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Teaching Foreign Languages Through Audiovisual Translation Resources: Teachers' Perspectives

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In the past decade, techniques traditionally used in the audiovisual translation (AVT) industry have been applied to foreign language teaching (FL) with promising results. Both teachers and researchers have provided useful data on various AVT typologies (i.e., subtitling, dubbing, audio description) to improve specific learning areas: vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, intercultural awareness, etc. (Ibáñez & Vermeulen, 2014; Baños & Sokoli, 2015). The following study aims to provide information in two relevant areas identified in the field: (1) the direct experience of those teachers who have been using AVT techniques in the classroom in recent years, and (2) their perspectives on the combination of FL and AVT in the future. A total of 56 respondents from Europe, the USA, and Asia participated in the study, these being teachers of French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, and Catalan as a FL. The results obtained are applicable to different languages and useful to professionals interested in using AVT in classroom or conducting further research.

Keywords: *audiovisual translation, foreign language teaching and learning*

INTRODUCTION

Access to teaching resources has increased rapidly in the foreign language (FL) classroom with the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT). Computers, interactive boards, tablets, and mobile phones have created new alternatives to traditional teaching methods (British Council, 2013). Especially since the appearance of the Internet and Wi-Fi in schools, the amount of digital material available has been continuously developing. Teachers use audiovisual (AV) material not only designed specifically for learning, such as language-learning platforms and mobile apps (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008), but also those created for the general public, such as TV series, films, and even social networks, including Facebook and Twitter (Blake, 2013). In fact, technological progress has increased the availability of free computer programs (e.g., YouTube and Movie Maker) that allow the manipulation of video clips to cut scenes, add captions, and add voice-over (Martínez Sierra, 2014).

In this regard, actively using techniques that are traditionally employed to translate AV texts has shown promising signs of success in the FL classroom (Talaván, 2013; Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2014; Baños & Sokoli, 2015). Applying these techniques (i.e. subtitling, dubbing, and voice-over) in the FL classroom does not necessarily require expert knowledge of professional conventions. The aim is different: rather than adapting a product to reach an audience who speaks a different language or giving an account of accessibility constraints, the intention is to provide students with hands-on training by creating captions or adding their voice to a video sequence so that they improve their skills in the FL.

This paper aims to analyze the impact of these didactic resources from a teacher's perspective and to explore views on the future use of AVT in FL teaching. To this end, 56 teachers from 15 countries across different levels and institutions took part in this study. They taught nine different FLs, principally English and Spanish.

LITERATURE REVIEW

AVT: Definition and Language Combinations

Translating has been defined as “[...] rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the authors intended the text” (Newmark, 1988, p. 5). Although it is as ancient as the first writing, the term *translation studies* was first used in the 1970s (Holmes, 1972). Since the emergence of translation studies as a discipline, various classifications have been made, such as legal, commercial, literary, medical, technical, and economic, depending on the nature of the translated texts. In this paper, attention is given to audiovisual translation (AVT), accepting that it “[...] involves all the linguistic translations and transfers made for the production and postproduction of any multimedia product” (Talaván, Avila-Cabrera, & Costal, 2016, p. 19) [own translation].

Specific traits of AVT when compared to other typologies include multiple channels (aural and visual), different types of signals (moving images, fixed images, texts, dialog, narration, music, noise), and its own set of conventions between the translated product and the spectator, which means that the translated version can be perceived as an original product (Mayoral, 2002). In this framework, AVT may use different language combinations:

Intralingual, where only one language is involved. AVT is executed from FL to FL. This is used for language-learning purposes, karaoke subtitles, notices, and announcements (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007).

Interlingual, where two languages take part. AVT consists of translating from FL to first language (L1) (direct) or L1 to FL (reversed) (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007). The interlingual combination is the most widespread and the best known by the general public.

Multilingual, which includes more than two languages. There is a multilingual option when a third language is involved. Some countries, such as Israel, Finland, and some parts of Belgium, add two languages in the subtitles to the original audio of a film (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998).

AVT: Typologies

New audience needs have progressively led to new typologies of AVT. These can be grouped into two general areas: subtitling and revoicing, which focus on writing and speaking skills, respectively. The following table presents a classification according to the previous distinction (Díaz Cintas, 2003; Chaume, 2012).

Table 1
Types of AVT

<i>Subtitling</i>	<i>Revoicing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intertitling • Standard subtitling • Surtitling • Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing • Respeaking-based subtitling • Fansubbing • 3D subtitling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dubbing • Voice-over • Free commentary • Narration • Audio description • Simultaneous and consecutive interpreting • Others: karaoke, audio-subtitling, fandubbing

In its broadest sense, subtitling is a linguistic practice consisting of adding written captions to a motion picture.

Intertitles constitute the origin of subtitles and can be defined as a piece of filmed, printed text that appears between scenes to make the film that lacks

sound clearer to an audience (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007).

Standard subtitles consist of written text of the actors' dialog, in addition to discursive elements that are part of the images or the soundtrack; usually, subtitles are positioned at the bottom of the screen (Díaz Cintas, 2001). They include the main information, but the number of words is considerably reduced in comparison to the verbal text, because the human eye can only read and process so much information within the time available.

Surtitles, also known as supertitles in the U.S. and supratitles by other scholars (Gambier, 1994), are “the translation of words being sung” (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 25).

Subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) are subtitles specifically for people who have complete, mild, or moderate hearing loss. They include all the necessary information when there is no auditory channel, such as information about music, sound effects, and intonation (Gottlieb, 1997).

Respeaking-based subtitling is live subtitling that is done using specialized speech-recognition software (Lambourne, 2006). The professional repeats what they hear into a device called a “respeaker,” which automatically converts verbal speech into subtitles. Ultimately, the professional makes changes to the automated captions, which are not 100% synchronized (Romero-Fresco, 2011).

Fansubs are subtitles produced by amateurs or fans of specific TV programs, feature films, and series who translate the episodes into their language to make them accessible for everyone online, sometimes even before the product reaches the FL country (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007). Recently, 3D film productions have opened a new area of research for 3D subtitles. Technologically speaking, standard subtitles seem to be insufficient to fulfill the requirements that these films present. They “require new plots, new shooting approaches, new conventions and new workflows that will profoundly change the industry” (Kozoulyayev, n.d.). The future will provide more information in this regard.

Revoicing is a wide and flexible term for adding voice to a film, making it more understandable and accessible for a specific audience.

Dubbing consists of replacing the original soundtrack with another voice, imitating as accurately as possible “the timing, phrasing, and lip movement of the original dialogue” (Luyken, Herbst, Langham-Brown, Reid, & Spinhof, 1991, p. 311).

Voice-over, also known as single-voice translation, does not eliminate the original soundtrack (Schwarz, 2011). The original plays in the background at a reduced volume. The synchronization between the image and the sound is different from that of dubbing, with “a slight delay in the translation” (Chaume, 2004, p. 21).

Narration is another variation consisting of verbal speech that faithfully summarizes the original content and “its delivery is timed so that there is no clash with the visual syntax of the program” (Pérez-González, 2009, p. 16).

Free commentary adds voice in such a way that the speaker is free to comment on what the viewer can see, often humorously (Chaume, 2012).

Audio description (AD) is more recent and could be defined as a literary art that provides a verbal version of the visual content, narrating verbal and nonverbal scenes; it is designed for people with full or partial visual impairment (Snyder, 2005).

Simultaneous and consecutive interpreting take place during live events (Tommola & Hynna, 1990). While simultaneous interpreting happens at almost the same time as the original speech, consecutive interpreting is delivered after the original speech.

Karaoke is generally known as a form of entertainment in which one or more people sing a song with the help of subtitles and original backing tracks.

Audio-subtitling consists of giving voice to existing subtitles. It is used to give the visually impaired population access to AV products that are subtitled but not dubbed (Braun & Orero, 2010).

Nowadays, as a result of technological developments, ordinary users are able to dub at home. Like *fansubbing*, *fandubbing* consists of domestic dubbings, often made for film trailers that have not yet reached the fans’ country (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007).

In the context of FL education, the typologies and language combinations may be used to enhance various FL skills (listening and reading comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary, amongst others). For example, *interlingual subtitling* can be used to enhance listening comprehension (Talaván, 2013) or for the purposes of intercultural language education (Borghetti & Lertola, 2014); *intra-lingual dubbing* can be used to improve fluency and pronunciation (Sánchez-Requena, 2016); and *audio description* can be employed to improve lexical and phraseological competence (Ibáñez & Vermeulen, 2013).

AVT in the FL Classroom: Beyond Controversy

Several scholars have opposed the inclusion of translation in the FL classroom because of the use of decontextualized sentences and memorization of long lists of vocabulary, encouraged by the practice of a grammar-translation method (Lado, 1957; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). The main argument was based on the belief that using native language could lead to syntactical errors and that focusing on learning grammatical structures could slow down the development of communicative skills. However, evidence shows that syntactical errors made by language learners are not necessarily caused by the interference of their first language (L1) (Schjoldager, 2004). FL students will inevitably use their L1, as this is “a naturally occurring phenomenon in all foreign language learners” (Leonardi, 2010, p. 26). Thus, translation has been used as an important

communicative language-learning tool for the last three decades (Danan, 2010). Currently, it is widely accepted and used from a communicative perspective by language teachers, scholars, and students, and FL learners “consistently rate translation as one of the most effective means of language learning” (Carreres, 2014, p. 128). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has also endorsed this idea, distinguishing language activities in terms of production (oral and written), reception (aural, visual, and *audiovisual*), interaction (spoken and written), and mediation or translation (oral and written) (Council of Europe, 2001). This is a variation of the traditional four-skill model (listening, reading, speaking, and writing). The CEFR introduces a new reception skill: audiovisual, in which the learner receives simultaneous information via two senses (both aural and visual); for example, “following a text as it is read aloud; watching TV, video or a film with subtitles; using new technologies (multimedia, CD-ROM, etc.)” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 71). Hence, translation can be considered an essential communicative skill to be developed in FL study.

The inclusion of AVT in the FL classroom is linked with the use of screen devices, such as laptops, tablets, and mobile phones, which have become indispensable for some. In FL teaching, traditional blackboards are giving way to computers and interactive boards (Leask & Pachler, 2014). Technological progress has increased scholars’ desire to further investigate the educational applications of ICT. Existing postures in this field are widely varied, from those who see technology as a must in the classroom to those still skeptical of its real contribution to FL lessons. For instance, Salaberry (2001) questions the level of effectiveness of ICT for pedagogical purposes, arguing that technological sophistication is not necessarily related to an improvement in the material created. In addition, Salaberry states that there is no specific explanation of how to integrate technology into the curriculum in a satisfactory way. However, in the last decade new researchers have attempted to fill the gaps in this area, showing the advantages of ICT in the classroom (Terhune, 2015; Peterson, 2016). As Witte, Harden, and Ramos de Oliveira (2009) suggest, “new technologies, coupled with flexible and innovative teaching methodologies and didactics, offer very motivating ways of learning through translation exercises (in the widest sense)” (p. 5).

This paper considers that translation and technology, when used correctly, can complement traditional teaching methods and increase the variety of FL learning options. In this regard, the use of technology by actively applying AVT techniques has become a recurrent pedagogic combination amongst language teachers (Cook, 2010; Danan, 2010).

Recent Studies

Nowadays, computer users rely on the numerous free tools and software available on the Internet that allow them to access, download, and edit video clips; for example, a video can be shortened or subtitles and sound can be

added. This has led to an increasing body of research in audiovisual translation (AVT) and language learning over the past decade. The various techniques traditionally used in AVT, such as standard subtitling, subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH), dubbing, voice-over, and audio description (AD), are taking on new roles outside their traditional industry.

With regard to subtitling, several authors (Williams & Thorne, 2000; Hadzilacos, Papadakis, & Sokoli, 2004; Sokoli, 2006; Incalcaterra McLoughlin, 2009; Díaz Cintas, 2012; Talaván, 2013; Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2014; Lertola, 2015) have encouraged teachers to include active subtitling as a teaching and learning resource in the language curriculum, including teacher-training experiences (López Cirugeda & Sánchez Ruíz, 2013; Fernández Costales, 2014). For instance, interlingual subtitling has been used not only to improve a particular traditional language skill, such as listening comprehension (Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2014a), but also to promote intercultural language education (Borghetti & Lertola, 2014), collaborative learning amongst distance-learning students (Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2014b) and vocabulary acquisition (Lertola, 2012). SDH is also used; for example, the SubLITE project applied SDH to develop various linguistic skills, with an emphasis on vocabulary acquisition and the use of specific adjectives (Talaván & Costal, 2016).

The use of revoicing in FL has been researched in the context of different typologies. For example, intralingual dubbing has been used to enhance speaking skills, such as speed, intonation and pronunciation (Chiu, 2012; Navarrete, 2013; Sánchez-Requena, 2016). In other projects, students audio-described FL clips to promote speaking skills (Ibáñez & Vermeulen, 2015; Talaván & Lertola, 2016), vocabulary acquisition (Martínez Martínez, 2012; Ibáñez & Vermeulen, 2013), and creative writing (Clouet, 2005). Finally, some studies focus on a combination of subtitling and revoicing activities (Porteiro, 2013; Talaván, Rodríguez-Arancón, & Martín-Monje, 2015). In this regard, the platform ClipFlair facilitates the task of captioning and revoicing in the FL classroom for teachers and students (Baños & Sokoli, 2015; Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2015).

A Few Remarks

The number of publications showing the possibilities of AVT in the FL classroom has increased in the last decade, as evidenced in the previous section. Although the information here has not focused on the results obtained, it seems increasingly common that these practices veer from the more traditional, teacher-centered approach and offer students the opportunity to adopt an active role in the language classroom and their learning experience (Talaván, 2013). Following the previous author, Baños and Sokoli (2015) also state that:

It introduces variety and creates an interactive and entertaining learning environment, thus increasing students' motivation; it

provides exposure to non-verbal cultural elements and presents authentic linguistic and cultural aspects of communication in context; it is extremely flexible and can be adapted according to the needs of students and tutors; it promotes transferrable skills; and students can be easily encouraged to use this type of material when learning a language independently (p. 204).

This quotation summarizes the general beliefs of those working with AVT in the FL classroom, stating that using AVT has a positive influence on FL learning. Nonetheless, most of the studies cited used a qualitative methodology with a relatively small number of participants. In order to encourage further research with larger numbers of participants, the authors of this paper recognize the importance of gathering the experience of language teachers who have designed and implemented AVT activities or projects in their lessons. The entire teaching and learning community could benefit from these experiences.

In addition, Incalcaterra McLoughlin and Lertola (2014) point out that the use of AVT brings more positive aspects to the language classroom than traditional translation does. For example: “[it] can offer a stimulating addition to more traditional monosemiotic translation tasks, while at the same time facilitating mnemonic retention, helping to raise awareness of cultural and intercultural issues and pragmatic aspects of communication, increasing motivation and enhancing the overall learning experience” (p. 70).

Many scholars have discussed additional relevant benefits of integrating AV material into the language classroom. For example, Danan (2010), one of the first authors to research the possible implications of AVT applied to language learning, posits that students will eventually experience “enhanced vocabulary acquisition, register awareness, emphasis on concision, delivery practice, and mastery of paralinguistic elements” (Danan, 2010, p. 441).

Nevertheless, language teachers still need to more regularly incorporate these types of learning activities into teaching, as both teachers and students need to become familiar with the new approach. Furthermore, the use of AV materials requires an increased level of preparation on the teacher’s side: for example, sourcing the material, learning how to use the technology, and learning the new terminology and uses for the different AVT typologies (see Table 1). Today, an abundance of AV texts is available on the Internet and, as is the case with traditional text-based and listening activities, the teacher must carefully select the materials to ensure that they are appropriate for the learner’s level of linguistic competence and are relevant (Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2014).

However, this preparation seems to be most complex at the beginning: the main issues arise because training on the use of specific software and downloading and uploading video clips is essential. Once these processes have been undertaken and learnt, the activities are relatively easy to conduct. Students need time to become familiar with the software and the new learning approach, so we have suggested implementing this type of activity as a regular task in the

language classroom, because “maximum benefits... [are] derived from a continuative and consistent use... rather than from its addition as a one-off language activity” (Incalcaterra McLoughlin & Lertola, 2014, p. 74). For similar reasons, Talaván (2006) supports the previous proposal, adding that: “The most appropriate time for such an exercise is probably toward the end of the session, since the students’ foreign language mental schemata is already active and concentrated in the subject under study. Hence, they can absorb new information more easily” (pp. 48–49). It has also been suggested that the more often these types of activities are used in class, the more familiar both teacher and students will become with this dynamic and, therefore, more efficient.

METHODOLOGY

The present research is a pilot study based on empirical, primary, and mixed-methods research. The main objective is to collect a variety of teachers’ experiences of using AVT resources in FL lessons. The focus is on the advantages and the constraints encountered, together with teachers’ beliefs on the future of this field. The literature review has evidenced the growing body of studies in recent years that recognize the impact of including AVT in the FL classroom. Most of the studies have focused on the learner’s perspective, paying little attention to teachers’ viewpoints. Hence, there is a need to undertake this research to discover how useful and valuable this tool is for teachers. It is believed that the results obtained in this study will help to improve future practices in the field.

Data-collection Tool

A questionnaire distributed online to professionals in the field was used to gather information. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first included questions about the participants, such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, nationality, and the country in which they teach. The second asked about the context of their teaching, such as the educational context, the FL taught, the students’ level of proficiency, the AVT typology used in class, the learning area boosted, the language combination used, how often AVT is used, the format of the teaching (face to face or online), and whether students do most of the AVT work during or outside class. The third section gathered information about teachers’ experiences in using AVT, with open-ended questions focusing on positive and negative aspects as well as future perspectives.

Google Forms was used to create the questionnaire, which could then be accessed online. The first and the second parts of the questionnaire offer numerical results presented in the form of charts in the following paragraphs. The third part is qualitative. NVivo was the software chosen to analyze this part of the data. It allows thorough analysis by creating nodes between paragraphs and analyzing the frequency of words, among other things.

Sample

The sample in this study consists of 56 participants from different nationalities who work in different countries and use a variety of AVT techniques in the language classroom. The sample includes 45 females and 11 males. The age range is varied: 19.6% are between 20 and 29 years old; 23.3% between 30 and 39; 39.3% between 40 and 49; and 17.9% between 50 and 59. The largest group (28.6%) has been teaching languages between 11 and 15 years and 23.2% have been doing so between 16 and 20 years, giving evidence that ICT resources are not necessarily used more by younger teachers. The teachers in the sample work in many countries, including Belgium, Germany, Greece, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, and the USA.

RESULTS

Results for this mixed-method study were obtained through a questionnaire, as explained in the Methodology section. It must be emphasized that the participants had the option to provide more than one answer to each of the questions; therefore, the sum of the percentages in each graph is sometimes higher than 100%. Responses to the first section of the questionnaire provided information about the context that has already been revealed in the previous section. The results of the second section of the questionnaire are provided in Figure 1.

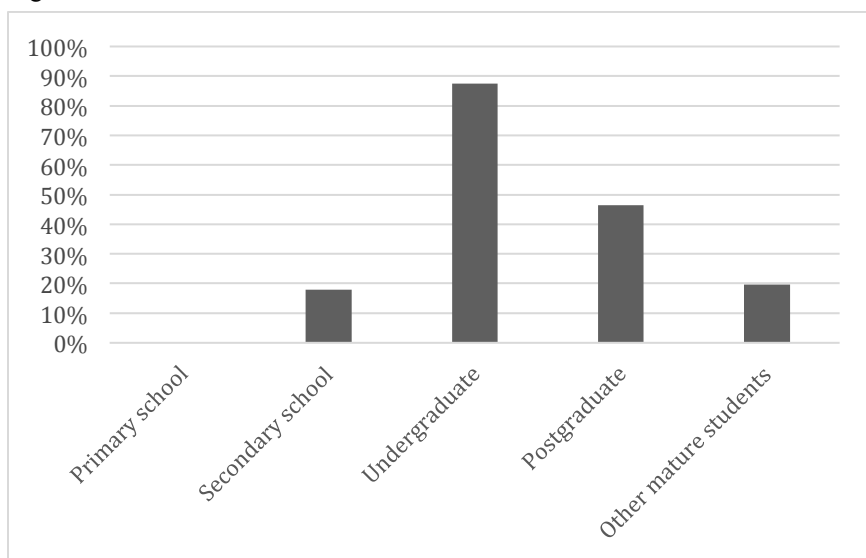


Figure 1
Educational Context in Which Participants Work

Most of the participants work with students over the age of 18. Figure 1 shows that most of the participants teach at the university level: 87.5% teach undergraduates, 46.4% teach postgraduates, and 19.6% teach other adult students who are over the age of 25. Less than 17.9% teach at the secondary-education level and none of the participants work in primary schools.

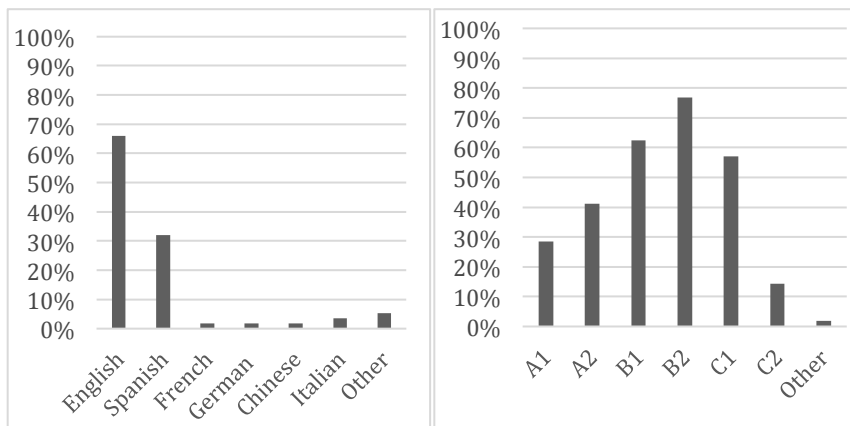


Figure 2
Foreign Languages Taught and Students' Command of Languages

Most of the participants teach English as a FL (66.1%), followed by Spanish (32.1%). In addition, two participants teach Italian, one teaches French, one teaches German, one teaches Chinese, and three teach a language other than those mentioned above. As shown in Figure 2, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) contains six levels of language proficiency: A1 and A2 (beginners), B1 and B2 (intermediate), and C1 and C2 (advanced) (Council of Europe, 2001). More than half of the students have an intermediate-advanced level: 62.5% for B1, 76.8% for B2, and 57.1% for C1. However, it is also important to highlight that many beginning students use AVT modalities: 28.6% for A1 and 41.1% for A2. This is relevant because there is a general belief that AVT cannot be used to teach the lower levels of a language. Students with level C2 are a minority group; this result is not surprising, bearing in mind that there are fewer courses available for this level.

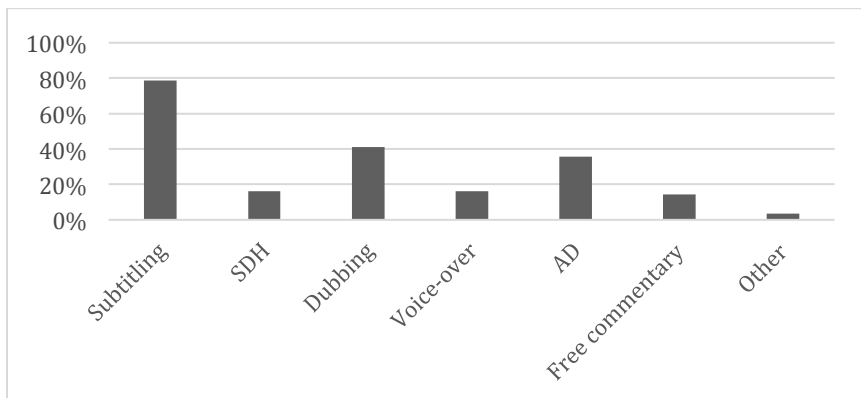


Figure 3
Most Used AVT Typologies in the Language Classroom

The main typology employed by the users is standard subtitling (78.6%), followed by dubbing (41.1%) and AD (35.7%). SDH and voice-over are used equally amongst the participants (16.1%), closely followed by free commentary (14.3%). Finally, two participants use a typology other than those noted above.

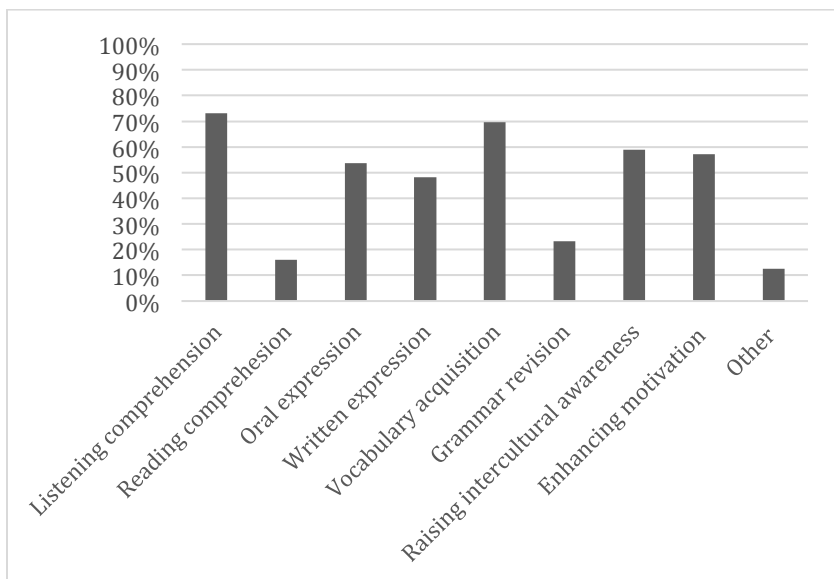


Figure 4
Areas Enhanced by AVT Typologies

The main focus of these sessions seems to be listening comprehension (73.2%), followed by vocabulary acquisition (69.6%), raising intercultural awareness (58.9%), enhancing motivation (57.1%), oral expression (53.6%), and written expression (48.2%). To a lesser extent, participants also aim to develop grammar revision (23.2%), reading comprehension (16.1%), and other areas (12.5%). It is important to highlight that although the interest might be focused on one learning area, AVT resources promote different skills simultaneously, intentionally and unintentionally.

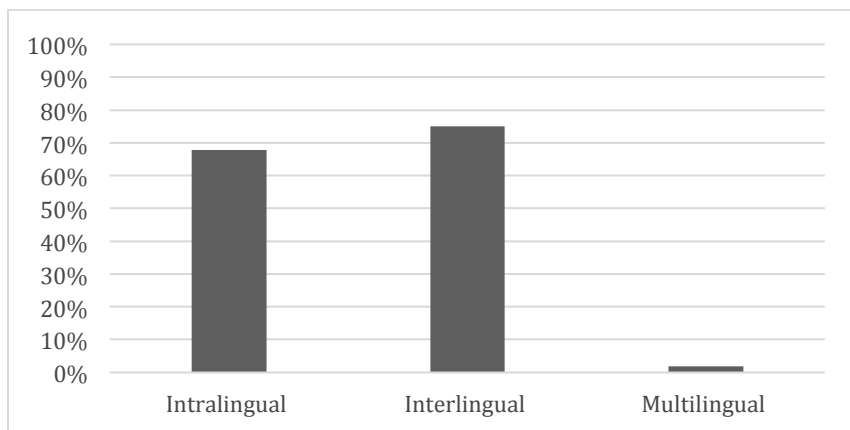


Figure 5
Most Used Language Combinations

Regarding language combinations, it may be surprising that teachers work not only interlingually (75%) but also intralingually (67.9%) and that the percentages for each are similar. Only one participant uses a multilingual combination and, therefore, combines at least three languages at once.

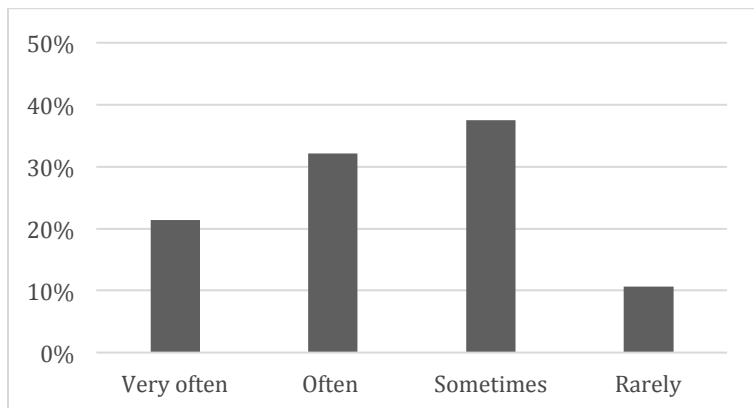


Figure 6
Frequency of Use of AVT Resources

Most teachers surveyed said they use AVT in their lessons “sometimes” (37.5%) or “often” (32.1%), with “rarely” with the lowest percentage (10.7%). A good percentage (21.4%) said “very often”, which implies that some participants (12 out of 56) use AVT as part of a module or subject itself.

Table 2
Type and Place of Learning

<i>Type of learning</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Online	12.5%
Classroom-based	87.5%
Total	100%
<i>Where AVT is used</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Outside the classroom (collaborative online work)	29.6%
Mainly in the classroom	81.5%
Total	111.1%

In relation to the type of learning, 87.5% of the participants teach face-to-face lessons while 12.5% teach online. Regarding where AVT typologies are used, 81.5% of participants use AVT typologies in the classroom and 29.6% employ them as a collaborative online tool outside the classroom. As the participants were allowed to choose more than one option, the total percentage is higher than 100%.

Positive Aspects

The responses in this section highlight the positive aspects of using AVT techniques from the teacher's point of view. The five most cited positive elements are motivation, fun, stronger bonds, reward, and IT knowledge. The two most commonly used words are (repeated in most answers) "motivation" and "fun." AVT activities seem to be motivating, stimulating, and engaging, both for the teachers preparing the sessions and for the students who are involved and attentive while completing the proposed activities. Teachers enjoy monitoring students and seeing them become absorbed in the task. This further motivates the teachers, whose teaching practice is continuously innovative. This also motivates the students, who appreciate the variety of learning methods. For instance, one participant states: "I personally enjoy it and I find it motivating and stimulating. It provides the chance to touch on more interdisciplinary topics [...]."

The second most used word is "fun"; teachers found students enjoying the learning activities and engaging actively in manipulating videos. In addition, the teacher has fun selecting the material. The AVT activities are student-centered for students to work in pairs or groups—teamwork and collaborative skills are useful for student future working life. Likewise, the bond between teacher and student and among students is strengthened. For instance, one comment reads: "during translation activities I can engage one-to-one with students." Teachers found using AVT expands their knowledge of ICT and helps with their professional development. Adapting and integrating various AVT activities and exercises also gives students a taste of translation as a professional practice. One aspect that may differentiate AVT from other traditional activities is that it results in a final product that can be presented to the entire class: the teacher and students can see the progress they have made. This makes everyone feel rewarded. All of these perceptions are consolidated by teachers' reports of positive feedback from students during the sessions.

The material itself brings students closer to real-life language situations. The nature of the clips provides a double input—visual and aural—together with cultural elements (which can be integrated into the sessions), normal language speed, and awareness of vocabulary and grammatical structures. The clips also expose students to various accents and dialogs. Once the material is prepared, it can be used repeatedly. The material allows students to practice a variety of skills: pronunciation-intonation, vocabulary acquisition, written expression, and listening comprehension, amongst others. The material gives students space to be creative. Teachers mention that it is possible to include material that is more difficult, because the combination of visual and aural input gives learners additional support. The activities seem to put less pressure on students, because they work on-screen more than in front of the entire class. This is a positive step that may reinforce students' confidence before they face their peers in an oral interaction, for instance. Some participants commented that after using AVT activities, their students gave better speaking

and writing performances.

All things considered, AVT seems to complement other classroom learning approaches and enhance various skills at the same time. Positive feedback from students reported by teachers evidences that AVT is fun and motivating, makes use of authentic materials, provides a visual aid, enhances cultural awareness, introduces students to translation, promotes teamwork, helps create closer relationships among students, and promotes communicative skills, independence, and engagement.

Negative Aspects

The participants noted some constraints in using AVT in FL teaching and learning. There is a universal feeling that teachers spend considerable time choosing material and preparing sessions, including sorting out the computer rooms. They feel that the preparation would be less time-consuming if copyright regulations were more flexible for sharing and publishing materials for colleagues to use. Among the aspects that involve time-consuming preparation, participants mentioned the difficulty of finding the right length of video at the right level, creating supplementary activities in a crowded syllabus, and finding appropriate material that links to the course. For example, one participant states: “It is time consuming [...]; [the] software may not always function as desired; copyright issues can be a concern [...]; students’ digital proficiency may vary greatly, this must be taken into account when designing the lesson.”

In fact, participants said that AVT activities rely too much on ICT and, in many cases, on the specialist IT team. Some respondents have experienced technological failures in the classroom, such as images that freeze or trouble with the format of the videos or subtitles. They felt that the success of the lesson sometimes relies on the performance of the software or technology. Teachers using AVT activities need to be well trained and feel confident about the benefits of using these resources before presenting the activities to students. Although careful planning and support materials are required to ensure that students understand the tasks, the same materials and tasks can be reused with varying groups and academic years.

Because AVT projects are not always rewarding for teachers based on their personal experience, they are sometimes frustrated. In many courses, AVT activities are not part of an assessment and, in general, evaluation guidelines are lacking. Even though most participants mentioned an increase in motivation as one of the advantages of using AVT in the FL classroom, some feel that students are not learning, especially because they observe a lack of engagement if the task is not assessed. In addition, it is difficult to get all the members of a group to submit the work on time.

Some negative aspects mentioned seem to be related to fear of the unknown rather than being real problems with using AVT in the classroom. These include finding it difficult to understand what technology can offer, the possibility of students being distracted (especially with a large class), other

teachers complaining about noise, students becoming confused about the tasks, making extra work for students at home, students having to make an extra effort to gain technological skills, not enough grammar being taught, students not feeling comfortable with recording themselves, and difficulties for lower-level students.

Future Perspectives

This section focuses on participants' comments on how they see the field of AVT in FL teaching and learning developing. Before going into details, this participant summarizes key ideas:

I think first of all we have hard work while convince many language colleagues of translation benefits. Many teachers turn down translation as a method because they only think about method Grammar-Translation. AV materials are a helpful resource which is essential to break down these resistances. Only when didactic "establishment" have accepted translation as a methodological resource, will AVT be able to be part of a curriculum.

Overall, 55% of the teachers said that AVT could be integrated seamlessly into the curriculum, whereas 10% believed it would be difficult due to the rigidity of current educational programs; in this case, they propose short-term courses or occasional activities in the classroom. With regard to the future possibilities that AVT offers, most participants referred to the potential to integrate AVT activities into the curriculum, face-to-face and/or online. The aim could be to enhance motivation, to teach multiple language skills at the same time, and to raise intercultural awareness. Of the teachers who already use AVT on a regular basis, some are paying more attention to the accessibility typologies (SDH and AD). In addition, the participants also consider that AVT provides students with ICT skills and increases their digital literacy. AVT could be used in primary, secondary, and higher education. In this way, rather than being a novelty, AVT projects would be integrated into the syllabus. Teacher training should be encouraged in order to make AVT visible and easy to apply.

However, the results show that there is no agreement on how to select or evaluate AVT material. It was suggested that more work should be undertaken in this regard, especially in relation to how assessments should be done and what should be assessed if these activities are to be included in the curriculum. Most participants stated that to include AVT in language teaching programs, it is necessary to first establish final assessment tasks so that students see more relevance in these projects.

Finally, teachers also commented on the gaps that need to be filled in the near future. The main issue is the need to train teachers to run these types of activities in class. Some of the participants mentioned the need to make colleagues aware of the benefits of using translation for language learning, because there is still a tendency to reject it. Resources linked to the exam board's content are also needed. Some suggested that even though AVT is gaining more importance in FL teaching and learning, more empirical research is needed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results show a variety of opinions on the use of AVT in FL teaching and learning. Although not all participants agree on each element discussed, there are some patterns. There is an agreement about the potential to use AVT techniques in the FL language classroom at all levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Teachers who have been using these techniques have had good experiences, considering AVT to be a motivating and engaging tool for the students and themselves. This finding is similar to that of other studies in this field previously mentioned in this article: students seem to have fun while learning; it creates stronger student-teacher and student-student bonds. Teachers find AVT activities and projects rewarding because there is a final product where progress and results can be observed and showcased to the class. In addition, AVT motivates teachers to keep up to date with technological progress and improves students' IT knowledge and group-working skills.

However, there is still some skepticism about the real possibilities to expand AVT use among teachers not in favor of the use of ICT in the language classroom. This could be due to inadequate knowledge about AVT resources. Currently, there are some courses that are designed specifically to train teachers in using AVT resources. Beyond this, further questions arise: is it only teachers with a background in translation who have an interest in this field? Should there be such a distinction between linguists and translators? Efforts still need to be made to accept translation as a methodological resource. There is evidence that AVT techniques can be used for not only language learning but also translation training. The authors would note that although it is desirable to have knowledge of linguistics, translation, and ICT, the use of AVT in FL teaching is an opportunity for any educator interested in learning about a new resource to use with their students. Nonetheless, further research should be undertaken to provide an objective justification of the previous statement.

Regarding the limitations, the present study could be strengthened by using a larger sample and by further investigating the characteristics of the participants involved. Aspects such as teachers' freedom to include AVT techniques in the course, their reasons to choose a specific AVT typology, and the personal situations of the participants could possibly complement the current conclusion. If AVT is to be used in the language classroom, other questions need to be addressed: What are the best methodologies for using AVT in the

language classroom? Is there a need to regulate how-to guides, lesson plans, and handouts? Does the lack of learner engagement have to do with whether the activities are compulsory and how relevant they are to the curriculum? Should these activities be part of the final assessment? If so, how should the assessment be administered, and what should be assessed? Finding answers to these questions marks a good start for a further understanding and improvement of AVT in FL teaching and learning; these questions may also be addressed in teacher training programs and a follow-up of those teachers' experience.

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Free Voluntary Reading: A Neglected Strategy for Language Acquisition

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In an exploration of methods to advance language acquisition without the inconvenience of participating in an immersion option, the authors discovered research on Free Voluntary Reading (FVR). FVR has made a recent resurgence, especially in the context of language acquisition. Krashen (2004) proposes FVR as the answer to building language proficiency in a fun and natural way. Krashen's (2004, 2011) publications conclude that students and language learners make tremendous gains in literacy and language acquisition from practicing FVR. Therefore, FVR is an excellent method for language learners who wish to advance their foreign language proficiency beyond existing levels. Also discussed are aspects of adolescent and adult cognitive functions as they relate to language acquisition and reading, along with effective strategies for practice that make FVR a good option for adult language learners.

Keywords: *Free voluntary reading, extensive reading, language acquisition, language immersion, foreign language*

INTRODUCTION

In the quest to discover the most effective means to advance one's proficiency level in a foreign language, it becomes evident that studies on methods to support language acquisition are numerous, among which a highly recommended strategy for increasing second language proficiency is immersion, either through dual language programs or visits to a foreign country (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991; Bialystok, 2001; Genesee, 1987; Met & Lorenz, 1997). However, an immersion setting may not be a realistic option for some language learners. Additionally, depending on one's goals, immersion alone may not be sufficient to build academic proficiency (Krashen, 2004). In order to build capability to a General Professional Proficiency level based on the Interagency

Language Roundtable (ILR) scale, a more targeted strategy may be required.¹ The authors found potential for advancing foreign language proficiency through Free Voluntary Reading (FVR).

The purpose of this article is to introduce FVR as an effective means of building foreign language proficiency without the requirement of immersion. The article introduces two approaches to immersion and their unlikely feasibility for many adult language learners; revisits the FVR research on school-age children and adults in the United States put forth by Cho and Krashen (1994, 1995a, 1995b) and Krashen (2011); expands upon these established works by focusing on the benefits of FVR on adolescent and adult language learners; and provides considerations for effective and efficient implementation. The review of the history of FVR and factors impacting adult language learners provides insight into the rationale and methods for acquiring language through reading. Additionally, required time for foreign language studies, as discussed by Bae and Kim (2008) and the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Council (DLIFLC & Presidio of Monterey, 2017), is incorporated into the discussion of building language through reading.

IMMERSION OVERVIEW

The research on effective language acquisition recommends two forms of immersion—one form available in the United States (U.S.) is *two-way dual language* programs in schools; the other form requires that learners visit or live in a foreign country. The two-way dual language method is a type of bilingual education program originally developed for students learning English. In two-way dual language immersion programs, native English speakers and speakers of another language are taught in the same classroom (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Harris, 2015; Lindholm-Leary, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2012). In the early grades, the majority of instruction occurs in a language other than English. Language instructional ratios shift over time until 50% of the academic day is taught in English and 50% in the other language. Spanish is the most common language offered in dual language programs in the U.S., but other dual language programs include Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Arabic, Russian, French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Haitian-Creole, Hebrew, Polish, and more (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Harris, 2015; Lindholm-Leary, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

According to dual language studies, both groups of learners develop academic proficiency in two languages (Collier & Thomas, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 2012). The minimum recommended period of participation in a dual language program is six years (Beeman & Urow, 2013; Collier & Thomas, 2004; Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Any amount of time short of the six-year period is less likely to result in the academic gains promised by dual language programs (Soltero, 2016; Thomas & Collier, 2012). As a result, many dual language programs begin in kindergarten and continue to 5th Grade or beyond. In the U.S, a school year lasts approximately 10 months. Kindergarten begins when students reach the age of 5 or 6. After kindergarten, students

advance a grade level each year, starting with 1st Grade. By 5th Grade, dual language participants have accumulated six years of classroom immersion experience.

Unfortunately, dual language program expansion in the U.S. has been relatively slow (Lindholm-Leary, 2013; McKay Wilson, 2011; Gross, 2016). The first documented dual language program, located in Miami, Florida, was established in 1962 (Lindholm-Leary, 2013). In 2000, the number of existing dual language programs nationwide was reported at 260 (McKay Wilson, 2011). By 2011, dual language programs rose to more than 2,000 (Gross, 2016), whereas there were more than 14,000 public school districts in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). It shows that dual language instruction was not a viable option for most U.S. adults when they were young.

Visiting or living in a foreign country is another form of immersion. In fact, there is a belief that immersion in another country is the best and, perhaps, the fastest way for adults to develop language proficiency (Dearman, 2010; Del Gaudio, 2014; Lewis, 2014). This type of immersion requires learners to spend three to six months or more in a foreign country. As learners are continually exposed to the country's native language during their waking hours, it is believed that they are forced to communicate in the language of the country or region, and thus, will learn the language quickly and naturally (Del Gaudio, 2014).

Immersion in another country may be an effective method for acquiring a language, but merely being in the presence of another language does not guarantee acquisition (Del Gaudio, 2014; Lewis, 2014). In addition, immersion focuses primarily on oral language acquisition (Del Gaudio, 2014). Listening and speaking skills are important components of language acquisition, but practicing these modalities to the exclusion of literacy skills limits one's ability to develop more sophisticated or academic language (Bae & Kim, 2008; Krashen, 2004).

An alternative method to increase language without the cost and inconvenience of an immersion is Free Voluntary Reading (FVR). The authors fully acknowledge that reading is not an equivalent replacement for experiences and exposure to culture and history in another country. Reading alone cannot replace the multidimensional learning and language growth associated with immersion experiences, but advancing language proficiency is possible through individual language growth.

THE UNIQUE POWER OF READING

Reading in a foreign language to develop language proficiency is not a new concept. Erard (2012) cites numerous cases in history of polyglots who advanced their language skills through reading. One exemplar is Kató Lomb, a Hungarian hyperpolygot who spoke more than 17 languages (Erard, 2012). Krashen had an opportunity to interview Lomb (Krashen & Kiss, 1996) and learned that Lomb was not only a passionate and dedicated language learner but

also a prolific reader. Krashen states that language acquisition happens when input is comprehensible. In other words, Lomb could make sense of what she read and build her language proficiency levels as she was exposed to unfamiliar words. Krashen observed that one of the most impressive aspects of Lomb's acquisition of multiple languages was that she had little to no interaction with native speakers of the languages (Krashen & Kiss, 1996). Lomb herself did not feel that she had any special talent or aptitude toward language learning. She practiced language through mind games and a great deal of reading. She also stated that grammar study was a waste of time. One learns grammar by acquiring language, rather than learning language by studying grammar (Krashen & Kiss, 1996).

Erard's (2012) search for the key path to successful multilingualism supports the impact of FVR on language acquisition. Reading is one of the most impactful activities upon language development (Asraf, & Ahmad, 2003; Dickinson, Griffith, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2012; Grabe & Stoller, 1996; Hayashi, 1999; Lampariello, 2014). Reading allows time to mentally interact with language in ways that are not possible with other modalities (Lampariello, 2014). In contrast to an immersion experience, readers can augment their language vocabulary through a comfortable, stress-free approach. Reading additionally exposes the reader to a wider range of less frequent vocabulary and usage than might be encountered through conversation alone (Hellman, 2011; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Schwarzer, 2014).

There is also evidence to suggest that reading practice does more than develop reading skills. A study conducted on subjects whose brains were scanned with Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) supports a theory that the activity of reading overlaps into the brain's speech areas. The ability to recognize print appears to occur, at least in part, in the same portion of the brain that compartmentalizes speech activity. The study was conducted on 21 adult native speakers of Spanish, English, Hebrew, and Chinese respectively, for a total of 84 participants. All participants were right-handed and determined to be in good health with normal neurological function. Even with contrasting writing systems, each language group demonstrated similar outcomes (Rueckl, et al., 2015). The conclusions of the study exemplify the complexity of the act of reading. The theory also brings credence to the connection between reading and its impact on the development of other language modalities.

Warwick and Mangubhai's (1983) quantitative study reports that FVR produces greater measurable gains in overall language acquisition than those from traditional methods. After eight months of FVR, the 380 subjects in the study outperformed the 234 control students who underwent traditional language instruction. In fact, the performance of the experimental students surpassed their peers' scores by twofold. After 20 months, accelerated gains were reported for the experimental group in four language domains: reading, writing, speaking and listening (Warwick & Mangubhai, 1983).

Reading also exposes the reader to language patterns consistently and repeatedly, a necessary component of language growth (Lampariello, 2014). Adults can make surprising gains in vocabulary and overall language proficiency if they commit to intensive and consistent FVR practice (Greenberg, Rodrigo, Berry, Brinck, & Joseph, 2006; Hellman, 2011; Schwarzer, 2014).

BACKGROUND ON FREE VOLUNTARY READING

Krashen (1995) introduced the method of FVR in the 1990s. He was one of the first professionals in the field to promote FVR and demonstrate its correlation to increased language acquisition. FVR made its initial appearance as reading for pleasure and was introduced within the context of school-based language immersion programs that were not exhibiting success (Krashen, 1995). Krashen (1995) stated that successful language acquisition, even in immersion programs, required significant amounts of pleasure reading in the target language. It was then that FVR was unveiled as a tool to develop language competence (Krashen, 1995).

Until the early 2000s, Krashen (1997, 2001) continued to cite the benefits of FVR in publications related to foreign and second language development. It was not until 2004 that Krashen (2004) provided more broad research on reading and literacy skills in his book, *The Power of Reading*, citing numerous studies that consistently supported the benefits of FVR for all students. Krashen (2004, 2011) argued that FVR is a powerful tool for the development of language in both first and second language learners.

The term FVR has been used interchangeably with other similar terms that emphasize vast amounts of reading, such as *extensive reading*, *sustained silent reading (SSR)*, *pleasure reading*, *independent reading*, and *Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R)* (Yamashita, 2015). However, Krashen (2004) distinguishes FVR from other types of independent reading approaches:

Free Voluntary Reading (henceforth FVR) means reading because you want to: no book reports, no questions at the end of the chapter. In FVR, you don't have to finish the book if you don't like it. FVR is the kind of reading most of us do obsessively all the time. (Krashen, 2004, p. 1)

Implementation of FVR

Effective implementation of FVR requires unrestricted reading for part of the school day (Krashen, 2004). Studies of FVR concluded that a correlation exists between FVR and building vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar performance, writing, spelling skills, and oral/aural language ability (Day & Hitosugi, 2004; Krashen, 2004, 2011, 2016; Mason, 2003; Shu, Anderson, & Zhang, 1995). Such benefits have been found consistently among native speakers and adolescent second and foreign language learners who function at

an ILR 1 or above in Reading (Day & Hitosugi, 2004; Krashen, 2004, 2011; Mason, 2003; Shu et al., 1995).²

Expansion of FVR

The empirical evidence in *The Power of Reading* resulted in FVR gaining traction. Teachers and librarians experimented with FVR in their classrooms and schools with promising results (Marson, 2005; Krashen & McQuillan, 2007).

Marson's Study

Sixth Grade teacher William Marson (2005) was inspired by Krashen's and others' research about the benefits of FVR. As a result, Marson (2005) implemented a "Reading for Fun" (RFF) activity in his daily elementary school schedule. Forty-five minutes a day were dedicated to RFF. Although there were no accountability requirements for reading time in his classroom, Marson allotted part of the RFF time—10 to 15 minutes—to "book talks" for students who wished to share their reading experiences.

Marson (2005) observed that students were so enthusiastic about the reading that they wanted to share their experience with classmates. According to Marson (2005), book talks were the greatest advertisement for books and reading. Both students and their parents reported increased reading time and enjoyment at home and at school because of Marson's RFF initiative. These conclusions were based on the responses to surveys completed by 23 parents of Marson's students. Seventy percent of the parents surveyed indicated their children were reading more at home than the previous year, whereas 91% claimed that their children enjoyed reading more.

Interviews and surveys of Marson's 32 students indicated the following results of the RFF program: 41% of the students found reading often or always enjoyable; 44% read at least once a day at home; 42% enjoyed book talks; and 36% expressed that a follow up writing assignment or activity made reading more fun. Of interest in this informal study is that 13 of the students came from homes where Portuguese was the primary language spoken (Marson, 2005).

FVR for Various Types of Readers

FVR was also cited for its effectiveness in late and reluctant readers (Krashen & McQuillan, 2007). FVR acts as an intervention for students lagging in reading skills. Providing access to lots of books and reading time is key. Krashen and McQuillan (2007) referenced 32 countries where reading instruction begins comparatively later than in the U.S., yet the later start does not negatively impact student's academic development. Each of the referenced countries values reading and provides an abundance of books in the home and at school.

Additionally, Krashen and McQuillan (2007) cited cases where FVR resulted in increased levels of academic literacy for previously reluctant readers. One case includes Fink's (1995) study in which 12 dyslexic readers were tracked. All the subjects learned to read at the age of 10 or later. Of the 12, nine went on to publish scholarly works, including one who became a Nobel laureate.

Krashen and McQuillan also cited Juel's (1994) study, which compared poor and good readers. The study focused on a cohort of 1st graders who were not provided intervention for their below-grade-level reading skills until 4th grade. Although implementation of FVR was a greatly delayed intervention attempt, students were still able to build reading to a 3.5 grade level as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills: Reading Comprehension Test (Juel, 1994).

Eventually, educational systems worldwide also gave FVR attention (Henri, Warning, & Angel, 2007; Okuma, 2010; Tiemensma, 2007). Other countries have struggled with literacy and language acquisition challenges similar to those in the United States. Some have implemented FVR and demonstrated promise in its utilization.

South Africa Study

South Africa struggles to build interest in reading within its school systems (Tiemensma, 2007). The nation formally referenced its illiteracy and functional illiteracy in the early 1980s, but attempts to rectify this issue did not begin until nearly a decade later (Olen, 1992). As a result, there remain high illiteracy and school dropout rates in South Africa. Even students who manage to complete school often graduate functionally illiterate (Tiemensma, 2007). To counteract this challenge, Machet and Olen (1996) conducted a study that included 139 students in the experimental group and 105 in the control group. All instruction was in English. South Africa recognizes 11 different official languages, so it was not unusual for instruction to occur in a language that was not the native or first language for either teachers or students (Machet & Olen, 1996). In the pre-treatment phase, the researcher administered a reading assessment specifically designed for students learning English (Machet & Olen, 1996). After eight months, students were re-assessed. The experimental group outperformed the control group on every standard assessed. In two areas, the number of experimental students meeting the standard was nearly 20% higher (Machet & Olen, 1996).

Studies of Japanese Students

Three studies conducted by Mason in Japan conclude that FVR gives equal or superior results to traditional language instruction (Mason & Krashen, 1997). The three separate studies focused on Japanese university students studying English as a foreign language. The first of Mason's (Mason & Krashen, 1997) studies was comprised of students who failed their first attempt at an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course. They completed cloze tests as

both pre- and post-treatment assessments.³ After a semester of FVR, the experimental students demonstrated larger measurable gains than those in the control group who succeeded in the EFL course. In fact, the experimental students effectively narrowed the English proficiency level gap between themselves and students in the control group. On the pre-test, the experimental group achieved a mean score of 22.55, whereas the control group achieved 29.70. On the post-test, the experimental group mean was 31.40, very close to the control group mean of 33.05. The experimental group experienced a mean gain of 8.90, but the control group only a 4.35 mean gain. Mason's two subsequent studies produced comparable results, leading to the conclusion that FVR was superior to direct language instruction (Mason & Krashen, 1997).

Sweet Valley Studies

Cho (Cho & Krashen, 1994, 1995a, 1995b) performed what came to be known as the "Sweet Valley Studies" with Korean women in their 30s as subjects. The women experienced little measurable English growth through EFL classes, despite having lived in the United States for several years. To find a more successful method for building English proficiency, Cho recommended that the subjects read a book series called *Sweet Valley High*, which many teenage girls in the United States found engaging (Cho & Krashen, 1994, 1995a, 1995b). Vocabulary growth was tracked by first asking students to underline words unknown to them as they read. At the end of the treatment period, the underlined words were compiled into lists personalized to each student. The selected word totals per participant ranged from 275 to 535. The participants were then asked to define, out of context, the words from their personalized lists. The percent correct in this method of assessment ranged from 56% to 80%. These results were achieved with no formal study or memorization of the vocabulary. Cho concluded that FVR had increased the subjects' vocabulary in English (Cho & Krashen, 1994).

Study of Iranian Students

A more recent study involving pre-university Iranian EFL students measured the impact of FVR on language acquisition, particularly writing in the second language (Salehi, Asgari & Amini, 2015). The study randomly selected 48 pre-university students, with half ($n=24$) assigned to the control group and half ($n=24$) to the experimental group. The control group was given instruction by a "traditional English teacher" under the supervision of the researcher, whereas English instruction to the experimental group utilized FVR. The findings demonstrated a strong correlation between FVR in English and improved writing skills in English. On the pre-assessment, the control group scored a mean of 12.71 and the experimental group 11.48, but the mean for the control group on the post-assessment was 13.92 and the experimental group 23.32 (Salehi et al., 2015).

Student Perspectives of FVR

Much of the previous discussion has emphasized the measurable impact of FVR on student reading skills and language development. It is worth noting how students who practice FVR assess their individual growth. Students prefer the activity of free reading to direct instruction, which results in improved attitudes towards reading (Krashen, 2004). Further, students self-report the feeling of reading better and having developed “a more mature writing style” as a result of FVR (Krashen, 2004, p.8). Self-assessment results demonstrate that students find the reading experience enjoyable (Krashen, 2004, 2011).

Dupuy (1997, 1998) conducted informal studies from which she reported the positive impact of FVR on students learning French. The first study involved 32 university students, 82% of whom reported that they did not read for pleasure in French. Dupuy (1997) dedicated a significant portion of the class time to reading in French and required minimal accountability. Students recorded what they read and voluntarily shared their reactions. At the end of the course, students self reported gains in their French proficiency and enjoyment of reading in French. Eighty-nine percent of the students expressed that the reading helped them improve their French, specifically their vocabulary and reading comprehension; 82% stated they would continue to read in French after the completion of the course; an impressive 94% stated that they would recommend the course to others (Dupuy, 1997).

Dupuy’s (1998) second informal study involved university students studying fourth-semester French. In this study, small groups of students selected the same book to read. Reading was followed by student-led discussions. Ninety-seven percent of the students stated that reading and discussing texts in French made reading more enjoyable. Additionally, students self reported improved comprehension (Dupuy, 1998). Individual growth perspectives are important for those who contemplate FVR as an engaging and effective strategy for increasing language proficiency.

FVR Challengers

Although FVR studies consistently reflect positive benefits, the method still faces opponents. In two documented studies, poorly implemented Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) programs were incorrectly identified with FVR (Herbert, 1987; Minton, 1980). Students and teachers did not positively perceive SSR in these cases (Herbert, 1987; Minton, 1980). SSR times were scheduled in a secondary-level school setting and performed building-wide at the same time daily. The SSR environment resulted in an awkward situation for students and teachers due to instructional and performance-based interruption. The SSR sessions required all teaching to stop so reading could be practiced. Performance-based courses, such as music, art, industrial arts, had to discontinue their activities until the SSR session was completed (Herbert, 1987; Minton,

1980). Such interruptions promoted negative teacher and student attitudes to reading due to an artificially imposed reading situation. Because the participants of the studies did not distinguish between SSR and FVR, the negative experience impacted the perception of FVR's enjoyment and effectiveness (Herbert, 1987; Minton, 1980).

Later, Cobb (2007) challenged the research on FVR. Cobb did not believe that FVR provided sufficient exposure to vocabulary for students to achieve second language (L2) reading fluency, the equivalent of ILR 2+ (in Reading). According to Cobb (2007), acquisition of new vocabulary requires a minimum of six to ten exposures. Cobb (2007) states that students do not read enough ILR 2+ level materials in the L2 to receive the minimum required exposures to new vocabulary. Students require a repertoire of 5,000 vocabulary words to read and comprehend with adult level fluency (Cobb, 2007). McQuillan and Krashen (2008) rejected Cobb's claim by stating that his conclusions were flawed. First, Cobb underestimated the extensiveness of students' reading. Second, Cobb's own hypothetical case results conflict with actual calculated outcomes. Even if students read a mere 20 minutes per day over the two-year period referenced in Cobb's hypothetical case, they would still be exposed to 1,460,000 words. This amount is eight times greater than the amount Cobb claims could be achieved and would easily lead to a 5,000-word reading vocabulary (McQuillan & Krashen, 2008).

Limitations to FVR Expansion

Having reviewed extensive research on the positive impact of FVR on language acquisition, the authors are surprised that FVR has not become more widespread. One likely impediment to FVR expansion is educators' beliefs about readers. Poor readers are taught reading skills in isolation. Despite lack of evidence citing any efficacy to this approach, these types of strategies are the first to which schools resort (Krashen, 2014). Krashen (2004) claims that schools would do better to provide more reading opportunities rather than less-effective drill-and-practice in isolation. Schools may also resist FVR based on fears that students may select books that are too easy for them. However, Bader, Veatch, and Eldridge (1987) conclude that students often select books that are more challenging than their teachers would have assigned to them. Pleasure reading should not be equated with easy reading (Bader, Veatch, & Eldridge, 1987; Southgate, Arnold, & Johnson, 1983).

Cost may be another factor for the limited expansion of FVR in school systems. In order to be successfully practiced, FVR requires large libraries of varied reading materials. The materials must be of high interest, age appropriate, culturally diverse, and varied in reading levels to provide offerings that meet the needs of a wide range of student abilities within a single classroom (Krashen, 2004). Providing such varied classroom libraries requires significant monetary investment. Uninformed school systems may not find the investment justifiable (Krashen, 2011).

Time requirements are another obstacle that may limit the adoption of FVR in schools (Krashen, 2004). From the authors' experiences, schools are under tremendous pressure to provide curriculum and instruction that is rigorous and aligned with standards. Modern school schedules and instructional hours are defined minute by minute. A school's language arts curriculum must embed time for independent quiet reading (Krashen, 2011); otherwise, teachers are hard-pressed to carve out the additional time. Machet and Olen (1996) make similar observations regarding assigned curriculum and its priority over FVR.

Beyond the School System

Research has demonstrated the positive impact of FVR within schools (Cho & Krashen, 1994, 1995a, 1995b; Dupuy 1997, 1998; Krashen, 2004, 2011; Mason, 1997; Salehi et al., 2015). Such research has led to modern language learners re-popularizing FVR (Yamashita, 2015). In fact, Okuma (2010) cites much of Krashen's work regarding FVR with the specific intent to revitalize its importance in language acquisition. Additionally, growing numbers of anecdotal claims praise the impact of FVR on language acquisition (Auslander, 2013; Barca, 2017; Heggem, n.d.; Lampariello, 2014; Fishwick, n.d.; Szynalski, n.d.). However, regardless of the research on its importance and the re-popularization of it, FVR does not receive the attention in school systems that one might expect. Nevertheless, the benefits seen from the practice of FVR in youth classrooms are also evidenced in language acquisition settings with adult learners (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015). There is sufficient compelling evidence that language learners of all ages benefit from FVR in the target language. Adolescents and adults, in particular, have enormous potential to benefit from FVR (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015).

ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS

There exist misconceptions about adults' inability to learn languages. Conclusions that young children possess a critical window for optimum language learning have been unfounded. In fact, provided comparable total exposure hours, adolescents and adults acquire second languages at a much faster rate than children (Ausubel, 1964; Marinova-Todd, Marshall, & Snow, 2000; Schleppegrell, 1987). An important impact on adult success in language learning is motivation (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000).

Schwarzer (2009) confirms that motivation plays a significant role in advancing language proficiency and reading levels in an adult foreign language classroom environment. Like younger readers, adults must be provided ample varieties and levels of texts that they find interesting, entertaining, and to which they can make connections to their lives. An adult FVR reading program offered as a significant component in a foreign language classroom is a powerful way to build new vocabulary and general language proficiency. Supplementing reading with meaningful activities, such as book talks, increases language attainment

(Greenberg et al., 2006; Hellman, 2011; Rueckl, 2015; Schwarzer 2009; Schleppegrell, 1987). Integrating time for book talks in an adult foreign language classroom has the added advantage of building oracy in the new language (Greenberg et al., 2006).

Adolescent and Adult Language Learners Advantages

Adolescent and adult brains function differently from young children's (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015). First, adolescent and adult language learners have considerably more advanced cognitive functions than young children do (Bialystok & Craik, 2010; Roberts & Kreuz, 2015; Schleppegrell, 1987). Adults demonstrate superior ability to control and focus their attention, preventing distractions in the thinking process. Adults are capable of filtering out a bombardment of multiple stimuli. Adults have greatly expanded memory capabilities in comparison to children and can more easily transition between different tasks (Bialystok & Craik, 2010; Schleppegrell, 1987). In addition, adults exhibit great flexibility in their ability to distinguish subtle nuances of pragmatic usage and corresponding meaning (Schleppegrell, 1987; Syrett & Musolino, 2015).

Furthermore, adolescents and adults tend to possess a solid foundation in the first or native language. Having acquired a previous language is a great advantage. Adolescents and adults possess significantly larger vocabularies than young children and are able to grasp abstract concepts (Ausubel, 1964; Schleppegrell, 1987). When adolescents, and particularly adults, acquire an additional language, they are less likely to be dually burdened with having to learn unknown concepts at the same time they are learning a new language system (Ausubel, 1964).

Adolescents and adults are better equipped to detect cognates, apply patterns in grammatical structures, and more quickly discern discreet irregularities in those patterns (Ausubel, 1964; Roberts & Kreuz, 2015; Schleppegrell, 1987). Depending on how linguistically close the foreign language is to the native language, adults may be able to transfer some aspects of their native language to the new language without explicit studying or instruction. By adolescence, learners are fully aware of multiple meaning words and phrases. They also understand that context plays a role in determining meaning and usage (Schleppegrell, 1987; Syrett & Musolino, 2015). It is logical to take advantage of the linguistic resources that adolescents and adults already possess when acquiring an additional language. The ability of the mature mind to make these connections is due to metacognitive skills, i.e., the ability to reflect upon learning (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015).

Metacognition is regularly practiced in adolescent and adult minds during the activity of reading (Strauss, 2015). This is also true when reading in a new language in which an individual has some basic proficiency (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015), the equivalent to ILR 1 or above in Reading. Unlike young children who are still acquiring their first language, literate adolescents and

adults have no reason to delay interaction with the written word. This makes even more sense in considering that most adults already learn much of their new content knowledge through reading. As such, it is illogical to deny adult brains the opportunity to learn through a method they already practice (Ausubel, 1964; Roberts & Kreuz, 2015).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADOPTING FVR

Suggested Reading Strategies

There are many strategies employed by readers who wish to advance their proficiency level through reading in a foreign language. New practitioners of reading in a foreign language may want to start by reading everything possible in the target language. There is an abundance of resources in multiple languages, including novels, non-fiction blogs, and online articles (Fishwick, n.d.). The key is for readers to select texts that are not too difficult and that are enjoyable and interesting to them. For example, it is completely acceptable to read comic books, graphic novels, and children's books. The pictures and drawings add visual support to the language (Barca, 2017; Cho & Krashen, 1993, 1995a, 1995b; Krashen, 1997, 2004, 2007, 2014; Lampariello, 2014).

Using Word Reference Resources

In the initial stages of reading in a new language, it may be necessary to rely upon dictionary resources. However, for this method to be effective, readers should only underline or highlight unfamiliar words as they read. When they are ready to look up word definitions, they should keep a catalog of the new vocabulary in a notebook, virtual notebook, spreadsheet, or Word document. Using this method prevents having to look up the same word multiple times because it was forgotten. In addition, words are kept in a single place and easy to find for later review or practice (Barca, 2017; Lampariello, 2014).

Text-to-Text Comparison

A variation of using a dictionary is comparing native and target language texts side by side. This may require gaining access to two copies of the same book, one in each language. Another option is to take advantage of bilingual, dual language, or parallel reader books available on the market and in libraries (Barca, 2017). Bilingual and dual language books are formatted so that the text of one language appears on one side of a book page, and of the other language appears on the opposing page. Using the language comparison method in dual language readers may require more extensive notes than the simple dictionary research method, but one benefit is the requirement of a single book (Barca, 2017). An additional benefit is that readers will discover phrases that are

commonly used in the target language, which do not equate to word-to-word translations from one language to the other.

Gradual Release

As readers continue to read more in the target language, they will notice that fewer words are unfamiliar to them. Their vocabulary is exponentially augmented (Auslander, 2013; Cho & Krashen, 1993, 1995a, 1995b). In a relatively brief time, the target language will feel natural and intuitive (Fishwick, n.d.). To facilitate this process, readers may want to focus on selections in which they have already acquired background knowledge. Background knowledge is acquired through previously studied content, reactivating previous related experience, or reading the selection in the native language prior to doing so in the target language (Heggem, n.d.).

Eventually, readers should not need to look up words and phrases. They will read more naturally, acquiring unknown vocabulary through contextual usage, much as they learned to do in their first language. At this point, readers will find their reading and language acquisition fluid, easy, and most importantly, enjoyable (Krashen, 2011). As readers advance their reading fluency, they may experience becoming so absorbed in the reading that they completely forget they are reading in another language.

Audiobook Options

To support listening practice and knowledge of pronunciation, readers may want to experiment with listening to audiobooks while they follow along with a hard copy of the reading material. Of course, using this method does not require new language readers to start with novels. Initially, graphic novels, very short stories, or children's picture books may be more appropriate for readers new to their language of study (Barca, 2017).

Time Requirements

No matter the method of acquisition, language growth requires time. To promote language proficiency levels, reading time must be extensive and intensive. Currently, there is no universally accepted definition of "language proficiency" (Cummins, 1984; Valdés & Figueroa, 1994). However, there are some commonly accepted measures of language proficiency, such as the Cambridge English Scale and the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Scale (Desveaux, 2013). In the U.S., the federal government employs the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale, which provides narrative descriptors for identifying a range of proficiency levels in reading, listening, speaking, and writing (Interagency Language Roundtable, n.d.). Two major U.S. government language schools—the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) and the Foreign Service Institute (FSI)—

utilize the ILR scale to determine the proficiency levels of employees requiring foreign language skills. A look at DLIFLC's practices and expected language outcomes may provide some insight on the topic of proficiency levels and corresponding time requirements.

Historically, DLIFLC (DLIFLC & Presidio of Monterey, 2017) has expected students to attend 30-35 hours per week of instruction in the target language to achieve a "Limited Working Proficiency" level (ILR 2) in Listening and Reading and an "Elementary Proficiency Plus" level (ILR 1+) in Speaking by the end of the basic course. For languages that share many linguistic features with English, such as Spanish, the course once lasted 24 weeks (~720 hours) but has recently been increased to 36 weeks (~1,080 hours) to reach the Institute's new higher graduation goals. Sharing fewer features with English, the Russian and Hebrew Basic Courses require 48 weeks (~1,440 hours). Languages most different from English in grammar structures and writing systems may require more than a year to gain basic levels of proficiency; for example, Chinese, Korean, and Arabic require 64 weeks of instruction (~1,920 hours). These time estimates are based upon an average student's progress (DLIFLC & Presidio of Monterey, 2017; Kobb, 2016; Lewis, 2014).

Estimates for the time required to attain certain levels of proficiency will vary according to school and curriculum. The U.S. State Department manages the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), which includes training of U.S. diplomats. A study conducted by officials from the FSI reports that languages most like English, such as French and Spanish, require approximately 600 hours of study, whereas more distantly related languages, such as Chinese or Arabic require between 1,200 to 4,400 hours to achieve an ILR 2+ proficiency level (Jackson & Kaplan, 1999; Lewis, 2014).

The comparison of intense language study is not an exact measure to understand the time required to see gains from FVR. Students enrolled in government agency language programs study language intensely on a full-time basis. Language training is essentially these students' full-time job (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015). Studies that measure foreign language growth through the practice of FVR may provide more accurate expectations for language proficiency growth. According to Tudor and Hafiz (1989), an FVR regime may produce gains in reading and writing and more accurate usage of syntax in the target language in as little as three months. As previously mentioned in Warwick and Mangubhai's (1983) study, impressive gains in the skill of listening are reported at the end of eight months of practicing FVR.

In general, the longer the duration of the intense FVR period, the greater the positive effect size in language and reading growth. Measuring by using a cloze test assessment, the studies listed in the following table reflect growth as soon as 12 weeks, but most FVR programs were implemented over a period of a year (Krashen, 2001) (see Table 1).

Table 1: *Access, Duration, and Effect Size*

<i>Study</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Average Titles Read Per Student</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Effect Size Using a Cloze Pre- and Post-Assessment</i>
Yuan & Nash (1992)	37	5.4	One Year	0.38
Mason Jr College (1997)	31	6.4	One Year	1.47
Mason University (1997)	40	5	One Year	1.11
Lee (2005)	65	3.3	12 Weeks	0.24
Hsu & Lee (2007)	47	7.5	One Year	1.02
Smith (2007)	41	12.2	One Year	0.56
Liu (2007)	46	9.8	One Year	1.59

Bloggers provide similar time investment estimates. Lewis (2014) is the owner of the website and blog *Fluentin3months.com*, as well as the author of the book with the same name. Lewis (2014) speaks 13 languages despite his claims that previous study through traditional classroom instruction never advanced his proficiency level beyond ILR 0+. According to Lewis (2014), his language level has been assessed at ILR 4 proficiency in Spanish and French. He is self-taught in all 13 languages. Based on Lewis's (2014) experiences, most languages require 420 hours of language practice to attain the equivalent of ILR 1+2 proficiency. This works out to five hours a day, seven days a week, for the course of twelve weeks or three months (Lewis, 2014).

Another online blogger provides additional insights to language acquisition and time requirements. Szynalski (n.d.), the creator of the website *Antimoon.com*, is a native speaker of Polish and has lived in Poland his entire life. Szynalski (n.d.) discusses his journey in learning English through self-taught methods. A review of his website informs readers of the strategies Szynalski used to build his English proficiency. As a side note, readers may notice that, impressively, no English text or usage on the website hints that

Szynalski is not a native speaker of English. Szynalski attributes much of his language acquisition success to reading. According to Szynalski (n.d.), language learners must consistently commit to reading 60 pages a week in the foreign language or roughly one hour a day for three years, the equivalent to an exposure of 1,000,000 sentences, to advance their language proficiency level.

CONCLUSION

Modern language learners may find FVR in the target language well worth the effort. Evidence has shown that engaging in FVR improves language acquisition and individual feelings of accomplishment. Research demonstrates that language acquisition benefits from FVR. Complementing the research are anecdotal claims on the impact of FVR on language acquisition (Auslander, 2013; Barca, 2017; Heggem, n.d.; Lampariello, 2014; Fishwick, n.d.; Szynalski, n.d.). The research has led to increased push for engaging the FVR framework (Okuma, 2010; Yamashita, 2015). FVR does not receive the attention one might expect in school systems, but it has the enormous potential to provide the same benefits to adolescents and adults (Roberts & Kreuz, 2015).

Modern language learners are very savvy. They realize that visiting another country or submitting themselves to an immersion experience is not a necessity to develop foreign language proficiency to ILR 3 or higher. In as little as a few months, or even a few weeks, language learners detect significant increases in their target language proficiency through consistent reading practice. The authors suggest that readers experiment with strategies that support their own reading and learning style.

NOTES

1. For ease of discussion and to create a contextual reference for readers, the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale is used in this article to specify language proficiency levels and language growth. The ILR scale is used by many United States governmental agencies, including the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and the Foreign Service Institute Department of Language Programs. The ILR scale measures each of the four language domains: Reading (R), Speaking (S), Listening (L), and Writing (W) (Interagency Language Roundtable, n.d.). Proficiency scores and general corresponding descriptions are as follows:

<i>Numerical Level Designation</i>	<i>Corresponding General Description of Level</i>
0	No proficiency
0+	Memorized proficiency
1	Elementary proficiency
1+	Limited proficiency
2	Limited working proficiency
2+	Limited working proficiency, plus
3	General professional proficiency
3+	General professional proficiency, plus
4	Advanced professional proficiency
4+	Advanced professional proficiency, plus
5	Functionally native proficiency

(Interagency Language Roundtable, n.d.).

2. In the discussions pertaining to growth in language proficiency levels, the authors assume that growth reflects a minimum of a plus (+) level increase, as measured on the ILR scale, beyond the initial proficiency level. In parts of the discussion where attained proficiency is referenced, the authors attempt to designate the equivalent ILR proficiency level based on the context of the referenced studies.
3. A cloze test is a written language assessment with blank lines that have replaced some of the original words of a text. Students' ability to accurately fill in the blanks with the expected missing words is interpreted to correlate with language proficiency level in the target language.

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Compliment Responses of Non-native Speakers of Japanese in Natural Conversation Versus Classroom Talk

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The field of L2 pragmatics demonstrates the effect of instructional intervention on the development of L2 learners' pragmatic competence. Nevertheless, effective instruction requires knowledge of pragmatic performances of L2 learners in naturally occurring conversations, in comparison to those of the target community speakers. This study, using a conversation analytic approach, examines responses of American students of Japanese to compliments issued by native speakers (NS) of Japanese in a dyadic interaction in three different settings: naturally occurring conversations between NSs and non-native speakers (NNS) outside of classroom, free-topic conversations, and fixed-topic conversations between NSs and NNSs in a classroom setting. The results show that naturally occurring conversations outside of the classroom occasionally provide NNSs with a dispreferred environment which orients them to steer the interactional trajectory to negotiate and create affiliative relations with the interlocutors, using so-called evading strategies, which are often used among speakers of the target community. In contrast, such a sequential environment was not observed in the conversations in a classroom setting.

Keywords: *compliments and responses to compliments, pragmatics competence, conversation analysis, learners of Japanese as a second language, instructional intervention*

INTRODUCTION

The speech act of complimenting and responding to compliments serves as “social lubricants” (Wolfson, 1983, p. 89). It is the most positive politeness strategy (Holmes, 1995) and is meant to establish and strengthen affiliative relations between interlocutors (Golato, 2005; Jucker, 2009; Chen, 2010; Lorenzo-Dus & Izura, 2017). Nevertheless, the pragmatic operation of

compliments and compliment responses may cause miscommunication between second language (L2) learners and the interlocutors due to various factors. That is to say, compliments are occasionally insincere, empty, and ironic (Jucker, 2009). Similarly, compliment realization patterns based upon the British National Corpus (Jucker, 2009) show more subtle variations than Manes and Wolfson's (1981) claim of lack of originality in terms of syntactic structures and word choice. Furthermore, targets for compliments also vary according to complimenter/complimentee status (Maiz-Arevalo & Garcia-Gomez, 2013; Placencia & Lower, 2013.) Finally, the pragmatic operation of compliments and responses is "culture specific and sociologically conditioned" (Jucker, 2009, p.1612). Like other speech acts and pragmatic features, it exhibits variations across cultures in terms of linguistic resources to perform pragmatic functions, cultural norms, and conventions (Taguchi, 2012, 2015). If second language (L2) learners lack understanding of uniquely defined cultural norms and conventions, they fail to perform pragmatic functions at appropriate levels of politeness in the target community (Taguchi, 2012, 2015).

The field of L2 pragmatics focuses on instructional intervention in the development of learners' pragmatic competence and suggests clear instructional benefits of pragmatic features compared to non-instructional learning environments (Alcon-Soler & Martinez-Flor, 2008; Ishihara, 2003; Kasper & Rose, 1999, 2001, 2002; Kasper & Roever, 2005; Marinez-Flor & Alcon-Soler, 2005; Rose, 2005; Taguchi, 2011, 2015; Takahashi, 2010). Nevertheless, effective instruction requires knowledge of the actual performances of L2 learners in naturally occurring conversation compared to those of speakers of a target community. Community speakers communicate by using common ground which reflects not only worldly information but also discourse information and other discourse party attitudes (Camp, 2017, p. 1619).

A sociolinguistic study of compliments and responses among young Japanese university students (Adachi, 2011) reveals that most compliments appear at the inter-located sequence position, in other words, between conversation sequences. Therefore, responding to a compliment implies a speaker's comprehension of the immediately preceding turns in the evolving sequential talk (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby & Olsher, 2002). Furthermore, culturally appropriate replies depend on how learners approach interactional trajectories during actions (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff et al, 2002). If learners lack common ground that the target community shares, pragmatic failure occurs. In order to provide effective instructional intervention, the first step is to understand how non-native speakers (NNSs) of Japanese respond to compliments issued by native speakers (NSs) of Japanese in evolving conversation sequence. This study, using the conversation analytic approach, examined the responses of American students of Japanese to compliments issued by Japanese NSs in a dyadic interaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies of Compliments and Compliment Responses

In the earliest and most detailed work on adjacency pair of compliments and responses to them in American English, Pomerantz (1978) discusses conflicting constraints created by two conversational principles faced by compliment recipients. One principle involves speakers' needs to agree with co-participants' compliments, rather than disagree, as a preferred next action in talk-in-interaction, as acceptance or agreement indicates co-participant alignment with the prior speaker (Clayman, 2002). The second is self-praise avoidance, which is taken as disaffiliative to a co-participant. These conversational principles diametrically conflict with each other (Herbert, 1989; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001).

Pomerantz (1978) presents four types of compliment responses demonstrated by American English speakers as solutions for the two conflicting dilemmas. First, compliment recipients, taking a neutral stance, question or downgrade the truth of the compliment assertion. Second, a compliment recipient may shift the referent of the assessable away from him or herself, return it to the compliment provider, or give an account or history of the assessable referent. Third, a recipient may reinterpret a compliment provider's intent and move to an action such as offering the referent of the assessable, asking whether he/she desires it. Finally, a recipient may completely ignore a compliment, displaying no acknowledgement. Similar to these response types, Holmes (1988, 1995) categorizes compliment responses collected in her American English data into three groups: *accept*, *reject*, and *deflect/evade*. *Accept* is an action of accepting a co-participant's compliment. This includes a simple acknowledgment token laugh, as indicated below (A indicates an American student of Japanese and J indicates a native Japanese speaker. See Appendix A for transcription symbols):

- 1 A: what songs of theirs (.) do you like?
 2 J: notto zero. (2.0) shitteru?
Notto zero (do you) know?
 3 A: un
Yes
 4 J: → sugoi!
Great!
 5 A: → haha

By contrast, *reject* is disagreement with a co-participant's compliment, as seen below:

- 1 J : → nihongo? joozu desu ne.
(Your) Japanese is good.

2 A : → tondemo nai.
Not at all

On the other hand, *deflect/evade* is mitigation of the force of a compliment by downgrading it with an account or history of the referent of the assessable. An example is as follows:

1 J: → demo: robu no nihongo wa (.) shinpo shita.
But Rob's Japanese (.) has improved.
 2 A: → ahh mai shuu_(1.0) juu_(2.0)juugo jikan goro_(2.0)
 nihongo no (.) benkyo shi: (2.0) shiteimasu kara (1.0) haha.
*Because every week, ten approximately fifteen hours (I) study
 Japanese. Haha.*

Some studies of compliment responses in Japanese (Adachi 2011; Baba 1996; Daikuhara 1986; Hirata, 1999; Kim, 2006; Koike, 2000; Terao, 1996) reveal that Japanese speakers' compliment responses are more complex than simple acceptance or rejection. For example, Terao's study (1996), which collected data from TV talk shows and natural conversations, reveals that more than 44% of compliment responses consisted of strategies other than compliment acceptance/rejection. Kim's study (2006) of compliment responses among young Japanese shows that a combination of different strategies was the most frequently adopted, whereas compliment acceptance was least frequently used. By contrast, Adachi's study (2011), which collected data from more than 40 hours of recordings with 67 young Japanese university students, reveals that rejecting compliments was the least adopted strategy. Conversely, the *deflect/evade* strategy accounted for more than 51% of the data, followed by accepting compliments. These findings suggest that using a combination of different strategies in the speech act of responding to compliments may be a cultural trend in Japan. In other words, responding to compliments is more complex than the utilization of pre-set formulaic expressions; it requires context interpretation that is embedded in interaction sequences.

In lieu of studying the speech act of complimenting and responding to compliments with respect to cultural relativism (Chen 1993; Cheng, 2011; Daikuhara, 1986; Herbert 1989, 1991; Holmes, 1988; Lorenzo-Dus, 2001; Nelson, Al-batal & Echols, 1996; Ye, 1995; Yuan, 1996, 2002), some studies have performed conversation analysis (CA) regarding sequential position of compliments and compliment responses in larger sequential contexts. Golato's studies (2002, 2005), through turn-by-turn adjacency pair analysis, demonstrate compliments and compliment responses as social actions co-produced by participants. For example, referential expressions display recipient-tailored characteristics (Auer, 1984; Ford & Fox, 1996; Schegloff, 1996), in which a speaker presents the referent of the assessable in a manner salient to a compliment recipient. Similarly, the results show that compliments tend to emerge in a dispreferred environment. In the sequence organization of talk in

interaction, Schegloff (2007) states that “the key issue in the organization around preference and dispreference concerns the alignment in which a second action stands to a first” (p. 59). A response to the first pair part oriented towards activity realization is a preferred turn, whereas the one impeding further activity is a dispreferred turn. Golato (2005), having adopted this concept, describes dispreferred environment as a dispreferred turn or a response to this turn. When a speaker turns down invitations, a compliment is often issued, thereby mitigating the force of face-threatening rejection, and delaying the dispreferred action of rejection. This study broadens this concept and uses the term “dispreferred environment” as a sequence of talk that may cause a co-participant to lose face.

Golato’s findings reveal that to perform at the culturally appropriate level of politeness, L2 learners need to develop strategies for processing contingent and interpretive undertaking in the evolving sequential talk (Lee, 2007). Such instructional intervention requires complex analytical work. The analysis should encompass the embedding context surrounding compliments issued in the inter-located sequences because the contextual contribution forms actions taken by speakers on a turn-by-turn basis (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992; Schegloff, 1992). For example, to deflate or evade compliments, a L2 learner has to demonstrate his or her interpretive understanding of how the interlocutor processed the compliment in the immediately preceding turn and to respond to and act on it to steer interactional trajectory to sustain affiliative relations with the interlocutor.

Studies of Compliments and Compliment Responses in NS-NNS Interaction

As found in Golato’s studies (2002, 2005), if a referent of the assessable is not expressed explicitly, based upon a speaker’s judgment that it is accessible to a compliment recipient, the non-native recipient may miss the information, and a communication breakdown may occur. Similarly, if a non-native compliment recipient misses the speaker’s intent of using compliment to mitigate a face-threatening act such as invitation rejection, efforts to sustain and strengthen social relations with interlocutors may be compromised.

Several studies have conducted instructional intervention incorporating sequential organization of compliments and compliment responses that are obtained from analysis of sequential position or practice of target speech in more naturally occurring conversation. Huth (2006), based upon Golato’s study results, investigated correlations between the instruction of German-specific sequential organization of compliments and compliment responses and its application in communicative tasks among American students of German in a classroom setting. The results demonstrate the elevation of L2 learners’ awareness of cross-cultural differences, while revealing their mistaken interpretation of language specific pragmatic practices introduced in the teaching material.

Similarly, Ishihara (2003) conducted formal instruction on the speech act of giving and responding to compliments to international students in an intensive ESL program. In her instructional sessions, the students practiced compliment responses categorized as deflating strategies in a role-playing task and were directed to compliment American English speakers outside of class and record the compliments and responses for data analysis. Her study of instructional intervention obtained positive results.

Although these studies incorporated discourse level role-playing activities and a naturalistic setting for practicing compliment issuance and response, the focus remained on the use of the adjacency pair taken out of context. Ishihara's study included production practice of target speech act in more naturally occurring conversation, but there was no opportunity for learners to perform speech act based on their interpretation of what interlocutors did in the preceding turns. Interactional courses of actions are not a pre-set entity, but are "treated as inherently locally produced and incrementally developed and by extension, as transformable at any moment" (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p.165) and are "the vehicle for getting some activity accomplished" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 59). Therefore, it is not certain whether teaching a particular set of sequences helps L2 learners orient to those particular language inherent sequences in interaction.

Another related issue is whether NNSs' responses to compliment in classroom interaction differ from responses in naturally occurring conversation, as classroom discourse is considered institutional interaction in terms of goal orientation and rational organization (Seedhouse, 2004). Institutional interaction orients to a core goal, task, or identity and, participants' actions are therefore responsive to resultant constraints (Drew and Heritage, 1992, p. 22; Schegloff, 1992). Furthermore, classroom interaction is characterized by the three-turn sequence referred to as IRE: teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation (Inan, 2012; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Seedhouse, 2004; Lee, 2007). Particularly worthy of note is Seedhouse's (2004) claim that teacher evaluation of L2 learners' production is one key interactional property of a L2 classroom. Therefore, regardless of the task or activity, *teacher* evaluates *student* production to attain institutional goals. When a teacher gives a verbal or non-verbal positive evaluation, it signals the end of the particular sequential event and the start of a new one (Seedhouse, 2004). Thus, if L2 learners are accustomed to the three-turn sequence, especially to the teacher's evaluation, their action of responding to a compliment in a classroom setting may differ from that in naturally occurring conversations.

METHOD

Research Questions

This study examines responses of American students of Japanese enrolled in 3rd year Japanese courses to compliments issued by Japanese NS via

dyadic interaction in three different settings: (1) natural conversation between students of Japanese and Japanese students of English in Japan via Skype outside the classroom, (2) free-topic conversation in classroom settings between students of Japanese and teaching assistants whose native language is Japanese, and (3) fixed-topic conversation in classroom settings between students of Japanese and teaching assistants whose native language is Japanese. Fixed-topic conversation was conducted to evaluate students' communicative skills at the end of a semester. Topics were not provided in advance to the students or the teaching assistants.

The following research question is explored: How do sequential environments affect actions of Japanese language students in responding to compliments (1) issued by native speakers of Japanese in naturally occurring conversation outside the classroom, (2) issued by teaching assistants of Japanese during free-topic classroom conversation, and (3) issued by teaching assistants of Japanese during fixed-topic classroom conversation?

Participants

To provide students of Japanese with naturally occurring conversational opportunities with native speakers in Japan, Skype conversations outside the classroom were initiated in the fall of 2009 through collaboration with a university professor in Japan. Students of Japanese participating in Skype conversations were enrolled in the fall/spring semester's 3rd year Japanese conversation courses at a California university. The optional conversation courses were offered for enrichment purposes; the students, therefore, were highly motivated to enhance their Japanese communicative skills. Their proficiency level, based on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), ranged from Intermediate Low to Intermediate Mid on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) scale. Moreover, they passed or nearly passed N3 (Level 3) of the retired Japanese Language Proficiency Tests (JLPT) developed by the Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services. Students took the JLPT at the beginning of the semester in which data were collected. According to the official JLPT site, passing N3 demonstrates Japanese comprehension ability for everyday situations.

Conversely, their counterparts in Japan were juniors majoring in Economics enrolled in English classes. Their Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores were below 500, considered "Low" on the old scoring system. Students of Japanese were encouraged to converse with their randomly assigned conversation partners via Skype at least once a semester for approximately 30 minutes in English and Japanese, alternatively. After uploading their recorded conversation on a designated site, they were given extra credit.

In order to examine the effect of an institutional setting on interactive communication, the NNS students' conversations with their teaching assistants were recorded as a part of class activities. The teaching assistants, exchange or

international students from Japan, were taking courses in teaching Japanese as a foreign language. They regularly assisted in class discussions and role-playing quizzes as students' partners. The dyadic free-topic Skype conversations were recorded during class hours in a language laboratory at the end of the semesters. Data were collected from 51 students of Japanese enrolled in 3rd year Japanese conversation courses between 2011 and 2013. Some were heritage speakers, but they grew up in an environment where they were rarely exposed to Japanese as a communication medium.

In addition to these two sets of data, the third data set was collected in the fall of 2015 from fixed-topic classroom conversations between nine students of Japanese enrolled in the 3rd Japanese conversation courses and four teaching assistants whose native language is Japanese. The teaching assistants were given the topic "student's future plan" before starting the conversations and were asked to encourage students with compliments.

Data

The corpus of two data sets includes 53 NSs and 51 NNSs' 20 to 30 minute dyadic conversations during four semesters between fall of 2011 and spring of 2013. Among them, 19 adjacency pairs of compliments and responses were observed in naturally occurring conversations between 36 NSs and 36 NNSs of Japanese outside the classroom and 24 adjacency pairs in free-topic dyadic conversations between 17 NSs and 47 NNSs in a classroom setting. In addition, the third data set collected from 20 to 25 minute fixed-topic classroom conversations between four NSs and nine NNSs in the fall of 2015 obtained 52 adjacency pairs of compliments and responses. The conversations were transcribed and analyzed with CA (See Appendix A).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Naturally Occurring Conversations between NSs and NNSs Outside the Classroom

Naturally occurring conversations between NSs and NNSs show that the adjacency pair of compliment-compliment responses usually occurs at a sequence-closing position with a compliment as a first pair part (FPP) and a contiguously occurring compliment response as a second pair part (SPP), and frequently seen simple receipt by compliment providers at a sequence-closing third position, as seen in Excerpt (1).

Excerpt (1)

- 1 J1 : → nihongo? joozu desu ne.
(Your) Japanese is good, isn't it?
- 2 A1 : → tondemo nai.
Not at all.

3 J1 : ↑sugoku ii desu (1.0) haha
 (Your Japanese is) great haha

By contrast, three compliment sequences were observed in which NNSs steered interactional trajectory in a particular direction, and, as a consequence, they expanded not only through elaboration, repetition, modification, or enhancement of the FPP or SPP, but sometimes developed into related but new topic sequences. Three cases in the data show that such a compliment recipient's actions were enacted in a dispreferred sequential environment where a projected self of an interlocutor might not be sustained and, as a result, there was potential for occurrence of embarrassment (Manning, 1992, p. 39). In such cases, NNSs designed compliment responses to suppress this dispreferred environment and to "preserve the equilibrium of the encounter" (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003, p.1458). These action sequences shed light on our understanding of the interactional framework, which motivates NNSs to take the floor and to explore interactional trajectories in the course of actions.

Excerpt (2)

- 1 A2: unten menkyo o (.) ee_ (1.0) motte iru no ka?
Do you have a driver's license?
- 2 J2: hai? (1.0) ↓ ahh [unten men-
Yes? Ahh [driver's li]
- 3 A2: [°un°]
- 4 J2: ↑motte nai (.) desu (.) kedo;_ (1.0) daigakusei no uchi ni
 (0.8)toritai.
*(I) don't have (it) but while (I am) a university student (I) want
 to acquire (it)*
- 5 A2: ↓Ahhh: (3.0)
- 6 J2: ↑motte masu ka?
(Do you) have (it)?
- 7 A2: Uhhh? (5.0)
- 8 J2: unten menkyo, (0.5) ↑motte masu ka?
(Do you) have a driver's license?
- 9 A2: ↑ohh hai hai.
Ohh yes yes.
- 10 J2: →↑Oh:!
- 11 A2: →[°Nuh:°
- 12 J2: [↑itsu tori mashita ka?
When did you get (it)?
- 13 A2: itsu_? °Ummm°(1.0)
When?
- 14 J2: itsu?
- 15 A2: (2.0) °Uhhh: _°
- 16 J2: When?

- 17 A2: anoo:_ go(.) go(.) go nen mae?
Well: five five five years ago?
- 18 J2: →↑Oh! ↑sugoi!
Oh! Great!
- 19 A2: →haha (.) amerika de,
Haha. In USA.
- 20 J2: un
- 21 A2: →ahh:_ anoo:(2.0) uhhh:_ju:_guroku sai?
Ten six years old (sixteen years old)?
- 22 J2: ah: ↑soo: nan da.
I see.
- 23 A2: un
Yes
- 24 J2: nihon wa, (.) juu hassai.
In Japan, eighteen years old.

Excerpt (2) contains two adjacency pairs of compliment-compliment response in which compliment responses are designed to help the NNS co-establish affiliative relations with the NS. In this excerpt, A2 created a dispreferred environment when launching a query of whether J2 had a driver's license. His "Ah" in #5 with an elongated falling tone, followed by a long pause, shows that he did not expect J2's response of not having one, and consequently, it prevented expansion of the initiated topic. J2 decided to continue on the topic, though, asking the same question to A2. When A2 expressed his understanding of the prior turn, with an acknowledgement token, "Oh" (Gardner, 2001), along with "hai hai" (=yes #9), J2 produced a first compliment with an assessment token "Oh" in #10, which evaluates the talk of the prior turn (Gardner, 2001). This stretched rising-tone "Oh" implied her admiration to A2 who already has a driver's license. A2 exhibited his softening of the dispreferred environment and rejected the compliment with a short and unmarked discourse marker "nuh," suggesting that possession of a driver license was not important. Even so, J2 upgraded her compliment with a strong lexical term "Sugoi" (*great*) in #18.

This compliment prompted A2's steering of the interactional trajectory. A2's response that he got a driver's license five years ago created a noticeable difference from his interactant who did not have one, magnifying the dispreferred environment that he created by asking about a driver's license. To mend this dispreferred environment and mitigate this face-threatening action, A2 needed to create a more affiliative relation with J2. Even with his limited linguistic resources, A2 took the floor, explaining that most Americans get a driver license at the age of 16. This is categorized as an account, an *evading* strategy observed in Adachi's data (2011) of young Japanese university students. To this no-fault account (Clayman, 2002), J2 responded with a newsmaker (Gardner, 2001) "so nanda" (*I see*) in #22. This remark reveals her "change-of-state" (Heritage, 1984) after realizing the difference of getting a driver's license between Japan and the United States. J2 informed A2 that people could get a

driver's license at 18 in Japan, assuring A2 that they were on an equal footing. These sequential actions demonstrate that the NNS (A2) attends to the emerging "structure in the stream of speech" (Goodwin, 2000, p. 159), negotiates, and accomplishes shared understanding with his co-participant on both the propositional and social levels.

Excerpt (3) shows a similar action. J3 was a Japanese exchange student in China for a semester when J3 and A3 (Rob—a pseudonym) had their second conversation in December. Their first conversation took place in October.

Excerpt (3)

- 1 J3 : hajimete sukaipu (.) shita toki to, (.) ↑zenzen chigau.
(It) is totally different from when we first did Skype.
- 2 A3 : (2.0)
- 3 J3 : ↑ima no hoo ga (.) umai. (2.0) watashi no English wa_ (.) juu gatsu to issho.
(Your Japanese) is better now. My English is same as in October.
- 4 A3 : Can you repeat the last part?
- 5 J3 : →watashi (.) eigo? (.) eigoryoku?(.)English?(.) watashi no eigo wa(1.0) juu gatsu to (.) onaji yakedo(1.0) Robu no nihongo,
I (.) English (.) I (.) English? (.) my English is the same as it was in October but Rob's Japanese,
- 6 A3: un
yes
- 7 J3: →umaku natta.
got better.
- 8 A3: (4.0) hanashite (.) imashita ka?
Were you talking?
- 9 J3: (2.0) ↑nani ga?
What?
- 10 A3: eigo_ (1.0) eigo (1.0) tsukatte (.) imasu ka?
English English. Did (you) use?
- 11 J3: eigo (.) tsukatte nai.
English (I) did not use.
- 12 A3: (3.0)
- 13 J3: ↑dakara (.) shinpo shiteimasen. (1.0) shinpo _(1.0) imi (.) waku?
So, (my English) has not improved (1.0) (shinpo)_ (do you) understand the meaning?
- 14 A3: (8.0)<J is looking up the word in the dictionary>
- 15 J3: progress?
- 16 A3: wakatta.
(I) understand

- 17 J3: → demo: robu no nihongo wa (.) shinpo shita.
But Rob's Japanese (.) has improved.
- 18 A3: → ahh mai shuu_ (1.0) juu_ (2.0)juugo jikan goro_ (2.0)
 nihongo no (.) benkyo shi: (2.0) shiteimasu kara (1.0) haha.
*Because every week. Ten approximately fifteen hours (I) study
 Japanese. Haha.*
- 19 J3: ↑waah:!
 20 A3: haha

J3 complimented A3's Japanese improved considerably since October when they had their first conversation, while self-deprecating her English in #1, #3, #5, and #7. As J3 created an environment where she did not "project herself with a social positive value that must be protected to maintain the equal status," A3 was expected to include a disagreement regarding the self-deprecation by the interactant as a preferred action (Pomerantz, 1978). Instead, A3 kept silent in #8, which shows a noticeable absence of disagreement with her self-deprecation, creating a dispreferred environment. Nevertheless, A3's question in #8, following a four-second silence, reveals A3's action of mitigating the dispreferred environment created by his failure to provide disagreement with J3's self-deprecation.

A3 took the floor, asking whether J3 talked (in English), and J3 responded not using English in #11 and #13. This response, in return, led to A3's statement that he studied Japanese for 10-15 hours a week in #18. A3's compliment response provided a no-fault account in that his Japanese improvement was not due to his ability, intelligence, or talent but to the many hours of studying. J3 adapted to this no-fault account with her assessment token "wow," demonstrating her surprise at the time he spent studying Japanese and shifting her referent from his Japanese ability to his effort. Up to the point of #7, J3 was the one who controlled the turn-taking actions. What motivated A3 to take the floor and issue a disjunctive question seems to lie in his intent in maintaining face and protecting his interactant's face, demonstrating his effort to mitigate his interactant's self-deprecation and solidify a congruent mutual relationship.

Golato (2005) states that compliments are used by native speakers of German to mitigate the force of dispreferred responses such as declining an invitation. A similar phenomenon was observed among NNSs' compliment responses in this study. NNSs' compliment responses in a dispreferred environment display an asymmetrical nature compared to the regular responses towards compliments issued by NSs. When sequential context constitutes a dispreferred environment, NNSs present an account, such as personal history, to mitigate dispreferred environments and to maintain "equal status" with their interlocutors. Such actions are reflected in NNSs' interpretive contexts embedded in interaction sequences.

Free-topic Conversations between NSs and NNSs in a Classroom Setting

Dyadic conversations between NSs and NNSs in a classroom setting demonstrate different patterns of compliment responses produced by NNSs from those in naturally occurring conversations. NNSs usually did not respond to compliments, remaining silent. Seventeen times a response was not offered to a NS-issued compliment, which represents approximately 70% of the total 24 compliment–compliment response adjacency pairs. As a consequence, topics were terminated abruptly or the participants moved on to disjunctive questions from the preceding ones, as seen in the following example:

Excerpt (4)

- 1 J4: eetto_jaa: kyoo wa asa (.) nani o tabemashitta ka?
Well What did you eat this morning?
- 2 A4: aah_kyoo wa_asa wa_aah_pankeeki o tabemashita.
Ahh Today in the morning (I) ate a pancake.
- 3 J4: ↑aah ii na: (1.0) pankeeki (.) ↑daisuki.(1.0) jibun de (.)
tsukurimashita ka?
*Aah I envy you (1.0) pancake (1.0) I love (it) (1.0) did you
make (it) by yourself?*
- 4 A4: hai.
Yes.
- 5 J4: →eeh! ↑Sugoi.
eeh! Awesome.
- 6 A4: → (3.0)
- 7 J4: (2.0)
- 8 A4: senshuu no (0.5) matsu_ (1.0) nani wo (.) shimashita ka?
Last (0.5) weekend (1.0) what did (you) do?

In Excerpt (4), after finding out that A4 made a pancake, J4 complimented it with “sugoi”(awesome). But A4 did not respond to it and the topic was abruptly terminated. This instance can be explained within the framework of classroom discourse. Although NSs and NNSs were more like peers in terms of age and educational background, NSs were regarded as teachers who were evaluating NNSs’ conversational skills. Therefore, NNSs followed the three-turn sequence of classroom interaction: teacher initiation, student response, and teacher evaluation. Within this three-turn sequence of classroom interaction, teacher evaluation is understood as a formulaic signal of ending particular sequential events, without expectation of a response. Thus, it is natural that NNSs, even in free-topic conversations, did not respond to compliments given by NSs in a classroom setting.

Two cases involving NSs’ compliments, however, moved NNSs to explore interactional trajectory in a direction similar to that in naturally occurring conversations.

Excerpt (5)

- 1 J5: ja:a (1.0) donna shigoto (.) shitai?
Then what kind of work (do you) want to do?
- 2 A5: ee:to (1.0) bengoshi (1.0) toka_ (2.0)
Well, such as a lawyer
- 3 J5: a:hh:
- 4 A5: ee: CEO ni naritai (1.0) desu.
Ee: (I) want. To become a CEO.
- 5 J5: → u:hh! ↑Sugoi! ↑Kakko ii!
Uhh! Awesome! Cool!
- 6 A5: un (1.0) ehh: (2.0) watashi wa totemo (2.5) doryoku?
independent?
I am very
- 7 J5: independent wa_ (3.0) dokuritsu?
Independent is “dokuritsu(=independence)”?
- 8 A5: dokuritsu (.) na node,
Because I am independence <A5 wanted to express the meaning “independent”.>
- 9 J5: un un
- 10 A5: eeto: (2.0) watashi wa_ (2.0) tabun_ kekkon [shimasen
Well (2.0) I (2.0) probably won't [marry
- 11 J5: [un un
- 12 A5: hahaha
- 13 J5: hahaha (1.0) shinakute mo (.) daijoubu?
Hahaha (is it) all right even if (you won't) marry?
- 14 A5: un
yes
- 15 J5: → ↑tsuyoi!
(You are) strong!
- 16 A5: → un un
- 17 J5: jaa (.) bengoshi toka (.) CEO ni (.) narun dattara_
Well (.) if (you) become a lawyer or a CEO,
- 18 A5: un?
- 19 J5: ↑mecha_ benkyoo shinai to (1.0) ikenai ne?
(You) have to study really hard, don't you?
- 20 A5: eh?
- 21 J5: sugoku (.) benkyoo shinai to_ (.) ↑taihen da ne?
If (you) don't study hard, (it will be) a problem, won't it?
- 22 A5: ↓ahh: hai. (2.0)
↓ahh: yes (2.0)
- 23 J5: un
- 24 A5: → [demo (2.0)
[but (2.0)
- 25 J5: [soo omou
[(I) think so.

- 26 A5: → demo_ watashi wa tsuyoi. (2.0) [haha]
But I am strong. [haha]
- 27 J5: → [haha] sugoi! (1.0) kakko ii!
[haha] awesome! Cool!
- 28 A5: → gaman (.)gaman.
Patient patient.
- 29 J5: amari (.) muri (.)shinai de ne.
Please don't overwork yourself!

Excerpt (5) shows that A5's interactional trajectory steering is different from that observed in dyadic conversations outside the classroom. When J5 heard that A5 wanted to be a lawyer or a CEO, she repeatedly offered emphatic compliments: *sugoi* (*awesome*) and *kakkooii* (*cool*). According to conversational principles, compliment recipients are expected to agree with a compliment provider while avoiding self-praise to maintain affiliative interactant relations (Pomerantz, 1978). Within this framework, A5 seemed to violate the latter conversational principle by boasting about herself. A5 supported J5's compliments, saying that she was hard working and independent in #6 and #8, thereby determining J5's next action. While complimenting A5's strength, J5 reevaluated her statement, warning that such a goal demands hard work in #17, #19, and #21. Nevertheless, borrowing J5's word "strong" in #15, A5 assured J5 of her strength in #26. J5 issued the same compliments, *sugoi* (*great*) and *kakkooii* (*cool*), but revealed her concern, "please do not overwork yourself!" in #29. A5's boasting in this conversational exchange indicates that A5 ignored J5's compliments (#5 and #15)—J5's attempt to establish affiliative relations with A5. A5's actions increased the potential for interactional breakdown. Similar behavior was observed in another classroom interaction in Excerpt (6).

Excerpt (6)

- 1 J6: jaa:_ ima mittsu no kotoba(.) shabereru no? (1.0) nihongo to,
 (.) eigo to, (.) supeingo?
*So can you speak three languages now? (1.0) Japanese,
 English, (1.0) and Spanish?*
- 2 A6: hai.
Yes.
- 3 J6: →↑ ahh! Sugoi! ↑Kakko ii!
Ahh! Awesome! Cool!
- 4 A6: → (1.0) kankokugo to:, (1.0) tagarogugo to:, (1.0) itariago mo
 (.) narau tsumori. (1.0)
(I) intend to learn Korean, Tagalog and Italian.
- 5 J6: →sugoi!
Awesome!

- 6 A6: → jitsu wa (1.0) kono huyu yasumi? (1.0) kankokugo wo
benkyo (.) shi_ [hajime masu]
*To tell you the truth, I start studying Korean this [winter
break]*
- 7 J6: [un un]sugoi!
Un un awesome!

J6 was impressed by A6's ability to speak Japanese, English, and Spanish, and issued multiple compliments: sugoi (*awesome*) and kakkoi (*cool*). Here again, A6 bragged about it, expressing her intent to learn more languages. Similar to A5, A6s' actions sounded dissonant as compliment responses. A6 dominated the interactional trajectory, with J6's repetition of a compliment word (sugoi). Adachi's data (2011) of young Japanese reveals that this adjectival compliment marker (sugoi) and its variation represented more than 21% of the compliments. Based on the finding, Adachi claims a shift of sugoi's function, from its literal meaning of *great* to silence-filler, indexing "the stance of supportive listening in interaction" (p. 277). It seems fair to categorize J6's compliments in #5 and #7 as silence-fillers, without receiving A6's affiliative response.

Fixed-Topic Conversations between NSs and NNSs in a Classroom Setting

The third set of data was collected to examine whether NNSs' compliment responses observed in free-topic classroom conversations were more institutionally oriented because of the classroom setting. To that end, fixed-topic conversations between nine students of Japanese and four native Japanese speaking teaching assistants were conducted in the classroom via Skype at the end of a semester. The teaching assistants were asked to encourage students with compliments. Whereas 52 compliments were observed during fixed-topic conversations, 30 of them were categorized as discourse markers and silence-fillers, as seen in Excerpt (7).

Excerpt (7)

- 1 J7: gakko ni (.) tsutome-tai n (.) desu ka?
Do you want to work at school?
- 2 A7: hai
yes
- 3 J7: watashi mo (.) gakko ni (.) tsutome-tai node_, issho desune^o
Because I also want to work at school, we are the same.
- 4 A7: hai.
Yes.
- 5 J7: sugoi desune_ (0.1) dewa_(0.1) Ben san wa (.) nihon de
hataraita_ ...
That's great! Well, Ben, you are working in Japan and ...

The NSs frequently used the compliment marker *sugoi*. However, without affiliative response from the conversation partner, this compliment marker lost its function of mutual alignment and ended as a silence-filler. An analysis of the 22 compliments and responses in an adjacency pair in fixed-topic classroom conversations shows a similar pattern of actions observed in free-topic classroom conversations. Eight out of nine students accepted NSs' compliments and four students displayed self-boasting, as seen in Excerpt (8).

Excerpt (8)

- 1 J8: nihon no resutoran de (.) hataraiteru n (.) desu ka?
Do you work in a Japanese restaurant?
- 2 A8: hai.
Yes
- 3 J8: nihongo mo shabette (.) eigo mo shabette_ te kanji (.) desu ka?
(You) also speak Japanese and also speak English something like that?
- 4 A8: supein-go o_ ° sukoshi°.
(I speak) Spanish a little.
- 5 J8: ↑sankakoku-go? (0.1)↑ mittsu? (0.1) desuka? _ ↑sugoi desu ne!
Three languages? Three? Really? That's great!
- 6 A8: kinoo_(0.3)
Yesterday
- 7 J8: kinoo?
Yesterday?
- 8 A8: nihon kara (0.1) anoo_ (0.2) bijinesu-man ga kite (0.2) eigo_ (.) zenzen hanasenakatta kara (0.2) Zenbu, watashi_nihongo de (0.1) ganbatte_ (0.3).
Because a businessman from Japan well could not speak English, I tried to do everything in Japanese.
- 9 J8: ↑iyaa! ↑Subarashii desu ne:
Wow! That's wonderful!
- 10 A8: de_ (0.2) tsugi no teeburu ga_ (0.1) supein-jin de_ hahaha (0.3)
Then Spanish speaking people were at the next table, and hahaha
- 11 J8: sugoi desu ne!
That's amazing!

After finding out that A8 works at a Japanese restaurant, J8 asked in #3 whether A8 used both Japanese and English as a communication medium. Instead of responding to the question, A8 presented information regarding her Spanish knowledge. J8, surprised that A8 could speak three languages, repeated “three” twice and offered a compliment “that’s amazing” in #5. A8’s next move,

resembling an evading strategy, was to ignore J8's compliment and initiate an anecdotal story concerning her restaurant experience with "yesterday" in #6. However, the anecdotal story verified A8's claim that she could handle three languages in #8 and #10. In this interactional trajectory, A8 displayed dominant control of the floor, whereas J8 simply issued compliments, indexing his recognition of A8's undertaking in #9 and #11.

Institutional settings apparently orient students into a particular interactional trajectory. The classroom's goal is not only for students to achieve course objectives but also to acknowledge students' ability, knowledge, motivation, responsibility, skills, and so forth. This institutional goal affects degrees of sensitivity to face. In classroom interactions, students' primary concerns seem to involve saving face, due to the inequality between student and teacher ability, knowledge, and skills. Therefore, from this perspective, A5, A6, and A8 might not be boasting but defending their face.

This study was to understand students of Japanese's actions of responding to compliments to facilitate more effective instruction. Analysis of naturally occurring conversations between NNSs and NSs shows that only three out of 36 NNS students demonstrated strategic responses to compliments, which oriented them to establish affiliative relations with their interlocutors. In dispreferred environments in which an interlocutor's projected self was in jeopardy, students showed sensitivity to face-threatening acts and steered interactional trajectory to suppress dispreferred environment by providing no-fault accounts. This interactional course of actions, categorized as an evading strategy, requires more than resorting to pre-set formulaic expressions—students must demonstrate contingent and interpretive contexts embedded in sequential courses of action to negotiate and create shared understanding with interlocutors.

Conversely, NNSs' responses to compliments in a classroom setting showed deviation from the cultural norm. Students, violating the conversation principle of avoiding self-praise, boasted to the interlocutor issuing a compliment. Their insensitive actions may stem from the classroom setting, the goal of which implies demonstration of ability, knowledge, motivation, and skills. Such institutional settings seem to encourage students to save face by demonstrating their diligent attitude, motivation, and ability, which repels interlocutors from negotiating and creating shared meaning and reduces them to mere listeners.

This study's results suggest some instructional implications. The field of L2 pragmatics claims that pragmatic competence and grammatical ability do not follow identical developmental trajectories and that advanced grammatical competence does not necessarily guarantee comparable levels of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Halig 1999; Taguchi, 2012), and the instructional intervention of pragmatic functions is useful and necessary. However, such instruction should include opportunities for learners to engage in contingent and interpretive work for prior sequences in evolving sequential talk rather than merely to recall and apply specific pre-set sequences to situations of compliment use. Therefore, assignment of naturally occurring non-classroom conversation,

such as conversing with a NS of a target language, plays an important role in learners' pragmatic development, as it generates environments requiring NNSs to undertake contingent and interpretive work of sequential interaction. NNSs may have to negotiate, establish, and maintain affiliative relations with their interactants to save face for themselves and others.

Naturally occurring conversation provided NNSs with such opportunities, but, in this study, pragmatic performances that created affiliative relations with interlocutors were observed only in three out of 36 occasions. Therefore, chances for L2 learners to naturally develop such pragmatic competence are few, unless they are exposed to and forced to practice pragmatic functions, cultural norms, and conventions in target communities. Accordingly, metapragmatic information is crucial for instructional intervention. Taguchi (2015), based on analysis of 31 experimental studies, emphasizes the effect of explicit teaching of metapragmatic information on the development of pragmatic competence. For example, the instruction may include presentation of research on the speech act of complimenting, responding to compliments in Japanese, and explanation of cultural norms and convention, and pragmatic function observed among Japanese speakers. Similarly, class discussion regarding students' responses to compliments in contexts embedded and enacted in particular sequences of interaction may enhance L2 learners' awareness of metapragmatic knowledge. Furthermore, the exercise of reviewing audio or video recorded interactional performances with native speakers of Japanese in sequential interaction and discussing problematic aspects regarding cultural and conversation norms may also elevate L2 learners' metapragmatic knowledge perception.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed American students of Japanese's responses to compliments issued by Japanese NSs in three different dyadic interaction settings: (1) natural non-classroom conversations between students of Japanese and Japanese students of English in Japan via Skype, (2) free-topic classroom conversations between students of Japanese and teaching assistants who are native speakers of Japanese, and (3) fixed-topic classroom conversations between students of Japanese and teaching assistants who are native speakers of Japanese. Results show that natural conversations outside the classroom offer maximum potential for pragmatic competence and communicative skill development. In talk sequence that may jeopardize co-participants' pride, learners initiated a topic to mitigate face-threatening acts and accomplished shared understanding with their co-participants.

Nevertheless, the scope of this study is small. The data were obtained from 20 to 30 minute non-classroom dyadic conversations between 53 NSs and 51 NNSs, 20 to 25 minute free-topic classroom conversations between 17 NSs and 47 NNSs, and 20 to 25 minute fixed-topic classroom conversations between four NSs and nine NNSs. To confirm study findings, a larger scale study should

be conducted in the future. Furthermore, most data was collected from first-time conversations. If we can provide students of Japanese with regular, non-classroom, and more frequent opportunities to meet and converse with NSs of Japanese, situational differences may affect student performances. Their performances over time may deepen our understanding of their pragmatic development.

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APPENDIX A

The transcription symbols listed here were adopted from Gardner's (2001) work.

- (.) = a very short pause
- . (a full stop period) = a falling terminal contour
- ;(a semi colon) = a slight fall from high to mid
- _ (an underline mark at the end of a word) = hesitation marker
- , (a comma) = a slight rise, showing that there is more talk to come
- ? (a question mark) = a strongly rising terminal contour
- ! (an exclamation mark) = a strongly animated tone
- : (a colon) = prolongation of a sound
- ↑ (an up arrow) = a marked rise in pitch
- ↓ (a down arrow) = a marked drop in pitch
- (a degree sign) = softer than the surrounding talk
- (a single dash) = an abrupt cuto

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New Insights into Students' Awareness of the Spanish Lenition Rule: A Revision of the Methodology

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Studies of the acquisition of the lenited allophones of Spanish voiced stops have traditionally focused on the production (Lord, 2010; Rogers & Alvord, 2014; Zampini, 1994), but not on the perception of these sounds. This pilot study examines relationships between (a) learner proficiency and perception of target sounds; (b) learner perception and production accuracy; and (c) allophone type (bilabial, interdental, or velar) and perception and production accuracy. Seventeen English-speaking L2 Spanish learners at the college level with various levels of language study (novice, intermediate, and advanced¹) took perception and production tests. Data was analyzed via spectrography and the results were statistically analyzed. Results indicate that: (a) the level of study might have a direct effect on the perception or production of the Spanish lenited sounds only at the intermediate level of study; (b) a moderate relationship between the perception and production of the lenited allophones was observed; and (c) of the three allophones, the interdental [ð] seems to be the easiest to perceive, but the hardest to produce. Given the pilot nature of this study, we cannot draw definitive conclusions, although the results might be interpreted to indicate a need for more focus on pronunciation instruction (both perception and production) of these Spanish allophonic sounds. Pedagogical suggestions are offered.

Keywords: *Pronunciation, perception, production, allophones*

INTRODUCTION

Accurate communication is an essential goal in language learning, and precise pronunciation plays a significant role in accurate oral performance. Although prosody seems to have been given priority in pronunciation instruction for some time (Derwing & Rossiter, 2003), segmentals should not be ignored (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010). The mispronunciations of the segments addressed in this study, namely [β, ð, γ], may greatly contribute to a foreign accent, and a strong foreign accent may cause breakdowns in communication and interfere with the social perception of the speaker, ultimately affecting communication. Research has shown a positive effect of formal training on L2 pronunciation; thereby form-focused instructions may benefit learners' perception and production of the lenited allophones of Spanish voiced stops. The present study examines the relationships between: (a) learner proficiency and perception of target sounds; (b) learner perception and production accuracy; and (c) allophone type (bilabial, interdental, or velar) and perception and production accuracy.

In an earlier version of this study (González-Bueno & Quintana-Lara, 2010), the data was analyzed by descriptive statistics; that is, only percentages of participants' errors in the perception and production tests were reported. The current version used inferential statistics to obtain more reliable results, which may confirm or reject the results of the previous version.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The allophonic lenition rule in Modern Spanish predicts that the voiced stops /b, d, g/ are lenited, that is, weakened, and are produced as the approximants [β, ð, γ] in certain obligatory contexts: In intervocalic position (e.g., *hada* [ˈaða]) and between a vowel or a liquid (e.g., *alba* [ˈalβa], *arder* [arðerˈ]), except in the case of homorganic [l] + [d] (e.g., *falda* [ˈfalda]) (Dalbor, 1996). However, recent research has redefined this contrast between the voiced stop and its corresponding lenited allophone to indicate that the process of stop lenition is a more complex phenomenon that involves a continuum of consonantal constriction and a wider array of phonetic contexts that includes nasals, laterals, rhotics, sibilants, and vowels (Hualde, Shosted, & Scarpace, 2011). Research has examined the various degrees of relative free airflow—oral constriction resulting in a lenited sound. Martínez Celdrán (2013) argues that, whereas the stop-spirant distinction can be considered to be binary, spirant production is actually gradient. Other researchers have found various degrees of lenition depending on the phonetic context of the sound (Hualde, et al., 2011), on the stress and the quality of the vowels surrounding the sound (Cole, Hualde, & Iskarous, 1999; Eddington, 2011), and on word frequency (Ortega-Llebaria, 2004). Rogers and Alvord (2014) measured the different degrees of oral constriction by using the intensity curve, measured in decibels, and calculating

the difference between the lower and the higher points of the curve at the target sound.

Although it has been observed that stop lenition might also occur in English in weakly accented intervocalic positions in rapid speech, like in “rubber” [ˈrʌβə], “sugar” [ˈʃʊgər], or “you can” [juːn] (Schwegler, Kempff, & Ameal-Guerra, 2010; Ashby & Przedlacka, 2011; Cruttenden, 2014), these occurrences might not be rule-governed as they are in Spanish. The sound [ð] is part of the English phonetic inventory as a phoneme in itself; therefore, if interchanged with its stop counterpart [d], the word meaning changes (e.g., “worthy” vs. “wordy”). The sounds [β] and [ɣ] rarely occur in English and are often misperceived as [v] and [w] respectively due to interlingual interference (Dalbor, 1996; Face & Menke, 2009;). Therefore, English-speaking learners of Spanish tend to pronounce the Spanish word *haba* ([ˈaβa]) as *[ˈaba]; *hada* ([ˈaða]), as *[ˈada]; and *lago* ([ˈlayo]), as *[ˈlago] (Table 1). The mispronunciation of these sounds greatly contributes to a foreign accent in English-speaking L2 Spanish learners, which, by affecting the social acceptability of the speaker, might ultimately have an impact on communication.

Table 1
Lack of Lenition in English-accented Spanish

<i>Spanish Word</i>	<i>Correct Spanish Pronunciation</i>	<i>English-accented pronunciation</i>
<i>haba</i>	[ˈaβa]	*[ˈaba]
<i>hada</i>	[ˈaða]	*[ˈada]
<i>lago</i>	[ˈlayo]	*[ˈlago]

Approximant sounds have always been assumed to emerge later than stops (Jakobson, 1941). For example, Eckman’s (1977) *Markedness Differential Hypothesis* holds that fricatives may be more difficult to acquire due to their higher degree of markedness. According to this hypothesis, linguistic features that are more frequent among other languages are unmarked and relatively easy to acquire, whereas features that are more language-specific and less common are marked and more difficult to acquire. More recently, markedness has also been considered one reason why these sounds are more difficult to acquire by Díaz-Campos (2004). Although the stop phones are considered the base phonemes and their more marked lenited (fricative) sounds their allophonic variants, lenited variants are, in fact, much more common in Spanish than their stop counterparts (Hualde, 2005; Schwegler et al, 2010). The combination of the particulars may inhibit acquisition of these sounds by learners of Spanish as a foreign language.

As early as the 1930s, Polivanov (1931, as cited in Llisterri, 1995) and Trubetzkoy (1939, as cited in Llisterri, 1995) proposed that perception and production are interrelated. Both claimed that the phonemic representation of a

foreign language is filtered through the phonological system of the native language (Llisterri, 1995). Liberman, Cooper, Shankweiler, and Studdert-Kennedy (1967) introduced the *Motor Theory of Speech Perception*, claiming that listeners are capable of inferring the vocal tract gestures used by speakers to produce speech sounds, allowing them to decode and reproduce those sounds.

Various models of L2 phonological acquisition have explored the relationship between perception and production more recently. Flege's (1995) *Speech Learning Model* (SLM) holds that the greater the perceived distance between an L2 sound and its L1 counterpart, the more likely a separate category is established for the L2 sound. Consequently, the L2 sound is acquired more easily, whereas those sounds that are similar (the perceived distance between L2 and the L1 sounds is minimal) cause the most significant difficulties, as learners cannot distinguish the subtle differences and establish separate categories. Similarly, Best's (1995) *Perceptual Assimilation Model* (PAM) predicted that learners associate unfamiliar L2 sounds with familiar L1 sounds and categorize them depending on the degree of similarity, thus affecting the difficulty and speed of acquisition. Kuhl and Iverson's (1995) *Native Language Magnet Model* (NLM) maintained that *prototypes*, or best exemplars, of phonetic L1 categories work as perceptual *magnets*. The nearer an L2 sound is to a magnet, the more it is associated with the L1 language category, making it hard to distinguish from the native sound.

Llisterri's (1995) review of studies regarding the perception-production relationship in second-language acquisition revealed contradictory findings. In line with Rochet (1995, as cited in Llisterri, 1995), Llisterri argued that the relationship between perception and production of L2 sounds is difficult to establish and far from being understood. However, a closer look at the studies reviewed by Llisterri (1995) shows that, despite contradictory results, theorists generally concur that, at low proficiency levels, accurate speech perception seems to precede and affect accurate production. Only at higher levels of study is production likely to be more accurate than perception.

The acquisition of Spanish lenited allophones of voiced stops has been addressed by several studies. Zampini's (1994) study was the first to investigate how native English-speaking L2 learners of Spanish acquire Spanish lenition. Second and fourth-semester students participated in two tasks, one to elicit spontaneous speech and one to read a passage aloud. The tasks explored the effect of speech style on their production. Zampini's results showed that all participants produced lenited sounds in less than 32% of the expected instances. She noted that, although learners might be aware of the lenition rule, its implementation might be hindered by the inability of learners to speak fast enough (the Spanish lenition rule is not applied in tempos slower than *andante*), and by the absence of an obligatory allophonic rule of voiced stop lenition in English.

González-Bueno (1995) studied the production of five native speakers of English learning Spanish as an L2. They were given an oral proficiency interview (OPI) and their productions were analyzed acoustically. Instances of

the obligatory contexts for [β, ð, γ] were identified and used to determine if the lenition rule had been applied. The five learners were found to produce lenited sounds about 50% of the time, a higher rate than the participants in the Zampini study. Both Zampini (1994) and González-Bueno (1995) attributed the difficulties in acquiring the lenited allophones of voiced stops [β, ð, γ] to phonemic and allophonic differences in English. Other studies also point to the difficulties of L2 learners of Spanish acquiring the lenition process. Elliot (1997) attributes this difficulty to the higher degree of markedness of spirant allophones. Díaz-Campos (2004) observed that after a training period, the spirant did not show any improvement, suggesting that lenited sounds are difficult to acquire. Lord (2010) analyzed the oral recordings of two groups of students in a study abroad program. One group had previously taken a Spanish phonetics course and the other one had not. Participants read aloud a list of Spanish words and phrases, each containing the target sounds ([b, d, g, β, ð, γ]). Lord (2010) concluded that explicit instruction seems to have a positive effect on the production of Spanish voiced stops, including their fricative allophones. Other studies have varied findings of the correct lenition of the Spanish voiced stops by English-speaking learners (see Rogers & Alvord (2014) for an extensive review of these studies), observing a tendency for higher proficiency learners to perform better than lower proficiency ones (Face & Menke, 2009).

To contribute to this line of research, the present pilot study was designed to determine the extent to which L2 Spanish learners at various levels of study are aware of the lenition rule of Spanish voiced stops. To that end, English-speaking L2 Spanish students were given perception and production tests. The present study attempts to answer three research questions (RQ):

1. Is there any significant difference in the results of the perception and the production tests by levels of study?
2. Is there a correlation between L2 Spanish learners' perception and production results, as indicated by both tests?
3. Which lenited allophones of voiced stops, bilabial, interdental and velar, are more difficult to perceive and produce by L2 Spanish learners?

METHOD

To answer the first RQ, a quasi-experimental study was performed, in which English-speaking students learning Spanish as an L2 at various levels of study were given perception and production tests. The perception test consisted of Spanish words containing the phonemes /b, d, g/ in intervocalic position, the obligatory phonetic context for the lenition of these sounds. To answer the second RQ of the potential link between production and perception (Bradlow, Pisoni, Akahane-Yamada, & Tohkura, 1997; Llisterri, 1995), participants read aloud a passage containing many instances of the target sounds, and their

production was acoustically analyzed to determine if there was a relationship between learners' perception and production. To answer the third RQ, values of both perception and production from the individual sounds, [β], [ð], and [ɣ], were compared.

Participants

Seventeen native speakers of American English without speech or hearing impairments were recruited to participate in the study on a voluntary basis, via flyers posted in the Spanish Department building. All participants, six males and eleven females with an average age of 23, were undergraduates learning Spanish as an L2 at a Midwestern American University. They had taken within the previous year, or were taking at the time of this study, Spanish courses. Two participants reported a low proficiency level in a third language (French and German) and a few indicated some language contact with native Spanish speakers. Students varied in language proficiency in different skill areas. As there was no valid method to determine their proficiency at the time of recruitment, participants self-reported their Spanish proficiency level, based on the course(s) they had taken or the placement exam results if they were new students and non-beginners of the Spanish language. Subsequently, this study refers to participants' proficiency levels as *levels of study*. Three participants were enrolled in beginning-, eight in intermediate-, and five in advanced-level courses (See table 2).

Table 2
Participants

<i>Level of study</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Sex</i> <i>M / F</i>	<i>Age (Ave.)</i>	<i>Mother Tongue</i>
Novice	3	1 / 2		English
Intermediate	8	3 / 5	23	English
Advanced	6	2 / 4		English

Given the small number of participants, this study should be considered a pilot: the results would only offer a glimpse into students' awareness of the Spanish lenition allophonic rule. A larger sample is required to understand the issue at hand.

Instruments

The stimuli for the perception test were 30 Spanish words containing one of the obligatory phonetic contexts for the lenition of the target sounds (Appendix A). These words were selected randomly, using the sole criteria of containing one of the target sounds [β], [ð], and [ɣ]. For clarity of observation, the sounds appeared between vowels in selected phonetic context. Hualde et al. (2011) found, although referring only to /d/, that the between-vowel context allowed for the least occluded, that is, more lenited allophone.

Four of the words (*lado*, *sabe*, *iba* and *nada*) were considered high-frequency items in Spanish, according to Alonso, Fernández, and Díez (2011), who calculated the frequency from a corpus of 67,979 Spanish words. However, familiarity with the words was not an issue, as the perception task was for the learners to determine whether the words were pronounced accurately while seeing the written form. If participants heard and saw a word spelled in such a way that the graphemes /b/v/, /d/, or /g/ (representing the voiced stops [b], [d] or [g] respectively) were in an obligatory position for lenition, they were expected to recognize the need for applying the lenition rule, assuming they were aware of such rule, regardless of whether the word was familiar to them. Participants heard the lenition rule applied in some instances (for example, the word *dedo* was correctly produced as [ˈdeðo]), but not in others (the word *dedo* was incorrectly produced as *[ˈdedo]). They were asked to identify either as “correct” or “incorrect” in the assumption that, if they were aware of the lenition rule, they would select “correct” when they heard a genuine lenited sound ([β, ð, ɣ]) and “incorrect” when they heard a stop ([b, d, g]) in the obligatory context for a lenited sound. A total of 60 different stimuli were selected: 30 containing the correct lenited sound [β, ð, ɣ], 10 per each sound, and 30 containing the incorrect voiced stop sound [b, d, g], 10 per each sound (Appendix B). The correct and incorrect instances of each word were presented randomly, not side by side. The stimuli were tape-recorded in a soundproof booth. Before the experiment, the intelligibility of the stimuli (provided by a female native speaker of Spanish) was assessed by four native speakers of Spanish, one female and three males, with no training in linguistics. The native listeners were presented with a written word on a slide and the audio recording of the word (Appendix C). They marked an answer sheet to indicate whether the word they heard sounded correct or incorrect (Appendix D). Identification accuracy was 100% for all stimuli.

Participants also read aloud a passage containing many instances of the target sounds. Their production was acoustically analyzed to determine if there was a relationship between learners’ perception and production. The stimuli for the production test (Appendix E) consisted of an 80-word paragraph in Spanish with 38 instances of the target sounds: 13 words for the sound [β], 18 for [ð], and seven for [ɣ]. Only a small number of the words (*lado*, *había*, *nada*, and

todo) were considered frequent in Spanish (Alonso et al., 2011). Familiarity might have affected the accurate pronunciation of these words. Given the small number, however, familiarity was not considered a threat to the design, only a concession to language naturalness.

Procedures

The experiment consisted of a perception test and a production test, both conducted in soundproof booths in a language lab.

Perception Test. Participants from the three levels of study (low, intermediate, and advanced) took the perception test, in which 60 randomized stimuli with an inter-trial-interval of three seconds were presented to them. Before the test, participants received a training session consisting of five test items to familiarize them with the tasks. They were presented a Spanish word on a screen. Once they saw the word, they clicked on it to hear the word pronounced. After listening to the word, they identified the pronunciation as “correct” or “incorrect” on an answer sheet. They were told to respond after each stimulus and encouraged to guess if unsure. The perception test lasted about 10 minutes. All participants were tested within a two-week period.

Production Test. Immediately following the perception test, the participants took the production test. They read aloud a paragraph containing 38 instances of the target sounds. Before recording, participants were given a minute to familiarize themselves with the paragraph. Their productions were recorded via a wired Shure PG58 microphone and a Peavey PV6 Audio Mixer in a Dell Optiplex 790 computer. The participants read aloud the paragraph once. The production test lasted about a minute. All were tested within a two-week period.

Analyses

For the perception test, participants’ responses, coded as “correct” and “incorrect,” were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For the production test, all words containing the target sounds were physically extracted from each recording using the speech-editing program Audacity 2.0.6 (Audacity Team, 2014). An initial aural analysis by the researchers (native speakers of Spanish) was acoustically confirmed via spectrography using Praat—the computer software package for the scientific analysis of speech in phonetics (Boersma & Weenink, 2014).

In this study, the researchers opted for following the binary distinction between the stop and lenited sound. Therefore, a period of silence before the beginning of the vowel formants, indicating an obstruction of airflow, was observed in spectrograms to classify the segment as a stop (“incorrect”). To classify the segment as lenited (“correct”), the researchers looked for the absence of this period of silence and the presence of vowel formants and turbulence, indicating relative free airflow.

In the earlier version of this study (González-Bueno & Quintana-Lara, 2010), the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics—only reporting the percentages of participants' errors in the perception and production tests. Previous results indicated that 1) levels of study had a direct relationship with the awareness of the Spanish lenition rule; that is, the higher the level of study, the fewer errors were made; and 2) there was a direct relationship between the perception and production of the bilabial and velar fricative allophones, but not of interdental. As for levels of difficulty, it was found that the interdental allophone was the easiest to perceive, but the hardest to produce. In this new version, inferential statistics—Kruskal-Wallis statistical tests, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests, and Spearman's rank-order correlation—were performed to obtain more reliable results, which may confirm or reject the results of the previous version.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: Is there any significant difference in the results of the perception and the production tests by levels of study?

RQ 1 addresses the relationship between learners' level of study and perception and production of the target sounds, that is, whether novice, intermediate, and advanced students differ in their perception and production of the lenited allophones of voiced stops. To that end, students took both the perception and the production tests, and the results were compared and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics v. 24.0.

In an ideal setting, an ANOVA test would have been used to test the difference among the three groups in the perception and production tests. Due to the small sample size ($n < 20$), nonparametric statistics—Kruskal-Wallis H Test—was used to avoid incorrect or misleading results. Table 3 summarizes the descriptive statistics for all variables—the mean, standard deviation, standard error of mean, median, percentile, minimum, and maximum for all lenited allophones tested in the perception and production tests.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics

		Perception			
		β	δ	γ	Total
N=17	<u>Valid</u>	17	17	17	17
	<u>Missing</u>	0	0	0	0
Mean		6.53	5.18	4.59	16.29
Std. Error of Mean		.067	.530	.840	1.638
Median		6.00	5.00	4.00	14.00
Mode		7	8	1 ^a	14
Minimum		2	2	0	7
Maximum		13	8	11	28
Percentiles	<u>25</u>	4.50	3.00	1.50	11.00
	<u>50</u>	6.00	5.00	4.00	14.00
	<u>75</u>	8.00	8.00	6.00	22.50
		Production			
		β	δ	γ	Total
N=17	<u>Valid</u>	17	17	17	17
	<u>Missing</u>	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.29	11.00	2.00	17.29
Std. Error of Mean		.635	1.524	.192	1.835
Median		4.00	9.00	2.00	16.00
Mode		6	8 ^a	2	9 ^a
Minimum		0	3	1	7
Maximum		8	21	4	30
Percentiles	<u>25</u>	2.00	6.50	1.50	11.00
	<u>50</u>	4.00	9.00	2.00	16.00
	<u>75</u>	6.00	17.50	2.00	25.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The Kruskal-Wallis H test (see Table 4), also referred to as one-way ANOVA on ranks, is a nonparametric rank-based test used to examine if statistically significant differences between two or more groups exist. This nonparametric test could be used as an alternative to the one-way ANOVA, as well as an extension to the Mann-Whitney U test, to compare multiple independent groups.

Table 4
Kruskal-Wallis H Test
Ranks

	<i>Level of Study</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>
<i>Perception</i>	Novice	3	12.00
	Intermediate	8	8.81
	Advanced	6	7.75
	Total	17	
<i>Production</i>	Novice	3	11.67
	Intermediate	8	9.06
	Advanced	6	7.58
	Total	17	

<i>Test Statistics^{a,b}</i>		
	<i>Perception</i>	<i>Production</i>
<i>Chi-Square</i>	1.450	1.318
<i>df</i>	2	2
<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>	.484	.517

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Level of Study

A Kruskal-Wallis H test did not show any statistically significant difference in student rate of errors among levels of study; for perception: $\chi^2(2) = 1.450, p > 0.05$, with a mean rank score of 12 for the novice, 8.81 for the intermediate, and 7.75 for the advanced level of study; and for production, $\chi^2(2) = 1.318, p > 0.05$, with a mean rank score of 11.67 for the novice, 9.06 for the intermediate, and 7.58 for the advanced level of study.

To examine the data further, a series of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests were performed across the levels of study to observe any significance across the different types of sounds, namely bilabial, interdental, and velar, in the perception and production tests. The results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5
Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test
Ranks

		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
<i>ProdBilabial -</i> <i>PercepBilabial</i>	Negative Ranks	10 ^a	12.30	123.00
	Positive Ranks	7 ^b	4.29	30.00
	Ties	0 ^c		
	Total	17		
<i>ProdDental –</i> <i>PercepDental</i>	Negative Ranks	1 ^d	2.00	2.00
	Positive Ranks	12 ^e	7.42	89.00
	Ties	4 ^f		
	Total	17		
<i>ProdVelar –</i> <i>PercepVelar</i>	Negative Ranks	12 ^g	11.08	133.00
	Positive Ranks	5 ^h	4.00	20.00
	Ties	0 ⁱ		
	Total	17		

- a. *ProdBilabial* < *PercepBilabial*
 b. *ProdBilabial* > *PercepBilabial*
 c. *ProdBilabial* = *PercepBilabial*
 d. *ProdDental* < *PercepDental*
 e. *ProdDental* > *PercepDental*
 f. *ProdDental* = *PercepDental*
 g. *Production* < *PercepVelar*
 h. *Production* > *PercepVelar*
 i. *Production* = *PercepVelar*

Test Statistics^a

	<i>ProdBilabial –</i> <i>Percep Bilabial</i>	<i>ProdDental –</i> <i>Percep Dental</i>	<i>ProdVelar –</i> <i>Percep Velar</i>
<i>Z</i>	-2.211 ^b	-3.046 ^c	-2.699 ^b
<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.027	.002	.007

- a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test
 b. Based on positive ranks.
 c. Based on negative ranks.

Overall, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test shows that the observed difference between the perception and production across the levels of study is significant; $Z=-2.211$, $p < 0.05$ for the bilabial sound; $Z=-3.046$, $p < 0.05$, for the interdental sound; and $Z=-2.699$, $p < 0.05$, for the velar sound. There were observed significance among the different sounds, so post-hoc analyses were performed to explore where the significance lies across the levels of the study. Three Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests were performed and the results showed that the only observed significance was between the perception and production of the interdental sound for the intermediate group, $Z= -2.214$, $p < 0.05$.

Research Question 2: Is there a correlation between L2 Spanish learners’ perception and production results, as indicated by both tests?

To answer RQ2, a Spearman’s rank-order correlation was run to determine the relationship between 17 participants’ rates of error in the perception and production tests.

Table 6

Nonparametric Correlation

		<i>Correlations</i>		<i>Perception</i>	<i>Production</i>
<i>Spearman’s rho</i>	<i>Perception</i>	Correlation Coefficient		1.000	.536*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.	.027
		N		17	17
	<i>Production</i>	Correlation Coefficient		.536*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.027	.
		N		17	17

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As seen in Table 6, there was a moderate, positive correlation between the participants’ perception and production, which was statistically significant ($r_s(15) = .536, p < .05$).

Research Question 3: Which lenited allophones of voiced stops, bilabial, interdental and velar, are more difficult to perceive and produce by L2 Spanish learners?

Due to the small sample size ($N=3$) for the novice level of study, the researchers decided to refrain from using any statistical analysis, as the statistical power and choice of significance levels would be very limited (Corder & Foreman 2014; Noether, 1987). Instead, the percentages of errors were used to answer this research question.

Table 7

Percentages of Errors Made by All Three Levels of Study by Sound

	<i>Perception</i>				<i>Production</i>			
	[β]	[ð]	[ɣ]	Total	[β]	[ð]	[ɣ]	Total
<i>Novice</i>	42	24	40	35	44	71	24	46
<i>Intermediate</i>	33	27	17	26	35	52	27	38
<i>Advanced</i>	28	22	23	24	26	44	33	34
<i>All 3 Levels</i>	34	24	26		35	56	28	

As Table 7 shows, the bilabial sound is the hardest to perceive whereas the interdental is the easiest. On the other hand, the interdental is the hardest to

produce whereas the velar is the easiest. These observations are consistent across all levels of study.

DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: Is there any significant difference in the results of the perception and the production tests by levels of study?

Reviewing the percentages of errors made by the three levels of study groups, a progression from more to fewer errors is observed from the novice to the advanced in both perception (novice, 35%; intermediate, 26%; advanced, 24%) and production (novice 46%; intermediate, 38%; advanced, 34%). However, when comparing the results of the perception and production tests of the three groups, no statistically significant difference was found. Further analysis shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the results of the novice and the intermediate group in that the intermediate group performed significantly better in the production test. Furthermore, descriptive analysis shows that [ɣ] is perceived slightly better than [β] and [ð] from the novice to the intermediate, although this difference is not statistically significant. These results confirm partially the findings from the previous study conducted by two of the authors (González-Bueno & Quintana-Lara, 2010), which claimed that levels of study had an effect on the level of awareness of the Spanish lenition rule. The present analysis shows that this awareness happens only in production and at the intermediate level of study.

The iconic inverted pyramid that the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) uses to represent the cumulative effect of language acquisition (Swender & Vicars, 1999) might explain why a statistically significant production difference is observed between the novice and the intermediate groups, but not between the intermediate and the advanced groups. As learners climb the inverted pyramid towards higher levels of proficiency, it becomes harder to advance to the next level, because the range of abilities increases exponentially in the next higher proficiency level. Therefore, it may take smaller amount of performance improvement for a Novice speaker to become an Intermediate speaker, but much more time and effort for an Intermediate speaker to climb to the Advanced level. Thus, the pronunciation improvement may be more visible between a Novice and an Intermediate speaker than between an Intermediate and an Advanced speaker.

Although students at the intermediate level performed better than those at the novice level, levels of study may not relate to levels of attainment in the perception or production of Spanish [β, ð, ɣ]. Due to the small number of participants, this study cannot pinpoint the reasons for the lack of an overall improvement from lower to higher levels of study. It could be resulted from an absence of pronunciation instruction. Given the effectiveness of pronunciation training evidenced in the literature (Derwing & Rossiter, 2003), even a minimal attention to pronunciation in the early stages of acquisition, and in particular to the Spanish lenition rule, might have sufficed for students to pay attention to its

implementation in the available input and become aware of the rule. This early awareness would allow for the establishment of a new category for the L2 sound, thus avoiding identification with the counterpart L1 sound (Best, 1995; Flege, 1995; Kuhl & Iverson, 1995).

Research Question 2: Is there a correlation between L2 Spanish learners' perception and production results, as indicated by both tests? The results indicate that there is a moderate statistically significant correlation between the perception and production results in all three groups, coinciding with some authors' suggestion that there is a correlation between perception and production (Best, 1995; Flege, 1995; Kuhl & Iverson, 1995). González-Bueno and Quintana-Lara (2010) also concluded that there was a direct relationship between the perception and production of the bilabial and velar fricative allophones, but not of interdental.

Research Question 3: Which lenited allophones, bilabials, interdental, or velars, are more difficult to perceive and produce by L2 Spanish learners?

Perception. As previously explained, no statistical analysis was performed, as the statistical power and choice of significance levels would be extremely limited by the small sample size. Instead, the percentages of errors were used to answer RQ3. Descriptive analysis shows that there is a slight tendency for [ð] to be the easiest of the three allophones to perceive, with a percentage of errors of 24%, closely followed by [ɣ] (26% of errors), whereas [β] falls in the last place (34% of errors). Researchers (Face & Menke, 2009; Zampini, 1994) pointed out that the English phoneme /v/ interfered with the perception of [β], as the grapheme “v” is a plausible spelling of the phoneme /b/ in Spanish. When participants read and heard words containing a “v” (*ave* and *cava* being the only instances present in this study) during the perception test, they labeled the word as “incorrect” because they might have expected it to be pronounced as [v]. On the other hand, when they saw a Spanish word spelled with a “b” and then heard the unfamiliar [β], they might have taken it as a [v], and therefore labeled the word as “incorrect.” This hypothesis falls along the lines of Zampini's (1994) when she speculates that orthography may have played a role in the pronunciation of /b/ by the native English speakers in her study. However, given this study using only two words containing the grapheme “v”, this might not have affected the results of the analysis.

Production. The sound [ð] seemed to be the most difficult to produce, with a percentage of errors of 56%, followed by [β] (35% of errors) and [ɣ] (28% of errors) in this study—contrary to what Macken and Barton (1980) observed that “labial stops are most likely to be lenited” (p. 447). The difficulty for English-speaking learners to acquire Spanish dental sounds and their lenition processes has been reported in many studies (Bowen & Stockwell, 1957; González-Bueno, 1995, 1997, 2006; Macken & Barton, 1980; Zampini, 1994). One explanation is that the sound [d] has an alveolar articulation in English, but

a dental articulation in Spanish. The mere anatomical aspect of this alveolar articulation prevents lenition of this sound, as the weakening of English alveolar sound [d] manifests itself in the process of “flapping” instead of lenition. Another explanation is the phonemic status of [ð] in English (Zampini, 1994). The fact that [d] and [ð] are separate phonemes in English might make native English-speaking learners of L2 Spanish reluctant to produce [ð] in the presence of “d”, for fear of changing the meaning of the word, as in the minimal pair <wordy>/<worthy>.

The answer to RQ3 confirms the previous study by González-Bueno and Quintana-Lara (2010), which showed a tendency for bilabials and velars to be perceived and produced with similar degrees of accuracy in all three levels of proficiency; and perception and production differed the most in the dental place of articulation, with production being more difficult than perception in all three levels of proficiency.

CONCLUSION

The most straightforward conclusion of this pilot study is that the level of study might have an effect on the perception or production of the Spanish lenited sounds at the intermediate level, as the intermediate group in this study produced the sounds significantly better than the novice group. When comparing recognition of the lenition rule (perception) with its application in production, a moderate significant correlation between the perception and production was observed. All three allophones seemed to present similar levels of difficulty in perception and production, except the interdental allophone [ð], which was the easiest to perceived but the most difficult to produce.

Despite the preliminary nature of the results, which may be affected by the small number of participants, this study suggests a slight tendency for [ð] to be the Spanish sound that is more difficult to produce among the three lenited allophones, thus agreeing with results of previous studies (Bowen & Stockwell, 1957; González-Bueno, 1995, 1997, 2006; Macken & Barton, 1980; Zampini, 1994). In terms of perception, [β] might be the most difficult to perceive, but we cannot compare this finding with previous studies, as they did not address perception of [β, ð, γ], only production.

Limitations and Recommendations

The findings of this pilot study cannot be taken as conclusive, due to the following drawbacks. Despite the efforts to recruit participants, participation was low. A larger sample would allow for greater confidence in the results and findings. In addition, participants’ levels of language proficiency were determined by self-reporting. Future studies should consider the use of a valid assessment procedure to determine participant’s levels of proficiency, such as the ACTFL’s Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

Eight instances in which the allophones appeared before a stressed vowel occurred: *llegó* (2), *higuera*, *había*, *mordido*, *podía*, *lavarse*, and *beber*. This might be important because the lenition is greater when followed by an unstressed vowel (Kirchner, 1998) as in *todo* > *todo* > *to*. This circumstance might have decreased the number of correct lenition cases in the participants' productions. Future studies should include exclusively items in which the voiced stop is followed by an unstressed vowel.

Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study indicate that the level of study has an effect on the level of awareness of the Spanish lenition at the intermediate level, and that there might be a relationship between perception and production. Therefore, we recommend Spanish teachers make students aware of the different articulation of the Spanish voiced stops' lenited allophones at the early stages of language learning by exposing them to perception exercises. Because the advanced level students in this study did not perceive or produce these sounds more accurately than the intermediate level students, we could assume that early awareness of different articulation in the interlanguage may increase accuracy in the long term. The effectiveness of well-informed pronunciation instruction has been demonstrated in the literature (Derwing & Rossiter, 2003). The instruction could provide considerable input in the form of perceptive discrimination and identification of the two sounds—the stop and the lenited allophone, ideally in a communicative way and contextualized within the lesson topic. For instance, while teaching Spanish definite and indefinite articles in a lesson on farm animals, the following awareness exercise (Figure 1) could be presented to young learners:

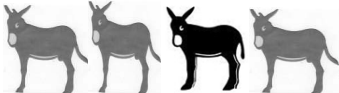

 <p>En la granja hay un burro negro [um'bu<u>r</u>o] (There is a black donkey on the farm)</p>	 <p>El burro negro se llama Platero [el'bu<u>r</u>o] (The black donkey's name is Platero)</p>
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Figure 1:
Visual Introducing [b] versus [β]

Students will hear the two statements (without seeing the phonetic transcriptions) and determine which statement contains the hard (stop) or the soft (lenited) sound. Repeated perception practice, followed by production exercises, will help learners perceive the difference between the two sounds and

become aware of the phonetic context in which each one appears. This type of practice, together with more sophisticated techniques, including but not limited to, spectrographic images and phonetic transcriptions, could be used with more advanced learners. (For an example of a full lesson, see González-Bueno, 2014). We recommend that Spanish teachers incorporate perception and production activities that increase learners' awareness of challenging Spanish-specific processes such as the lenition of voiced stops. This may help students overcome the difficulties presented by the allophones of Spanish voiced stops and become more proficient communicators.

NOTE

1. Levels of study are indicated using non-capitalized words (novice, intermediate, advanced). These words will be capitalized (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced) only when referring to the ACTFL proficiency levels.

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APPENDIX A**WORD LIST**

	[β]
1.	haba
2.	iba
3.	bebe
4.	ave
5.	sabe
6.	baba
7.	boba
8.	cava
9.	lobo
10.	hubo

	[ð]
1.	dedo
2.	nada
3.	oda
4.	codo
5.	lodo
6.	lado
7.	mide
8.	pide
9.	hada
10.	mudo

	[ɣ]
1.	hago
2.	mago
3.	lego
4.	miga
5.	fuga
6.	higo
7.	sigla
8.	logo
9.	daga
10.	llego

APPENDIX B

STIMULI LIST

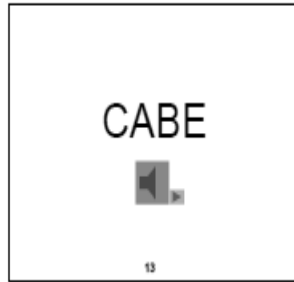
	[β]	[b]
1.	[ˈaβa]	*[ˈaba]
2.	[iβa]	*[iba]
3.	[ˈbeβe]	*[ˈbebe]
4.	[ˈaβe]	*[ˈabe]
5.	[ˈsaβe]	*[ˈsabe]
6.	[ˈbaβa]	*[ˈbaba]
7.	[ˈboβa]	*[ˈboba]
8.	[ˈkaβa]	*[ˈkaba]
9.	[ˈloβo]	*[ˈlobo]
10	[ˈuβo]	*[ˈubo]

	[ð]	[d]
1.	[ˈdeðo]	*[ˈdedo]
2.	[ˈnaða]	*[ˈnada]
3.	[ˈoða]	*[ˈoda]
4.	[ˈkoðo]	*[ˈkodo]
5.	[ˈloðo]	*[ˈlodo]
6.	[ˈlaðo]	*[ˈlado]
7.	[ˈmiðe]	*[ˈmide]
8.	[ˈpiðe]	*[ˈpide]
9.	[ˈaða]	*[ˈada]
10	[ˈmuðo]	*[ˈmudo]

	[ɣ]	[g]
1.	[ˈaɣo]	*[ˈago]
2.	[ˈmaɣo]	*[ˈmago]
3.	[ˈleɣo]	*[ˈlego]
4.	[ˈmiɣa]	*[ˈmiga]
5.	[ˈfuɣa]	*[ˈfuga]
6.	[ˈiɣo]	*[ˈigo]
7.	[ˈsiɣa]	*[ˈsiga]
8.	[ˈloɣo]	*[ˈlogo]
9.	[ˈdaɣa]	*[ˈdaga]
10	[ˈɛɣo]	*[ˈɛgo]

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OF SLIDES OF PERCEPTION EXPERIMENT



APPENDIX D

ANSWER SHEET

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PRACTICE SESSION		
	CORRECT	INCORRECT
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

SESSION 1			SESSION 2		
	CORRECT	INCORRECT		CORRECT	INCORRECT
1			31		
2			32		
3			33		
4			34		
5			35		
6			36		
7			37		
8			38		
9			39		
10			40		
11			41		
12			42		
13			43		
14			44		
15			45		
16			46		
17			47		
18			48		
19			49		
20			50		
21			51		
22			52		
23			53		
24			54		
25			55		
26			56		
27			57		
28			58		
29			59		
30			60		

APPENDIX E

READING PASSAGE

La cueva del lobo

El mago llegó a la cueva todo cubierto de lodo y baba, asustando a las aves posadas en una higuera que había al lado de la entrada. El lobo, antes de darse a la fuga, le había mordido en el codo y en los dedos, y ahora apenas podía sostener la daga con la que intentó defenderse. Llegó hasta el lago para lavarse y beber un poco. No se oía nada, era como si el bosque se hubiera quedado mudo.

- [β] = cueva₍₁₎, cueva₍₂₎, cubierto, baba, aves, había₍₁₎, lobo₍₁₎, lobo₍₂₎, había₍₂₎, lavarse, beber, bosque, hubiera
- [δ] = del, todo, lodo, posadas, lado, entrada, de₍₁₎, de₍₂₎, darse, mordido, codo, dedos, podía, daga, defenderse, nada, quedado, mudo
- [γ] = mago, llegó₍₁₎, llegó₍₂₎, higuera, fuga, daga, lago

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

NOVEMBER

- November 15-18 Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX*
Information: mesana.org/annual-meeting/upcoming.html
- November 16-18 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention (ACTFL), New Orleans, LA*
Information: www.actfl.org
- November 16-18 American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA*
Information: www.aatg.org
- November 16-18 American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Fall Conference, New Orleans, LA*
Information: www.aatj.org

2019

JANUARY

- January 3-6 Modern Language Association (MLA) Convention, Chicago, IL*
Information: www.mla.org/convention
- January 3-6 American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) Session, Chicago, IL*
Information: www.aatg.org
- January 3-7 Linguistic Society of American (LSA) Annual Meeting, New York, NY*
Information: www.linguisticsociety.org

FEBRUARY

- February 7-10 American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL), New Orleans, LA*
Information: www.aatseel.org
- February 28-March 3 California Language Teachers' Association (CLTA) annual conference, San Jose, CA*
Information: cita.net

MARCH

- March 9-12 *American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)*, Atlanta, GA
Information: www.aaal.org
- March 12-15 *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Convention*, Atlanta, GA
Information: www.tesol.org
- March 21-23 *Southern Conference on Language Teaching (SCOLT) Annual Conference*, Myrtle Beach, SC
Information: www.scolt.org

MAY

- May 26-31 *NAFSA: Association of International Educators Annual Conference and Expo*, Washington, DC
Information: www.nafsa.org

NOVEMBER

- November 14-17 *Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting*, Atlanta, GA
Information: mesana.org/annual-meeting/upcoming.html
- November 22-24 *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention (ACTFL)*, Washington, DC
Information: www.actfl.org
- November 22-24 *American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Fall Conference*, New Orleans, LA
Information: www.aatj.org
- November 22-24 *Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA) Annual Conference*, Washington, DC
Information: clta-us.org

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SPECIFICATIONS FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Prepare the manuscripts in accordance with the following requirements:

- Follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style (the 6th Edition)
- Not exceeding 6,000 words (not including reference, appendix, etc.)
- Use double spacing, with margins of one inch on all four sides
- Use Times New Roman font size 12
- Number all pages consecutively
- In black and white only, including graphics and tables
- Create graphics and tables in a Microsoft Office application (such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel)
- Graphics and tables should not exceed 4.5” in width
- Do not use the footnotes and endnotes function in MS Word. Insert a number formatted in superscript following a punctuation mark. Type notes on a separate page
- Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible

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 - Notes (optional)
 - References
 - Tables and figures (optional)
 - Appendixes (optional)

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It should describe, discuss, and evaluate publications that fall into a topical category in foreign language education. The relative significance of the publications in the context of teaching realms should be pointed out. A review article should be 15 to 20 double-spaced pages.

REVIEW

Submit reviews of textbooks, scholarly works on foreign language education, dictionaries, tests, computer software, audio-video materials, computer and mobile applications, and other non-print materials. Point out both positive and negative aspects of the work(s) being considered. In the three to five double-spaced pages of the manuscript, give a clear but brief statement of the work's content and a critical assessment of its contribution to the profession. Keep quotations short. Do not send reviews that are merely descriptive.

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Deadline: Submissions are welcome at any point. Manuscripts received by 31 March will be considered for the spring issue and by 30 September for the fall issue of the journal.

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