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# JTAR

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## About the Journal

Founded in 2013, the Journal of Teacher Action Research (ISSN: 2332-2233) is a peer-reviewed online journal indexed with EBSCO that seeks practical research that can be implemented in Pre-Kindergarten through Post-Secondary classrooms. The primary function of this journal is to provide classroom teachers and researchers a means for sharing classroom practices.

The journal accepts articles for peer-review that describe classroom practice which positively impacts student learning. We define teacher action research as teachers (at all levels) studying their practice and/or their students' learning in a methodical way in order to inform classroom practice. Articles submitted to the journal should demonstrate an action research focus with intent to improve the author's practice.

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# SURVEYING THE LINGUISTIC NEEDS OF TEAM MEMBERS TRAVELING TO PUERTO RICO FOR A SHORT-TERM SERVICE LEARNING TRIP

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**Abstract** The researchers conducted an informal mixed-methods needs analysis of team members to calibrate a brief language learning experience suited to the participants before traveling from the U.S. to Puerto Rico on a service-learning trip. The purpose of the service-learning trip involved improving the physical conditions, morale, and resources within a selected school. Two participants who expressed interest in attending the service-learning trip (1 middle school student and 1 adult) were interviewed, and the interview results were used to design a brief online survey. While 34 individuals attended the trip, 18 team members (6 middle school students and 12 adults) voluntarily completed the online survey. Quantitative and qualitative survey results were analyzed and used to design a 6-week Spanish language-prep course to better equip the team to reach their service goals while in Puerto Rico.

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**Keywords:** teacher action research, service learning, needs analysis, perceptions of language learning, language teaching

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## Introduction

Educators conduct action research to enhance their teaching practice and promote achievement (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Mertler, 2016). In education, action research is, “intended to support [teacher] researchers in coping with the challenges and problems of practice and carrying through innovations in a reflective way” (Feldman, Altrichter, Posch, & Somekh, 2018, p. 6). To this end, needs analyses can demonstrate a crucial component to exposing learners’ beliefs, attitudes, and goals regarding a target language and culture (Long, 2005; Wei, 2016). The revealed learner needs may direct

educators' planning and empower them to conduct a course better suited for their students.

The researchers for this study served as team leaders for a group of 34 people, comprised of middle school students and adults in the U.S., who traveled to Puerto Rico for one week on a service-learning trip. Service-learning involves, "experiential learning and allows students first-hand immersion with a culture, different than their own, leading to greater awareness and an increased sense of cultural competence" (Wall-Bassett, Hegde, Craft, & Oberlin, 2018, p. 275). While in Puerto Rico, the team members were expected to participate in projects to improve the conditions of a specific school (through painting, mulching, electrical work, etc.), teach and entertain students with creative games, perform dramas and musical productions, and provide resources to enhance the learning environment of the school.

When traveling outside of one's cultural and linguistic locality, one must have a healthy awareness of the target language and culture to reap a positive experience. The researchers, as facilitators of the service-learning trip, recognized that fostering cultural awareness and sensitivity among team members would enable them to better serve the people of Puerto Rico (Wall-Bassett et al., 2018). To ensure the principal success of this experience, the researchers offered a prep course in Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture to interested participants. Kaewpet (2009) argues, "learner needs will need to be addressed if the course is to be successful" (p. 209).

To clarify learner needs, beliefs, and culture as discussed in this study, the following descriptions are provided. *Learner needs* constitute the gap between what learners currently know and the knowledge they hope to attain (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Kaewpet, 2009; Long, 2005). Learners' *belief systems* are explained by Richards and Lockhart (1996) as able to, "influence learners' motivations to learn, their expectations about language learning, their perceptions about what is easy or difficult about a language, as well as the kind of learning strategies they favor" (p. 52). Therefore, the ideology one has regarding a language can completely alter the individual's approach to learning that target language. In the same way, a learner's perspectives regarding a target culture can influence his or her approach to learning the language. Here *culture* is defined in accordance with Lobo (2005) as, "an aspect or feature that can be associated with life in a country, including its language" (p. 35).

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to discover the linguistic needs and perceptions of the team members. Learners' current knowledge, needs, and beliefs were assessed using interviews and surveys to gather qualitative data (Griffin, 2016; Harlow, Smith, & Garfinkel, 1980; Kouritzin, Piquemal, & Renaud, 2009; Lobo, 2005). Results from preliminary or exploratory interviews with one adult and one student, both of whom had expressed interest in attending the service-learning trip, were utilized to design research survey questions (Mertler, 2016; Kouritzin et al., 2009; Lobo, 2005). The two interviewees were available and volunteered to be interviewed during the exploratory stages of the action research. Specifically, the researchers sought answers to the following questions:

1. How much Spanish do the team members attending the trip know and what can they do now?
2. What do the team members believe they need to know and do in the target language and culture?
3. How do the team members believe they can achieve their linguistic and cultural goals?

## Literature Review

Needs analysis, as a form of action research, has been found effective in assessing the needs and motivation of language learners (Long, 2005). In the field of language teaching, needs analyses have focused on what learners need to more efficiently learn for a target language. The results from such analyses have been used to write language objectives, design syllabi, and decide on appropriate teaching and assessment methods and resources for language courses (Wei, 2016). Three studies conducted over the last 40 years that have ramifications for the present study are discussed here.

Harlow et al. (1980) administered a survey to 250 first-semester students of French regarding perceived communication needs. This survey included three parts: biographical information, plans of how students might use French in the future, and rated descriptive statements regarding categories of language use. In the final section, students were asked to rate the statements using a Likert scale, measuring the individual's judgment of the item's importance. The purpose of this study was to identify a means to, "compose a syllabus, based upon concrete data, which [would be] patterned after the functional/notional concept" (Harlow et al., 1980, p. 11). This research constituted a basis for this study's design, as similar survey results were used to design a fitting language-prep course for team members traveling to Puerto Rico. This course was designed with a functional/notional syllabus, which aligns with the research of Harlow et al. (1980), insofar as it, "entails a structuring of language and language teaching in terms of content rather than form, and learner needs rather than tradition" (p. 12).

Students enrolled in undergraduate Korean as a foreign language (KFL) courses at the University of Hawai'i participated in a needs analysis (Chaudron et al., 2005). Researchers first conducted unstructured interviews with a random sample of students ( $n = 21$ ; 25%) enrolled in Korean language courses during the first semester, and findings from the interviews were used to design a survey that was administered to all participants ( $n = 84$ ). Survey respondents reported, among other things, a strong desire to learn Korean to better communicate with friends and relatives, to advance in their careers, and to conduct themselves more successfully when touring South Korea. The researchers then paired with curriculum developers to design "social survival" language learning tasks that met the learning needs of over 90% of the KFL students. Likewise, the researchers for the present study used results from semi-structured interviews to create a relevant survey, and the survey results were used to design effective Spanish language curricula matched to learner needs.

A more recent study was designed to assess the needs of native Arabic-speaking engineering students of English for specific purposes (ESP) (Alsamadani, 2017). Classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and a survey were utilized with student participants ( $n = 200$ ) at Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia. One noticeable finding was that students reported the need for greater emphasis on meaningful speaking and writing skills in ESP courses. In general, participants wanted to learn English in a way that was responsive to their needs. They were not interested in gaining a “textbook” type of knowledge” (Alsamadani, 2017, p. 65) of English but wished to gain meaningful proficiency to use English in the professional and business worlds. Responding to Alsamadani’s (2017) call for more “pervasive and comprehensive ‘needs analysis’ . . . [to] motivate students to become actively involved in the process of learning” (p. 65), the researchers in the present study sought to design a comprehensive analysis of team members’ learning needs and design a functional/notional syllabus based upon those needs.

## Methodology

*Subjects.* In the past 25 years, short service-learning trips have become an increasingly popular experience for students in the United States. The trip under study consisted of 34 team members (17 adults, each accompanied by one of their children) as well as two team leaders, the action researchers. Initially, the researchers conducted interviews with two potential team members who had expressed interest in attending the service-learning trip, the results of which were utilized during the preliminary stages of the research to construct a survey for the remaining individuals on the team. Though the survey was distributed to all 34 team members, 18 participants elected to complete the survey regarding their linguistic and cultural beliefs, needs, and goals. The student participants were classmates at a private institution in an affluent suburb in the southeastern U.S. Public and private schools in the local area are regionally renowned for the competitive level of academics.

*Data Collection.* To investigate the cultural and linguistic needs of the team members, the researchers administered two interviews and 34 surveys. The open-ended individual interview sessions with two team members served to gauge the participants’ beliefs, attitudes, self-reported proficiency, and goals regarding the Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture. The responses from these recorded face-to-face interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to provide direction for the formulation of appropriate survey questions (see Appendix A).

To streamline the accessibility and anonymity of the survey for participants, the researchers designed and administered the survey through an online survey management site. Email constituted a significant means of communication for the team prior to departing on the service-learning trip; therefore, a link to the survey was emailed to each team member. The survey consisted of nine questions, a length deemed appropriate to elicit increased likelihood of participant responses (see Appendix B). As mentioned above, although all 34 team members were given the opportunity to complete the survey, 18 participants provided responses. The data were assessed and compared to construct an appropriate language-prep mini-course for the service-learning trip to Puerto Rico.



*Data Analysis.* The survey served as a needs analysis assessment tool. Data collected from the survey informed the development of a program of study for the team to ensure that they were linguistically and culturally prepared for their upcoming trip to Puerto Rico. Therefore, the researchers categorized the commonalities of the participants' itemized responses and constructed corresponding lessons. Although 18 of the 34 team members submitted survey responses, the data collected account for over half of the team (53%). For action research with small sample sizes in educational settings, this is a sufficient pool of representation for a needs analysis, with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of  $\pm 16\%$  (Cohen et al., 2011). The common results discovered in team members' responses outlined the framework for the language-prep program subsequently designed.

## Results

To determine the level of Spanish proficiency among the participants, the team members self-identified their knowledge of Spanish on the survey. Therefore, their language capabilities were not officially tested, and this analysis was based upon the assumption participants provided honest answers. This assumption was reasonable given that the surveyed team members were not graded or in any way consequently affected by the responses provided through this survey.

*Prior Language Learning Experiences.* To determine the level of Spanish proficiency among the participants, the following interview question provided the clearest results: "Have you studied Spanish in the past? If so, where and for how long?" One of the two interviewed participants responded that he had never studied Spanish, while the other stated he had studied Spanish for two years over two decades ago. Therefore, the following two pieces were included on the survey. The first item was an open-ended question that asked participants to briefly describe their language learning experience. While seven participants did not respond to this term, the following responses were received:

- "It's been too long ago – high school."
- "Started studying Spanish this year"
- "I work with a Spanish speaking employee, so I know a few words."
- "2 years of high school foreign language"
- "1 semester in college 20 years ago"
- "I have not learned any Spanish yet"
- "6<sup>th</sup> grade ½ semester"
- "Studied in college"
- "Brothers that speak Spanish"
- "Only about 2 ½ years"
- "5 years in a Spanish speaking country"



These responses demonstrate the predominantly novice base of language learners comprising the team, apart from the two individuals who studied for over two years and lived in a Spanish-speaking country for five years. To further examine learner capabilities, the researchers asked team members to identify themselves as beginning, intermediate, or advanced language learners through completion of the sentence: "I am \_\_\_\_." The results are shown in Figure 1 below.

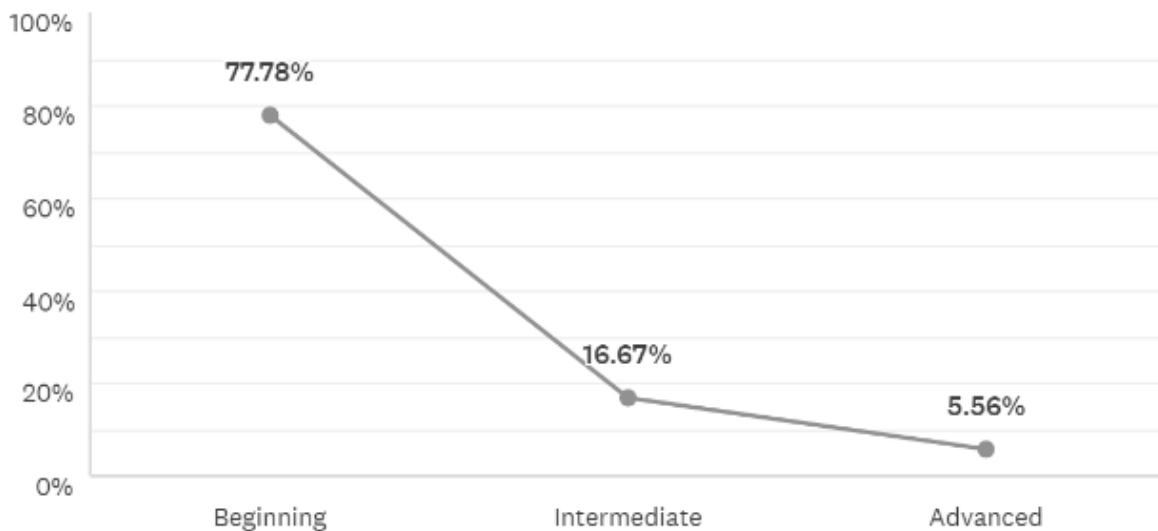


Figure 1. Perceptions of Current Spanish Language Proficiency.

One team member (5.56%) reported herself being comfortable speaking in Spanish, which we denoted as perceiving *advanced* proficiency. While three participants (16.67%) described their current Spanish language skills as falling into the *intermediate* proficiency category, most respondents (77.78%;  $n = 14$ ) indicated that they knew little to no Spanish and were at the *beginning* level of Spanish proficiency.

When asked to select items from a list of what they currently can do in Spanish, the surveyed participants responded as summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Perceptions of Current Spanish Language Skills

Choice	<i>n</i>
Greet people in Spanish	93% (14)
Understand and demonstrate respectful Puerto Rican etiquette	60% (9)
Ask where to find the restroom	60% (9)

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Order food at a restaurant in Spanish	20% (3)
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Ask for basic directions	20% (3)
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One individual left a comment stating, “none of the above,” and three others skipped this question. These four individuals all claimed to be willing to invest time in online lessons and activities in language and culture for one hour per week. Likewise, of the five team members who said they were only able to greet people in Spanish, two were willing to spend a half hour per week to work on Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture, while one expressed willingness to commit one hour per week, and the remaining participant selected 3–5 hours per week. All five respondents who claimed to only be able to greet people in Spanish also expressed interest in online lessons and activities above all other forms.

These results depict that most service-learning trip team members were either very novice learners or did not yet consider themselves Spanish learners but were open to learning to various degrees. In response to this needs analysis, initiating the prep course with basic Spanish words and phrases seemed most beneficial for the team. This starting point was intended to inform the new learners and refresh those who had learned the basic material before.

*Perceptions of Language Learning Goals.* To determine what team members believed they needed to know and do in the target language and culture, the survey inquired as to what participants would like to be able to do in Spanish once they arrived in Puerto Rico. Respondents stated a need to know basic words and a desire to participate in basic conversations with Puerto Ricans. Therefore, the survey included an item inquiring about team members’ ratings regarding the importance of various basic communicative Spanish features. The results from this section of the survey are displayed below in Table 2.

*Table 2: Perceptions of Value of Language Learning Outcomes*

	Level of Importance			<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>Not (1)</i>	<i>Somewhat (2)</i>	<i>Very (3)</i>			
Greeting people in Spanish	0% (0)	17% (3)	83% (15)	18	2.83	0.37
Demonstrating respectful etiquette while in Puerto Rico	0% (0)	6% (1)	94% (17)	18	2.94	0.23

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Ordering food at a restaurant in Spanish	11% (2)	50% (9)	39% (7)	18	2.28	0.65
Asking for basic directions	0% (0)	67% (12)	33% (6)	18	2.33	0.47
Asking where to find the restroom	17% (3)	33% (6)	50% (9)	18	2.33	0.75

A preliminary interview question asked whether participants would be willing to take a language and culture prep course, and if so, what format they would prefer. With positive responses regarding the course and a declared preference of audio and speaking formats, items were included on the survey asking respondents to select what lesson delivery or learning formats they would prefer and how much time they were willing to devote to learning. Participants were able to select multiple answers regarding the learning format, but only one response for the item about time commitments. Respondents described wanting to invest time in a language and culture training in a variety of formats (Figure 2), though students preferred small classes ( $n = 12$ ; 67%) and online activities ( $n = 8$ ; 44%) above other formats.

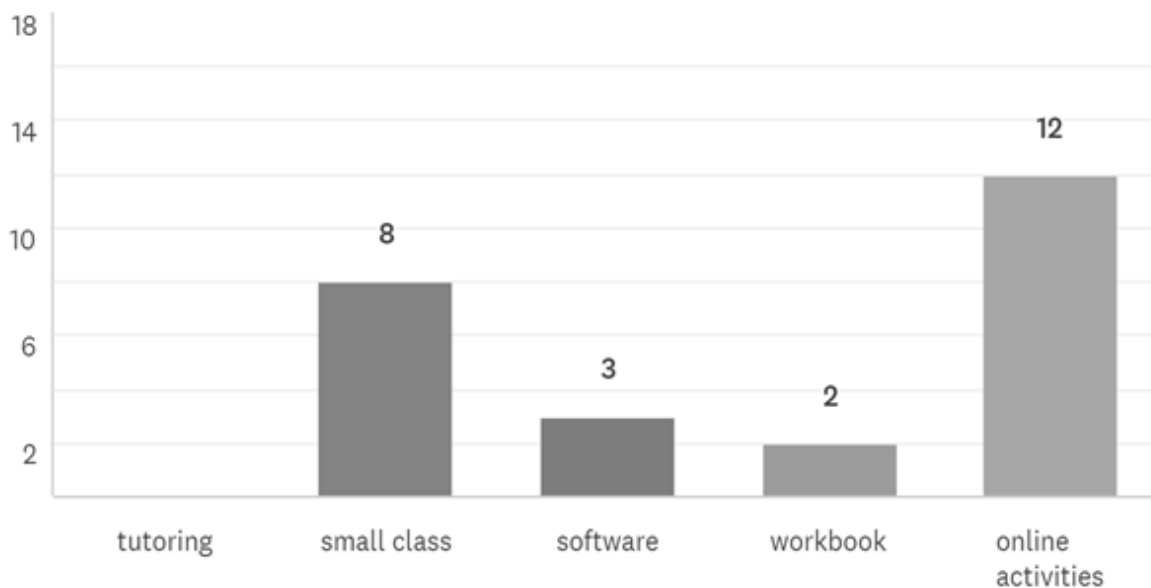


Figure 2. Spanish Language Study Learning Format Preferences.

When asked “How much time per week would you be willing to devote to working on your Spanish language and culture learning?” team members responded in accordance with the data viewable in Figure 3 below, with the majority selecting either a half hour or one hour ( $n = 15$ ; 83%). With dominant interest in online and small class formats of no more than one hour per week, the prep course design adhered to these results. Practical qualities, such as the availability of the team leaders, the pre-set meeting dates, and meeting space availability, all influenced the realistic construction of the prep course. With the data and

logistics considered, the prep course entailed a 30-minute small class gathering before each of the six informational trip meetings, during which online materials and sites were provided for short at-home practice activities and exercises lasting no longer than 30 minutes.

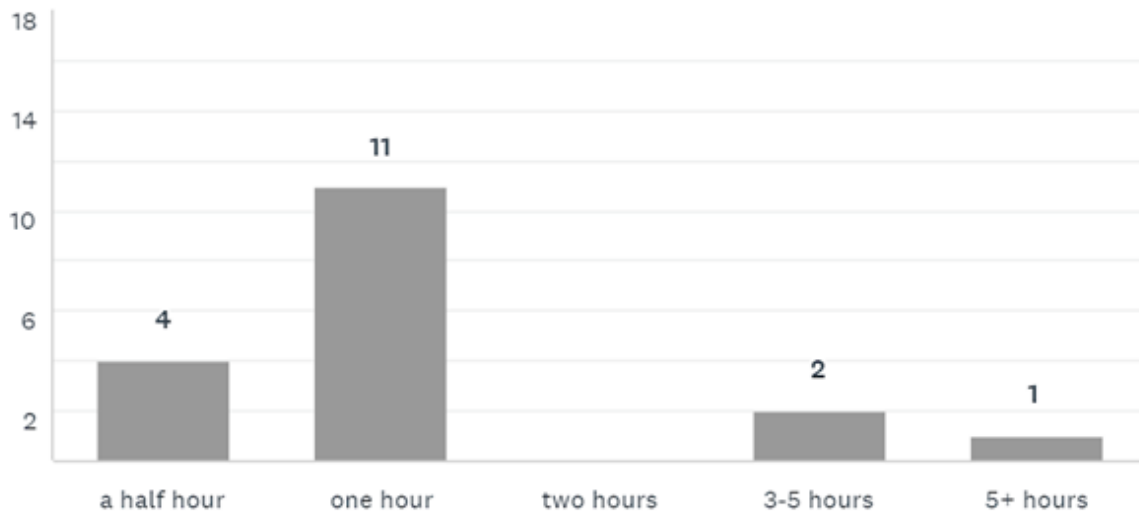


Figure 3. Time Commitments to Spanish Language Study.

*Perceptions of Aptitude and Value of Language Learning.* To better understand the participants' language learning beliefs, they were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements concerning their perceptions of their own language learning skills and the value they placed on learning Spanish. Statements included for this item and the results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Perceptions of Current Language Learning Skills

	Scale of Agreement				n	M	SD
	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)			
I'm a good language learner.	6% (1)	44% (8)	33% (6)	17% (3)	18	2.61	0.83
I'm good at Spanish.	33% (6)	56% (10)	6% (1)	6% (1)	18	1.83	0.76
I don't think many PRs will be able to speak English.	28% (5)	33% (6)	39% (7)	0% (0)	18	2.11	0.81
Learning Spanish is useful.	0% (0)	6% (1)	61% (11)	33% (6)	18	3.28	0.56

Learning Spanish is difficult.	12% (2)	29% (5)	53% (9)	6% (1)	17	2.53	0.78
I'm not willing to work hard to learn Spanish.	25% (4)	50% (8)	25% (4)	0% (0)	16	2	0.71
The culture in PR is inviting.	0% (0)	0% (0)	83% (15)	17% (3)	18	3.17	0.37

*Beliefs about themselves as language learners.* The interviews inquired as to whether participants saw themselves as good language learners and why. The interviewees defined themselves as good language learners due to natural ability to learn quickly. Therefore, the survey included items assessing team members' beliefs about themselves as language learners.

Half of the surveyed participants ( $n = 9$ ; 50%) identified themselves as good language learners, while the other half of the group declared otherwise. Most participants indicated that they were not proficient in Spanish ( $n = 16$ ; 89%). Roughly 67% ( $n = 12$ ) of the team members who rated the statement about willingness to challenge themselves indicated they were willing to work hard to learn Spanish, which empowered the efforts of designing this functional/notional syllabus because the participants expressed buy-in and interest. As informed by the data, the researchers decided to begin the prep course with a class containing less complex but meaningful learning activities. Team members with greater Spanish proficiency were expected to boost the confidence and motivation of less-proficient team members to help them better engage in the Spanish learning process. Providing materials and lessons within the team members' zones of proximal development was central to the overall intent of the prep course and helped to maintain a balance between challenging and attainable goals in the learning process. When students believe they can learn, they will try harder; therefore, this balance between rigor and motivation was necessary to ensure students remained engaged and confident in themselves as language learners.

*Beliefs about language learning.* When questioned about the challenges associated with language learning, the interviewees responded that the difficulty depends on the individual language learner. Therefore, the survey included a question asking if participants agreed or disagreed that learning Spanish is difficult. Approximately 60% of the team members agreed that learning Spanish is difficult, and about 40% disagreed. Nonetheless, more than 90% of the team members stated they believed learning Spanish is useful.

These reported beliefs about language learning informed the development of the prep course. The beginning of the course was purposefully designed to help participants recognize the usefulness of Spanish and to provide linguistic tools and materials suitable for the team's pace of learning. The team leaders attempted to demonstrate that learning Spanish is not overly difficult and unattainable. While learning Spanish, or any language, is not easy, the format and pace of instruction can be used to enhance learners' acquisition and learning experiences.

*Beliefs about culture learning.* To determine team members' cultural goals and beliefs, the interviewed participants were asked what they wanted to learn about the Puerto Rican culture. Both interviewees stated a desire to learn Puerto Rican customs and etiquette. Consequently, the survey included a question asking if team members believed that demonstrating respectful etiquette while in Puerto Rico would be important, and all participants agreed that this was significant. Therefore, the prep course included useful details about Puerto Rican customs and etiquette.

### **Discussion and Implications**

The process of formulating the functional/notional syllabus in this study was intended to serve as a practical example for language educators at all levels. Purposefully aligning objectives embedded in a course with student perceptions and needs can promote greater student engagement and achievement (Jabbarifar & Elhambakhsh, 2012). Analyzing needs to inform syllabus construction as it pertains to the broader field of education is also central to this discussion.

The discoveries of this action research culminated in the formation of a prep course for a service-learning trip going to Puerto Rico. The goal of this course was to engage all team members in acquiring Spanish language and learning about Puerto Rican culture. When choosing the length of the course, the collaborating researchers took into consideration team members' lifestyles and other responsibilities. Additionally, survey results indicated most team members preferred to learn Spanish language and culture online and/or in a small class for no more than one hour per week. To promote participation, the prep course entailed short 30-minute small class sessions held before mandatory informational trip meetings. Additional online materials were provided at each session for at-home practice and study. One of the action researchers taught the small class and prepared all the handouts and other necessary materials. Participants were encouraged to reach out if they desired to schedule individual tutoring.

The needs analysis indicated that most team members predominately had little to no Spanish learning experience prior to the service-learning trip. Therefore, the course launched with a study of the Spanish alphabet and pronunciation (see Appendix C for the course syllabus). The initial lessons also incorporated a brief introduction to Spanish language and culture. Less-complex introductory language activities were included to ensure that the learning objectives were attainable for most participants with little Spanish proficiency. These activities were chosen to ensure team members experienced language learning success and increased confidence, thus encouraging the continuation of learning (Tsai, Cheng, Yeh, & Lin, 2017).

Just over half of the team members believed learning Spanish was difficult, though the clear majority recognized it to be useful. Therefore, the course was designed for the needs and feasible learning pace of the service-learning team members to demonstrate that learning Spanish is attainable. Addressing the learner beliefs surrounding the course content in this

way exhibited the team leaders' commitment to accommodating the students they served. Womack (2017) maintained that syllabi and course objectives should be designed with all students in mind to undergird the course with accommodations appropriate for the target audience. Accommodating students' needs and learning goals when designing a course—what Womack (2017) termed *universal design*—is a necessary means for appropriate and effective instruction.

To further employ the practice of universal design throughout the construction of the prep course, each element of the survey informed a lesson for the course. Participants declared the following linguistic features to be important: greeting people in Spanish, demonstrating respectful etiquette, and asking where to find the bathroom. Teaching and practice of these linguistic and cultural aspects were incorporated into the prep course curriculum. The second session covered greetings and basic questions, and the third lesson explored ordering food in a restaurant. The prep course also incorporated details about Puerto Rican customs and etiquette in the fourth lesson. The fifth lesson covered asking for directions and where to find the restroom. Likewise, educators who wish to promote student success and self-efficacy may find the results of a preliminary needs-analysis, like the one employed in this study, helpful.

Though the team members would have benefited greatly from conversing in Spanish while in Puerto Rico, a 6-week course of one hour per week did not lend itself to adequate preparation for advanced sentence formation. The prep course instead included a wealth of basic communicative phrases that team members could practice and use to communicate with Puerto Ricans. During the service-learning trip, the team hosted drama and musical performances, all of which had translators. However, the team was equipped with phrases to invite Puerto Ricans to these programs in Spanish. The course sought to meet the needs of the students as practicable in the time frame allotted for the class—a measure suggested for educators employing a similar approach to syllabus and course design.

## Conclusion

This needs analysis was conducted to design an appropriate preparation course for a service-learning team. The process of creating a functional/notional syllabus informed by learner needs proved to be daunting for the teacher researchers and required significantly more effort than utilizing a pre-designed textbook. Nonetheless, the anticipation remained that the resulting prep course would enhance student learning.

Employing universal backwards design by utilizing the results of a needs analysis to formulate objectives and design a “best-fit” course for students serves as a means of preliminary accommodation (Womack, 2017). Like Serafini and Torres (2015), the action researchers in this study anticipated that our, “needs analysis can provide practitioners with an adaptable blueprint to implement their own needs analysis,” (p. 465) while designing a specialized course. The interview and survey utilized in this study are examples for other educators who may wish to employ a similar informal needs analysis for a course or unit and may be adapted to suit a different context for learning.



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**Appendix A: Preliminary Interview Questions**

1. Have you studied Spanish in the past? If so, where and for how long?
2. So tell me what got you interested in going on this trip.
3. What will you need to do in Spanish when you get to Puerto Rico?
4. What would you like to be able to do in Spanish with you get there?
5. Would you say that you are good at learning languages? Why or why not?
6. Do you think certain formats of learning a language would be preferable to you?
7. Do you think language learning is hard?
8. What comes to mind when you think of the culture in Puerto Rico?
9. Do you want to learn about the Puerto Rican culture? If so, what do you want to learn?
10. How might you gain the desired knowledge of the Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture before your trip?
11. Would you be willing to take a prep course of Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture before your trip? Why or why not?

### Appendix B: Survey Protocol

1. Please complete each demographic indicator below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Level of education: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please complete each item below:

Language(s) spoken: \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) studied: \_\_\_\_\_

Location(s) of past travel to \_\_\_\_\_

Spanish-speaking localities: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of time spent abroad: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please indicate whether you (1) ***strongly agree***, (2) ***agree***, (3) ***disagree***, or (4) ***strongly disagree*** with the following statements:

\_\_\_\_\_ I'm a good language learner.

\_\_\_\_\_ I'm good at Spanish.

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't think many Puerto Ricans will be able to speak English.

\_\_\_\_\_ Learning Spanish is useful.

\_\_\_\_\_ Learning Spanish is difficult.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not willing to work hard to learn Spanish.

\_\_\_\_\_ The culture in Puerto Rico is inviting.

4. Check only one choice to complete the following statement:

**I am . . .**

\_\_\_\_\_ fluent in Spanish

\_\_\_\_\_ comfortable speaking in Spanish, though I struggle sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ able to understand more Spanish than I can speak

\_\_\_\_\_ not comfortable speaking in Spanish, but I can read and write some Spanish

\_\_\_\_\_ able to say a few basic words in Spanish

\_\_\_\_\_ not currently able to communicate in Spanish at all

5. Briefly describe your Spanish language learning experiences.

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6. Select whether you believe the following features are (1) **very important**, (2) **somewhat important**, or (3) **not important**.

- \_\_\_\_\_ greeting people in Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ demonstrating respectful cultural etiquette
- \_\_\_\_\_ ordering food at a restaurant in Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ asking for basic directions
- \_\_\_\_\_ asking where to find the restroom

\*Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

7. Check all choices that answer the following statement:

**I'm able to . . .**

- \_\_\_\_\_ greet people in Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ understand and demonstrate respectful Puerto Rican etiquette
- \_\_\_\_\_ order food at a restaurant in Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ ask for basic directions
- \_\_\_\_\_ ask where to find the restroom

\*Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Check all choices that answer the following statement:

**I would invest time in a language and culture training in the form of . . .**

- \_\_\_\_\_ tutoring
- \_\_\_\_\_ a small class
- \_\_\_\_\_ software
- \_\_\_\_\_ a workbook
- \_\_\_\_\_ online lessons and activities

\*Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

9. Check only one choice to answer the following question:

**How much time per week would you be willing to devote to working on your Spanish language and culture learning?**

\_\_\_\_\_ ½ hour

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 hour

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 hours

\_\_\_\_\_ 3–5 hours

\_\_\_\_\_ 5+ hours



## Appendix C: Prep Course Syllabus and Outline

### Prep Course Overview

This course is designed to prepare our team to have the most beneficial service-learning trip possible. During this course we will learn the basics of Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture. This course was designed in response to the results of the survey our team members completed. Therefore, this course has been specifically designed for adults and adolescents to learn together. These six sessions are convenient, as they will take place just before our team meetings. Also, the material will be engaging and fun as we learn about the Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture together.

### Dates of Meetings

Date	Location	Time
Sunday, April 26, 2017	Room A	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 1, 2017	Room B	5:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 5, 2017	Room A	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 8, 2017	Room B	5:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 12, 2017	Room A	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 15, 2017	Room B	5:30 - 6:00 p.m.

### Texts

- Spanish-English Dictionary

### Frequently Used Websites

- Puerto Rico governmental site: <http://www.topuertorico.org/>
- BBC Spanish language site: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/talk/>
- Spanish language class site: <http://mendycolbert.com/Spanish1.htm>
- Spanish practice site: <http://www.studyspanish.com/>

Course Outline

Lesson Topic	Lesson Objectives	In-class Learning Tasks	At-home Practice Activities	Online Resources
Session 1: Introduction to Spanish Language and Hispanic Culture	<p>To be able to explain the value in learning the Spanish language and culture for our service-learning trip to Puerto Rico</p> <p>To understand the outline and design of this course</p> <p>To be able to pronounce letters in the Spanish alphabet</p>	<p>1. Discuss the value in learning Spanish and culture for our service-learning trip.</p> <p>2. Review the outline and design of this course and ask and answer questions.</p> <p>3. Introduce Spanish alphabet with videos and handouts (see resources).</p> <p>4. Discuss the at-home activities.</p>	<p>With your family member:</p> <p>1. Search the web to discover interesting cultural features of Puerto Rico and bring your findings next week.</p> <p>2. Practice your pronunciation using the provided online resources.</p>	<p><a href="#">Chart: Spanish Alphabet</a></p> <p><a href="#">Exercise: Spanish Pronunciation Practice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Web site: Official Puerto Rico Governmental Site</a></p> <p><a href="#">Video: Spanish Alphabet</a></p> <p><a href="#">Video: Practice Spanish Alphabet Song</a></p>
Session 2: Greetings and Basic Questions	<p>To be able to greet someone in Spanish</p> <p>To understand the greetings and salutations of others</p> <p>To be able to speak and respond appropriately in formal v. informal situations</p>	<p>1. Discuss cultural findings from last week's at-home activity.</p> <p>2. Review pronunciation.</p> <p>3. Introduce basic Spanish greetings with videos and vocabulary handout (see resources).</p> <p>4. Complete partner communicative activity (see resources).</p> <p>5. Discuss the at-</p>	<p>With your family member:</p> <p>1. Re-watch the basic greetings videos (see resources).</p> <p>2. Write three basic conversations.</p> <p>3. Complete the at-home activity (see resources).</p>	<p><a href="#">Handout: Greetings Lesson Vocabulary</a></p> <p><a href="#">Partner Communicative Activity: Greetings</a></p> <p><a href="#">Lesson 2 Vocabulary Flashcards</a></p> <p><a href="#">Conversational Activity</a></p> <p><a href="#">Video: Basic Greetings, Part 1</a></p> <p><a href="#">Video: Basic Greetings, Part 2</a></p> <p><a href="#">Video: Formal v.</a></p>

		home online practice activities.		<a href="#">Informal Language</a>
Session 3: Ordering Food in a Restaurant	To be able to order food in a restaurant or other food establishment	<p>1. Begin with reading and reviewing greetings and basic conversations (from last week's at-home activity).</p> <p>2. Discuss the progression of interactions between customers and waiters on the mainland U.S. and how they differ from those in Puerto Rico.</p> <p>3. Watch the video explaining how to order food at a restaurant.</p> <p>4. View and discuss the food vocabulary handout (see resources).</p> <p>5. Complete the dictionary usage activity handout (see resources).</p> <p>5. Discuss the at-home online practice activities.</p>	<p>With your family member:</p> <p>1. View the at-home activity link (see web links).</p> <p>2. Create a menu together and role-play as a server and customer ordering from the menu.</p> <p>3. Take turns switching roles and check each other's Spanish.</p>	<p><a href="#">Handout: Foods Lesson Vocabulary</a></p> <p><a href="#">Activity: Dictionary Usage</a></p> <p><a href="#">Lesson 3 Vocabulary Flashcards</a></p> <p><a href="#">At-home Communicative Activity: Menus</a></p> <p><a href="#">Video: How to Order Food or Drinks in Spanish</a></p>
Session 4: Puerto Rican Culture and Etiquette	To be able to understand culturally respectful etiquette in Puerto Rico	<p>1. Practice greetings and basic questions.</p> <p>2. Review last week's at-home activity of how to</p>	<p>With your family member:</p> <p>1. View the three websites provided that explicate Puerto Rican</p>	<p><a href="#">Article: Puerto Rican Cultural Etiquette</a></p> <p><a href="#">Puerto Rican Etiquette</a></p> <p><a href="#">Puerto Rican Culture</a></p>

		<p>order food in a restaurant.</p> <p>3. Discuss the importance of demonstrating respectful etiquette.</p> <p>4. Together read the article regarding Puerto Rican etiquette (see resources).</p> <p>5. Read the articles about Puerto Rican etiquette (see resources).</p> <p>5. Discuss the at-home online practice activities.</p>	<p>culture and etiquette (see resources).</p> <p>2. Discuss the Puerto Rican culture and etiquette together</p> <p>3. Practice previously learned material.</p>	
<p>Session 5: Useful Miscellaneous Words and Phrases</p>	<p>To be able to invite someone to a program</p> <p>To be able to exchange pleasantries and greetings</p> <p>To be able to ask for and understand directions</p> <p>To be able to ask where to find the restroom</p>	<p>1. Discuss principles of Puerto Rican etiquette.</p> <p>3. Overview of invitations vocabulary flashcards (see resources).</p> <p>4. View videos and discuss how to ask for directions (see resources).</p> <p>5. Complete Asking for Directions Activity (see resources).</p> <p>6. Watch and discuss the video on asking where to find the</p>	<p>With your family member:</p> <p>1. Practice inviting someone to a program and wishing them a good day.</p> <p>2. Role play to practice asking for directions and giving directions.</p> <p>3. Practice asking and telling where to find the restroom.</p>	<p><a href="#">Invitations Vocabulary Flashcards</a></p> <p><a href="#">Videos: Asking for Directions</a></p> <p><a href="#">Activity: Asking for Directions</a></p> <p>HYPERLINK "https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGW8Tt8PCoc&amp;nooredirect=1" <a href="#">Video: Where is the Restroom?</a></p>

		<p>restroom (see resources).</p> <p>7. Discuss the at-home online practice activities.</p>		
Session 6: Course Review	To review learned material and answer any questions	<p>1. Discuss the value of learning Spanish and Puerto Rican culture for our service-learning trip.</p> <p>2. Perform impromptu skits of exchanging greetings and asking basic questions.</p> <p>3. Choose three different partners to practice ordering in a restaurant.</p> <p>4. In a small group, discuss Puerto Rican culture and etiquette for five minutes.</p> <p>5. In a new small group, role-play asking for directions and asking where to find the restroom.</p> <p>6. As a class, discuss situations in which we might use the conversational phrases presented in the last lesson.</p>	With your family member, practice the material covered in the course and review the vocabulary overview handout (see resources).	<p>HYPERLINK "http://www.phschool.com/atschool/realidades/pdfs/repaso/L1_Capitulo_PE.pdf" <a href="http://www.phschool.com/atschool/realidades/pdfs/repaso/L1_Capitulo_PE.pdf">Handout: Vocabulary Overview</a></p>