Es _____.
- 13) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 14) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 15) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 16) Se llama _____. Es _____.
- 17) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 18) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 19) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 20) Se llama _____. Es _____.
- 21) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 21) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 23) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 24) Se llama _____. Es _____.
- 25) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 26) Se llama _____. (No) tiene _____.
- 27) Se llama _____. Le gusta _____.
- 28) Se llama _____. Es _____.

Appendix O: Sample of “Walk Around the Room” Activity

Las reglas = The rules

***¡No inglés!** Allow **processing time** for them to understand you, and then **repeat** the question using “**los gestos**” to act out what you are trying to ask them.

*Only talk to those with the same color paper as you. Introduce yourself **or ask** him/her for her name if he/she doesn't tell you.

3. ¿Cuántos sofás tienes en tu sala?

<u>Se llama...</u>	<u>Su respuesta es...</u>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	

Appendix P: *Nuestra casa ideal* student project

Español 2

U5. 1~Un proyecto

Nuestra Casa Ideal



A. Los Requisitos:

*Los grupos necesitan crear una casa ideal para el programa *MTV:Extreme Crips*.

1. Forma un grupo de 3-4 personas
2. El grupo decide crear *un apartamento ideal* o *una casa ideal*.
3. Necesita crear una casa en "3 dimensiones" – Think shoe boxes!
4. La casa necesita por lo menos 4 cuartos.
5. Cada cuarto necesita incluir por lo menos 2 muebles de la lista U5.1.
6. También, necesita incluir por lo menos 4 cosas adicionales de la página R2.

B. Usa el espacio aquí para organizar el proyecto.

*Escribe las personas en el grupo, los números de teléfono, y los correos electrónicos.

C. **Las responsabilidades del grupo:** Put a check mark at each one as you make your decisions.

1. Will you create a house or an apartment? What's it like (use adjectives to describe it)?
2. Where is this house/apartment? Big city? Town? Beach?
3. You will each write a short description (paragraph) for the room you create. Which room is yours? Use R2 vocab.
4. Decide which room(s) / pictures / objects each will contribute.
5. What will your final product look like?
6. Who will bring (shoe)boxes?
7. How will you combine the paragraphs together (from #C3) in order to **submit one, complete written/typed (AND DOUBLE SPACED) description?**

D. How to write your descriptions:

1. Be sure to use interesting, descriptive words (colors, size, quantity...)
2. Create an opening paragraph about the house that answers the questions found in #C1 & #C2.
3. Use the starter phrase: *Nuestra casa ideal....* or *Nuestro apartamento ideal...*
4. Be sure to say at least one activity you do in your room.
5. Be sure to state the color (using *ser*) and the location (using *estar*) of at least 1 item in each room.
6. Organize your own, personal room description here:

**On the day we present these masterpiece *Cribs* to the class, each person will say one general statement about the house. Then, you will each present one room. You may not read off of your written paragraph sheet. Instead, you shall use your visuals (the ones you chose to include!) to guide your speaking.

Appendix P (cont.): *Nuestra casa ideal* student project

La nota:

See the 3 rubrics for more complete information

Group Grade:

1. Do you meet the requirements of the project?
2. Your house (Crib) – graded on neatness, labels, creativity. (*Some portions = individual grade*)
3. Your combined paragraph – graded on content and grammar

Individual Grade:

1. How well and thoroughly do YOU personally contribute to your group throughout the planning process?
2. How well do YOU speak Spanish clearly and enthusiastically in your portion of the oral presentation? No English allowed, so choose words that you are comfortable using.

We will start these on Tuesday, Oct. 11. We will present on Tuesday, Oct. 18.

Get to work! Use your time wisely! Have fun! Be creative!

I will allow for at least 10 minutes of each class period as planning time, as long as you are working responsibly.

Here is a model: Do you notice all of the descriptive words?

Nuestra casa ideal es muy elegante. Tiene muchos cuartos grandes. Está en la ciudad de Miami, muy cerca de la playa. La casa tiene un comedor, una cocina, dos cuartos y una sala.

En el comedor nuestra familia come la cena. El comedor es azul y tiene una mesa muy larga con ocho sillas. También hay un televisor enorme porque nuestro padre mira los deportes durante la cena...

Appendix P (cont.): *Nuestra casa ideal* student project

La rúbrica #1
Nuestra casa ideal



Me llamo _____

Mi cuarto: _____

La Casa

	<i>8-Meets ALL requirements</i>	<i>6-Meets most requirements</i>	<i>4-Falls below requirements</i>	<i>2-0 Unacceptable</i>
Los cuartos (GROUP)	Includes all 4+ rooms from the 5.1 vocab list	Includes only 3 rooms from the 5.1 list	Includes 2 rooms from the 5.1 list	Includes only 1 room from the 5.1 list
Los muebles (INDIV.)	You remembered everything! Each room has at least 2 labeled items or furniture.	Oops! Your house is missing 1-3 items or furniture.	Whoa! Your house is missing 4-6 items or furniture.	Yikes! Your house is missing more than 6 items!
Vocab R2 (GROUP)	Yes, you have included 4 words from p. R2 and they are... <u>*LIST THEM HERE!</u> 1) 2) 3) 4)	You have included 3 words from p. R2 and they are... <u>*LIST THEM HERE!</u> 1) 2) 3)	You have included only 2 words from p. R2 and they are... <u>*LIST THEM HERE!</u> 1) 2)	You have included only 1 or 0 words from p. R2. <u>IF YOU USED ONE, LIST IT HERE!</u> 1)
Creativity (GROUP)	Wow! I want to move right into this house! It shows super creativity through a variety of color and details.	A creative product with color and details. Yeah, I guess I could live here...	It's acceptable, but your house is lacking in color and detail.	Your house is boring and plain. I think I'll keep looking for my casa ideal.
Neatness (INDIV.)	Wow! Your room is extremely neat and appealing! Your attention, time and effort are very obvious.	Your room is acceptably neat. I can see the effort you put forth.	Parts of your room are not neat and create a distracting visual.	Yikes! The room is unacceptable, messy, and unclear.

La Nota : _____ /40 puntos

***SEE OTHER SIDE FOR PARAGRAPH & PRESENTATION RUBRICS**

Appendix P (cont.): *Nuestra casa ideal* student project

La Rúbrica #2 ~ Nuestra casa ideal

Me llamo _____

Párrafo - GRUPO	8	6	4	2
Requirements	You have it all! Includes all the details necessary in each room description – you mention the furniture, other details, R2 words and an activity done in each room.	You have almost everything. Includes most details but missing 1-2 details overall.	Includes many details but missing 3-4 details overall.	Missing more than 4 details overall.
Grammar (Accurate word order, verb endings, noun/adj. agreement)	Consistent use of well-constructed sentences. Controls most all verb conjugations and consistently observes agreement. Quite perfect! Very few/minor errors.	Almost always uses well-constructed sentences. Controls most verb conjugations an almost always observes agreement. Majority of structures are accurate.	Frequently uses well-constructed sentences. Controls some verb conjugations and observes agreement but there are several errors. Approximately half of structures are correct.	Rarely uses well-constructed sentences. Controls very few conjugations and rarely observes agreement. Less than half of structures are correct.
Vocabulary (Appropriate variety and context of Span 2 level words)	Consistently uses appropriate and logical vocabulary for the context. A broad range and variety of vocabulary is used.	Almost always uses appropriate and logical vocabulary. A somewhat limited range and variety of vocabulary is used.	Uses appropriate and logical vocabulary for the context but limited range and variety is used.	Rarely uses appropriate or logical vocabulary. Limited range and variety. May be English interference.
Individual Contribution to the Group (observed by Srta. Dischley)	You were always on task during the planning process. You showed respect for and worked well with others.	You were mostly on task during the planning process. You may have been reminded to stay focused. You worked well with others.	You consistently needed to be reminded to remain on task OR sometimes sat back and let others do the work.	You gave minimal effort and were off task and/or you were the source of problem(s) your group experienced.

NOTA: _____ / 32 puntos

Oral – INDIVIDUAL	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-0
Comprehensibility (Degree to which the spoken language is understandable to the listener)	Practice makes perfect! Very few words are mispronounced. Verb conjugation and noun-adjective agreement is close to perfect. Your voice projects and is clear. No use of English!	You practiced and it shows! Pronunciation is mostly correct but some words are mispronounced. Perhaps there are a couple of grammatical errors, but none that impede comprehension. You speak with some clarity. No use of English!	Did you practice enough? Pronunciation is generally correct, though there may be lack of voice clarity and/or some English interference. Grammatical errors lead to confusion for the audience.	Did you practice at all? Pronunciation is rarely correct. Many words are mispronounced and/or there is lack of clarity. Many sentences are incomprehensible. There may be too much English interference.

NOTA : _____ / 10 puntos

***SEE OTHER SIDE FOR RUBRIC FOR CREATION OF ACTUAL HOUSE**

Appendix Q: Introductory Activity to Opinion Phrases

Me llamo _____

Hoy es el ____ de noviembre, 20____



¿Qué piensas tú?



¿Cierto o falso para tí? *Dibuja un círculo en la letra C o en la letra F.

- 1) Yo pienso que la comida en la cafetería es muy deliciosa. C F
- 2) Yo pienso que la clase de español es la clase más fácil. C F
- 3) Yo pienso que mirar los deportes en la televisión es más divertido que mirar programas (comedias, dramas, etc.) C F
- 4) Yo pienso que *The Burgery* tiene las hamburguesas MÁS ricas. C F
- 5) Yo pienso que las películas de *PIXAR* son más interesantes que las películas de *DISNEY*. C F

Completa las frases:

- 6) Para mí, la clase más difícil es la clase de _____.
- 7) Para mí, el mejor programa de televisión es _____.

“Estoy de acuerdo.” = “¡Es mi opinión también!”

¿Estás de acuerdo o no? *Lee la conversación y escoge tu respuesta.

- 8) *Srta. Dischley*: El mes de diciembre es el mes más divertido.

Tú: _____ Sí, estoy de acuerdo contigo, Señorita. ¡Me gusta diciembre!
_____ No, Señorita. No estoy de acuerdo. El mes más divertido es _____.

- 9) *Srta. Dischley*: Yo puedo comer sushi todos los días. Es una de mis comidas favoritas.

Tú: _____ Sí, estoy de acuerdo contigo Señorita. ¡El sushi es una comida fantástica!
_____ No, Señorita. No estoy de acuerdo. Me gusta más _____.

Appendix Q (cont.): Introductory Activity to Opinion Phrases

En la televisión/las películas

1) El programa _____ es mejor que el programa _____
porque...

2) El cine _____ es mejor que _____
porque...

3) El mejor actor es _____
porque...

4) La mejor actriz es _____
porque...

La comida

1) El restaurante _____ es mejor que _____
porque...

2) _____ es la mejor comida
porque....