

The Impact of Short-Term Study Abroad Programs on L2 Listening Comprehension Skills

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Abstract: *This study investigates the impact of a five-week intermediate Spanish course on the listening comprehension ability of 48 participants in short-term study abroad programs, and compares these groups with 92 peers enrolled in a similar course on the home campus. While both on-campus and study abroad groups experienced similar gains in listening comprehension, there were significant differences in the way learners approached listening tasks: The study abroad group applied primarily top-down and social listening strategies, while the on-campus students favored bottom-up processing. Higher-proficiency students in the study abroad groups had significantly higher comprehension gains, and the study abroad groups achieved higher levels of confidence and self-perceived ability after the treatment. Results outline some of the benefits and limitations of short-term foreign sojourns for beginner and low-intermediate language learners.*

Key words: *learning strategies, listening comprehension, short-term foreign sojourns, strategy training, study abroad*

Language: *Spanish, relevant to all languages*

Introduction

There is no question that American undergraduates are becoming more and more interested in foreign study. According to the Institute for International Education's (IIE) annual Open Doors report (Institute for International Education, 2006), the

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number of U.S. students studying abroad has more than doubled in the past decade. Indeed, from the academic year 2003–2004 to 2004–2005 (the last year for which data are available), the number increased by nearly 8%. And although the United Kingdom continues to be the leading destination for U.S. students, attracting nearly 16% of the total, approximately three quarters of sojourners seek out a destination where English is not the primary language, and where they will therefore face linguistic challenges, whether inside or outside the classroom. Traditional wisdom among educators and administrators has supported the idea that such a study abroad experience must be beneficial to language learners because it affords them a unique opportunity that is not available at home, namely some level of immersion among native speakers.

As a response to this powerful assumption about the benefits of foreign sojourns, over the past 30 years a growing body of research has developed on the impact of study abroad programs on second language proficiency (Cubillos & Robbins, 2004). Thanks to those investigations, we have learned that study abroad participants tend to achieve higher levels of oral proficiency, native-like sociolinguistic skills, and enhanced metacognitive awareness (Freed, 1998). These studies also have informed us of the significance of environmental factors (such as living arrangements and degree of interaction with the target language community) in determining the effectiveness of study abroad programs (Guntermann, 1995; St. Martin, 1980; Wilkinson, 1998), as well as the substantial role played by personal variables such as initial proficiency level and personality traits (Brecht & Robinson, 1995; Lapkin, Hart, & Swain, 1995). While there is increasing evidence about the global benefits of study abroad programs, there is still a dearth of data on how the foreign immersion setting might affect specific aspects of language learning (Segalowitz et al., 2004).

As background for this investigation into the impact of a short-term study abroad program¹ on second language (L2) listening comprehension skills, we outline below the data available on the role of individual differences in the determination of study abroad gains, and the impact of study abroad on specific linguistic skills and self-confidence.

As previously indicated, the potential benefits of study abroad are considerable, but its effects do not appear to be uniform across individuals (DeKeyser, 1991; Segalowitz et al., 2004). Research findings suggest that these programs may benefit students with a more solid grammar and reading base (Brecht, Davidson, & Ginsberg, 1995), and those with initially lower language proficiency (Freed, 1995). Gender and personality type also may be factors that mediate gain in study abroad programs, however the evidence available on this subject is inconclusive (Siegal, 1995).

Research on the impact of linguistic immersion on the development of specific learning strategies is very limited, and the few existing studies indicate that foreign sojourns may have little or no impact on strategy use. Miller and Ginsberg (1995), as well as Huebner (1995), did not find any significant differences in learning strategies between abroad and home-based groups of Japanese learners, explaining this as a tendency of immersion students to recreate classroom interactions in the target language environment. In a diary study of an English speaker in Argentina, Carson and Longhini (2002) also document the tendency of learners to recreate classroom behaviors (such as writing out verb lists, studying grammar books, etc.) in immersion situations.

The impact of study abroad on language learning often has been studied in tandem with its influence on students' personal development. This may be due to the common (and largely unfounded) assumption among educators that an overseas academic experience, with its inherent challenges and adventures, automatically will lead to positive changes in various dimensions of

students' personal growth. And yet, despite this longstanding hypothesis, research in this area has yielded varied, inconclusive, and sometimes counterintuitive results. In this study, we focus specifically on students' perceived confidence levels with respect to language learning, yet most work thus far has concentrated on more general aspects of confidence, usually as a subset of personal development characteristics. Juhasz and Walker (1988), for example, focused on the effect of study abroad on students' self-esteem and self-efficacy, and found that the on-campus control group gave themselves higher ratings in these areas than those who went abroad for one semester. Yachimowicz (1988), too, found that the overseas group that was studied remained relatively consistent on a self-efficacy measure, while the control group demonstrated more positive attitudes about themselves after their junior year. A seminal study by Burn, Carlson, Useem, and Yachimowicz (1990) reported no significant differences between abroad and on-campus groups in levels of self-confidence after a sojourn abroad. Such counterintuitive findings often are explained by positing that students abroad are faced with greater daily challenges than their peers at home, and therefore are more aware of their own shortcomings. On the other hand, Kuh and Kauffmann (1985) and Thomlison (1991) report confidence gains in their study abroad groups, which supports traditional thinking and anecdotal evidence about the advantage of such experiences. In short, contradictory findings in this area of research hinder the development of a cogent theory, and specific data with regard to confidence and language learning are sorely lacking in the field.

In the past decade, the popularity of the traditional junior year abroad among American undergraduates has been waning, as more and more students choose to participate in short-term overseas programs (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). IIE reports that from the academic year 1993–1994 to 2003–2004, the percentage of U.S. students participating in year-long programs abroad

declined from 14.8% to 6.2%, while those studying abroad for less than a semester or quarter increased from 38.2% to 51.6% (IIE, 2006). And yet the rate of research has not kept pace with the growth in popularity of short-term programs, which now define the overseas experience for more than half of all American study abroad students. The overwhelming majority of research has focused on sojourns lasting at least one semester (Duperron, 2006), and much data collection, even on short-term programs, has focused on intercultural competency and affective and psychological aspects of the experience, often without a control group at home for comparison (Jones & Bond, 2000; Sell, 1983).

Despite the common assumption that short-term immersion programs abroad are beneficial to students in multiple ways, more research is needed on the actual impact of these programs on students' foreign language proficiency, and on the mechanisms that may enhance or interfere with L2 acquisition. Therefore, this investigation was undertaken to study the impact of a five-week intermediate Spanish course on participants in two short-term study abroad programs, and to compare these groups with peers enrolled in a similar course on the home campus. Considering the significance of listening comprehension in the acquisition of a new language, we have chosen it as a valuable point of departure to understand how foreign immersion may influence the way learners process crucial aural input.

Research on Listening Comprehension

It is widely agreed in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) that linguistic input is required by the learner to build, process, and internalize the structure of the L2 (Pica, 2003). Numerous studies have been dedicated to exploring how oral and written input is analyzed by the learner, and determining ways in which instruction can enhance the learner's ability to process and internalize this input (Gass, 1997; Long & Robinson, 1998; Schmidt, 1995;

VanPatten, 2002). The preponderance of evidence collected to date suggests that listening and reading are fundamental core skills required for successful L2 acquisition, and that sound pedagogy must address the question of how to consolidate and develop these skills in the target language (Saville-Troike, 2006).

Although second language learners have extensive listening comprehension skills in their native languages (L1), transfer of their listening skills from L1 to L2 is not automatic and ultimately may depend on learners' ability to deploy specific coping or compensatory strategies. Comprehensive reviews of the studies on the subject of listening strategies have been provided by Rubin (1994), Chamot (1995), and Berne (2004). (See Table 1 for a summary of findings.) These studies highlight the differences among language learners in their abilities to process spoken language, and provide information on the different cognitive and affective factors that underlie those differences.

Of particular significance to this investigation is the theoretical framework provided by O'Malley, Chamot, and Küpper (1989), Bacon (1992), and Vandergrift (2003). O'Malley and colleagues define strategies as conscious "mental processes that are activated in order to understand new information that is ambiguous or to learn or retain new information" (p. 422). They classify these strategies into three categories: metacognitive (strategies that involve knowing about learning and controlling learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning task), cognitive (strategies that involve manipulation of information through rehearsal, grouping, or elaboration), and social/affective (strategies that involve interaction with another person or self-assurance to complete the learning task).

Bacon (1992) used O'Malley et al.'s theoretical framework to investigate listening comprehension in a foreign language learning situation, and developed an empirically based inventory of strategies

specific to listening comprehension tasks (see Appendix A).

Finally, Vandergrift's extensive exploration of the role of strategies in the development of listening comprehension skills led him to the formulation of a model of the skilled second language listener (2003, 2005). According to Vandergrift, the difference between more- and less-skilled listeners resides in the type of listening strategies deployed (more-skilled listeners use less translation, more metacognitive strategies, more questioning, elaboration, and more monitoring); he further suggests that instruction should promote the strategic processing observed among successful listeners (planning, monitoring, and evaluating) (Vandergrift, 2003).

The idea of a strategies-based instructional model for the development of listening skills has also been proposed by other researchers (Cohen, 2000; Mendelsohn, 1994, 1998), and has been specifically applied to the training of study abroad participants by researchers at the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota (Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2004). CARLA's research on the impact of this instructional model suggests that the deployment of speaking and listening strategies indeed may become more important and more frequent in the study abroad context due to enhanced opportunities to interact with native speakers. However, these researchers also recognize that additional research is needed to fully understand the nature and extent of this phenomenon (Cohen, Paige, Shively, Emert, & Hoff, 2005).

With this theoretical framework in mind, our study investigated the behaviors and mental processes conducive to successful listening comprehension in a second language. In particular, the study sought to establish the impact of the learning environment on strategy use and comprehension. Special attention was given to any changes in listening comprehension strategies that may take place as a result of

TABLE 1

Research on Listening Comprehension Strategies

Strategy Use as a Distinguishing Factor Between More- and Less-Proficient Listeners		
Researcher	Year	Main Findings
DeFilippis	1980	More-proficient learners report more often the use of the following strategies: automatic flow of the auditory stimulus, contextual inferencing, grammar strategy, visualization, cognate recognition, role identification.
Martin	1982	Not all strategies are used by all learners, and the strategies that are employed are applied differently and with different results.
Fujita	1985	Three factors discriminate between more- and less-proficient listeners: self-confidence, focus/search for meaning, active participation.
Murphy	1987	More-proficient listeners use a wide variety of strategies; focus on rhetorical organization and main ideas. Less-proficient listeners are "text-heavy."
O'Malley et al.	1989	More-proficient listeners monitor their attention during the perceptual phase; attend to larger chunks and use inferencing during the parsing phase; and are more likely to elaborate, make inferences, and relate information to their own experiences during the utilization phase.
Rost and Ross	1991	More-proficient listeners are more likely to use forward inferencing and continuation signals, while lexical and global reprise are more likely to be used by less-proficient listeners.
Vandergrift	1997a, 1998	Much greater use of metacognitive strategies is observed among more-proficient listeners (especially comprehension monitoring and problem identification). Less-proficient listeners get bogged down by ineffective surface processing strategies (such as translation).
Moreira	1996	High-level listening comprehension is associated with more use and awareness of strategies.
Chao	1997	More-proficient listeners are more motivated and use strategies more frequently.
Young	1997	Learners show similar patterns of strategy use, but some have greater repertoires of individual strategies than others.
Goh	1998	More-proficient listeners use a wider range of tactics (specific actions or steps to solve the listening comprehension problem).

immersion in the target language community during a study abroad program, and to the extent to which those changes correlate with different levels of attainment in the area of listening comprehension.

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses that guided this research were:

1. Students in short-term study abroad programs achieve higher gains in listening comprehension than on-campus students enrolled in the same language courses.

TABLE 1 *continued*

Effects of Listening Strategy Instruction		
Researcher	Year	Results
Mendelson	1994	Students should be trained to transfer listening strategies from L1. Instruction should include a wide range of passage types and purposes for listening.
Vandergrift	1996, 1997b, 1999	Steps for strategic instruction include: 1) presentation of expressions to indicate lack of comprehension and request assistance, 2) use of training videos to observe and discuss strategy use, and 3) model and practice of strategies through cooperative tasks.
Thomson and Rubin	1996	Learners receiving strategy instruction score significantly higher on a video listening test. Listening instruction must be differentiated by level (high- and low-proficiency listeners have different needs and knowledge bases).
Field	1998	Research into strategy training is inconclusive. Strategies are unconscious, and training may not benefit weak strategy users. Instruction should focus on listening subskills (recognition of word boundaries, detection of sentence constituents, etc.).
Cohen et al.	2005	Deployment of speaking and listening strategies may indeed become more important and more frequent in the study abroad context due to enhanced opportunities to interact with native speakers.
Strategy Use as an Explanation for Shortcomings in Listening Comprehension		
Researcher	Year	Results
Vogely	1995	Learners resort to bottom-up strategies when communication breaks down.
Goh	2000	Half of the problems occur at the initial phase of the listening process (perception).
Hassan	2000	Learners are stuck on analyzing each word individually.

2. Participation in a short-term study abroad program affects the learners' choice of listening comprehension strategies.
3. Students in short-term study abroad programs achieve higher confidence levels in their listening comprehension skills.

Subjects

The subjects in this study were traditional-age students (18 to 22 years of age) enrolled in an intermediate-level (third-semester) intensive Spanish course required for graduation for about half of the undergraduates at a four-year doctoral/research institution (see Table 2). The course took place during

a five-week optional winter term, and was part of the institution's regular offerings on campus and as part of its short-term study abroad programs in Spain and Costa Rica.

Students in all locations used the same syllabus, textbook, and ancillaries, and were exposed to the same pedagogical approach for approximately the same number of instructional hours. For obvious reasons, students were not randomly assigned treatments, and instead self-selected into the on-campus or abroad group. All students enrolled in the nine sections of the course were asked to complete a voluntary pre- and postcourse written survey instrument

TABLE 2

Demographics

Category	Subcategory	Abroad	On Campus
Total Count		48	92
Gender	male	35%	57%
	female	65%	44%
GPA	> 3.50	26%	11%
	2.0–2.50	9%	22%
Year	freshman	48%	24%
	junior/senior	25%	53%
Years of Spanish in School	1–2	21%	28%
	> 4	17%	10%

and take a pre- and postcourse listening comprehension test.

In the on-campus group, 92 of 103 enrolled students completed both instruments (89% response rate), while 48 of the 49 students abroad completed both instruments (98% response rate). There were no significant differences between the respondent groups with regard to previous college Spanish courses or self-reported out-of-class experience with Spanish.

Procedures

On Campus

At the beginning of the course, researchers visited each class section while instructors left the room. Before the instruments were administered, students were told that their participation was voluntary, and that their responses would remain confidential and have no bearing on their course grades. Each student's response sheets were marked with a confidential identifying number so that pre- and posttests of individuals could be matched.

For the listening comprehension assessment, researchers played a cassette tape according to the instructions provided, and students marked responses on their worksheets. The written survey then was admin-

istered. All materials then were collected by the researchers.

The same procedures were followed for the posttreatment assessments at the end of the course.

Abroad

The instruments were administered at both classroom locations abroad by an advanced undergraduate and a graduate student serving as assistants to the study abroad programs; neither had a teaching role. Each assistant carried the prepared test packets abroad, followed the same procedures as those followed on campus, and delivered the packets to the researchers upon their return to campus five weeks later.

Instrumentation

For the assessment of comprehension pre- and posttreatment, the listening portion of the Spanish Advanced Placement Test (College Board and Educational Testing Service, 2003) was used. This instrument was selected due to its thorough validation, and because it provided a practical and reliable standardized measure of comprehension across the participating sites. The test consisted of 30 multiple choice items divided into three parts: dialogues (10

questions), short narratives (7 questions), and long narratives (13 questions).

Students were asked to listen to a recording and then answer questions presented either verbally via cassette tape (17 questions) or in writing (13 questions). The length of the examination was approximately 30 minutes. Due to lack of time, trained staff, and equipment at the off-campus sites, no interactive listening component was included.

To assess the use of strategies during the listening task, a Metacognitive Awareness Strategy Questionnaire (MASQ) was used to elicit students' reported self-perception of their listening comprehension strategies (Vogely, 1995). This questionnaire consisted of 28 statements about personal deployment of listening comprehension strategies under different circumstances, to which students were asked to react by expressing agreement or disagreement using a 6-point Likert scale (see Appendix B). The first 17 statements asked students to indicate their general comprehension strategies when processing aural L2 input, and the last 11 required them to report specifically on their compensatory strategies (those deployed when confronted with breakdowns in the comprehension of aural L2 input).

The pre- and posttreatment surveys also included a self-assessment of Spanish skills, consisting of 10 questions aimed at eliciting students' self-perceived linguistic competency, both before and after the course. The questionnaire included 7 general questions about Spanish skills and 3 questions specific to listening comprehension (see Appendix C). Although the use of self-reported measures has its detractors (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977), it is widely viewed as an acceptable means of data collection, particularly when researching nonobservable mental or psychological processes (Norwick, Choi, & Ben-Shachar, 2002).

To account for possible affective differences due to varied classroom environments, the posttreatment questionnaire also included 16 items that asked students to characterize their classroom instructor

and overall course experience on an adjectival scale (see Appendix D).

Finally, students were asked to provide brief, open-ended responses to three questions about their course, language learning, and perceived changes in L2 skills over the previous month.

Data Analysis

Because the pre- and posttreatment scores (y_{pre} and y_{post}) of each individual student are repeated measurements of the same subject, they were not independent of each other, and it would not be valid to use any two-sample tests. Therefore a new variable (D), representing the difference between the scores, was constructed:

$$D = y_{post} - y_{pre}$$

The variable D thus derived had no issues of dependence.

To determine whether there was a significant increase in the students' posttreatment scores, it was necessary to test whether $D > 0$. A t test sufficed in this case since the whole study had more than 30 subjects ($N = 140$). The total sample was further divided into two subgroups by site (on-campus vs. abroad), and a two-sample t test was used to determine whether there was a difference in score improvements between the two groups.

The entire sample was also grouped by performance: Those students who scored at least 7 (of 10 possible) points on the dialogue portion of the listening comprehension test were defined as high-performing students. There was interest in testing whether this group achieved different levels of improvements by site. After this second cut, the data became thinner. The abroad group had only 13 high-performing students, while the on-campus group had 16. A nonparametric test (the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon rank test) was employed to compare the differences in scores. A significance level of .05 was chosen to compare with the p values of each test.

Before any detailed analysis was done, the reliability of the self-designed instru-

ment (MASQ) was tested. The battery of items was tested on a pilot group prior to the study, and the same reliability test also was conducted using the data gathered from the study. In both instances the instrument demonstrated an acceptable level of reliability, with most items testing at .70 or greater.

The analysis of self-assessment was more complex in the sense that 1) it was necessary to measure an intangible with a Likert scale, and 2) in some cases more than one item attempted to elicit similar responses from students (i.e., several items attempted to tease out students' reported use of the same listening comprehension strategy). The first issue was addressed through sample size, since the large number of observations was more likely to reveal trends (if any), and also by averaging out the randomness of individuals.

Factor analysis was used to tackle the second problem since it examines the correlation (or the variance-covariance) matrix of each battery of questions, and extracts a much smaller number of uncorrelated themes. Factor analysis was also the main tool used in data reduction. Separate factor analyses were done for each subsample of interest to determine whether there were changes in listening strategies pre- and posttreatment, and whether high-performing students employed different strategies from the rest.

Results

At the end of the course, both groups of students, abroad and on-campus, demonstrated significant gains on two of the three sections of the listening comprehension assessment: dialogue and short narrative ($p < .05$); however, there was no significant improvement in their scores in the long narrative section (see Table 3). Contrary to the first research hypothesis, in general there was no significant difference in the degree of improvement between the two groups. That is, during the one-month period of the study, students made equal progress in the development of L2 listening comprehension skills, regardless of whether they completed the course on campus or abroad (see Tables 3, 4, and 5).

The only subgroup for which a statistical difference emerged was the high-performing group: those students who scored at least 7 (of 10 possible) points on the dialogue portion of the listening comprehension test. Students in this subgroup who studied abroad demonstrated significantly higher gains in the long narrative section than their peers who remained on campus (see Tables 6 and 7).

Factor analyses of responses to the MASQ showed that the abroad and on-campus groups already were employing different listening comprehension strategies at the outset of the course. Prior to participat-

TABLE 3

T-Test for the Differences in Scores

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Difference in Dialogue	-1.34	1.890	.184	-1.71	-.977	-7.279	104	.000
Difference in Short Narratives	-.64	1.409	.136	-.91	-.375	-4.733	106	.000
Difference in Long Narratives	-.04	1.316	.132	-.30	.222	-.305	98	.761

TABLE 4

Group Statistics of the Differences in Scores

	Location	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Difference in Dialogue	abroad	46	1.6304	1.92479	.28380
	on campus	59	1.1186	1.84844	.24065
Difference in Short Narratives	abroad	46	.7609	1.23261	.18174
	on campus	61	.5574	1.53324	.19631
Difference in Long Narratives	abroad	38	-.0263	1.32516	.21497
	on campus	61	.0820	1.32029	.16905

TABLE 5

T Test for the Differences in Scores by Location (Abroad/On Campus)

		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Difference in Dialogue	Equal variances assumed	1.382	103	.170	.5118	.37021	-.22244	1.24602
	Equal variances not assumed	1.375	94.908	.172	.5118	.37209	-.22691	1.25049
Difference in Short Narratives	Equal variances assumed	.738	105	.462	.2035	.27578	-.34333	.75031
Difference in Long Narratives	Equal variances assumed	.761	104.537	.449	.2035	.26752	-.32698	.73396
	Equal variances not assumed	-.396	97	.693	-.1083	.27324	-.65059	.43402

ing in this investigation, the abroad group demonstrated a dominance of metacognitive strategies such as "set self-up for the task" and "focus attention" (sample items on MASQ included: "I clear my mind and tell myself to stay focused," "I make sure that the conditions are right for listening," and "I mentally check my understanding over and over"). Pretreatment, the abroad group also employed social strategies (such as "appeal

for help" and "ask for confirmation"), as well as top-down cognitive strategies (such as "predicting" and "summarizing"), particularly when confronted with comprehension blocks. For this group, however, bottom-up cognitive strategies (such as "listening for specific words" or "recognizing prefixes, roots, and suffixes") were less important overall (see Tables 8 and 9).

TABLE 6

Statistics on the Ranks of the High-Performing Subgroup

	Location	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Pretreatment: Dialogues	abroad	13	15.54	202.00
	on campus	16	14.56	233.00
	total	29		
Pretreatment: Short Narratives	abroad	13	14.15	184.00
	on campus	16	15.69	251.00
	total	29		
Pretreatment: Long Narratives	abroad	13	13.46	175.00
	on campus	16	16.25	260.00
	total	29		
Posttreatment: Dialogues	abroad	12	12.71	152.50
	on campus	11	11.23	123.50
	total	23		
Posttreatment: Short Narratives	abroad	12	13.04	156.50
	on campus	12	11.96	143.50
	total	24		
Posttreatment: Long Narratives	abroad	12	9.46	113.50
	on campus	12	15.54	186.50
	total	24		

TABLE 7

Test Statistics for the High-Performing Subgroup

	Preretreatment: Dialogues	Preretreatment: Short Narratives	Preretreatment: Long Narratives	Posttreatment: Dialogues	Posttreatment: Short Narratives	Posttreatment: Long Narratives
Mann-Whitney U	97.000	93.000	84.000	57.500	65.500	35.500
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.740	.615	.360	.591	.700	.027
Exact Sig. [2 x (1-tailed Sig.)]	.779	.650	.398	.608	.713	.033a

Note: Not corrected for ties

For the on-campus group, on the other hand, bottom-up cognitive strategies occupied a place of importance, and students'

frustration with L2 learning was evident. For example, on-campus students were more likely to try to identify grammatical

TABLE 8

**Factor Analysis of General Listening Strategies
(Abroad Group Pretreatment)**

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Keep telling self to stay focused and keep up	.866	-3.127E-02	2.461E-02	-3.783E-02	.119
Clear mind and stay focused	.773	-8.042E-02	.269	7.509E-02	.109
Mentally check understanding	.745	.149	-2.514E-02	.110	1.653E-02
Try to summarize	.743	.191	.104	.233	-2.648E-02
Conditions right for listening	.636	-.242	.364	.105	.150
Try to understand phrase by phrase	.592	.567	-.275	6.042E-02	.208
Listen for details then piece together	-8.672E-02	.763	.145	5.956E-02	6.577E-02
Translate as much as possible	8.025E-02	.747	.139	9.885E-02	.155
Try to identify grammatical structures	.403	.455	-.167	.361	-.339
Listen for known words	9.163E-02	8.032E-02	.919	-9.094E-02	6.580E-03
Listen for key words	.179	.173	.870	.114	.159
Don't worry about details; goal is overall meaning	2.437E-02	.118	3.437E-02	-.812	9.738E-02
Try to understand meaning of each word	.228	.153	-3.459E-02	.784	4.455E-02
Listen to speaker pronunciation	.162	.337	.173	.661	.172
Look for topic/summary sentences	1.156E-02	.175	-5.857E-02	9.184E-02	.739
Piece together known words	9.942E-02	.186	.124	-.140	.737
Guess what speaker will say based on topic	.301	-.309	.219	.145	.567

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

TABLE 9

**Factor Analysis Strategies When Not Understanding L2 Input
(Abroad Group Pretreatment)**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Ask for help	.791	-.271	.260	.248
Ask for confirmation	.780	6.795E-02	.112	.236
Ask speaker to repeat	.771	-4.034E-03	2.970E-02	-.340
Keep listening and hope for clarification	.618	.283	-.405	.203
Guess words based on context	.615	3.788E-03	-.395	.155
Try to calm down and gain confidence	9.250E-03	.848	.106	-6.402E-03
Lose immediate train of concentration	-6.302E-02	.750	.300	1.393E-02
Often give up trying to comprehend	-5.822E-02	.207	.732	5.468E-02
Think about segment and listen passively	.118	.270	.718	-.106
Try to remember words to look up later	.368	7.355E-02	2.846E-02	.812
Get flustered and frustrated	.157	.525	.280	-.567

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

structures, understand the meaning of each word, and listen to the speaker's pronunciation than their study abroad counterparts. When confronted with comprehension challenges, the on-campus students were more likely to express frustration: "I often give up trying to comprehend," "I lose my immediate train of concentration," and "I tend to get flustered and frustrated." Evidently, bottom-up and affective strategies dominated in this group, while top-down, metacognitive, and social strategies were generally less important (see Tables 10 and 11).

After the course, social and top-down cognitive strategies became preeminent among the abroad group, supplanting metacognitive strategies in importance (see Tables 12 and 13). Bottom-up cognitive strategies continued to prevail among the

on-campus students, although their sense of frustration with L2 learning was diminished, and social strategies gained in status (see Tables 14 and 15). These findings suggest that the study abroad environment played a role in the promotion or reinforcement of social and top-down comprehension strategies, which upholds the second hypothesis of this investigation.

Pre- and posttreatment results of the skills self-assessment questionnaire (see Appendix C and Table 16) yielded like results for the two groups on most items, including two of the three listening comprehension items (items #1 and #2). However, the students abroad rated their comprehension skills as significantly stronger than their on-campus counterparts (item #8), demonstrating an overall higher confidence level. In fact, while the two groups

TABLE 10

**Factor Analysis of General Listening Strategies
(On-Campus Group Pretreatment)**

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Try to identify grammatical structures	.767	.143	4.038E-02	-.109	-.215
Try to understand meaning of each word	.736	-3.830E-03	.236	-5.362E-02	5.931E-02
Listen to speaker pronunciation	.719	2.025E-03	-4.638E-02	.175	8.933E-02
Mentally check understanding	.611	.269	.293	-3.214E-02	5.752E-03
Try to summarize	.580	.108	.159	.210	.269
Try to understand phrase by phrase	.427	.298	.105	-.388	.113
Guess what speaker will say based on topic	-9.458E-02	.761	.164	-2.902E-03	.112
Clear mind and stay focused	.204	.727	3.876E-02	.108	7.610E-02
Conditions right for listening	9.347E-02	.674	.176	.384	-.249
Keep telling self to stay focused and keep up	.339	.620	.185	4.617E-02	.238
Listen for details then piece together	2.141E-03	.200	.793	9.315E-02	-6.533E-03
Translate as much as possible	.407	-2.184E-02	.674	.115	.136
Look for topic/summary sentences	.298	.266	.582	5.909E-02	5.059E-02
Listen for key words	4.780E-02	.143	.165	.789	-3.527E-02
Listen for known words	4.182E-02	.161	3.961E-02	.737	.275
Piece together known words	.182	4.477E-02	-9.003E-02	.326	.760
Don't worry about details; goal is overall meaning	-8.675E-02	.200	.408	-.191	.657

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

TABLE 11

**Factor Analysis of Strategies When Not Understanding L2 Input
(On-Campus Group Pretreatment)**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Often give up trying to comprehend	.868	-7.800E-02	-6.489E-02	-.125
Lose immediate train of concentration	.847	8.578E-02	8.057E-02	.257
Get flustered and frustrated	.828	4.524E-02	-2.714E-02	.303
Think about segment and listen passively	.620	-3.320E-02	.551	-.372
Ask for help	-8.563E-02	.901	6.020E-02	-5.418E-02
Ask for confirmation	9.562E-02	.862	.130	-1.444E-02
Ask speaker to repeat	1.501E-03	.687	5.538E-02	.356
Guess words based on context	-6.330E-02	9.995E-02	.845	.115
Keep listening and hope for clarification	-7.332E-02	-.130	.674	.461
Try to remember words to look up later	.128	.314	.605	2.669E-03
Try to calm down and gain confidence	.310	.161	.231	.801

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

responded similarly to item #9 (rating one's demeanor in Spanish on a continuum of nervous/confident) at the beginning of the course, by the end of the course the abroad group reported higher levels of confidence. Moreover, by the end of the course, the overseas students indicated that they found a Spanish-only environment more exciting than their peers at home (item #6), and that they found interacting in Spanish to be more rewarding (item #10, $p < .05$). On the basis of these results, the third hypothesis of this investigation is upheld.

The abroad and on-campus groups reported no difference in attitude toward their instructors at the end of the course ($p < .05$). They also rated the classroom experience similarly except for two items: The abroad group considered the course to be somewhat more difficult and more quickly

paced than did their peers on campus (see Tables 17 and 18).

An iterative qualitative analysis of the short-answer responses yielded several noteworthy findings. First, the abroad students were more likely to respond to the short-answer items (100% response rate vs. 67% for the on-campus group), and they produced more text, that is, they had more to say about their language learning experience than their counterparts at home. Second, in contrast to their actual performance, students in the abroad group were more likely to report perceived improvement in listening comprehension than those on campus (33% vs. 11%). Finally, 40% of students abroad referred to elements of the out-of-classroom environment as being helpful for the development of listening comprehension skills, with the

TABLE 12

**Factor Analysis of General Listening Strategies
(Abroad Group Posttreatment)**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Try to summarize	.849	.230	3.597E-02	1.360E-02
Listen for details then piece together	.766	.157	.299	5.413E-02
Piece together known words	.670	4.298E-02	-.185	.116
Listen for key words	.670	.135	-2.157E-03	-9.076E-02
Look for topic/summary sentences	.669	.115	.204	.110
Keep telling self to stay focused and keep up	.173	.839	-3.803E-02	-2.891E-02
Mentally check understanding	9.236E-02	.772	7.032E-02	.212
Try to understand phrase by phrase	.185	.641	.345	-9.002E-02
Translate as much as possible	.279	.540	-4.519E-02	.469
Try to identify grammatical structures	-1.860E-02	.116	.855	6.563E-03
Listen to speaker pronunciation	.348	7.127E-02	.641	.378
Try to understand meaning of each word	.115	.273	-2.949E-02	.804
Don't worry about details; goal is overall meaning	.143	.218	-.359	-.660

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

home stay experience perceived as highly influential. Only 3% of on-campus students considered out-of-class experience a contributor to their development of L2 listening comprehension skills.

Discussion

Contrary to the researchers' expectations, the results of this study do not support the hypothesis that students who take an intermediate-level Spanish course as part of a short-term sojourn abroad in an L2 immersion setting demonstrate higher gains in listening comprehension than peers who enroll in the same course on campus. Despite

the fact that students abroad have a vested, personal interest in rapidly improving their comprehension skills, evidence regarding the certainty of linguistic gains in general in a native speaker setting is far from persuasive (Segalowitz et al., 2004; Wilkinson, 1998). Indeed, the results described here support this uncertainty. If study abroad students do in fact make greater gains in listening comprehension, either consciously or unconsciously, those skills do not appear to transfer to the formal test-taking setting, at least not with the noninteractive instrument used in this study.

TABLE 13

**Factor Analysis of Strategies When Not Understanding L2 Input
(Abroad Group Posttreatment)**

	Component	
	1	2
Ask for confirmation	.829	2.078E-02
Keep on listening and hope for clarification	.787	-2.442E-02
Ask for help	.761	-.133
Ask for speaker to repeat	.733	-.178
Try to remember words to look up later	.722	.175
Guess words based on context	.645	-3.717E-02
Try to calm down and gain confidence	.421	.405
Lose immediate train of concentration	-6.376E-02	.898
Get flustered and frustrated	-8.499E-02	.856
Often give up trying to comprehend	-.319	.740
Think about segment and listen passively	.195	.726

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

The study abroad experience seems to have linguistic benefit for one subgroup, namely those students who start the program with a higher level of competency. In this case, those students were able to make more significant gains in listening comprehension than their high-achieving peers on campus. However, it is unclear whether these students are truly the only ones who made greater gains, or whether these students were simply more skilled at transferring their abilities to the test-taking setting.

It is clear that any differences between groups' scores were not due to demographic variations or environmental factors within the classroom. In fact, the overall classroom experience of all students seems to have been quite satisfactory; the mean score for all respondents on the instructor-related items (see Appendix D and Table 17) was 5.5 on a 6-point scale, with 6 being the most positive score. The overall mean score for the classroom experience items was 5.2 (omitting the last two items which refer to class pace and difficulty level), indicating that stu-

dents were generally very satisfied with their course, whether taken on or off campus (see Table 18). The fact that the students abroad found their course to be more difficult and fast-paced than those on campus is likely due to the fact that classes abroad were held for fewer days in order to make time for excursions, yet the same amount of material was covered as on campus.

A somewhat surprising finding of this investigation was that students who choose to study a foreign language abroad already employ different, and more sophisticated, listening comprehension strategies than those who pursue language study on campus.² The abroad group was younger (with a higher percentage of freshmen), indicating, perhaps, that its members had a greater affinity for language study and were eager to continue this pursuit early in their college careers. From the beginning, the abroad group tended to eschew the bottom-up strategies which manifest themselves in less successful language learners and which were so prevalent among the on-campus

TABLE 14

**Factor Analysis of General Listening Strategies
(On-Campus Group Posttreatment)**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Mentally check understanding	.820	.176	.185	.140
Listen to speaker pronunciation	.764	.277	.208	4.149E-02
Try to understand phrase by phrase	.760	-6.143E-02	-3.924E-02	-8.692E-02
Keep telling self to stay focused and keep up	.692	-7.472E-03	.347	.246
Try to identify grammatical structures	.627	.203	.232	-.467
Listen for details then piece together	-4.354E-02	.783	.147	.139
Try to summarize	.276	.726	6.255E-02	-.113
Listen for key words	2.547E-02	.676	.224	3.807E-02
Look for topic/summary sentences	.392	.538	-.359	.349
Translate as much as possible	.170	8.709E-02	.828	-9.079E-02
Try to understand meaning of each word	.214	.252	.735	-.157
Piece together known words	.235	.219	.553	.530
Don't worry about details; goal is overall meaning	2.082E-02	6.285E-02	-.128	.751

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

group, both before and after the course. On the contrary, the abroad group relied heavily on metacognitive strategies such as self-management, self-evaluation, and intentional focus, which were still present after their overseas experience, but which never appeared at all among their stay-at-home peers.

The one major change to which a sojourn abroad may contribute is the social/affective aspect, which gained dominant status among the abroad group by the end of the course. Students who interact with native speakers on a daily basis are more likely to ask their interlocutors for assistance and confirmation and to use these

responses as strategies for comprehension. The on-campus group made some gains in this area as well, but related more to personal affective changes (reduced sense of frustration) than to social interaction. If nothing more, the on-campus course seemed to help them reduce their anxiety about language learning.

One of the study's more interesting findings came from the students' self-assessment of their language skills. At the end of the course, the abroad group was clearly more confident when interacting in Spanish than the students on campus. This is understandable, since those who went overseas had repeated, authentic

TABLE 15

**Factor Analysis of Strategies When Not Understanding L2 Input
(On-Campus Group Posttreatment)**

	Component		
	1	2	3
Lose immediate train of concentration	.859	-.225	8.143E-02
Often give up trying to comprehend	.810	-8.221E-02	-.193
Get flustered and frustrated	.761	-.338	.245
Think about segment and listen passively	.730	-4.915E-03	-9.872E-02
Ask for confirmation	-.178	.904	7.570E-02
Ask for help	-.136	.899	-4.892E-02
Ask for speaker to repeat	-.163	.674	.394
Keep on listening and hope for clarification	-.108	7.851E-02	.853
Guess words based on context	-.184	.155	.632
Try to calm down and gain confidence	.399	-.157	.625
Try to remember words to look up later	.347	.346	.455

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Each block of unshaded cells represents the same factor.

TABLE 16

Mean Comparisons of Skills Self-Assessment*

Item	Pre			Post		
	Abroad	On Campus	Sig.	Abroad	On Campus	Sig.
1	2.15	2.35	.290	1.60	1.80	.219
2	3.30	3.19	.519	4.10	4.02	.585
3	4.33	4.16	.430	4.75	5.05	.131
4	4.04	3.47	.009	4.08	3.85	.358
5	3.53	3.57	.870	4.35	4.77	.112
6	2.65	3.59	.000	2.25	3.23	.000
7	3.91	3.04	.000	4.23	3.52	.008
8	3.74	4.23	.021	3.07	3.65	.005
9	2.96	2.93	.913	3.83	3.42	.072
10	2.72	3.71	.000	2.38	3.09	.002

* 1-6 scale, with 6 representing very strong agreement with the item on the right

encounters with native speakers, while their counterparts at home most likely

spoke Spanish only to their classmates as part of staged oral exercises. However, it is

TABLE 17

Means of Instructor Rating Scores*

	Abroad	On Campus	Sig.
Inefficient/efficient	5.54	5.47	.630
Sensitive/insensitive	5.38	5.34	.859
Unapproachable/approachable	5.73	5.76	.825
Disorganized/organized	5.65	5.39	.072
Impatient/patient	5.44	5.42	.921
Dull/exciting	5.33	5.06	.118
Off-putting/welcoming	5.40	5.67	.186
Incompetent/competent	5.85	5.71	.201

*1-6 scale, with 6 representing very strong agreement with the item on the right

TABLE 18

Means of Classroom Experience Rating Scores*

	Abroad	On Campus	Sig.
Boring/interesting	5.06	4.97	.611
Worthless/valuable	5.42	5.14	.099
Confusing/clear	5.13	5.23	.569
Pointless/rewarding	5.21	5.03	.359
Unpleasant/pleasant	5.17	5.23	.771
Threatening/comfortable	5.38	5.44	.731
Effortless/hard	2.40	3.12	.001
Sluggish pace/quick pace	5.25	4.71	.003

* 1-6 scale, with 6 representing very strong agreement with the item on the right

striking that this newly found confidence did not manifest itself in actual comprehension gains for most students (but again, this may be due to the noninteractive nature of the assessment). The findings on confidence are corroborated by the students' short-answer responses, many of which claim improvement in the area of listening comprehension. It is apparent that the frequent interactions with native speakers that takes place on a sojourn abroad instill a certain measure of confidence in students that is not found in the traditional class-

room setting. It is unclear, however, how this increased confidence affects language learning, either in the current setting or in future courses.

Summary and Suggestions for Further Research

This research project set out to investigate the impact of short-term foreign sojourns on listening comprehension. While both on-campus and abroad groups experienced gains in listening comprehension as a result of participating in a five-week language

class, there were significant differences in the way learners approached their listening tasks, and these differences seem closely tied to the nature of the environment in which the instruction took place: The study abroad setting seemed to promote or reinforce the use of top-down and social listening strategies for comprehension (strategies that foster successful L2 acquisition), while the home campus setting was associated with less productive bottom-up processing. Both types of preferences seem to be equally helpful for students at the novice-high/intermediate threshold. However, for students at the upper end of this threshold, the study abroad environment and the favoring of social/affective strategies appear closely tied with significant gains in comprehension.

The data also suggest that foreign sojourns result in significantly higher levels of self-perceived ability. This enhanced confidence may have important effects on motivation, attitude toward learning Spanish, and ultimately, continuation of studies beyond the required level. Indeed, 35% of nonsenior students in the abroad groups subsequently enrolled in upper-level, nonrequired Spanish courses, as opposed to 13% of the on-campus group. Study abroad students appear to feel more empowered by their listening comprehension experiences, and we may therefore speculate that their increased confidence is likely to result in more engagement in input-generating interactions, and consequently in more language acquisition. Such findings alone should be sufficient grounds for recommending even short-term sojourns for beginner and intermediate learners.

It must be emphasized that this study was conducted on short sojourns with non-collaborative listening tasks and self-reported strategy-use questionnaires. The impact of longer study abroad programs (lasting a semester or a year), as well as the use of different listening comprehension assessments and alternative strategy-elicitation techniques, should be considered in order to have a better picture of what happens in the area of comprehension as a result of foreign language immersion. In addition,

it would be enlightening to investigate whether achievement differences exist among students based on the time and quality of interactions with native speakers. Finally, further study is needed to define more clearly the relationship among confidence level, actual skill level, and motivation and attitude toward L2 learning.

In spite of no difference in gain in comprehension performance between study abroad and on-campus students on the instrument used in this study, the question remains as to whether the results may have been different under different testing conditions. For example, if students had been tested in real time while involved in interactive tasks, performance levels may have varied dramatically. One may hypothesize that the abroad group would make significantly larger gains under such circumstances, but this would certainly require further investigation.

Finally, the fact that the high-scoring group had significant gains as a result of the intervention suggests that there may be an ideal proficiency threshold for study abroad; this, too, should be further investigated.

Notes

1. Short term is defined here as any study abroad program lasting less than eight weeks, as reflected in IIE's Open Doors report.
2. None of the students in the abroad group were majoring in foreign languages at the time of the study.

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APPENDIX A

*Listening Comprehension Strategies**

METACOGNITIVE

Prior to listening

1. Set self up for the task
2. Focus attention
3. Apply an advance organizer
4. Go in with a plan
5. Vow to think/listen in the target language

* Material in this appendix is based on Bacon, 1992

While listening

6. Self-management
7. Self-evaluation
8. Monitor
9. Express interest, motivation
10. Express lack of interest, lack of focus
11. Aware of loss of attention

Postlistening

12. Know what helped understanding
13. Evaluate comprehension

COGNITIVE

1. Bottom-up processing
2. Top-down processing
3. Summarization
4. Translation
5. Elaboration (relating to personal experience)
6. Elaboration (relating to world knowledge)
7. Transfer

SOCIAL/AFFECTIVE

1. Appeal for help
2. Ask for confirmation
3. Reassure self

APPENDIX B*Metacognitive Awareness Strategy Questionnaire (MASQ)**

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about listening strategies in Spanish by circling the response that is appropriate for you.

When listening to Spanish, the things I do to listen effectively are . . .

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I make sure that the conditions are right for listening (I get close enough to the speaker; I try to reduce/eliminate distracting noises, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I clear my mind and tell myself to stay focused.	1	2	3	4	5	6

* Material in this appendix is based on Vogely, 1995

3. I try to guess what the speaker is going to say based on what I know about the topic.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I listen for words I know.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I keep telling myself to stay focused and to keep up.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I mentally check my understanding over and over.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I try to identify grammatical structures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I wait to hear an entire phrase, then I try to understand it before the speaker continues on to the next.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I listen for key words.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I listen for details and then I try to piece things together.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I try to translate as much as possible in my mind.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I listen to the way the speaker pronounces the different words.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I try to summarize in my mind what I am hearing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I wait for the first word I know, then another one, and then try to piece them together.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I look for topic and/or summary sentences.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I try to understand the meaning of each word.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. I don't worry about details, I just try to get the overall meaning of the text.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about listening strategies in Spanish by circling the response that is appropriate for you.

When listening to Spanish, if I don't understand something . . .

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I ask for help (what does . . . mean?).	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I ask for confirmation (do you mean . . . ?).	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I ask the speaker to repeat what he or she said to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I try to remember specific words to look up later in the dictionary.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I keep on listening actively and hope for clarification further on.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I guess what the word or phrase might mean based on context.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I find myself hanging on to one segment as the rest of the text flows by me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I tell myself to calm down.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I tend to get flustered and frustrated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I lose my immediate train of concentration.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I often give up trying to comprehend.	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX C*Self-Assessment of Spanish Skills*

Honestly rate your current Spanish skills by putting an X along the continuum where you think your skill or performance level is. Placing an X at either end of the continuum would designate *very strong agreement* with that concept.

For example, the response to the sample item below indicates that the person answering is only slightly disgusted by spiders:

When I see a big, hairy spider, I am:

fascinated — — — X — — disgusted

1. When I hear Spanish spoken, I . . .

try to understand

tune out

2. When I hear Spanish spoken, I . . .

usually understand
nothing

usually understand
everything

3. When I speak Spanish, . . .

no one knows what I'm
talking about

I can usually get my
point across, even if it's
not perfect

4. When I speak Spanish . . .

I don't care if I sound
American

I really try to sound like
a native speaker

5. As I think about the challenges in Spanish 107, I feel . . .

concerned about my
grade

confident about my grade

6. The thought of being in a Spanish-only environment . . .

fills me with excitement

fills me with dread

7. When I am speaking Spanish and don't know a word that I want to say, I . . .

say it in English

try to describe the word
in Spanish

8. Given my background in Spanish, I consider my listening comprehension skills to be:

strong

weak

9. When I interact in Spanish, I am usually:

nervous

confident

10. I find interacting in Spanish to be:

rewarding

frustrating

