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CALL Evaluation: Students’ Perception and Use of LoMásTv

Cristina Pardo-Ballester
Iowa State University

ABSTRACT:
In order to integrate technology into the language curriculum, it is essential not only to evaluate a program within a second language acquisition (SLA) framework but also to seek the students’ attitudes towards the use of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) materials. Guided by Chapelle’s (2001) framework for CALL evaluation, this paper reports on a 2-year empirical study of intermediate level learners’ perceptions of the use of a web-based multimedia program with authentic video clips and its effectiveness as a language-learning tool. Students believed that the learned culture and vocabulary enhanced their listening skills. A pretest/posttest design assessed the long-term gains in listening and speaking performances. Results indicated a significant gain in listening and speaking. The paper concludes by highlighting what lessons to consider when integrating CALL into language courses.

KEYWORDS
Students’ Attitudes, CALL Evaluation, Authentic Video Material, Help Options, Listening, Speaking

INTRODUCTION
Language program coordinators who are in charge of establishing curricular goals, setting policies and requirements, and researching materials for a language program should be concerned about students’ perceptions when using new computer-assisted language learning (CALL) materials. Likewise, language teachers should carefully evaluate CALL materials in order to realize the best options for their students (Blake, 2008). There are many course and curriculum issues to consider when evaluating and using technology for a language course which may impact its effectiveness. Some of these are (a) the difficulty level of the tasks used in the class, (b) the task appropriateness for students, (c) teacher and student experiences with technology when using different tasks, (d) student performance, (e) student expectations about learning the language, and (f) expansion of the student-centered classroom, for example, via synchronous CMC. It is for these reasons that at the end of a language course, teachers, department chairs, and program supervisors read student evaluations to learn more about the course and instructors. However, the standard course and instructor evaluation forms administered by language departments may not include specific answers for these stakeholders. Answers to specific questions about language ability resulting from the use of a web-based multimedia program are important for making decisions concerning the vast amount of funding and time directed toward the development of technology-enhanced L2 instruction. For this reason, in order to integrate technology into the curriculum, it is essential not only to evaluate the program in terms of a second language acquisition (SLA) framework, but also to examine student attitudes towards the use of CALL (Ayres, 2002). Furthermore, Chapelle (2003) states that researchers in CALL should analyze software design to ensure successful language learning through learners’ interaction with the tasks. Chapelle (2001) also advocates evaluating CALL task appropriateness by fol-
lowing six criteria based on an interactionist SLA framework: (a) language learning potential, (b) learner fit, (c) meaning focus, (d) authenticity, (e) positive impact, and (f) practicality.

Guided by Chapelle’s (2001) framework for CALL evaluation, this paper reports on an empirical study of learner perceptions about the use of LoMásTv, a web-based multimedia program with authentic video clips, and its effectiveness as a language-learning tool. This research represents an attempt to gather empirical data in order to assess the degree to which learners value the use of authentic materials (e.g., soap operas, interviews, music videos, documentaries, and other television programs) with CALL. This study also investigates whether an improvement in listening comprehension as well as students’ oral performance benefited from exposure to authentic videos in a multimedia environment which afforded full control of help options (e.g., closed captions in the L2 and subtitles in L1 exposed at the same time, an integrated online dictionary, transcripts, pitch-corrected slow play, and backward and forward buttons).

**Authenticity and Help Options in CALL**

There are several proposed benefits of using authentic materials in the classroom, including the discovery of the L2 culture and possible acquisition of knowledge through reading texts and listening to audioclips at websites designed for native speakers (Levy, 2009). Bacon (1992) discusses the need to provide students with culture and language using authentic language because learners are generally exposed to modified input in their textbooks. Bacon also suggests that many teachers support the inclusion of authentic input into the curriculum in order to take advantage of the natural acquisition process in the formal setting of a classroom. Authentic video, according to Tschirner (2001), helps learners “gain insights into the semiotic systems representative of another culture” (p. 312). Furthermore, Weyers (1999) argues that second-semester university students of Spanish exposed to authentic television soap operas (experimental group) enhanced their listening comprehension over learners in a control group who were not exposed to authentic videos. He also shows that learners in the experimental group were more confident in producing oral output when compared to those students who were not exposed to the natural language. Several studies suggest an advantage for exposing learners to authentic learning materials in order to provide insights into the language and culture by means of native-speakers’ voices, dialects, and registers (Bacon, 1992; Chung, 1999; Herron, Dubreil, Correi, & Cole, 2002; Weyers, 1999).

Researchers also largely agree that students are interested in using authentic materials and everyday activities (e.g., watching video clips or listening to music in the target language) in order to learn a foreign language (Peters, Weinberg, & Sarma, 2009). However, Robin (2007) cautions that listening to authentic input may be too difficult for students, especially for beginners because of the fast pace of the audio and the use of colloquialisms. For this reason, learners should receive modified input, for example, by adding redundancy to the input (Chapelle, 1998). Learners can benefit from modified authentic input which incorporates not only repeated audio delivery but also help options such as transcripts, slowed audio delivery, and closed captions (Robin, 2007).¹

Watching television in the target language with closed captions fosters better general comprehension by the students (Borràs & Lafayette, 1994). Borràs and Lafayette's empirical study also confirmed that participants working with closed captions had better attitudes than those who were working with no captions. Learners often realize that they know the target language being spoken when they see closed captions, but they cannot hear it when spoken in an authentic native environment. That is why closed captions can reduce anxiety and frustration when listening to authentic video (Cárdenas-Claros & Gruba, 2009; Winke, Gass, & Sydorenko, 2010); students are allowed to relax at their desks and feel self-
confident in their ability to understand a foreign language. Borrás and Lafayette also found that learners using closed captions spent more time working on higher level tasks than other participants who did not have access to captions. In addition, learners working with closed captions used them more frequently and for longer periods of time than those who used transcripts (Grgurović & Hegelheimer, 2007). The ability to read the closed captions helps students understand what they are listening to and distinguish words and phrases when spoken in an authentic manner (Danan, 2004; Grgurović & Hegelheimer, 2007; Stewart & Pertusa, 2004).

Several studies have examined the effectiveness of using help options in the CALL classroom. While many studies focus on reading and vocabulary acquisition, few examine listening, grammar, and writing (Cárdenas-Claros & Gruba, 2009; Danan, 2004; Grgurović & Hegelheimer, 2007). Indeed, an examination of the research on the effectiveness of web-based multimedia with authentic videos to learn a foreign language reveals a paucity of studies using multimodal functions for listening and speaking.

LOMÁSTV

Yabla Inc. created LoMásTv (http://lomstv.com), a website devoted to the use of pedagogically supported authentic videoclips. The site uses the Yabla player to display video media in the target language (see Figures 1-3). Learners who use LoMásTv are immersed in Spanish by listening to native speakers and have full control over their learning. The aim of LoMásTv is to train listening comprehension of natural language with the opportunity to look at a written version (e.g., closed-captions, subtitles, and video transcripts).

Figure 1
Screen Shot of LoMásTv Main Page

Figure 2
Screen Shot of a Segment of a Soap Opera Entitled Muñeca Brava
The website does not censor content; therefore, the content is appropriate for university level students or adults. The site also has a classroom schema of assigning videos. Teachers can assign lessons to study specific grammatical structures, assign videos to watch, and have students play listening games in which the goal (points to be reached) and due date are determined by the nature of the Yabla game. The goal of accumulating a high number of points serves as an incentive to continue practicing/playing. Incorrect answers result in revealing the correct answer and the opportunity to pick up points when the missed linguistic items are repeated in the second round. Although LoMásTv is a site for autonomous learning, it can also be used as a supplement to a textbook with parallel linguistic and cultural content.

The input presented is the natural language that native speakers hear and use in their daily routine, but the software includes a number of help options. LoMásTv is well grounded in the interactionist SLA framework. For example, Chapelle (1998) stated that multimedia CALL design and evaluation should create beneficial conditions for SLA and named seven hypotheses for developing CALL materials. LoMásTv incorporates some of these conditions, such as noticing or perceiving of input (Hypothesis 1: “The linguistic characteristics of target input need to be salient” [p. 23]). Students perceive the input by using closed captions or other help options. Also, when completing listening games, the input is enhanced with words in bold face to make the input more salient. Understanding the language in terms of modified input, for example redundant input, is Chapelle’s second hypothesis: “Learners should receive help in comprehending semantic and syntactic aspects of linguistic input” (p. 23). Although the input in LoMásTv is natural, students have full control to modify it by using the help options. In addition, learners process the aural input via multimodal functions (videos, aural texts, written texts, such as subtitles, transcripts, and an integrated online dictionary). All these functions allow students to receive redundant information. In addition, “learners notice errors in their own output” via listening games (Hypothesis 4, p. 23). LoMásTv engages students in the learning process by promoting interaction through integrated dictionaries and cloze listening games (Hypothesis 6: “supporting modified interaction between the learner and the computer” [p. 23]).

**SLA and the Multimodal Function of LoMásTv**

Using authentic language videos with visual and written support is a good means for learning both the linguistic and sociolinguistic features of Spanish. According to Krashen’s (1985) comprehensible input and Schmidt’s (1990) noticing hypothesis, language learning will take place when learners are exposed to varied language, have their attention focused, and have substantial language input and lexical information. During the learning process, students must also be motivated to be cognitively engaged in the activities (Skehan, 1998). In the case of LoMásTv, learners watch the videos enhanced by means of closed captions in the L2 and subtitles in the L1, as well as play listening games. The listening games are a tutoring
activity that provides simple yes-no feedback in vocabulary and grammar drill exercises (Peters et al., 2009). The vocabulary includes colloquial expressions and low- and high-frequency words, as well as a variety of social registers from different areas of Spain and Latin America.

As Hoven (1999) points out, an “advantage of a CELL [Computer Enhanced Language Learning] environment relates to the necessity for learners to be exposed to the same text from different perspectives and with emphasis on different aspects in order to fully comprehend a listening text” (p. 91). In this regard, LoMásTv is not only enhanced with listening games and instant feedback, but it also offers many other help options, such as transcripts, closed captions, and subtitles. Learners can hide or show closed caption and subtitle options; stop, rewind, or fast-forward the videos; and listen to the videos at a slower pace.

Multimodal functions can be an excellent language tool for presenting authentic material and providing comprehensible input in the target language. Rost (1990) suggests that listening can be enhanced in a multimedia environment with “multiple exposures to the same or similar texts” (p. 169). That is, listening, reading, watching, and interacting are far more effective for retention than passive listening alone.

In addition to enthusiasm for incorporating a multimedia program in the curriculum, teachers should determine what software to use and how. Researchers agree that the software should be integrated in the curriculum by incorporating it in lesson plans and highlighting clear goals for tasks (Blake, 2008; Cumbreño Espada, Rico Garcia, Curato Fuentes, & Domínguez Gómez, 2006; Jones, 2006). For these reasons, evaluation to determine the appropriateness of the software for specific language learners is crucial.

THE STUDY

The impetus for using a multimedia program in the intermediate Spanish program at my university was the need to integrate culture and language instruction and enhance students’ listening competence. Some students who come with previous Spanish experience from high school have difficulties in listening comprehension because some instructors do not teach Spanish in the target language. Therefore, students struggle during listening activities or exams. In order to assist students with listening, implementing LoMásTv seemed to be a good method not only to improve their listening abilities, but also to motivate them and maintain a positive environment. These are two important instructional strategies according to Hammadou and Schrier’s (1988) study of administrators’ perceptions toward the supervision of foreign language teachers.

This study was conducted from Fall 2007 to Fall 2009 in the intermediate Spanish courses at my university, a large Midwestern research university. The established curriculum for intermediate Spanish courses is rooted in the communicative approach to language teaching, and the target language is spoken from the first day of class. Grammar and vocabulary, which students study at home and in class, are covered while working on communicative activities. Students meet 4 days a week for 50 minutes. Once a week, students meet in the computer lab to focus on writing and culture. In the computer lab, using the chat tool integrated in the platform of WebCT, students practice Spanish by chatting with classmates about videos that were previously assigned. Students are expected to listen to the assigned videos outside of class in order to be prepared in class for chatting. Before coming to the computer lab, students work on LoMásTv games from the assigned videos. Students receive grades according to points reached for each game. As homework, students also complete and receive a grade for a supplemental sheet based on vocabulary and comprehension from the assigned videos.
Research Questions
The study aimed to answer the following perception and performance questions:

1. Did the students enjoy using authentic videos and perceive this experience as useful for language learning? If so, was the level of authentic videos used in this multimedia environment appropriate for intermediate learners of Spanish?
2. Did the students perceive that they improved their Spanish performance as a result of the LoMásTv experience? If so, how frequently did they use help options to help understand the content? Was the amount of time they spent with the software sufficient for learning Spanish?
3. What was the participants’ perception about the usefulness of using LoMásTv outside of the classroom?
4. Did the students’ Spanish listening and speaking skills improve during the time that they used this multimedia component? If so, what is the relationship between students’ listening and speaking scores?

Procedures
Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and all participants agreed to participate voluntarily. A consent form was signed prior to data collection. This study was included in the course syllabus and took place over 15 weeks. In the first week of the semester, the participants completed a background questionnaire. They also completed an effectiveness questionnaire at the end of the semester. Both questionnaires were anonymous. In order to assess the main effect of the web-based multimedia program on listening and speaking over time, students in six sections of the course completed pre- and posttests on listening and speaking.

Participants
The participants in this study were 539 intermediate-level Spanish learners: 261 students were enrolled in first semester and 278 students were enrolled in the second semester. Of these students, 348 were females and 177 were males. 506 students had English as their L1, 12—Chinese, 4—Vietnamese, 2—Russian, and 1—Arabic. Their average age was 19 years. Fourteen participants did not complete a background questionnaire administered at the beginning of the semesters.

Materials
Pre- and Posttests
To answer the question of whether or not the participants’ skills improved over the course of the semester, pre- and posttests were administered for listening and speaking.

Listening: At the beginning of the semester a listening pretest was administered consisting of seven true/false comprehension questions. The audio segment was of a conversation among three friends and was taken from the ancillary material for Chapter 4 of the Interacciones textbook. The voices were not familiar to any students. The listening posttest consisted of 23 multiple-choice comprehension questions created by the course supervisor and checked by all instructors. The audio segment contained three dialogs and one monolog with three voices familiar to the students and four voices unfamiliar to them. The linguistic (lexical and grammatical) content of the listening posttest came from six chapters of the textbook used during the study. Each test item for both tests was worth 3 points. Incorrect answers received 0 points, and correct answers received 3 points.

Speaking: Participants took the standard Versant Spanish Test as both the pre- and posttest. In this test all participants performed the following activities: read aloud, listen and repeat, say the opposite, answer short questions, build sentences from jumbled words, an-
swer open-ended questions, and retell stories. This test was chosen because of its standardized form and the types of speaking and listening skills evaluated in the test; responses from participants are scored automatically. Participants took the Versant Spanish Test on their own telephones and at different places and times.

**Questionnaires**

Two questionnaires were administered. The first one asked participants about their demographic information, such as age, first language, and sex. The second questionnaire asked participants to rate the effectiveness of LoMásTv by asking them open-ended and multiple-choice questions. Following Jamieson, Chapelle and Preiss (2005), questions related to task appropriateness for the six criteria were developed for this second questionnaire. See Table 1 for the six criteria and examples of questions formulated to elicit data based on those criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for CALL task appropriateness</th>
<th>Operationalization as questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language learning potential</td>
<td>Do you remember some vocabulary or expressions from LoMásTv? Give an example. (Q.6) Did your Spanish improve from working on LoMásTv? Why or why not? (Q.8) Did you learn grammar or vocabulary by doing the GAMES? (Q.12 &amp; Q.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner fit</td>
<td>How difficult was LoMásTv for you? (Q.7) What grade do you think you received in your games assignments? (Q.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning focus</td>
<td>How often did you use the following help options to understand the content? (Q.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>What did you learn from LoMásTv besides Spanish? (Q.4) Is what you learned in LoMásTv useful outside of class? (Q.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact</td>
<td>Is LoMásTv a good software to learn Spanish? (Q.1) Did you enjoy learning Spanish with LoMásTv? (Q.2) What do you prefer: to do homework from textbook or from LoMásTv? (Q.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicality</td>
<td>Do you want to spend more or less time using LoMásTv? (Q.5) How much time did you use to obtain the assigned points to get full credit when you were completing the games? (Q.11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

To answer the four research questions in this study, the data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative approaches. The qualitative data from the open-ended survey questions were thematically coded by identifying responses that revealed their perceived usefulness of the materials. Three graduate students and the author of this paper coded the data. Data are reported in numbers and percentages of valid learner responses for each statement. T-tests were performed to determine whether there were differences between the first and second semesters of the second year program.
RESULTS
Data were collected from the first and second semesters of the second-year Spanish program. To see if there were any statistical differences between groups, descriptive statistics were calculated for two questions pertaining to impact and overall perceptions of LoMásTv’s usefulness. Then, independent t-tests were performed to compare means. The results are presented in Tables 2 and 3. It was found that there were no statistical differences between the two courses. Thus, participants were grouped together as one homogenous group for the analysis that follows.

Table 2
Independent-sample t-test for the question “Is LoMásTv good software to learn Spanish?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 201</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 202</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses were grouped as: 1=yes or somewhat and 0=no

Table 3
Independent-sample t-test for the question “Did you enjoy learning Spanish with Lomas?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 201</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.1156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 202</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses were grouped as: 1 = yes or somewhat and 0 = no

Research Question 1: Effectiveness for Language Learning and Learner Fit

Responses to Questions 1 and 2, which dealt with the enjoyment derived from using authentic videos and participants’ perceptions of its usefulness for language learning, are summarized in Table 4. Regarding Question 1, there was a solid agreement that learning Spanish with authentic videos was useful and that participants enjoyed learning the target language using LoMásTv. Participants’ positive impression was borne out by the written comments of 405 students. These participants thought the software was good because they felt that their listening skill improved (36%), that they learned about Spanish culture (24%); they perceived that learning with help options was a good idea (18%), claimed that LoMásTv was fun to use and more enjoyable than usual activities (5%), and had the impression that they learned new words (4%). Other positive comments were the following: learning about spelling and pronunciation, practicality, interactivity, helps in building confidence, variety of materials, working at their own pace, and good balance. By contrast, other responses indicated that some participants were unhappy using authentic videos. Several indicated that authentic videos were hard to understand because native speakers talk too fast. They also mentioned that their Spanish skills did not improve. Other responses referred the frustration felt doing the games, repetitive games, preference for textbook, distraction working with background music, and dislike of soap operas.

Table 4
Participants’ Perceptions of Enjoyment and Usefulness of Using LoMásTv

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response (N=539)</th>
<th>Q.1: Is LoMásTv good software to learn Spanish?</th>
<th>Q.2: Did you enjoy learning Spanish with LoMásTv?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>55.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt;.01%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the participants’ responses to Question 2 were also very positive. There were different reasons for enjoying learning with authentic videos: intriguing shows, more enjoyable than usual activities, music and video aid comprehension, fun and nice to be exposed to authentic materials, fun games, learning different dialects and working at one’s own pace. The same negative responses that were given for Question 1 above were largely repeated for Question 2, but they also added that videos were too time consuming, and some students forgot to do their homework.

The participants were also asked to state their preference for doing homework using LoMásTv or their textbook (Q.9). The majority of the participants (63.38%) preferred working with authentic videos, and the reasons they gave were varied: more engaging and interactive than the textbook, more fun and interesting, more practical and convenient, instant feedback for spelling and grammar, learning more and faster, developing listening skills, seeing real life, variety of content, help in different areas, including in vocabulary and pronunciation. A moderate number of students (34.38%) preferred to do homework using their textbook. The reasons were the following: learning more from textbook, more help with grammar and vocabulary, correcting homework in class provides better feedback, writing and reading help more than listening and speaking, no need of internet using the textbook, accustomed to using textbook, not much time spent using the book, more challenging and writing exercises facilitate remembering material. There were a small number of participants (2.23%) who did not select a category, stating that both tools were good for homework.

On the basis of learner fit, two questions were formulated to learn about the difficulty of using authentic videos to learn Spanish (Q.7) and their self-evaluation of listening games (Q.14). Overall, 64% of respondents perceived that the difficulty of the multimedia program was good, followed by 22% of respondents who felt that working with LoMásTv was easy or very easy. Only 14% of learners reported having difficulty with the software and two respondents felt that LoMásTv was very difficult. Furthermore, the majority of participants 77% self-evaluated their listening games with a grade of A or A-. Approximately 19% of them reported receiving a B+, B, or B-, and a small percentage of learners (3%) reported having a C+, C, C-, or D.

**Research Question 2: Perceived Improvement in Spanish Performance**

Responses to Questions 6, 8, 12 and 13 investigated students’ perceptions toward the software’s potential as a language-learning tool. Question 6 asked if participants remembered some vocabulary or expressions from using LoMásTv. Questions 12 and 13 asked the same question but referred to learning vocabulary and grammar by doing the listening games. The participants had four options for their responses: yes, somewhat, no, and don’t know. Overall, participants perceived LoMásTv to be useful as a language-learning tool because the majority of the participants reported that they could recall vocabulary, expressions, and grammar after using the software (74% for recalling vocabulary and expressions using LoMásTv [Q.6], 90% for vocabulary doing the games [Q.12], 75% for grammar doing the games [Q.13]). These high percentages were confirmed by participants writing a wide range of vocabulary and expressions in Question 6. It was interesting to see that a lot of expressions did not come from the chapters covered in the textbook, but instead from the shows they watched.²

Responses for Question 8 indicate that students considered LoMásTv a beneficial learning tool for improving their Spanish performance: 84% selected yes or somewhat when asked if their Spanish improved from working with LoMásTv. There was a range of perceptions toward improving their Spanish. Interestingly, the majority of them reported improvement in comprehension and listening skills because they could hear native speakers from different countries and they felt that they could understand Spanish better after learning how people
use it in daily life. Participants also mentioned improvement in culture, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and even speaking. Only a small portion of participants (10%) reported not knowing if their performance improved by working with authentic videos. Some of these responses agree that they improved their Spanish but could not relate their improvement to the work done with authentic videos. The same percentage of participants (10%) clearly stated that working with LoMásTv did not help them to improve their Spanish. Several mentioned the difficulty of the videos, difficulty understanding different dialects, the need for more use to improve the language, time consuming or not effective use of time, no improvement in verbal performance or grammar, and the use of subtitles in L1 as an easy way out. In summary, it appears that most of the participants rated LoMásTv as beneficial for language learning.

**Frequency of Help Options Use**

Question 10, pertaining to meaning focus, asked participants about the frequency of using help options (Table 5). The participants reported using multiple help options in order to understand the content of the authentic materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help options</th>
<th>Frequency of use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>9.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewind, pause, &amp; stop</td>
<td>50.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English subtitles</td>
<td>57.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish closed captions</td>
<td>77.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish transcripts with English translation</td>
<td>17.26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>n*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.02%</td>
<td>49.48%</td>
<td>41.49%</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.64%</td>
<td>42.63%</td>
<td>6.71%</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.10%</td>
<td>38.50%</td>
<td>4.39%</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.08%</td>
<td>15.10%</td>
<td>7.81%</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.26%</td>
<td>36.71%</td>
<td>46.02%</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Not all students had access to the help option question because it was added to the questionnaire in Spring 2008. 139 participants did not see this question and 12 skipped it.*

Data from the study consistently indicate that learners used multiple modes of interaction. This finding supports the research of Bird and Williams (2002), who showed that the use of bimodal presentation (aural and visual) is beneficial for comprehension and vocabulary recognition. Many researchers agree with the benefits for L2 when students have control of their learning by using multiple modes of interaction (Baltova, 1999; Danan, 2004; Hoven, 1999; Jones, 2006; Rost; 1990).

When looking at the breakdown of modes of interactions by the five help options in Table 5, the results show that transcripts were used the least. This result supports the findings of Grgurovic and Hegelheimer (2007) that suggests that these tendencies are noteworthy. The reason for not using a transcript could be that the transcript is not displayed when the video is played; learners have access to this feature before playing the video. It could also be that transcripts were not needed while playing the video because subtitles in English and Spanish were available. In addition, it could be easier for the participants to read sentence-by-sentence using the subtitles while practicing their listening, instead of just practicing their reading skills when using the transcript (Pujola, 2002).

The feature used most frequently was the subtitles in English, followed by the repeat features (e.g., rewind and pause), the subtitles in L2, and finally the online dictionary. Looking at the frequency of subtitle use, it seems that the participants used dual input (English and Spanish). This finding is interesting because ample research has been done using subtitles in only L1 or L2, but there are few research studies using subtitles in L1 and L2 together.
(Danan, 2004). Danan suggested that using subtitles in both languages is beneficial because it gives learners more flexibility to learn at their own pace. Furthermore, “spoken and written texts ... can be processed simultaneously” (p. 72). Stewart and Pertusa (2004) suggested that subtitles in L1 are not beneficial for learning the target language because they do not encourage learners to use their listening skills because they can read in their L1. Other researchers (Baltova, 1999; Borrás & Lafayette, 1994; Stewart & Pertusa, 2004) also confirm that using L2 subtitles in L2 authentic videos is beneficial for learners because this feature helps them to learn distinguishing linguistic items when spoken in an authentic manner. In addition, students using subtitles in the L2 have a much more positive attitude than those who do not use them (Borrás & Lafayette, 1994).

The rewind, pause, forward, and stop features were the second most frequently used features. This finding is in contrast with Hegelheimer and Tower (2004) whose results showed that their participants ignored or underused the ability to repeat previous sentences aurally or visually. Finally, the low use of the online dictionary supports other studies that suggest the online dictionary is used rarely (Hegelheimer & Tower, 2004) or not at all (Grgurovic & Hegelheimer, 2007) when other help options are available.

**Practicality**

About 70% of the participants thought that they were spending an adequate amount of time watching the video clips and doing their homework with the listening games, but 12% would have liked to spend more time and 18% less time (Q.5). The listening games, according to the respondents, were not that difficult because it took little time to get full credit when completing them (51% of learners spent 30 minutes, 39% spent 15 minutes, 9% spent 60 minutes and 1% spent more than 60 minutes).

**Research Question 3: Authenticity Outside of the Classroom**

The participants’ responses regarding the authenticity of the multimedia program revealed that LoMásTv is an excellent tool to learn Hispanic culture. When asked what they learned besides Spanish (Q.4), approximately 91% of participants mentioned learning about culture. Their comments about culture were learning different accents and different dialects, noticing that Spanish and North American worlds use similar words, learning slang, about different countries, cities and food, noticing the pronunciation of Argentinean dialect dropping the ‘s,’ learning gestures and even history. Only 4% of participants stated not learning much. In Question 4, 7% of participants also mentioned learning listening skills and strategies to study the language. Although this percentage seems low, the number was higher when asked if what they learned from LoMásTv was useful outside of the classroom (Q.15). Approximately 36% of respondents who made comments about the effectiveness of the program outside of the classroom indicated an improvement in their Spanish listening comprehension, and 38% stated learning about culture (e.g., being exposed to real situations, accents, native speakers, study abroad, slang, etc.) was beneficial. Other respondents gave positive feedback about the program for learning Spanish and recommended continued use. On the other hand, in response to the same question (Q.15), 44% of participants revealed mixed feelings about their preferences about using authentic videos. They spoke of their boredom while listening to soap operas, the utility for future travel abroad, the disutility of Spanish to find a job, the insufficient frequency of using the tool in the classroom, and their frustration about the difficulty of quizzes or handouts. The participants’ written comments were supported by statistical findings. Overall, 81% of respondents agreed, by selecting yes or maybe, that the authentic materials were useful outside of the classroom. Furthermore, 10% of the participants could not tell (i.e., they selected I don't know) if LoMásTv was useful outside of the classroom setting. Only 9% disagreed with the belief that authentic videos, such as soap operas, were useful outside of the classroom.
**Research Question 4: Improvement in Speaking and Listening and Relationship between Both Skills**

To assess listening and speaking, descriptive statistics were calculated for the pre- and posttest scores, and then a pair-samples t test was conducted to compare the means between the pre- and posttests. The figures in Table 6 indicate an increase in 19.87 in the mean score from pretest to posttest in listening. The t test showed this substantial difference to be highly significant ($t = -12.83$, $df = 124$, $p < .0001$). Statistical findings of the t test applied to speaking pre-/posttests showed an increase of 4.27 in the mean score between the two tests ($t = -8.75$, $df = 124$, $p < .0001$). The statistically significant differences found in this study for improvements in listening and speaking performance suggest that learning from authentic videos in a multimedia environment, with full control of help options, results in better listening comprehension and subsequent better speaking in Spanish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean ($M$)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation ($SD$)</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening pretest</td>
<td>67.95</td>
<td>13.96</td>
<td>0.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening posttest</td>
<td>87.83</td>
<td>11.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking pretest</td>
<td>33.90</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>0.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking posttest</td>
<td>38.16</td>
<td>7.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, the scores for the posttests were used to calculate the Pearson correlation coefficient between the listening and speaking posttest scores. The coefficient shows a weak to moderate correlation ($r = .36$, $p < .01$) between the students’ increase in listening performance and their speaking performance but the correlation coefficient is too weak to warrant the conclusion that an increase in listening skills results in an increase in speaking skills. The scatterplot (see Figure 1) of these two variables shows a general upward trend in the data suggesting higher listening scores are associated with higher speaking scores, but there are not many cases of students with both low speaking and low listening scores. Most of the data are clustered in the upper region of the listening scale.

**Figure 1**
Correlation between Increase in Listening and Speaking Scores for Posttests
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The data collected from questionnaires during the study allows for insights into the use of authentic videos in the language classroom. Almost all of the participants reported that LoMásTv was enjoyable and that they learned something from it during the semester. Findings from the LoMásTv evaluation are summarized in Table 7. These findings suggest that authentic videos are popular with L2 learners and, therefore, should be incorporated into a program of language learning in order to integrate not only language, but also culture, into the curriculum. Cultural competence and linguistic performance are two skills that the ACTFL proficiency guidelines specify that students should know when studying a foreign language (Herron et al., 2002).

This inquiry has also yielded evidence about the benefits of using a multimedia program with full student control of multiple modes of interactions and supports other researchers who have found a similar wide range of benefits for L2 learning to reinforce the acquisition of vocabulary (Baltova, 1999; Bird & Williams 2002; Winke et al., 2010), improve listening skills (Hoven, 1999; Jones, 2006; Rost, 1990), get acquainted with culture, and even improve speaking ability (Borrás & Lafayette, 1994).

It is important to note that although there is an increase in the listening and speaking results from the pretests to posttests, the data are insufficient to warrant the claim that the authentic videos with the full student control of help options are solely responsible for this improvement because the structure of this study does not assess the students' viewing of the videos or the three instructors' teaching styles. The findings suggest, however, that exposure to authentic videos in a web-based multimedia program helped students improve their listening and speaking performance. However, correlation analysis indicated only a weak relationship between increased listening and speaking skills.

Table 7
Results of CALL Evaluation for LoMásTv

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for CALL evaluation</th>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language learning potential</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>74% could recall vocabulary and expressions from LoMásTv; 90% perceived improvement in their vocabulary; 75% stated improving their grammar. 84% felt that their Spanish improved from working with LoMásTv; 10% did not know; and 10% felt no improvement. This improvement was verified with the students’ written input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner fit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overall, 86% of students perceived LoMásTv as good, easy, or very easy to use. Only 16% reported having difficulty with the software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning focus</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students used multimodal help options to understand content in this order of preference: dual language subtitles, rewind, dictionary, and the transcript.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The majority (81%) of students agreed or somewhat agreed that LoMásTv videos were useful outside of the classroom. Only 9% disagreed, and 9% did not know. 91% of students reported learning culture from the videos, and 7% learned about listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The majority of students (96%) thought LoMásTv was good software for learning Spanish. They felt they learned a lot about culture, listening, and discovering new ways to study Spanish by using the help options. Only 9% did not enjoy learning with LoMásTv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>71% of the students were pleased with the amount of time spent on the videos, 18% would like to have spent less time and 12% more time. 51% of students spent 30 minutes to complete the assignments, 39% spent 15 minutes, 9% 60 minutes, 1% more than 60 minutes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings in this study and classroom experience suggest that video materials should be varied and supported in the classroom. Success in the classroom is not assured solely by the integration of software based on positive feedback, but rather by integrating the program into the curriculum, providing assessments based on curricular objectives, and observing whether or not the objectives are achieved (Cumbreño Espada et al., 2006).

Although this learning tool could be implemented as individual listening self-learning material, the role of the instructor is crucial, and LoMásTv in no way provides a substitute for teachers. However, there is a very wide range of ways in which software can be used in the classroom. Educators could select videos and use them for elicited imitation activities. The variety of accents and native speakers from Spain and Latin America could provide various models of imitation. Likewise, LoMásTv incorporates sociolinguistic authenticity into the L2 classroom, and educators could use the videos to support the use of role play as a means of conversation among students. Watching the segments of a video in which speech acts appear and incorporating a role play, such as greeting, asking for information or arguing, provides practice for customary interaction Spanish-speaking populations would consider routine. These videos could also serve as a tool to frame communicative classroom-based discussion.

From a sociocultural point of view, LoMásTv exposes students to native speakers and provides an authentic representation of various registers (familiar and formal) of the language. Colloquial expressions are very appealing to students, but some instructors could find it inappropriate for language learners, especially for K-12 students. Nevertheless, the use of authentic videos for foreign languages has the potential to enhance students’ awareness of cultural aspects of language in ways that other media do not. Learning an array of communicative settings and registers might give learners the opportunity to use the language effectively in different situations. Furthermore, LoMásTv serves as a supplementary source of real-life exposure to complement regular coursework. It would be ideal for dialectology, phonology, and phonetics courses. LoMásTv may be effective for different language levels, from beginners to more advanced-level courses.

Audiovisual materials enhanced with help options are powerful pedagogical tools that help improve L2 listening skills. Help options support language learning because learners receive enhanced input on demand (Cárdenas-Claros & Gruba, 2009). In addition, the incorporation of both L2 closed captions and L1 subtitles at the same time offers learners the opportunity to compare the target language with their L1. Consequently, learners have the opportunity to develop metalinguistic awareness, which could direct them to a better understanding of the target language (Edwards, Pemberton, Knight & Monaghan, 2002).

NOTES
1 Help options have been defined by Cárdenas-Claros and Gruba (2009), as “embedded application resources that assist learners in performing computing operations and/or support language learning” (p. 69).

2 Here are some examples of the linguistic items that were repeated several times: preservativos ‘condoms’, bomba ‘bomb’, minas ‘girls’, cucarachas ‘cockroach’, cara de sapo ‘frog face’, vos and sos two forms used in Argentina to say ‘you’, *tú cabeza es llena de mierda (the expression needs the verb estar instead of ser)* ‘your head is full of crap’, pendejia ‘idiot’, demonios ‘demons’, culo ‘butt’, no me cortes ‘don’t hang up on me’, boliche ‘disco’, tesoro ‘treasure’, *hacer la difícil (hacerse instead of hacer)* ‘she/he is playing hard to get’, se pone de novio ‘getting serious’ in the context of getting a girlfriend, gallina ‘chicken’, chulo ‘pimp’, *hacer la gana (it should be hacer lo que te la gana)* ‘to do whatever you want’, *hacer pedo (the expression is with the verb estar instead of with hacer)* ‘to be drunk’, pobrecita ‘poor girl’, con permiso ‘if you will excuse me’, fíjate ‘notice’, and others.
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Cristina Pardo-Ballester's research interests center on SLA, CALL, and language assessment. She has published articles in Language Learning & Technology, CALICO Journal, Language Assessment Quarterly, the Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education (JDLTE), and The Language Educator. She has also published in Technology for Second Language Learning conference proceedings. She is especially interested in the development of hybrid language courses, learning about different technical tools enabling the delivery of these courses. To date, she has developed four hybrid Spanish courses for teaching Spanish at Iowa State University. From the development and delivery of these courses she was able to publish on the development of online instructional materials such as online readings with multimedia glosses and learning Spanish with the virtual world of Second Life.

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