

**INCREASING
HERITAGE SPANISH
SPEAKERS'
WILLINGNESS TO
COMMUNICATE IN
SPANISH
CLASSROOM**

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My positionality

- ➔ Born and raised in Guadalajara, MX
- ➔ Migrated to U.S at 17, following my parents
- ➔ Attended ESL classes and earned U.S. High School Diploma
- ➔ Fully bilingual Spanish and English
- ➔ Worked 20 years in agriculture and migrant ed programs to support my family, including three children
- ➔ Started at YVC in 2010 as a Title V program coordinator
- ➔ Earned my AA, BA, and MA while working full-time with Title V programs; MA Thesis is the basis for this presentation
- ➔ Am now the interim director for the CAMP program and part-time AH faculty member teaching Spanish for Healthcare

Purpose and Overview of this study

- ➔ To examine the effectiveness of incorporating activities with themes of social justice and inequality to stimulate emotion and motivate Spanish Heritage Language speakers so as to provoke willingness to communicate (WTC) in Spanish
- ➔ Integrated a six-week theme of immigration and the impact on DACA students to evoke empathic responses and increase WTC in a Spanish Heritage Language classroom.
- ➔ Compared WTC observations and pre-implementation student surveys for the first four weeks of the course with those of the last six weeks.

ONE research question

- ▶ **RQ1:** What impact does the purposeful use of emotional activities in the L2 classroom have on Spanish Heritage Language learner's willingness to communicate?

Identify

- elements of the willingness to communicate (WTC), including the role of emotions in language learning

Review

- an approach to using a culturally relevant theme to stimulate emotional response and engagement with learning

Learning
Outcomes
from this
Presentation

Supporting literature

- ▶ Emotions encourage social interaction and WTC (Peter, 2007).
- ▶ Emotions are socially constructed acts of communication that mediate one's thinking, behavior, and goals (Imai, 2010).
- ▶ At least 17 opportunities to practice are needed to learn something new (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006).
- ▶ Using questions to prompt deep thinking allows students to learn and produce language (Roediger & Karpicke, 2006).
- ▶ It is important to create learning situations that encourage students to acquire language naturally rather than learn it consciously (Patrick, 2019),
- ▶ Emotional, personalized connections to content may motivate students to practice and increase Spanish proficiency (Lopez, 2016; Mendez & Aguilar, 2018; Piniel & Albert, 2018)

Mixed Methods Study Design



igual hasta el un estudiante implicaba
futuro brillante para experimentó discriminación por
desigualdad

mismas experiencias de la cuarta respuesta
choque cultural se país sin ayuda
enfrentamos choque cultural
inspiración

ver que una dinero para sobrevivir
con el tema establezca mi metas
tres ejemplos de
pase por momentos
identidad

similares desde que
tratados por igual estuvo relacionada con
que una persona ilustran la inspiración
el idioma de
hizo recordar todo
cultural se vivió
de primera mano
la segunda respuesta
todo el sacrificio
como la discriminación
conexión

la mismas experiencias

que la cumplía

tercera respuesta también

ganas de hacer

supervivencia en trabajos

familia también pasó

de conexión con

lucha contra la

Five primary themes emerged

Connection
to others

Inspiration

Personal
reactions to
stories

Increased
self-
confidence

Expanded
knowledge

Quantitative and qualitative results

- All the students reported feeling connected to the class activities inclusive of social justice and discrimination theme
- Increased communication in writing and in synchronous class sessions suggests that emotional connections to activities stimulated communication and thus student performance
- This investigation demonstrated that provoked emotions in the classroom may increase students WTC to speak in Spanish.

Limitations on this study because of COVID 19 and move to online instruction

The pandemic may have affected student perception and willingness to participate completely.

I struggled to make observations in my field journal throughout the study because of the confines of distance learning and my inability to observe all students practicing like I could have in a classroom.

Completing these tasks during via distance learning may have impacted the data that was collected from both the Likert-scale surveys and the mid-study questionnaire

Comparing student responses from the first four weeks with the last six weeks may have been influenced by students' experience in the classroom

My general goal in the present study was to provoke student empathic emotions with DACA so as to improve their willingness to communicate in the Spanish Classroom while gaining understanding of social justice issues



The feelings and emotions experienced during foreign language learning and instruction are important to understand so that language teachers can adjust their approach



A positive emotional atmosphere in the classroom contributes to students demonstrating motivation



People learn and acquire a language in different ways. Making an emphatic emotional connection may help learners build their confidence when acquiring a new language



My Recommendations



INCREASE THE
SAMPLE SIZE AND
REPEAT THIS STUDY
WITH
CONSIDERATION
FOR THE TIMING OF
ACTIVITIES



ATTEND TO THE SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
ASPECTS OF LEARNING IN
THE L2 CLASSROOM



INCORPORATE
EMOTIONAL
ACTIVITIES WITH
STANDARD
CURRICULUM
TO INCREASE
WTC

Learning Outcomes Review

- ▶ Identify Aspects of willingness to communicate (WTC)
 - ▶ With a shoulder partner, identify what you learned about WTC.
- ▶ Review the approach of using a culturally relevant theme
 - ▶ With a different shoulder partner, discuss what you think about the merits and risks of using emotionally charged curriculum with students.

THANK YOU!

GRACIAS!

