

ARTICLE



## Willingness to communicate and oral communicative performance through asynchronous video discussions

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### Abstract

*Speaking in a foreign/second language is a challenge for many learners, even when they have linguistic knowledge. Drawing on González-Lloret and Ortega's (2014) framework for technology-mediated tasks and MacIntyre's (2007) framework for willingness to communicate in a second language, this mixed-methods study investigated the impact of asynchronous video discussion tasks on learners' willingness to communicate and oral communicative performance. Two groups of intermediate learners of Spanish participated in the study, (a) a video discussion Flip group (the experimental group) (FG, n = 28), and (b) a control group (CG, n = 24). Measures included a pre-post survey, speaking quizzes, a final oral presentation, and semi-structured interviews. Results showed that the video discussion tasks facilitated the increase of FG students' willingness to communicate and oral communicative performance, and their frequency and confidence in using Spanish. The qualitative findings revealed FG students' positive but challenging experiences in the tasks. Implications for practice and further research are provided.*

**Keywords:** *Video Discussion Tasks, Willingness to Communicate, Communicative Performance, Speaking*

**Language(s) Learned in This Study:** *Spanish*

**APA Citation:** Jaramillo Cherez, N., & Nadolny, L. (2023). Willingness to communicate and oral communicative performance through asynchronous video discussions. *Language Learning & Technology*, 27(1), 1–23. <http://hdl.handle.net/10125/73521>

### Introduction

While the overarching goal of learning another language (L2) is to communicate effectively and confidently with other native speakers, one challenge for learners is to express themselves while speaking (Blake, 2016). Spontaneous and sustained oral communication in the L2 is not always guaranteed even when learners have high linguistic competence (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998) or multiple opportunities to practice. Some students take advantage of oral communicative opportunities, while others opt to avoid them, leading researchers to hypothesize that learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) is context-dependent (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998). In other words, learners' WTC in the L2 depends on the formality of the communication activity, the expectations, familiarity with the interlocutor and the topics, and the social settings in which this communication activity occurs (Bergil, 2016; MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima et al., 2004).

Technology-mediated task-based language teaching (TBLT) can help students engage in more active communication using the L2 while making use of digital tools and developing the confidence to use the language (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014; Lai & Li, 2011; Ziegler, 2016). Asynchronous and synchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) applications can facilitate task-based instruction. With asynchronous tools, learners can have more time to plan what they will speak or write about and increase accuracy, linguistic complexity, and fluency (Ellis, 2003; Guillén & Blake, 2016). Existing research on CMC such as online chats, discussion platforms, and gaming practices has shown the potential of these

tools to promote not only language development but also learners' WTC and interaction in the L2 (Chong & Reinders, 2020; Compton, 2004; Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006; Lepore, 2014; Reinders & Wattana, 2014), authentic language use (Kent, 2017), and participation in intercultural exchanges (Lee, 2009).

Video and audio can allow learners to record themselves and identify their mistakes, facilitating speech correction (Sokolova et al., 2015) and engagement in the tasks (Wang, 2007). The use of asynchronous video, in particular, allows learners to self-record their videos, use verbal and non-verbal cues, and respond in a more personal and realistic way (Griffiths & Graham, 2009). Asynchronous video also helps learners monitor their linguistic performance as they can watch their videos again and correct any gaps in their oral production (Hirotani & Lyddon, 2013). For example, Hirotani and Lyddon (2013) investigated Japanese and English learners' L2 self-introductions and awareness-raising through asynchronous video recordings. These learners' L2 oral production was characterized by a modified discourse structure that resembled their partner's models. In addition, both groups of learners benefited greatly from self-monitoring their use of language. The authors argued that asynchronous video potentially assists in developing presentational and, to a lesser degree, interpretive skills.

However, it remains unclear how the use of video discussions helps promote WTC and confidence in speaking. This study examined whether students can develop their WTC and oral communicative performance through digital asynchronous video tasks. The research questions that guided this study include:

1. How do asynchronous video discussions impact intermediate Spanish learners' willingness to communicate?
2. How do asynchronous video discussions impact intermediate Spanish learners' oral communicative performance?
3. What are intermediate Spanish learners' perceptions of their experience in the asynchronous video discussions?

## **Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching**

Meaningful L2 learning experiences require a strong focus on learners' communicative needs and interests (González-Lloret, 2007; González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014; Long, 2014; Nunan, 2004), and on their motivations for learning (Lantolf, 2000). An approach that can fulfill this goal is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), a framework built upon principles of second language acquisition and language pedagogies (Long, 2014; Nunan, 2004; Van den Branden, 2016). From a pedagogical standpoint, TBLT emphasizes learning through real-life tasks that connect needs and content, communication and interaction, authentic use of language, language process, learners' personal experiences, and language use inside and outside the classroom (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014; Long, 2014; Nunan, 2004; Thomas & Reinders, 2010). With the influential role of technology in the educational landscape, tasks mediated through technology may enhance the L2 learning experience, allowing learners to use the L2 in authentic, real-life, and meaningful interactive and collaborative tasks (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014; Thomas & Reinders, 2010). Therefore, technology-mediated tasks should seek to foster communicative activities that enhance the use of the L2 more actively and leverage the technology features.

Research on technology-mediated tasks has explored the use of many Web 2.0 tools, highlighting promising uses to help learners improve their language skills. Multimodal computer applications that include text, chat, audio, video, and images can facilitate interaction, negotiation of meaning, information exchange, and discussions (Collentine, 2009; Jepson, 2005; Levy & Kennedy, 2004; Sauro, 2004; Sun, 2009; Wang, 2007). For instance, while Sun (2009) found that text-based and video-based blogs promoted the development of oral communicative competence, Halvorsen (2012) identified that the lack of nonverbal cues in technology-mediated interactions obscured meaning and comprehension. Halvorsen included emoticons (a combination of keyboard characters) to overcome the lack of nonverbal cues in these

interactions, which became a useful strategy to clarify meaning. Additionally, tools that promote interaction supported by video (i.e., enhance body language, facial expressions, and paralinguistic cues) provide an advantage over other Web 2.0 tools (Blake, 2000; Lin, 2015; Lys, 2013; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). Related studies have found that asynchronous tools allow time to prepare and rehearse the L2, which can increase students' language confidence and skills (Arnold & Ducate, 2006; Lin, 2015; Smith, 2003).

## **Willingness to Communicate**

WTC is defined as the learners' readiness to enter into discourse and communicative context using the L2 (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998). Research on WTC has identified multiple enduring and situational factors that influence language learners' WTC (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima et al., 2004). Situational factors include the learner's control of the L2, desire to communicate with a specific person, and communicative self-confidence. MacIntyre et al. (1998) argued that "the ultimate goal of the learning process should be to engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the WTC in [those opportunities]" (p. 547), implying that having only the opportunity to communicate in the L2 is not enough for learners to demonstrate their WTC. Learners may also feel motivated by the content, perceived competence, knowledge of the L2, lack of anxiety, and interpersonal situation within the communicative context (Clément et al., 2003; MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima, 2002). Anxiety can be influenced by feelings of tension and apprehension and can fluctuate depending on time and context (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima et al., 2004). In other words, anxiety can affect self-confidence and WTC (Gregersen, 2003; Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012; Yashima et al., 2018), cause fear of embarrassment and losing face (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2014; Gregersen et al., 2014; Kessler, 2010), and lead to errors (Gregersen, 2003). In particular, research has found that speaking in the L2 raises students' anxiety more than in other activities (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012; Horwitz, 2010; Kessler, 2010) which can also affect WTC (MacIntyre, 2007).

Despite the emerging research investigating technology-mediated tasks and WTC, several aspects remain underexplored. For example, it is unclear whether asynchronous video tasks can promote learners' oral communicative performance and WTC or lower their speaking anxiety. Thus, this study investigates an instructional strategy to help learners of Spanish steadily build their WTC and confidence in speaking in the L2 while participating in asynchronous video discussion tasks.

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

Participants included a total sample of 52 college students enrolled in four sections of an intermediate Spanish course. The study employed convenience sampling of all students enrolled in the sections and the two instructors to accommodate their availability for the study. Two of the sections used the Flip technology tasks (experimental group, FG,  $n = 28$ ) and the other two sections were the control group (CG,  $n = 24$ ). The majority of the participants in each group identified themselves as female (FG:  $n = 21$ , 75%; CG:  $n = 21$ , 87.5%), had studied Spanish for more than three years (FG:  $n = 25$ , 89.3%; CG:  $n = 20$ , 83.3%), and had not lived in a Spanish-speaking country (FG:  $n = 26$ , 93%; CG:  $n = 18$ , 90%).

### **Development of Asynchronous Video Discussion Tasks**

Based on Eddy (2017), each asynchronous video discussion task was designed to align with the ACTFL communication goal area standards and the course learning goals. The task design employed a three-stage process which describes the (a) language learning outcomes, (b) assessment evidence, and (c) learning plan. First, the desired learning outcomes per instructional unit were identified based on the course goals, ACTFL standards for interpretive and presentational communication goals, and the topics of the textbook. Second, the quizzes (designed by the instructors using the Can-Do Statements of the ACTFL standards; Eddy, 2017) were used for summative assessment. Finally, six asynchronous video discussion tasks were designed and

connected to the learning outcomes, the use of the Flip tool, and the feedback rubric. Each task corresponded to one chapter of the textbook and included text, visual, video, and oral input. Each task had different levels of complexity (i.e., description of familiar topics, comments on social issues, comparing information, narrate events), autonomy (i.e., impromptu speaking, evaluating the progress of learning), and novelty (i.e., up-to-date topics related to social/educational/cultural issues, use of the language beyond the classroom). Descriptions of each task can be found in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1***Description of Each Flip Task*

<b>Textbook Chapters</b>	<b>Interpretive &amp; Presentational Communicative Goals</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Topic Resources</b>
<i>Ch. 7: Nosotros</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identity and individuality</li> <li>• Impact of language and culture on shaping countries and people</li> </ul>	<i>Compare and contrast one cultural aspect between a Spanish-speaking country and your own country.</i>	Visual input
<i>Ch. 8: Nuestro pequeño mundo</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our actions and the world around us</li> <li>• Impact of human actions and technology on the environment and society</li> </ul>	<i>Describe what you do to protect the environment. Mention three things you should do to protect the environment but don't do (or don't do enough).</i>	Visual and video input
<i>Ch. 9: En busca de la igualdad</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic engagement and social equity</li> <li>• Socio-political issues related to equity, language, and culture in Hispanic countries and in the U.S.</li> </ul>	<i>Describe what you think is the most important issue related to civil rights/human rights in the United States and Spanish-speaking countries today. Explain what should be done about it. Explore the website as a resource.</i>	Visual input and web resources
<i>Ch. 10: Los tiempos precolombinos</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical and cultural events</li> <li>• Influence of historical events, traditions, and culture on language in the American continent</li> </ul>	<i>Imagine you could participate in a historic event. Describe when would you visit and what you would do, as well as why this event is important to you. Watch the video as a reference.</i>	Visual and video input
<i>Ch. 11: Los tiempos coloniales</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagination and culture</li> <li>• Influence of cultures and situations related to students' own life and culture</li> </ul>	<i>Watch the video and listen for the question at the end ("Imagine that your Spanish professor suddenly disappeared. What do you think would have happened to him/her and what consequences would it have for you and the class?").</i>	Input from a stage conversation
<i>Ch. 12: La democracia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in life and society</li> <li>• Personal and socio-political changes in Latin America and in the U.S.</li> </ul>	<i>Imagine you have the power to change one aspect in your life, what would you change and why? Explain as many details as possible.</i>	Visual input

The [Flip](#) tool (formerly known as Flipgrid), a social learning platform, was selected because it offered ease of use, multimodality, personalization, video recording, and built-in feedback. Flip allows learners to record

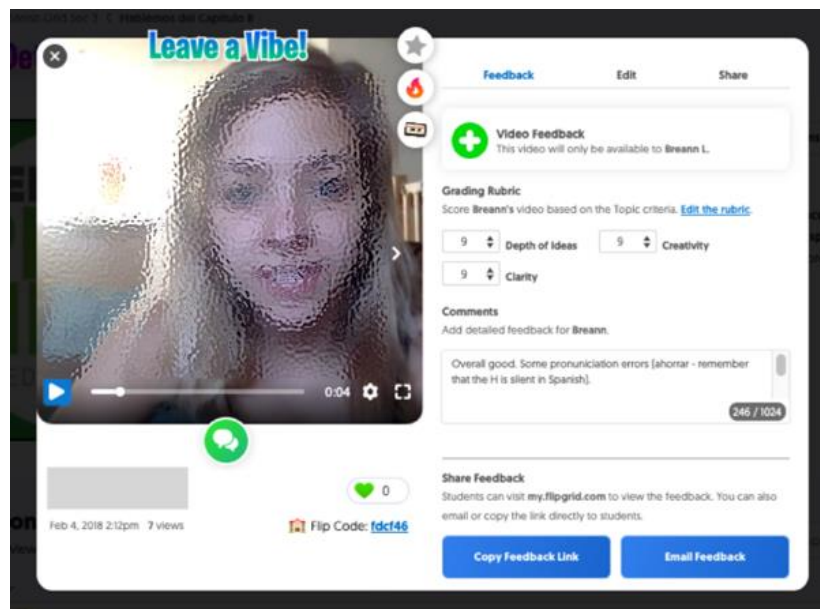
and post their videos (from a computer or a mobile device) as well as personalize their posts by adding titles, emojis, and animated images to increase engagement. Flip’s asynchronous characteristics allow learners to self-assess their performance before posting the video recordings, thus facilitating a focus on the learning process. Simple and intuitive navigation, use, and layout of a digital tool can drive learners to focus on the language use rather than on troubleshooting technical problems (Liou, 2012; Zou et al., 2015), particularly when the tool is new to learners. Research has suggested that Flip can be a useful tool for helping language learners develop their speaking and listening communicative skills (Mango, 2019; Petersen et al., 2020). Figure 1 shows the Flip instructor’s dashboard of the class grid and their view of a student’s post. Figure 2 shows the students’ view of the task, peers’ posts, and their own recording screen.

**Figure 1**

*Flip Functionalities: Instructor’s Dashboard*



*Note.* Instructor’s view of one topic within the class grid



*Note.* Instructor’s view of a student’s post

## Figure 2

*Flip Functionalities: Student's View of the Task, Peers' Posts, and Recording Screen*

The image displays a screenshot of the Flip learning management system interface. At the top left is a green circular logo with the text "EL PLANETA MEDIO AMBIENTE". To the right of the logo, there are two numbered instructions in Spanish and English. Below the instructions, there are statistics for "12 Videos" and a row of four student profile pictures. The bottom portion of the image shows a video recording interface with a central video feed of a person and various control buttons on the right and bottom.

1. Describe que haces para proteger el medio ambiente. Menciona tres cosas que deberías hacer para proteger el medio ambiente pero que no las haces (lo suficiente) Mira el video para que te inspires! [Describe what you do to protect the environment, and mention three things you should do to protect the environment but don't do (or don't do enough)] You can watch the video to get inspired!

2. Complete [Online Reflections Ch 8](#)

A cuidar el medio ambiente

12 Videos 12 Responses 0 Replies 54 Views 2.1h Engagement

Random Slideshow

Add Sticky Note

Show Topic

The course instructor in the experimental group (FG) listed the asynchronous video discussion tasks in the syllabus as classroom activities for extra credit. The rubric that the instructors developed and used in the classroom speaking activities was also used to provide feedback to students on their speaking performance in the Flip tasks. This rubric included three broad criteria: (a) content, (b) language use, and (c) comprehensibility. Students in the control group (CG) were also offered extra credit for participating in the study, though they were not offered any video discussion tasks.

The FG instructor facilitated all classroom activities, which included initial open-ended questions for students to feel comfortable speaking in Spanish, pair and group questions and answers, and discussions about topics from the textbook and segments of videos watched in class. In addition, the FG instructor encouraged students to participate in the Flip tasks every week and provided feedback through the rubric. The scores that students received in the Flip tasks were not included in the final course grade. The CG

instructor facilitated classroom speaking practice which included an ice-breaker at the beginning of the class followed by pair and group conversations focused on questions and answers about the textbook topics, a mini-roleplay, personal opinions, or discussion on cultural topics.

### Research Design and Data Collection Instruments

This mixed-methods study used a within- and between-subject design to compare learners' WTC and communicative performance in the FG and CG. A pre- and post-survey, oral quizzes, final oral presentation, and semi-structured interviews gathered student data. To ensure equivalent conditions for the FG and CG and minimize the instructor effect, all four course sections used the same textbook and assessment activities including quizzes, exams, and the final project. Additionally, study resources and activities to practice Spanish in and out of class (e.g., Conversational Partners and Spanish Table) were available to both groups.

First, Yashima et al.'s (2004) survey for WTC and communicative behavior, which applies research-based constructs that have been previously examined for factors related to WTC and communicative behavior in the L2 (MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; McCroskey & Baer, 1985; Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004), was administered at the beginning and the end of the semester to both groups. The survey included 67 items grouped into nine scales. The first four scales (*motivational intensity*, *desire to learn the L2*, *intergroup approach-avoidance tendency*, *interest in international/vocation activities*) had six questions each, and the scale *interest in international news* had two questions, all on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The scale *frequency of communication* had six questions on a 10-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all* (1) to *very frequently* (10). The scales *communication apprehension* and *willingness to communicate* had 12 questions each on a 100-point measure, ranging from *I would NEVER* (0) to *I would ALWAYS* (100). Lastly, the scale *self-perceived communicative competence* had 12 questions ranging from *completely incompetent* (0) to *completely competent* (100; see [Appendix](#)). The survey was not modified from its original scales and measurements to preserve consistency of the scales; however, the word 'English' was replaced by the word 'Spanish' where pertinent.

Second, the scores from the four speaking quizzes and the final oral presentation were collected. The quizzes and oral presentation were developed and assessed by the instructors using the rubric (content, language use, and comprehensibility). The quizzes were administered online on the learning management system approximately every two weeks. Each quiz had a single randomized open-ended question closely related to each of the topics discussed in class. The oral presentations took place in the classroom during Finals Week. In these presentations, each student provided an oral description and analysis of their topic of choosing, drawing on the sources and outline previously prepared (e.g., compare/contrast aspects of the topic with personal interest or culture).

Third, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the FG to gather a deeper scope and insights into students' experiences in the asynchronous video discussion tasks. All students were invited to participate in these interviews during the last week of classes. The interviews were in English for ease of communication. A total of 13 students volunteered to participate in the interviews. The interview protocol included the following areas of inquiry: (a) perceptions of speaking and communication skills, (b) challenges faced when speaking in Spanish, (c) experience completing the Flip tasks, (d) challenges faced in the Flip tasks, and (e) feedback on the use of the Flip tasks.

Finally, two classroom observations were conducted to gather insight on the classroom activities during the 15-week semester. The first observation took place in week 6 and the second observation in week 11.

### Data Analysis

Following Yashima et al. (2004), the current study combined the nine variables in the survey into five dependent construct variables to measure WTC and *communicative behavior in the L2*: (a) motivation to learn Spanish, (b) international posture, (c) communication confidence, (d) WTC, and (e) frequency of communication.

The independent variable was the two different instructional approaches: the experimental group using Flip tasks (FG) and the control group (CG). The statistical analysis included a two-tailed test of significance paired sample *t*-test and a follow-up pairwise comparison with independent samples *t*-test to determine any difference between the pre- and post-survey results within and between the FG and CG. Students' communicative performance was measured by their speaking quizzes and oral presentation scores. To assess oral communicative performance more holistically, a composite variable called *communicative performance* was calculated by giving this variable a total weight of 100 points, where the quizzes accounted for 40% and the oral presentation for 60% of the total weight. This percentage distribution corresponds to the activity requirements; for example, quizzes required shorter answers to a single question while the oral presentation required longer and complex descriptions of topics. Correlation analysis examined the association between students' scores in the Flip tasks and their *communicative performance*.

The semi-structured interviews were first transcribed and analyzed following a three-stage approach to enhance the validity of the findings (Denzin, 2012) and the development of congruent and closely connected themes (Miles et al., 2014): (a) structural and initial coding based on interview questions, (b) pattern coding to develop categories and concepts, and (c) development of themes.

## Results

### Willingness to Communicate

The results showed that students' perceptions of their WTC increased between the pre- and post-survey for both FG and CG groups. The variables *motivation to learn Spanish*, *communication confidence*, *WTC*, and *frequency of communication* showed higher mean values for both groups, while the variable *international posture* was lower in the post-survey for the FG (Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics for Pre- and Post-Survey Scales, Mean, and Standard Deviation by Group (FG and CG)*

Survey Scales	<i>M(SD)</i>			
	FG ( <i>n</i> = 28)		CG ( <i>n</i> = 24)	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Motivation to Learn Spanish	5.16 (0.77)	5.24 (0.67)	5.27 (0.69)	5.60 (0.70)
International Posture	5.10 (0.77)	5.09 (0.77)	5.12 (0.88)	5.51 (0.85)
Communication Confidence in Spanish	3.27 (1.00)	3.51 (0.66)	3.27 (0.58)	3.49 (0.62)
Willingness to Communicate in Spanish	2.63 (1.44)	3.05 (1.33)	3.03 (1.28)	3.10 (0.87)
Frequency of Communication	4.33 (0.86)	4.92 (0.88)	5.12 (0.74)	5.38 (0.87)

To determine whether the mean differences observed for each construct variable were statistically significant between the pre- and post-survey, a paired-samples *t*-test was performed after checking that all assumptions were met. The difference in mean scores for all construct variables were approximately normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test for FG (*motivation to learn Spanish*,  $p = .587$ ; *international posture*,  $p = .304$ ; *communication confidence*,  $p = .199$ ; *willingness to communicate*,  $p = .214$ ;



and *frequency of communication*,  $p = .127$ ) and for CG (*motivation to learn Spanish*,  $p = .479$ ; *international posture*,  $p = .542$ ; *communication confidence*,  $p = .892$ ; *willingness to communicate*,  $p = .271$ ; and *frequency of communication*  $p = .092$ ). Table 3 presents the results of the paired-samples  $t$ -test, which showed that the FG participants' scores in the post-survey were significantly greater than in the pre-survey for two construct variables: *willingness to communicate* ( $M = 5.24$ ,  $SD = .67$ ), and *frequency of communication* ( $M = 4.92$ ,  $SD = .88$ ) with a significance value of  $p = .001$ . The effect size Cohen's  $d$  for *frequency of communication* was .68, a medium effect size; for *willingness to communicate*, Cohen's  $d$  was .31, a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Participants' perceptions in the CG were statistically significant for the variables *motivation to learn Spanish* ( $p = .022$ ) and *international posture* ( $p = .021$ ). The effect size Cohen's  $d$  for *motivation to learn* and *international posture* were .47 and .45, respectively, which are considered small-to-moderate (Cohen, 1988). These results suggest that while the increase in students' WTC in the FG was small, their communication increased moderately.

**Table 3**

*Results for the Paired Samples  $t$ -Tests of Survey Scales Mean Differences by Group (FG and CG)*

Survey Construct Scales	Paired Samples $t$ -Test							
	FG				CG			
	Mean Difference	$t$	$p$	$d$	Mean Difference	$t$	$p$	$d$
Motivation to Learn Spanish	0.08	0.804	.428	.11	0.33	2.460	.022**	.47
International Posture	-0.04	-0.425	.674	.05	0.39	2.479	.021**	.45
Communication Confidence in Spanish	0.24	1.064	.297	.28	0.22	1.730	.097	.36
Willingness to Communicate in Spanish	0.43	2.366	.025*	.31	0.07	0.227	.822	.06
Frequency of Communication	0.60	3.800	.001**	.68	0.27	1.423	.168	.35

*Note.* \* statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$

We were interested in examining whether there was any difference in the WTC between the two groups. First, we examined WTC as a whole construct by combining all construct variables into a single construct and performing a multivariate independent  $t$ -test. These results are presented in Table 4 and revealed that the difference between the groups on the combined dependent variables was statistically significant:  $F(5, 46) = 2.769$ ,  $p = .029$ ; Wilks'  $\Lambda = .769$ ; partial  $\eta^2 = .231$ . Second, we conducted an independent samples  $t$ -test for each variable between the groups. Mean differences for FG in *communication confidence*, *willingness to communicate*, and *frequency of communication* were .02 (95% CI, -.480 to .538), .036 (95% CI, -.358 to 1.064), .33 (95% CI, .158 to .820), respectively, which are higher than the CG. The mean scores for *motivation to learn* and *international posture* were .25 (95% CI, -.560 to .050) and .43 (95% CI, -.770 to -.076), respectively, which are lower than the CG. There was a statistically significant difference between

the mean differences for *international posture* from students in CG and FG,  $p = .017$ . The effect size  $d$  of this variable was approximately .6, a moderate size (Cohen, 1988; Urdan, 2010). Other variables were not statistically significant. The combined group means were significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) These results show that overall WTC increased for the FG, suggesting that the Flip tasks appear to be beneficial for students' development of their readiness to speak in Spanish. However, the variable *international posture* shows a different result; the slight decrease for the FG compared to increase in the CG may be due to the CG's instruction including more cultural aspects related to Spanish-speaking people and countries as noted from field notes taken during the observations. This variable requires further analysis for understanding students' attitudes toward and interest in international and cultural affairs of Spanish-speaking communities and countries.

**Table 4**

*Results from the Multivariate Independent t-Test and Pairwise Comparisons for FG and CG*

Survey Scales	Mean Differences		Mean Diff.	SD	Pairwise Comparisons		95% Confidence Interval <sup>b</sup>	
	FG	CG			<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>	Lower	Upper
Motivation to Learn Spanish	0.08	0.33	-0.25	0.17	.126	.42	-0.581	0.086
International Posture	-0.04	0.39	-0.43	0.17	.017*	.68	-0.770	-0.080
Communication Confidence in Spanish	0.24	0.22	0.02	0.27	.936	.02	0.519	0.559
Willingness to Communicate in Spanish	0.43	0.07	0.36	0.34	.306	.29	-0.321	1.04
Frequency of Communication	0.60	0.27	0.33	0.24	.187	.37	-0.162	0.815

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ ; <sup>b</sup> adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni correction test

### Oral Communicative Performance

The results of the composite variable *communicative performance* revealed that the CG ( $M = 90.44$ ,  $SD = 6.62$ ) performed higher than the FG ( $M = 89.96$ ,  $SD = 7.26$ ) (Table 5). It is worth noting that the FG participants began the course at a lower baseline than the CG, as indicated by the quiz mean scores.

**Table 5**

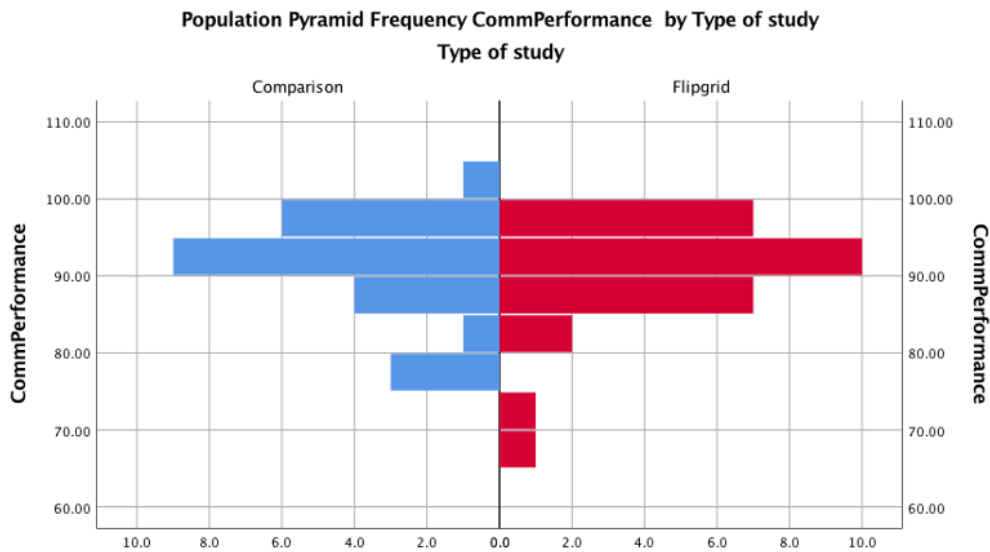
*Descriptive Statistics for Quizzes, Oral Presentation, and Overall Communicative Performance*

Scores	FG		CG	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Speaking Quiz 1	27.29	2.16	27.63	2.60
Speaking Quiz 2	27.38	2.26	27.58	1.89
Speaking Quiz 3	28.04	1.67	28.25	2.29
Speaking Quiz 4	28.11	1.62	28.67	1.63
Oral Presentation	35.04	3.75	35.46	3.56
Overall Communicative Performance	89.96	7.26	90.44	6.62

We were interested in determining if the difference we observed in the *communicative performance* was significant between FG and CG groups. To this end, the non-parametric test Mann-Whitney U was performed after checking all assumptions. The distribution of the communicative performance scores for each group was different, as assessed by visual inspection of the population pyramid histogram (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Distribution of Communicative Performance in FG and CG*



The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicated that although the FG performed with lower mean ranks (26.29) than students in the CG (26.75) in their communicative performance scores ( $U = 330, z = -.110, p = .912$ ), this difference was not statistically significant, using an exact sampling distribution for U (Dinneen & Blakesley, 1973). A further Spearman’s rank-order correlation analysis revealed that a statistically significant and positive relationship existed between students’ *communicative performance* and the Flip task scores,  $r_s(26) = .389, p = .041$ . This correlation suggests that the Flip tasks played a role in the

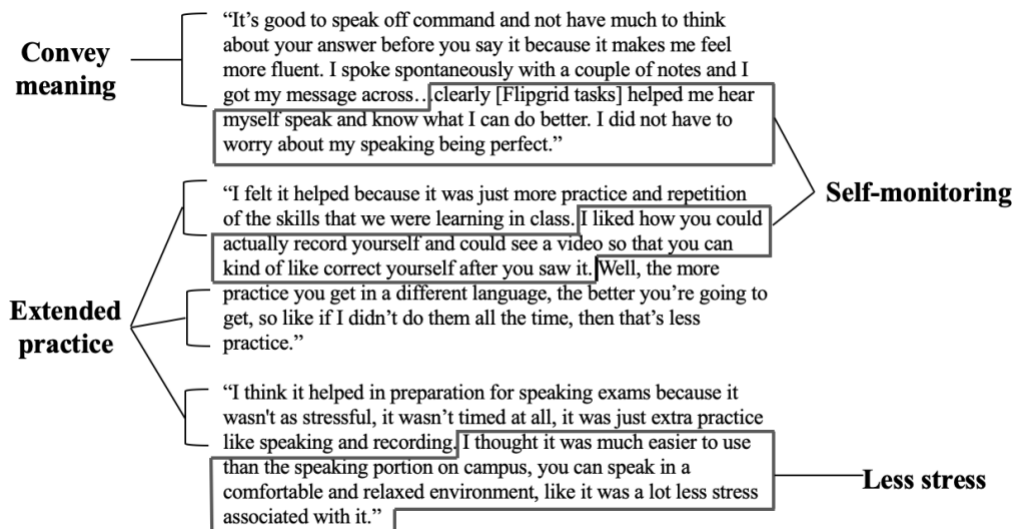
*communicative performance* in the FG ( $r^2 = .15$ ), showing that while the scores in the Flip tasks increased, so did the *communicative performance* score. These findings give an indication that the Flip tasks can be beneficial for helping students develop their oral skills for presentation and interpretive communication goals.

### Experience in the Asynchronous Video Discussion Tasks

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews revealed themes pertinent to speaking practice, confidence in speaking, oral performance barriers, and affordances of the Flip tool. Students perceived themselves as more fluent and less stressed when speaking in Spanish. Students reported that they responded faster to the prompts as if they were in a real conversation and believed that "it's good to speak off command." Students also had the flexibility to self-correct their responses during the task completion as they could play their video responses back, recognize their mistakes, and identify vocabulary or grammar that they could correct in subsequent recordings. For example, a student commented that "[Flip tasks] helped me hear myself speak and know what we can do better." Figure 4 illustrates multiple students' views of the tasks.

**Figure 4**

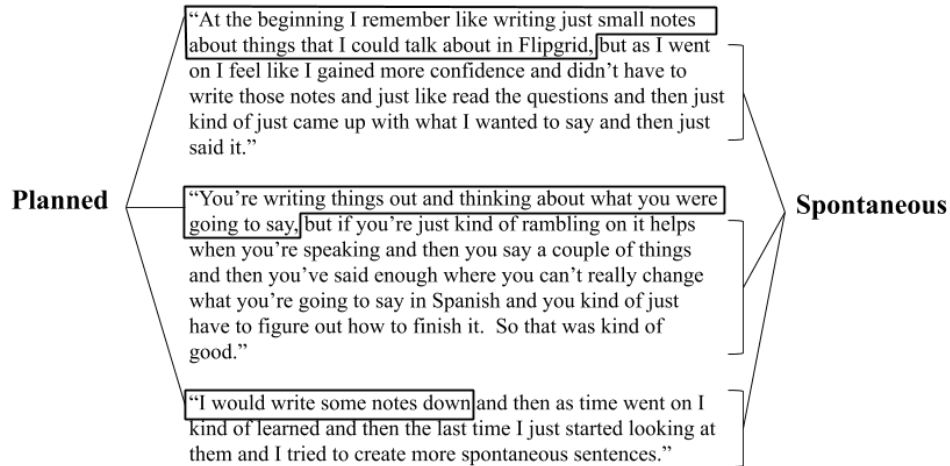
*Excerpt Showing Students' Perceptions of Practice, Confidence, and Self-Monitoring*



Students' confidence in speaking Spanish appeared to have increased, leading them to perceive a sense of relaxation and self-assurance of their language use in communication (Figure 5). One student mentioned that they did not have to "worry about my speaking being perfect, ... I am able to relax and think, which makes my speaking more accurate." The findings also show a level of confidence for more spontaneous speaking that students experienced in the FG tasks. According to one student, the "[Flip tasks] helped if I couldn't figure out something, like I didn't know the word or the saying, then I could say it in a different way and wouldn't have to worry about not humiliating myself." Figure 5 demonstrates the transition from planned speaking to spontaneous speaking.

**Figure 5**

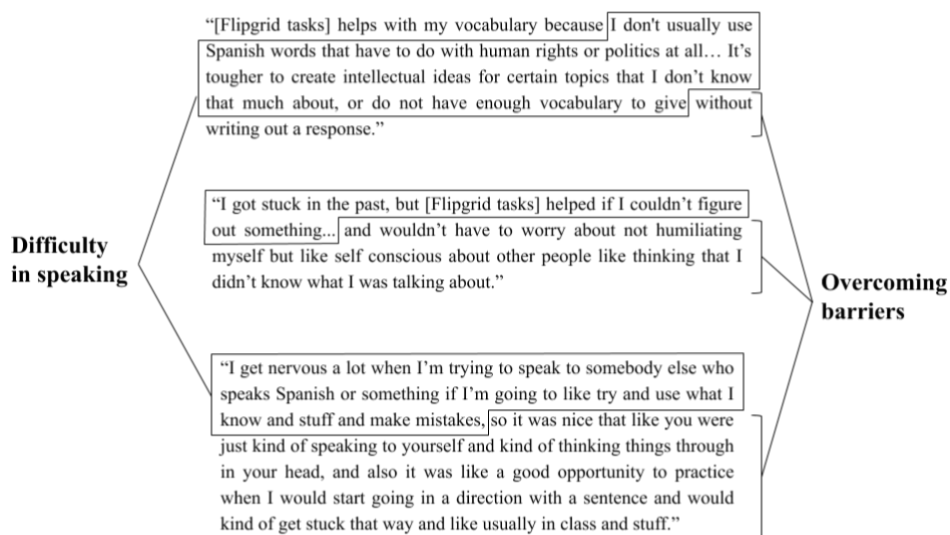
*Excerpt Showing Students' Transition from Planned Speaking to Spontaneous Speaking*



The topics in the video tasks connected to the textbook and some topics were more challenging for some students than others. One student commented that “it’s tougher to create intellectual ideas for certain topics that I don’t know that much about, or do not have enough vocabulary to give.” For example, this student mentioned that they did not “usually use Spanish words that have to do with human rights or politics at all.” Thus, the lack of knowledge of complex topics in their language made it harder to provide answers in the Flip video tasks. One mechanism that students used was to plan their oral discourse by “writing out a response” or taking time to plan their ideas. While the expectation was to have students spontaneously respond to the prompts using the grammatical structures and vocabulary that corresponded to the textbook topics, the asynchronous video discussion tasks allowed students time to plan their answers and use simple or complex grammar and terms correctly. One student commented that “it was easier to connect use of vocabulary that we already learned so I wasn’t so much racking my brain for vocabulary words” (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**

*Excerpt Showing Students' Speaking Barriers and Overcoming Them with Flip Tasks*



The findings also revealed students' frequent fear of judgment and anxiety about their speaking quality. For example, a student mentioned feeling frustrated when completing a task "because I was getting stuck a little and pronounced things slowly." Despite the anxiety inherent in speaking, some students gained confidence through the asynchronous video discussion tasks as students could "practice more spontaneous speaking without the pressure of judgments" or "knowing that [Flip tasks were] a tool for us without anyone judging." Some plausible reasons for students' fears may be a combination of factors including perceived lack of fluency, grammar mistakes, incorrect use of vocabulary, and inaccurate pronunciation. Table 6 presents a summary and examples of the major themes of the participants' interviews.

**Table 6**

*Major Themes from Participants' Semi-Structured Interviews*

<b>Major Themes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interview Excerpt</b>
Speaking Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding flow of conversational style</li> <li>- Extending language practice</li> </ul>	"I like to like talking about what we were learning about in the book sometimes. The way it connected with the class."
Confidence in Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More accurate uses of grammar and vocabulary</li> <li>- Self-monitoring</li> </ul>	"In class we were asked direct questions where like a sentence would suffice for answering it, but then with the Flip it was more open ended, and you could talk more and take multiple directions with it you could actually record yourself and could see a video so that you can, kind of like, correct yourself when you saw it."
Oral Performance Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unfamiliarity with content</li> <li>- Challenges in spoken performance</li> <li>- Anxiety and nervousness</li> </ul>	"...it's tougher to create intellectual ideas for certain topics that I don't know that much about, or do not have enough vocabulary to give without writing out a response."
Affordances of the Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ease of use</li> <li>- Flexibility</li> <li>- Safe environment (asynchronous posts)</li> </ul>	<p>"...thought it was much easier to use than the speaking portion on campus, you can speak in a comfortable and relaxed environment, like it was a lot less stress associated with it."</p> <p>"...it was quicker and done, it was like okay it plays the video and sound and it was like okay click here, it was really good, it was really user friendly."</p>
Limitations of the Tool	Language support	"...it can't correct for accents. I cannot improve my accent on [Flip]."

## Discussion

The results of this study provide some evidence that the asynchronous video discussion tasks (FG) can be beneficial to help students increase their WTC and communicative performance. As suggested elsewhere (Hirotani & Lyddon, 2013; Pellerin, 2013), the asynchronous video tasks facilitated a space where students could rehearse and master oral communication through open-ended tasks and self-assess their speaking performance. The results indicate that students' increased perceptions of their WTC and increased confidence for spontaneous speaking are connected to their participation in the video tasks. These tasks allowed students an opportunity to speak when they were ready to do so and to steadily become more confident in their use of the language. In addition, the tasks allowed students to feel safe and take risks while speaking without the fear of making mistakes in front of others and feeling embarrassed or judged for inaccuracies in their linguistic performance. This finding relates to the contextual and affective factors that can trigger feelings of self-confidence and WTC.

The findings from this study also revealed that students' WTC and confidence to speak in the Flip tasks were positively related to their performance in the speaking quizzes, suggesting that offering students opportunities to develop their speaking confidence and WTC needs to be built over time within low-pressure activities that allow for self-monitoring. As research on WTC has underscored (MacIntyre, 2007; Yashima et al., 2004; Yashima et al., 2018), students should be motivated to seek out opportunities to communicate in the L2. These opportunities need to balance enduring and situational factors that affect students, including how much control students have over their language practice, their desire to communicate with others when they are ready to do so, their anxiety and apprehension to speak in the L2, and their confidence in using the L2. For students in this study, the tasks served as an extended practice to increase their confidence in speaking and understanding the flow of a conversational style while integrating more complex grammar and vocabulary studied in class. Students completed the tasks by describing the topics using the grammar, vocabulary, and other linguistic knowledge they had already mastered or practiced. Students made use of the language as in real-life conversations where they were willing to communicate regardless of their language accuracy, as conveying meaning was more important than perfecting their responses. The findings in this study correspond with other research which found that, presumably, if students perceived themselves competent in the L2, they might take opportunities to speak and use language more holistically for meaning construction.

In addition, the results showed that students' WTC and communicative performance seemed to be determined by the pressure (or lack thereof) from affective as well as linguistic factors commonly encountered in face-to-face contexts (Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006). Because the tasks offered a space for students to post their responses asynchronously without having others see the posts in real-time, students' speaking anxiety appeared to have lessened, giving them more confidence to use the L2. While real-time tasks will always denote some level of pressure, students in this study perceived themselves as better prepared to communicate in these types of tasks as they built their confidence and WTC in the Flip tasks. For instance, the task scores and communicative performance were positively correlated, suggesting that using the L2 in a safe environment with opportunities for self-monitoring and rehearsal could help students complete the class activities more confidently.

This study also identified language barriers that students experienced in video discussions, such as content, language accuracy, and anxiety. This finding is in line with other studies that have found connections between language performance and anxiety (Liou, 2012; Lu & Hsu, 2008; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014). Based on students' experiences and perceptions, it is clear that their fear of being embarrassed, making mistakes, and being judged for their language skills prevails as a potential barrier to communication in the L2. These findings suggest that when students feel more anxious and nervous, they may be less likely to communicate spontaneously without fear of losing face, affirming that anxiety can affect WTC and self-perceived confidence in speaking. In particular, this finding relates to the situations and communication activities in which students engage that might trigger anxiety, affecting their WTC and speaking performance. Thus,

this study underscores the need to help students build enough confidence to be willing to communicate in real-time class activities if they are to transfer speaking skills to real-world communicative situations.

The asynchronous nature of Flip offered students opportunities to build their confidence in speaking through a process in which they rehearsed and recorded their speech, obtained self-feedback, and revised their language performance. The video discussion tasks also facilitated students' development of their confidence to use the language spontaneously, as students felt they were able to respond to the prompts with much more confidence.

The tasks helped students go beyond accomplishing these goals; they also helped students be "creative with the language and recombine learned material in order to express personal meaning" (ACTFL, 2012). In addition to extended practice of the L2, asynchronous video tasks can be a potential pedagogical strategy to promote the ACTFL presentational and interpretive standards of the Communication goal area. Speaking is a language activity that can trigger anxiety in the L1 as well as the L2. It is essential for instructors to understand that learning and communicating in a second language involves a complex and often lengthy process that requires constant practice and scaffolding. Asking students to demonstrate their oral communicative skills goes beyond requiring them to utilize grammar and vocabulary; it involves creating the conditions that build their confidence in using the language in a communicative situation and with various interlocutors.

Therefore, giving students the time and space to build their confidence in their oral skills is necessary for their language-learning trajectory. This study has shown that students felt more confident and willing to communicate without the fear and anxiety of making mistakes or being judged, aspects that could interfere with their spontaneous use of the language. The online platform created a *brave space* where they felt encouraged to use the L2 to choose vocabulary, sentence structures, verb conjugations, or grammar they have learned. While their speech was planned discourse in some cases, the orchestrated series of asynchronous video tasks over the semester stimulated their willingness to speak and exert control of their lexis and grammar choices. To this end, technology-mediated tasks should also empower students to use the L2 with awareness of their own goals, strengths, and choices for practice. These tasks should also involve conditions that promote agentic learning, where students set their goals and initiate action to use the L2.

An interesting finding in this study was the CG's higher perception for the variable *international posture* ( $p = .021$ ). From the class observations, it could be noted that the instructional approach in the CG incorporated personal experiences and references to international contexts more often than in the FG. One possible explanation is that students' perceptions and own interest in Spanish international affairs might have been reinforced by the use of activities and materials related to international news and topics of interest for Spanish speakers. The learners' attitudes toward and interests in international affairs, the Spanish-speaking international community, interactions with Spanish speakers, and intercultural communication in Spanish deserve further exploration.

With this discussion, it is necessary to present some limitations that might have affected the interpretation of the results. First, not all students who initially volunteered to participate in the FG tasks completed all tasks and surveys or participated in the interviews. It is important to note that the Flip activities were included in the class syllabus as extra credit opportunities, and students might not have been interested or had enough time to participate.

Second, the FG and CG were conveniently selected. The CG served as a control group with a different instructor, but used the same classroom instructional strategies and additional resources as the FG. Having more students participate in a randomized study with an alternative task approach might help draw other insightful conclusions on the impact of the tasks on students' speaking performance. Third, the task design involved two of the communication goal areas of the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2012), interpretive and presentational. Adding a focus on interpersonal communication could



allow for a bidirectional perspective of students' WTC and communicative performance. Therefore, how student-to-student interaction can be used as a formative assessment requires further examination.

## Conclusion

To varying degrees, the asynchronous video discussion tasks facilitated a speaking practice environment which, according to students, was flexible, free from judgment, and offered self-evaluation. The tasks' apparent flexibility contributed to students' positive experiences in meeting the criteria of the tasks. However, it may not be the tasks themselves that impacted students' WTC and communicative performance; rather, these gains can be explained by the task design that considered the affordances of the technology to design, develop, and implement the tasks. The integration of the video discussion tasks provided conditions that allowed students to filter out the anxiety that speaking inherently brings. While many students perceived an improvement in their grammar and vocabulary while speaking, this is not the only aspect that should determine students' proficiency in the L2. Giving students the time and space to build confidence in their oral skills is necessary for their language learning trajectory. The technology's affordances and limitations highlight the synergy between tasks and technology, and how their respective features intertwine to enhance the learning process.

## Acknowledgements

The authors extend their appreciation to all the participants who volunteered their time for the study and those who completed the Flip tasks. This appreciation extends to the course instructors for their openness and willingness to use the technology tasks in their classroom.

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## Appendix. Willingness to Communicate Survey

### Motivational Intensity Scale

(Strongly disagree = 0; Strongly agree = 7)

1. Compared to my classmates, I think I study Spanish relatively hard.
2. I often think about the words and ideas that I learn about in my Spanish classes.
3. If Spanish were not taught at school, I would study it on my own.
4. I think I spend fairly long hours studying Spanish.
5. I really try to learn Spanish.
6. After I graduate from college, I will continue to study Spanish and try to improve.

### Desire to Learn Spanish Scale

(Strongly disagree = 0; Strongly agree = 7)

1. When I have assignments to do in Spanish, I try to do them immediately.
2. I would read Spanish newspapers or magazines outside my Spanish course work.
3. During Spanish classes, I'm absorbed in what is taught and concentrate on my studies.
4. I would like the number of Spanish classes at school increased.
5. I believe absolutely Spanish should be taught at school.
6. I find studying Spanish more interesting than other subjects.

### Intergroup Approach-Avoidance Tendency Scale

(Strongly disagree = 0; Strongly agree = 7)

1. I want to make friends with international students studying in the U.S
2. I try to avoid taking with foreigners if I can.
3. I would talk to an international student whenever possible at school.
4. I wouldn't mind sharing an apartment or room with an international student.
5. I want to participate in a volunteer activity to help foreigners living in the surrounding community.
6. I would feel somewhat uncomfortable if a foreigner moved in next door.
7. I would help a foreigner having trouble communicating in a restaurant or at a station.

### Interest in International Vocation/Activities Scale

(Cronbach's  $\alpha = .73$ , Yashima, 2002; Cronbach's  $\alpha = .62$ , Yashima et al., 2004)

(Strongly disagree = 0; Strongly agree = 7)

1. I would rather stay in my hometown.
2. I want to live in a foreign country.
3. I want to work in an international organization such as the United Nations.
4. I'm interested in volunteer activities in developing countries such as the Peace Corps.
5. I don't think what's happening overseas has much to do with my daily life.
6. I'd rather avoid the kind of work that sends me overseas frequently.

### Interest in International News Scale

(Strongly disagree = 0; Strongly agree = 7)

1. I often read and watch new about foreign countries.
2. I often talk about situations and events in foreign countries with my family and/or friends.

### Frequency and Amount of Communication Scale

(Not at all = 0; Very frequently = 10)

1. I volunteer to answer or ask questions in class.
2. I answer when I am called upon by the teacher.
3. I participate in classroom activities such as pair work.

4. I ask teachers questions or talk to them outside the class period.
5. I talk with friends or acquaintances outside school in Spanish.

#### Communication Apprehension Scale

(I would NEVER feel nervous = 0; I would ALWAYS feel nervous = 100)

1. Presenting a talk to a group of strangers.
2. Talking with an acquaintance while standing in line.
3. Talking in a large meeting of friends.
4. Talking in a small group of strangers.
5. Talking with a friend while standing in line.
6. Talking in a large meeting of acquaintances.
7. Talking with a stranger while standing in line.
8. Presenting a talk to a group of friends.
9. Talking in a small group of acquaintances.
10. Talking in a large meeting of strangers.
11. Talking in a small group of friends.
12. Presenting a talk to a group of acquaintances.

#### Willingness to Communicate Scale

(I would NEVER start up a conversation = 0; I would ALWAYS start up a conversation = 100)

1. Present a talk to a group of strangers.
2. Talk with an acquaintance while standing in line.
3. Talk in a large meeting of friends.
4. Talk in a small group of strangers.
5. Talk with a friend while standing in line.
6. Talk in a large meeting of acquaintances.
7. Talk with a stranger while standing in line.
8. Present a talk to a group of friends.
9. Talk in a small group of acquaintances.
10. Talk in a large meeting of strangers.
11. Talk in a small group of friends.
12. Present a talk to a group of acquaintances.

#### Self-Perceived Communicative Competence Scale

(0 = complete incompetent, 100 = complete competent)

1. Present a talk to a group of strangers.
2. Talk with an acquaintance.
3. Talk in a large meeting of friends.
4. Talk in a small group of strangers.
5. Talk with a friend.
6. Talk in large meeting of acquaintances.
7. Talk with a stranger.
8. Present a talk to a group of friends.
9. Talk in a small group of acquaintances.
10. Talk in a large meeting of strangers.
11. Talk in a small group of friends.
12. Present a talk to a group of acquaintances.

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