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Measuring Language-related Outcomes of Community-based Learning in Intermediate Spanish Courses

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Abstract: This pilot study investigates whether requiring participation in community-based learning can motivate intermediate level Spanish learners to engage in more frequent interaction in Spanish outside of the classroom and course requirements. Using the theoretical framework of willingness to communicate in a second language, this study combines both quantitative and qualitative methods to measure university-level, intermediate Spanish learners' attitudes and behaviors regarding oral communication in Spanish before and after experiencing three consecutive quarters of community-based learning. By using the lens of second language acquisition theory to examine language-related outcomes for students in these courses, this study addresses a critical need within the scholarship of Spanish community-based learning and provides a theoretically motivated model for the assessment of language-related outcomes of programs utilizing this pedagogy.

Keywords: assessment, attitudes, community-based learning, individual differences, language learning, language use, motivation, second language acquisition, service learning, willingness to communicate

Introduction

For many classroom learners of Spanish in the United States, the classroom constitutes the only context for their second language (L2) practice, despite the fact that Spanish-speaking communities abound in both large and small cities throughout the country (Nelson and Scott 2008; Ortega 1999). Theories of second language acquisition posit that a critical ingredient for the development of L2 speaking skills is the opportunity to participate in meaningful interaction, and a good deal of research has shown how effective interactive, task-based activities can be for developing L2 communicative competence (Mackey 2007; Ortega 2007). Nevertheless, questions remain about the effectiveness of even the richest classroom-based language practice for leading learners to willingly engage in L2 conversation outside of the classroom. Indeed, it is not uncommon for learners with seemingly high levels of L2 competence to remain reticent about actually using the language (MacIntyre et al. 1998; Skehan 1989). However, particularly after their formal studies cease, learners' active use of the L2 is crucial for the continued development and maintenance of their communicative competence, a fact that is crystallized in the Communities goal of the *National Standards for Foreign Language Education* (1999). Language educators must therefore strive to understand what is necessary to take students from being L2 learners to independent L2 users.

Within the field of research in L2 acquisition, increasing attention is being paid to the construct of the willingness to communicate (WTC), which is believed to be one of the most important variables in explaining individual differences with respect to learners' use of their L2 for authentic communication (MacIntyre et al. 1998). Willingness to communicate synthesizes the psychological and linguistic processes that influence a learner's decision to communicate, and research indicates that learners with higher levels of L2 WTC will more frequently engage

their L2 for communicative purposes (MacIntyre and Charos 1996). Since L2 WTC is not a direct function of proficiency, it cannot be expected to develop solely on the basis of gains in L2 competence, but research does suggest that certain types of L2 learning experiences can positively impact its development. Language immersion is one such experience. Investigations comparing immersion and foreign language learners of French in Canada have found that immersion students had significantly higher levels of L2 WTC and willingly used French to communicate more frequently than the FL students (Baker and MacIntyre 2000; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Donovan 2003). These researchers argue that the increased out-of-class opportunities for contact and interaction with L2 speakers that language immersion programs can offer account for such differences.

In recent years, it has become more common for college-level Spanish programs in the United States to incorporate some form of community-based learning to provide learners a type of linguistic and cultural immersion experience within local Spanish-speaking communities. Based on the research on L2 WTC, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that community-based learning could be effective in strengthening learners' WTC in Spanish and in increasing the frequency with which they willingly use Spanish outside of the classroom. So far, no study has examined this question, but a growing body of scholarship on the use of community-based learning in college Spanish programs has reported that the experience boosts students' confidence and motivates them to use and improve their Spanish (e.g., Beebe and DeCosta 1993; Caldwell 2007; Long 2003; Morris 2001; Weldon and Trautmann 2003). However, in the large majority of studies, motivation, self-confidence, and language use are not the focus. Thus, the constructs are neither defined nor measured within any formal framework, and their treatment is limited to anecdotal reports or selected comments from student journals. As Lear and Abbott (2008) have noted, the field is only just beginning to systematically investigate the language-related outcomes of community-based learning pedagogies. Quantitative studies of community-based learning outcomes grounded within second language acquisition theory are extremely rare, as are studies of a more longitudinal nature.

The present article attempts to address this gap in the Spanish community-based learning literature. Using the theoretical framework of L2 WTC, this pilot study combines both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore intermediate Spanish learners' attitudes and behaviors regarding oral communication in Spanish before and after experiencing community-based learning over the course of three consecutive university quarters.

Willingness to Communicate

Willingness to communicate is a construct first advanced in the field of Communications to explain individual differences in communicative behavior in one's first language (McCroskey and Baer 1985; McCroskey and Richmond 1987). Willing to communicate was described as a personality-based predisposition toward approaching or avoiding speaking when given the choice to do so. This research demonstrated that WTC was related to, but significantly distinct from other variables such as shyness, introversion and extroversion, communication anxiety, and communication skills, which they identified as antecedents of WTC. Willingness to communicate therefore functions as a mediator between these antecedents and the decision to speak. Overall, research has demonstrated that WTC in one's first language (L1) is a trait-like variable that is relatively consistent across different contexts and over time (McCroskey 1992). A notable product of this research is the Willingness-to-Communicate Scale (McCroskey and Baer 1985), a probability-estimate instrument used to measure one's WTC. It asks respondents to indicate their willingness to initiate communication in a range of situations combining interlocutor types and contexts, and therefore offers a direct measure of a person's predisposition towards initiating or avoiding speaking.

More recently, attention has turned to the question of how WTC operates in the L2. MacIntyre et al. (1998) have argued that fundamental differences between first and second languages, such as the range of competence achievable by learners, the variable nature of L2 competence, and other social issues related to L2 use, make WTC more variable in the L2 than in the L1 across situations and over time. They offer a theoretical model of L2 WTC that they call the “pyramid model”. In it L2 WTC is the top of a conceptual pyramid, a point at which a learner is about to communicate, and a widening base of situational, affective, and cognitive variables support it. Willingness to communicate in the L2 is not presented as a consistent personality-based trait, as it is in the L1, but rather as an orientation supported most immediately by situation-specific (i.e., state-like) and then more stable (i.e., trait-like) influences. Primary among the more situational influences are the desire to speak with a specific person, one’s apprehension about speaking in a specific context, and one’s perceived ability to communicate effectively in a specific situation. These latter two variables are brought together under the label “linguistic self-confidence”. Among the less situation-specific influences are cognitive, affective, and behavioral variables, which include L2 competence, attitudes towards the L2, a desire to affiliate with L2 speakers, a desire to learn the L2, and the effort dedicated to L2 learning. Several of these variables are based on essential components of Gardner’s (1985) socioeducational model, which is arguably the most widely researched motivational framework in the field of second language acquisition, and one that has been shown to be a significant predictor of L2 achievement (Masgoret and Gardner 2003).

An expanding body of research on L2 WTC offers empirical support for the pyramid model. Several studies demonstrate that among a variety of antecedent variables, L2 WTC is most strongly and immediately influenced by the subcomponents of linguistic self-confidence: communication anxiety and one’s perceived level of communicative competence (Baker and MacIntyre 2000; Hashimoto 2002; MacIntyre and Charos 1996).¹ Though these same results are also true of L1 WTC, as the pyramid model suggests, WTC does not simply transfer from the first to the second language. MacIntyre et al. (2002, 2003) studied this question with adolescent and adult L2 learners respectively and failed to find a significant relationship between their L1 and L2 WTC. Research has also explored the relationship between L2 WTC and two of the most important components of Gardner’s socioeducational model, namely integrativeness and motivation. Integrativeness is defined as a learner’s overall desire to identify with members of the L2 group and interest in having social interaction with them, whereas motivation refers to the attitudes, desire, and effort that a learner dedicates to learning the L2 (Masgoret and Gardner 2003). Some research has found significant positive correlations between L2 WTC and these motivation variables, indicating that those who are more integratively motivated to learn the L2 are also more willing to communicate using it (Hashimoto 2002; MacIntyre et al. 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, and Shimizu 2004). However, this relationship appears to be complex. Each of these studies involved L2 learners in an immersion context, but MacIntyre et al. (2003), comparing immersion and traditional foreign language learners of French in Canada, found a statistically significant relationship only in the immersion group. In the traditional foreign language group, they found only a small correlation that did not reach the level of statistical significance. These researchers note that the strength of the relationship between integrative motivation and WTC may be moderated by skill level, but they speculate that the nature of the learning context plays a larger role. Because immersion learning necessarily involves learning *through* the L2, those students adopt a motivation for learning that is more tightly connected with authentic L2 communication. Traditional foreign language classroom methodologies, on the other hand, may rely more heavily on learning *about* the L2 “without the pragmatic use of the language for interaction”, and, therefore, these learners fail to adopt a “motivation based on the notion that it is necessary to talk in order to learn” (602). Indeed, in two different comparison studies between immersion and traditional foreign language learners, immersion

learners demonstrated significantly higher levels of L2 WTC than those in the traditional foreign language group (Baker and MacIntyre 2000; MacIntyre et al. 2003).

A naturalistic immersion context, that is, learning the L2 where it is spoken natively, offers distinct advantages for promoting L2 WTC. One is that learners have more opportunities for contact with the L2 community, and such contact can help foster the development of integrative motivation (Clément, Gardner, and Smythe 1977). But L2 learners are often anxious about interacting with L2 speakers, fearing that they lack the skills to effectively communicate with them. Nevertheless, research indicates that facing these fears can help allay them. Two different large scale studies of language learners living in the Canadian French-English bilingual context found that those who had more opportunities to interact with L2 speakers also had significantly higher levels of L2 WTC (Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre 2003; MacIntyre and Charos 1996). In both cases, statistical modeling showed that the more learners engaged in pleasant exchanges with L2 speakers, the lower their anxiety became about doing so, which allowed them to develop a more positive perception of their L2 ability. Ultimately, this increase in linguistic self-confidence motivated learners to use the L2 for authentic communication more frequently. Another advantage of a naturalistic immersion context is that its social norms favor the use of the L2. Clément et al. (2003) argue that when learners believe that people important to them approve of and encourage their L2 use, they will be more likely to engage in L2 communication. Their study involved L2 French speakers at a bilingual university, and they found that normative pressure to use the L2 indirectly promoted L2 WTC and frequency of L2 communication by providing learners an additional source of linguistic self-confidence: students who felt strong support for their use of the L2 also experienced lower anxiety about speaking and held a more positive perception of their L2 skills.

Interestingly, outside of a naturalistic immersion context, where opportunities for interaction with L2 speakers are more limited, normative pressure likely plays an even more important role in promoting L2 WTC and L2 use. MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Conrod (2001) investigated this topic among junior high French L2 students in a primarily Anglophone part of Canada. They took two different measures of L2 WTC, one based on willingness inside the classroom context, and one based on willingness outside the classroom, and two important findings emerged from their analysis. First, those learners who felt strong social support for their learning and use of the L2 had significantly higher levels of L2 WTC outside of the classroom than those who did not feel strong endorsement from significant others. This social support had a much smaller (and nonstatistical) impact on WTC inside the classroom. These researchers explain that this is likely because using the L2 out in the world, particularly where opportunities for contact with L2 speakers are limited, requires learners to exert an effort beyond that which is necessary within the comfortable confines of their classroom. Their data indicate that with the support of important others, including friends and even teachers who can structure opportunities for interaction with L2 speakers outside of the classroom walls, learners should be more likely to take advantage of such opportunities more frequently. The second important finding was that learners' L2 WTC inside and outside of the classroom, while significantly correlated, were nonetheless statistically different. Underscoring the situated nature of L2 WTC, this result suggests that L2 interaction carried out within the classroom may develop L2 WTC primarily within the classroom context. Generating strong levels of L2 WTC outside of the classroom may require gaining experience interacting in such contexts.

The Study and Research Questions

The research just reviewed suggests that community-based learning should be a valuable pedagogical tool for promoting Spanish foreign-language learners' WTC, and their use of Spanish outside of the classroom. Community-based learning involves connecting learners with opportunities to participate in L2 speaking communities and has demonstrated its potential for

promoting positive relationships between learners and Spanish-speaking community members (see Hellebrandt and Varona 1999). Such relationships can foster a more integrative motivation for learning and promote linguistic self-confidence, the primary variable that supports L2 WTC. However, the question of whether requiring participation in community-based learning helps intermediate level learners generate a greater willingness to speak and to engage in more frequent interaction in Spanish outside of course requirements has not been systematically investigated by either the L2 WTC research or the research on Spanish community-based learning.² As mentioned earlier, studies measuring language-related outcomes of students engaged in Spanish community-based learning are rare. The present pilot study therefore addresses a critical need within the scholarship of Spanish community-based learning by using the lens of second language acquisition theory to examine the language-related outcomes of community-based learning. At the same time, the study contributes to the growing body of L2 WTC scholarship by applying this theory to the Spanish FL context in the United States. The following questions were asked:

1. Is there a change in learners' Spanish WTC outside of the classroom and its immediate antecedent, linguistic self-confidence, from the beginning to end of a community-based learning program?
2. Is there a change in learners' integrativeness and motivation to learn Spanish from the beginning to the end of this program, and what is the relationship between these variables and their Spanish WTC?
3. Is there a correlation between learners' Spanish WTC and how frequently they speak Spanish outside of class requirements, and does this frequency change from the beginning to the end of this program?
4. What is the relationship between these learners' WTC inside and outside of the classroom?

Methods

The Language Program

The context for this study was an innovative, community-based learning integrated, intermediate Spanish program at a California university. The program is a multisection, three-course sequence beginning in the fall and ending in the spring quarter. It is not an alternative to a more traditional program; all students interested in intermediate Spanish must take these community-based learning courses.³ The program defines community-based learning as a pedagogy of engagement and relies on service-learning and community-based research to tightly integrate the study of language and culture with classroom and community experiences. With the assistance of the campus community-based learning office for appropriate placements, each quarter students are required to spend a minimum of sixteen hours working with and learning from Spanish-speakers in the local community. The large majority of placements involve students serving as English tutors and conversation partners for Spanish-speaking immigrants of different ages in small group and one-on-one situations. The English proficiency of these Spanish-speakers is often quite low, and they frequently rely on Spanish to communicate, thus students have many opportunities to interact in Spanish. Such placements are appropriate for intermediate-level learners since high levels of Spanish proficiency are not critical for students to feel successful in their work. Classroom activities and course assignments help focus and support students' learning in the community through topics such as the Latino presence in the United States, the concept of family, challenges of living abroad, social justice, etc. Linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competences are also targeted. For example, lessons include such Spanish skills as how to greet and start conversations with community members, negotiating forms of address, how to tell an anecdote and how to respond appropriately to others' stories, etc. In addition to the required work hours, in-class lessons are also complemented by

mini-research projects that require students to further engage with Spanish-speakers locally and beyond. Typical projects include greeting and introducing themselves to Spanish-speaking campus staff, visiting local Spanish-speaking restaurants and speaking in Spanish with servers, touring local markets that cater to Spanish-speakers and inquiring in Spanish about items sold there, connecting via internet with Spanish-speakers around the world to investigate course topics, etc. Opportunities for students to critically reflect on their community experiences are provided frequently through small group and class discussions, written assignments, and oral presentations.

Participants

The participants were nonnative Spanish learners who were enrolled in the community-based learning intermediate program during the 2008–09 academic year and who agreed to participate anonymously in a study on second language acquisition. After eliminating native or heritage speakers and those who submitted incomplete data, the study began in the fall with forty-six students. By the spring, attrition and incomplete data submissions reduced the participant pool to eighteen students who are the focus of this study. All eighteen were classroom learners with an average of 4.5 years of prior Spanish studies and no previous intensive, immersion or community-based learning experience in Spanish. Ten students were sophomores, eight were freshman, and none had taken Spanish courses at the university; all began the intermediate program straight from high school programs across the United States.

Instruments

A survey was administered at the beginning of the first course and again at the end of the third course. In addition to collecting basic demographic and language experience information, the survey included scales designed to measure learners' Spanish WTC in and outside of the classroom, their perceived ability to speak Spanish, their L2 communication anxiety, their integrativeness and their motivation for learning Spanish. An additional section that assessed the frequency with which learners willingly speak Spanish outside of class repeated the same items presented in the WTC outside of class scale. For each of the communication-related sections, participants marked their responses using Likert-type ratings from 1 to 6 to indicate, depending on the scale, willingness, perceived level of competence, level of comfort/anxiety, agreement/disagreement, and frequency. All of the survey items were adapted from those widely used in published research on WTC (MacIntyre et al. 2003; McCroskey 1992) and integrative motivation (Masgoret and Gardner 2003), where they have been demonstrated to have high reliability. Adaptations were made primarily so that the communication situations presented were more representative of those that learners of Spanish in the United States typically encounter. Reliability measures of these adapted scales were high, ranging from .80 to .94. Complete scales along with their reliability estimates are found in the Appendix. The spring survey also included a section with open-ended questions designed to obtain students' perspectives about their experience with community-based learning and their willingness to speak Spanish.

Procedures

At the beginning of the fall quarter and again at the end of the spring quarter, all students enrolled in course sections were invited to participate in a study on second language acquisition. They were told that their participation was not obligatory, that it would be completely anonymous, and that it would not bear on their grades in the course. During a subsequent class session those students who agreed to participate were given a survey instrument. It was explained thoroughly and students were asked to complete it at home and return it to their instructor during

the next class. The survey protected students' identity by generating unique, anonymous ID numbers that could be matched from fall to spring. All students were invited to participate, but since this study focuses on classroom learners, surveys that identified native/heritage speakers were eliminated, as were those that were incomplete. All numerical survey results were tabulated and analyzed using the SPSS statistics package. Open-ended responses were examined for trends and were used to interpret and contextualize the quantitative results.

Results

Learners' Linguistic Self-confidence and WTC

The analysis first focused on WTC's most immediate antecedent variable, linguistic self-confidence, which is a construct that combines a learner's perceived L2 competence and speaking apprehension. The data for perceived competence were normally distributed, so a paired-samples *t*-test was used to compare changes in mean scores from fall to spring. The results indicate that there was a significant positive change from fall ($M=16.83$, $SD=4.62$) to spring ($M=20.33$, $SD=4.79$) in how learners evaluated the efficacy of their Spanish speaking skills: $t(17)=3.32$, $p=.004$. This change represents a jump on the ability scale from feeling "somewhat able" to feeling "able". Unlike perceived competence, the fall scores of speaking anxiety were not normally distributed. They were clustered at the lower end, indicating that in the fall learners felt quite anxious about speaking Spanish. Because the data could not meet the assumptions for a paired-samples *t*-test, a nonparametric alternative, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, was used to compare fall and spring scores. The analysis revealed that learners did become more comfortable speaking Spanish by the end of the community-based learning program and this change was significant: $Z=3.24$, $p=.001$. Whereas in the fall the median score was 14.5 ('somewhat nervous') and scores were clustered at the lower end of the scale, by the spring the median score was 21.0 ('somewhat relaxed') and the distribution was no longer skewed. Mean scores of learners' WTC outside of the classroom from fall to spring were compared with a paired-samples *t*-test and the results indicate that learners' spring scores ($M=33.2$, $SD=8.8$) were significantly higher than their fall scores ($M=29$, $SD=10.5$): $t(17)=2.62$, $p=.018$. By the end of the community-based learning program, learners had generated a greater willingness to speak Spanish.

Motivation, Integrativeness, and WTC

Following MacIntyre et al. (2003), integrativeness and motivation were examined as separate variables. Motivation was measured by twenty of the forty-three items on the Motivation section of the survey. These items comprised three different measures: motivational intensity, attitudes towards learning Spanish, and the desire to learn Spanish (Gardner 1985). The fall mean motivation score was relatively high ($M=100$, $SD=5.4$), representing a 5 on the 1–6 scale used for measurement. The spring mean showed positive gains ($M=105$, $SD=6.2$), and unlike the fall scores, the spring distribution was skewed, with the bulk of the scores clustered at the higher end of the scale. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated that learners' increase in motivation scores from fall to spring was significant: $Z=3.19$, $p=.001$. Though learners began the year already relatively motivated to learn Spanish, through the program they increased their motivation further. Integrativeness was measured by the remaining twenty-three items on the Motivation section of the survey, which comprised three measures: interest in foreign languages, attitudes towards Spanish-speakers, and integrative motives for learning Spanish (Gardner 1985). Like the fall motivation mean, the fall mean integrativeness score was also relatively high ($M=110$, $SD=12.62$), representing a 4.8 on the 1–6 scale, and the distribution was slightly skewed, indicating some bunching of scores at the higher end of the scale. The

spring distribution ($M=119$, $SD=10.18$) showed further clustering of scores at the high end. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to compare means and the results showed that learners' integrativeness demonstrated significant growth from fall to spring.

The analysis next examined the relationship between the learners' integrativeness and motivation for learning Spanish and their Spanish WTC. Kendall's tau-b, a nonparametric correlation analysis, was used because not all of the data followed a normal distribution. As Table 1 indicates, for the fall data this test revealed a significant positive correlation between integrativeness and WTC ($\tau=.409$, $p=.02$), but not between motivation and WTC. However, by the spring the correlation between integrativeness and WTC had grown stronger ($\tau=.642$, $p<.001$) and the correlation between motivation and WTC had grown and reached the level of statistical significance ($\tau=.481$, $p=.007$).

Table 1. Kendall's Tau-b Correlations: Motivation and Integrativeness with Fall and Spring WTC (N=18)

Category	Fall WTC	Spring WTC
Motivation	$\tau=.220$ $p=.22$	$\tau=.481^*$ $p=.007$
Integrativeness	$\tau=.409^*$ $p=.02$	$\tau=.642^*$ $p<.001$

WTC and Frequency of Speaking Spanish Outside of the Classroom

The pyramid model makes a clear distinction between communicative intentions (i.e., WTC) and communicative behaviors (i.e., actually speaking), but it posits that such intentions drive behavior so that there should be a relatively strong correlation between learners' WTC and their frequency of L2 use (MacIntyre et al. 1998). This assumption was explored in the present data. Frequency scores were calculated by totaling the responses to each of seven of the eight situations presented on the survey. Situation 7 (public speaking) was eliminated because all student responses were identical ('never have done it'). Kendall's tau-b was used to examine correlations since not all the data was normally distributed. The results revealed significant positive correlations between WTC and speaking frequency for both the fall ($\tau=.56$, $p=.002$) and the spring ($\tau=.67$, $p<.001$): the higher a learner's WTC, the more frequently she spoke Spanish outside of class. These results provide further empirical support for the pyramid model's assumption about the ability of WTC to predict communication behavior.

To investigate whether the community-based learning pedagogy encouraged learners to speak Spanish more frequently outside of the classroom and class requirements (i.e., of their own accord), mean scores on the speaking frequency measure were calculated per speaking situation for fall and spring. Table 2 displays these scores for the seven situations considered.

These data were further analyzed using a two-way repeated-measures ANOVA in which the dependent variable was the frequency score and the two independent variables were the speaking context, with seven levels (i.e., survey items) and program completion, with two levels (i.e., before and after community-based learning). While the data exhibited some deviations from the repeated-measures ANOVA assumptions, the procedure was used because such deviations do not invalidate the test's results (Larson-Hall 2010). Using the Greenhouse-Geisser correction, the analysis revealed that the observed gains in frequency of Spanish use from fall to spring were significant ($F_{1,17}=17.38$, $p=.001$, partial eta squared=.51, power .97): learners willingly spoke Spanish outside of the classroom and course requirements more frequently

Table 2. Fall and Spring Mean Frequency of Communication Outside of the Classroom

Situation (From Survey)		Fall	Spring
1. Nonnative speaker friends: School/home	M	3.61	4.39
	SD	1.42	1.29
2. Native speaker acquaintances: School/home	M	2.72	3.89
	SD	1.48	1.53
3. Native speaker stranger: Service encounter	M	2.39	3.17
	SD	1.33	1.50
4. Native speaker coworker or international student: Work/school	M	2.89	3.78
	SD	1.68	1.48
5. Native speaker friend: Social setting	M	2.33	3.39
	SD	1.37	1.24
6. Native speaker stranger having trouble communicating: Public setting	M	2.33	3.00
	SD	1.28	1.61
8. Native speaker stranger: Community setting	M	2.11	3.11
	SD	1.28	1.41

Score scale 1–6: 1 = ‘never’, 6 = ‘very frequently’ (e.g., several times per week)

after completing the community-based learning program than before they began. The analysis also revealed a significant effect for the speaking context (with Greenhouse-Geisser correction $F_{3,97,67.4} = 6.54$, $p < .001$, partial eta squared = .28, power = .99), but not for the interaction between the two. However, post hoc tests identified only situation 1 (nonnative learner/friend) as being significantly distinct from others, namely 3, 5, 6, and 8 ($p < .05$), but not 2 and 4. Perhaps unsurprisingly, speaking Spanish with nonnative learner/friends occurred with greater frequency than speaking in most other situations, particularly those involving native speaker strangers.

WTC Inside and Outside the Classroom

A paired-samples *t*-test and Pearson correlation were used to analyze the fall WTC inside and outside the classroom measures. Corroborating MacIntyre et al. (2001) findings, the results revealed that while correlated ($r = .637$, $p = .005$, r -squared = .41), WTC inside ($M = 29$, $SD = 10.5$) was significantly different from WTC outside the classroom ($M = 29.0$, $SD = 8.1$) ($t = 2.2$, $p = .042$, $df = 17$). Indeed, the overlap between the two is well under 50%.

Discussion

Among the present sample of intermediate level Spanish students, the quantitative analysis supports the hypothesis that extended participation in community-based learning, even when required, can promote positive linguistic outcomes that contribute to success in second language

acquisition. Intermediate learners who were initially quite anxious about interacting in Spanish were repeatedly required to speak in Spanish with Spanish-speaking friends, acquaintances, and strangers, and the data suggest that through this required interaction learners became more confident in their Spanish skills, they became more willing to speak Spanish, and they increased the frequency of their willful Spanish communication out in the real world. At the same time, learners also evinced important positive changes in their integrative motivation. And while the gains in both integrativeness and motivation for learning Spanish were significant, what is perhaps more consequential is the nature of the change suggested by the correlation analysis between these variables and WTC. In the fall, learners scored relatively high in both integrativeness and motivation (average 4.8 and 5, respectively on the 1–6 scale), yet the analysis found only a moderate statistical correlation between integrativeness and WTC, and a small, nonstatistical correlation between motivation and WTC. In other words, at the beginning of the program, after an average of four and a half years of Spanish study, the learners had not developed strong connections between their positive attitudes, desire, and efforts they dedicated to learning Spanish and the concept of actually speaking the language outside of the classroom. However, by the end of the program both correlations had grown stronger and both were found to be significant. After three quarters of repeated interactions with Spanish-speakers in a variety of contexts, these learners forged much stronger associations between their L2 learning goals and the efforts they directed outside of the classroom towards achieving them.

It is interesting to compare these results with those of MacIntyre et al. (2003), who found significant correlations between integrative motivation and WTC among their immersion learners, but not their traditional foreign language learners. When the present study's participants began their program, they patterned like MacIntyre et al.'s foreign language learners, but by the end of the year they patterned like their immersion learners. As noted earlier, MacIntyre et al. believe that this difference may be due to a failure of foreign language methodology to emphasize authentic interaction in the classroom. This is certainly possible. But in the case of Spanish in the United States, where opportunities for L2 use outside of the classroom are available, it seems likely that this result also reflects an underlying "Krashenite" philosophy of second-language acquisition, espoused by many foreign language teachers (and learners), that L2 competence should be sufficiently built up *before* L2 performance outside of the classroom. Furthermore, there are some who argue that foreign language methodology in the United States gives students the message that "outside of the classroom" really means "outside of the country" (study abroad), thereby ignoring local communities as valid contexts for Spanish language acquisition (Ortega 1999). Indeed, post hoc analyses of the frequency measures for the fall indicate just how little some classroom learners practice Spanish outside of their classrooms. Among the study's eighteen participants, in the fall only 22% indicated that they spoke Spanish outside of the classroom with other nonnative learners frequently or very frequently, and as Table 2 shows, this was the situation with the highest mean score. Only 34% of the participants reported speaking Spanish with native speaker acquaintances frequently or very frequently, but 28% reported never having done it. The situation with the second highest mean score in the fall was that of speaking with a native speaker peer, defined as a coworker or international student on campus, but only 17% reported doing this frequently or very frequently and 33% had never done it. Finally, only 6% of the participants reported speaking Spanish with a native speaker friend frequently or very frequently, and 39% said they had never done it. These results were compared with the frequency scores of the other twenty-eight participants who completed the fall survey and the results were very similar. These findings are also corroborated by several other Spanish community-based learning studies in which the authors report that the community-based learning experience was the first time many learners had interacted in Spanish outside of the classroom (Varas 1999; Weldon and Trautmann 2003).

This study also provides further evidence that WTC inside the classroom and WTC outside the classroom are not isomorphic constructs. The relevance and import of this result for L2

instruction is perhaps best understood in the context of the pyramid model of L2 WTC, where linguistic self-confidence, WTC's most immediate antecedent, appears as both a state and a trait variable. At the trait, or more enduring level, self-confidence is described as a general belief about being able to communicate effectively, based on learners' cognitive evaluation of the overall state of their L2 skills, and their general anxiety about using the L2. At the state level, self-confidence is highly situation specific, and is defined as a "momentary feeling of confidence" about the ability to communicate effectively in a particular situation (MacIntyre et al. 1998: 549). These researchers argue that novel situations are detrimental to state self-confidence, since learners will lack a previous experience to reference in assessing their ability to meet the communicative demands of the situation. If state self-confidence is reduced, WTC will be reduced, as will be the possibility of the learners choosing to communicate. The important pedagogical implication is that classroom-bound communicative activities, as authentic as they may be, might only serve to build up more trait-like self-confidence. The change in context from contrived activities in a classroom filled with mostly nonnative speaking friends and peers, to the unpredictable real world of native Spanish-speaking friends, acquaintances, and strangers might be too radical of a departure; classroom activities may provide insufficient reference points for many learners to generate the state self-confidence needed to speak outside of class. Teacher instruction should provide students with guided experience speaking in situations outside of the classroom so that when they leave their language programs they have adequate reference points from which to generate the WTC that can keep them speaking Spanish well into the future. This is particularly important at the lower-division levels, since the great bulk of these students do not continue their formal Spanish studies.

It is not possible to claim that the positive outcomes observed among this study's participants were brought about entirely by community-based learning, but it is also unlikely that the observed increase in WTC could be due to linguistic gains made through a year of classroom language instruction alone. Indeed, a post hoc analysis of the fall and spring data failed to find a significant correlation between learners' years of L2 study and their WTC. As stated earlier, in the pyramid model, L2 competence is only one of many distal influences on WTC. Moreover, the qualitative analysis of participants' comments about their experiences offers additional support for the effectiveness of community-based learning, along with some insight about learners' WTC and language use. All eighteen participants believed that community-based learning helped them become more willing to speak Spanish outside of the classroom and class assignments, and that through the community-based learning assignments they became more confident about their Spanish skills. Their comments revealed specific fears they previously held (and to some extent still hold) about speaking with native speakers. Five students acknowledged having been fearful of not speaking Spanish "properly", which some believed would lead Spanish-speakers to judge them, and others believed might be offensive to Spanish-speakers. Six others explained that they had feared initiating conversation with Spanish-speakers because, due to their inability to speak with the fluency of a native speaker, they would be imposing on their time and patience. Such fears may reflect the learners' socialization within a multicultural society that is often insensitive to nonnative speakers, and within a foreign language methodology that has, at least tacitly, held the idealized "near-native speaker" as the ultimate goal for language learning (Ortega 1999). However, by staring down their fears, the participants discovered that despite their linguistic limitations, their use of Spanish was welcomed warmly in many contexts. Two students' comments are representative:

Now I think it might be the opposite. They're probably flattered by the fact that we're trying to speak with them. Some of the food servers tell me they love it when I go there and speak to them in Spanish. I think they feel like I'm trying to connect with them.

I'm not as scared anymore to speak with Spanish-speakers. I think they like to help me because they are learning a language too and know how it feels.

In response to whether participants spoke more Spanish outside of class assignments after experiencing community-based learning than before they began, most all responded that they did. Those who did not indicated that they spoke Spanish frequently before the program and continued to do so. The contexts for use that students mentioned most included speaking more with their nonnative friends outside of class, speaking with campus staff, speaking with staff in several local restaurants, and arriving early or staying late to socialize with new friends they made in the placement communities of their community-based learning programs. Interestingly, all eighteen students believed it was important for community-based learning to be a required part of intermediate Spanish. Each of them indicated that without the requirement they would not have had the positive (linguistic and cultural) experiences that they had. Several stated that they would likely not have made room in their already busy schedules for the time that community-based learning required. Many others mentioned that they needed to be “pushed” into speaking Spanish outside of the classroom because it’s “hard work”, but that they enjoyed the rewards, which included “feeling proud” of themselves, “making new friends to speak Spanish with”, and enjoying the “praise” they received from Spanish-speakers about their Spanish. Finally others stated that without this type of program they would have never realized how many opportunities there were to use their Spanish skills. One student stated that the program inspired him/her to look into opportunities to get involved with a Spanish-speaking community at home over the summer. These responses suggest that the CBL program provided learners with the social support they needed to help them take advantage of opportunities to speak Spanish outside of the classroom.

Conclusion

This pilot study’s small participant pool, lack of random participant selection, and lack of a control group limit the extent to which its findings can be generalized beyond its own participants. However, the findings presented suggest that community-based learning integrated into a language skills program can help learners generate a greater willingness to communicate in Spanish outside of the classroom, an outcome that will support their language acquisition process. Furthermore, the study offers some evidence that these outcomes are not easily achieved through traditional classroom methodology. If the goal of educators is to create lifelong learners and language users, then their pedagogy must engage learners outside of the classroom, and community-based learning, when appropriately structured, appears to offer an effective means to achieve this goal. Travel abroad should no longer be considered the only worthy avenue for promoting WTC.

This pilot study also offers a theoretically motivated model for both assessment of and future research on language-related outcomes of community-based learning programs. Future research should explore outcomes with larger groups of learners and across a wider range of proficiency levels. Studies comparing outcomes between learners who experience community-based learning and those who do not are also necessary. Finally, future research should investigate longer-term outcomes, for example, several years after completing a community-based learning program.

NOTES

¹ Perception of competence is more consequential for WTC than an objectively measured level of competence because speakers’ appraisal of their skills can be quite different than their actual skill level (MacIntyre and Charos 1996; McCroskey and Richmond 1987).

² Jorge (2010) notes the results of some long-term assessment measures of a community-based learning program, but research methods are not provided since this was not the focus of the article.

³ Because the course catalogue describes the program’s community-based learning requirement, students are aware of it when they register for intermediate Spanish.

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APPENDIX

Survey instrument scales and open-ended questions (alpha levels indicate reliability estimates).

WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE *INSIDE THE CLASSROOM* ($\alpha = .86$)

Directions: This section covers situations in which you *might choose* to speak **in Spanish** during a Spanish class. Presuming you have *completely free choice* to speak or not, please indicate how *willing* you are/would be to use Spanish in each classroom situation. Use the following rating scale 1–6: 1 ('never willing'), 2 ('rarely willing'), 3 ('sometimes willing'), 4 ('willing only about half the time'), 5 ('very frequently willing'), 6 ('always willing').

Please write one and only one whole number in each space, and do not leave any blank. Remember, each of the items refers to using SPANISH.

1. _____ Speak with a nonnative speaker classmate to carry out a short class activity.
2. _____ Speak with a group of 3–5 classmates to carry out a short class activity.
3. _____ Speak with your teacher before or after class.
4. _____ Give a short oral presentation in front of the class as a class assignment.
5. _____ Speak with your teacher during class about a question you have.
6. _____ Speak with a classmate who is a native Spanish speaker to carry out a short class activity.
7. _____ Socialize with a native Spanish-speaking classmate while waiting for class to begin or in between activities.
8. _____ Socialize with a nonnative Spanish-speaking classmate while waiting for class to begin or in between activities.

WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE *OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM* ($\alpha=.94$)

Directions: This section covers situations in which a student *might choose* to speak **in Spanish** outside of a Spanish class. Presuming you have *completely free choice* to speak or not, please indicate how *willing* you are/would be to use Spanish out in the world. Use the following rating scale 1–6: 1 ('never willing'), 2 ('rarely willing'), 3 ('sometimes willing'), 4 ('willing only about half the time'), 5 ('very frequently willing'), 6 ('always willing').

Note: You are not indicating how frequently you do each activity, but simply how *willing* you are or would be to do each one.

1. _____ Speak with your friends who have learned or are learning Spanish (i.e., nonnative speakers).
2. _____ Speak with Spanish-speaking acquaintances (e.g., staff working around campus, relatives of friends, etc.).
3. _____ Speak with a Spanish-speaker in a service encounter (e.g., to order your meal in a restaurant or to ask for assistance at a store).
4. _____ Speak to Spanish-speaking coworkers or international (Spanish speaking) students on campus.
5. _____ Speak with a native Spanish-speaking friend (e.g., at school, a party, over coffee, etc.).
6. _____ Speak with Spanish-speakers having trouble communicating in public (e.g., in a store, at a bank, etc.).
7. _____ Give an oral presentation to a group of native Spanish-speakers in the community who are not friends or acquaintances (e.g., strangers at a community meeting).
8. _____ Speak with a native Spanish-speaker stranger (i.e., not friend or acquaintance) (e.g., people you encounter in the community, while waiting in line, etc.).

SPANISH SPEAKING ABILITY ($\alpha=.86$)

Directions: Please indicate what you believe is your ability to successfully do each of the items **in Spanish**. Use the following 6-point scale: 1 ('completely unable'), 2 ('hardly able/very poorly'), 3 ('somewhat able'), 4 ('able/OK'), 5 ('moderately able/well'), 6 ('completely able').

1. _____ Speak in short (5–10 minutes), informal conversations on familiar topics (e.g., family, weather, where you are from, etc.).
2. _____ Speak in longer (20–30 minutes), informal conversations on familiar topics about past, present and future (e.g., favorite vacations, your childhood, movies, what you did last night, your plans after graduation, etc.).
3. _____ Speak in longer (20–30 minutes) conversations (e.g., explain, express your opinions, speculate, etc.) on more complex topics (e.g., the environment, science, politics, etc.).
4. _____ Speak in short (5–10 minutes) conversations (e.g., make brief comments) on current topics (e.g., the environment, science, politics, etc.).
5. _____ Speak to explain how to carry out a useful task (e.g., use e-mail, find a place to live, etc.).

LANGUAGE ANXIETY ($\alpha = .89$)

Directions: Please indicate the level of comfort/anxiety you typically experience or would experience speaking **in Spanish** in the following situations. Use the following 6-point scale: 1 ('extremely nervous'), 2 ('moderately nervous'), 3 ('somewhat nervous'), 4 ('somewhat relaxed'), 5 ('moderately relaxed'), 6 ('extremely relaxed').

Note: You are not indicating your *ability* to do these things, but rather your anxiety/comfort level doing them.

1. _____ Speaking with your professor.
2. _____ Speaking with classmates who are also learning Spanish (i.e., nonnative speakers).
3. _____ Speaking with a small group of classmates.
4. _____ Speaking with native speaker friends and acquaintances outside of class.
5. _____ Speaking with native Spanish-speakers in the community (i.e., not friends or acquaintances).

MOTIVATIONS AND ATTITUDES (Motivation: $\alpha = .80$; Integrativeness: $\alpha = .86$)

Directions: Following are a number of statements about the Spanish language, language learning, and Spanish-speakers with which some people agree and others disagree. There are no *correct* answers since people have different opinions. Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement using the following 6-point scale: 1 ('strongly disagree'), 2 ('moderately disagree'), 3 ('mildly disagree'), 4 ('mildly agree'), 5 ('moderately agree'), 6 ('strongly agree').

1. _____ Studying Spanish is important for me because I want to travel abroad and be able to more fully experience the Spanish-speaking culture.
2. _____ I would really like to learn many foreign languages.
3. _____ I love learning Spanish.
4. _____ I hate Spanish.
5. _____ Studying Spanish is important for me because it will enable me to make friends with (more) Spanish-speakers.
6. _____ Since English is such a global language, it is not important for Americans to try to be bilingual.
7. _____ I really identify with Latinos and/or other Spanish-speakers in the United States.
8. _____ I really identify with Spanish-speakers.
9. _____ If I planned to spend time in another country, I would make a great effort to learn the language even though I could get along in English.
10. _____ I keep up to date with Spanish by working on it almost every day.
11. _____ I have not had very many positive experiences learning Spanish.
12. _____ I find I am losing any desire I ever had to learn Spanish.
13. _____ I admire the values of the people of Spanish-speaking cultures.
14. _____ I don't pay much attention to the feedback I receive in Spanish classes.
15. _____ I wish I could speak any language (in addition to English) perfectly.
16. _____ I make a point of trying to understand all the Spanish I hear.
17. _____ Spanish-speakers make significant positive contributions to the world.
18. _____ Studying Spanish is important to me because I want to better know and understand the cultures of Latinos in or near my community.

19. _____ I really work hard to study Spanish.
20. _____ Learning Spanish is really a great experience.
21. _____ I admire the values of the Latinos living in the United States.
22. _____ I don't bother to try to understand more complex aspects of Spanish.
23. _____ Knowing Spanish is not an important goal in my life.
24. _____ I would rather spend time learning other things than Spanish.
25. _____ Latinos and other Spanish-speakers make significant positive contributions to our lives here in California and in the United States.
26. _____ I sometimes daydream about not having to take Spanish.
27. _____ Latinos and other Spanish-speakers in the United States are very warm-hearted, respectful, and sociable people.
28. _____ I really have no interest in foreign languages.
29. _____ Spanish-speakers are very warm-hearted, respectful, and sociable people.
30. _____ When I have a problem understanding something in Spanish class, I always ask my teacher for help.
31. _____ Studying a foreign language is not a pleasant experience.
32. _____ Studying Spanish is important for me because it will help me better understand Spanish-speaking cultures.
33. _____ I want to learn as much Spanish as possible.
34. _____ The more I get to know Spanish-speakers, the more I want to be fluent in their language.
35. _____ I don't put a lot of effort into completing my Spanish homework assignments.
36. _____ The more I get to know Latinos in the United States, the more fluent I want to become in their language.
37. _____ I don't bother checking my corrected assignments in my Spanish classes.
38. _____ I am studying Spanish because I would like to make (more) friends with Latinos in or near my community.
39. _____ I would like to continue learning Spanish beyond this class.
40. _____ Studying Spanish is important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with native Spanish-speakers.
41. _____ I wish I were fluent in Spanish.
42. _____ I want to learn to speak Spanish so well that I can read or listen to anything in Spanish and understand it.
43. _____ Studying Spanish is important for me because it will allow me to more fully experience Latino cultures in or near my community.

FREQUENCY OF SPEAKING IN SPANISH OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM ($\alpha = .84$)

Directions: This section explores the *frequency* with which you actually do communicate **in Spanish** *outside* of your Spanish classroom and class assignments. Please indicate how *frequently* you actually use Spanish to do each of the items listed. Use the following rating scale 1–6: 1 ('never have done it'), 2 ('have done it couple of times ever'), 3 ('occasionally, a few times a year'), 4 ('somewhat frequently, once a month'), 5 ('frequently, few times a month'), 6 ('very frequently, a few times a week').

1. _____ Speak with your friends who have learned or are learning Spanish (i.e., nonnative speakers) at school/home.
2. _____ Speak with Spanish-speaking acquaintances (e.g., staff working around campus, relatives of friends, etc.).
3. _____ Speak with a Spanish-speaker in a service encounter (e.g., to order your meal in a restaurant, to ask for assistance at a store, etc.).

4. _____ Speak to Spanish-speaking coworkers or international students on campus you meet.
5. _____ Speak with a native Spanish-speaking friend (e.g., at school, a party, over coffee, etc.).
6. _____ Speak with Spanish-speakers having trouble communicating in public (e.g., in a store, at a bank, etc.).
7. _____ Give an oral presentation to a group of native Spanish-speakers in the community who are not friends or acquaintances (e.g., strangers at a community meeting).
8. _____ Speak with a native Spanish-speaker stranger (i.e., not a friend) (e.g., people you encounter in the community, while waiting in line, etc.).

OPINION: Please share your thoughts on the following questions

1. Do you think your experience with community-based learning this year has helped you to become more willing to speak Spanish outside of the classroom and required assignments? Explain.
2. Do you think you speak Spanish outside of the classroom and required assignments more now than when you began intermediate Spanish? If so, please give examples.
3. How do you feel overall about community-based learning being required in this Spanish program? Would you prefer that it were only an option and not a requirement? Explain.