

ESEDI

Analysis of requirement in each organisation

WP2

Needs analysis in France

The Needs Analysis is carried out by the partnership in each project country and it is aimed at identifying the needs of the target group in the area of Spanish language teaching and learning. There were two categories of respondents involved in the process of collecting data for the elaboration of the Needs Analysis in France: 4 teachers of Spanish (active with young and adult learners in compulsory school and in lifelong learning) and 19 learners, most of them being between 16 to 19.

The instruments used for data collection were two separate questionnaires, one, in Spanish, addressing teachers and one, in French, for students. The questionnaires had been developed jointly at the level of partnership in English.

The Needs Analysis was implemented in France in May and June 2011.

Greta du Velay
<http://cri.velay.greta.fr>

I. DATA COLLECTED FROM TEACHERS

1. Objectives or aims mentioned by the students when they start courses

Teachers have been asked to rank the below pre-determined aims from 0 (not mentioned) to 10 (the most habitual). The table below summarizes their answers and calculates the rank.

Aims	Teach 1	Teach 2	Teach 3	Teach 4	Average	Rank
Compulsory course	9	9	10	9	9,25	1
English certificate or exam	8	8	9	8	8,25	2
Required for work purposes	6	3	3	5	4,25	5
Improve their CV	5	2	2	6	3,75	6
Need a new hobby / interest	2	2	4	3	2,75	9
Travel and/ or holidays	3	7	5	7	5,5	3
Communicate in Spanish-speaking countries	3	6	8	4	5,25	4
Communicate in Spanish-speaking circles	0	5	7	2	3,5	7
Improve self-assurance by speaking another language	4	1	1	0	1,5	10
Get to know Spanish -speaking cultures	2	4	6	1	3,25	8

Two teachers are active in the compulsory school while two other are working with continuous training. Nevertheless there are few differences regarding their answers. It is though coherent to calculate the average and to rank. The main reasons are the inclusion of the Spanish course in a diploma curriculum. Apart from these, people decide to learn Spanish for travelling, going on holidays followed and to communicate in Spanish-speaking countries (both items can be considered as the same objective).

2. Factors influencing the motivation of the student in class

Teachers have been asked to rank the below pre-determined aims from 0 (not mentioned) to 10 (the most habitual). The table below summarizes their answers and calculates the rank.

Aims	Teach 1	Teach 2	Teach 3	Teach 4	Average	Rank
Easy and relaxed atmosphere	6	4	5	3	4,5	7
The student feels comfortable and accepted	7	1	9	4	5,25	5
The course level is appropriate for the student	1	5	10	9	6,25	4
Competitiveness with the fellow students	0	0	4	0	1	11
Direct student participation	3	6	5	6	5	6
Interaction amongst the students	2	7	4	5	4,5	7
Feeling of improvement in one's own competency	4	2	7	2	3,75	9
The activities catch the student's interest	5	8	8	7	7	3
Possibility of choosing topics, according to tastes and needs	8	3	2	1	3,5	10
The student understands the purpose of the activities	10	9	6	8	8,25	2
Student involvement in the activity	9	10	6	10	8,75	1

There is no surprise in the fact that learners need to be involved in the activity and understand their use and purpose to be motivated. These two factors obviously have a much stronger influence than the others. Together they are weighted 8,5 while the third criteria "The course level is appropriate for the student" has only 6,5 points.

On the free space where teachers could mention other factors influencing the student's motivation, they are:

- validation of the year and possibility to enter a higher course level
- the fact that they go on holidays in a Spanish-speaking country

- the fact that learners have Spanish-speaking friends and that they can use the language to communicate with them
- the fact of having relatives speaking Spanish
- funny activities based on daily situations
- the diversification of documents
- the use of new technologies
- the inversion of the roles learner <--> teacher

The factors that may lead to loss of student motivation are when:

- the learner doesn't understand the instructions given in Spanish
- s/he has difficulties in memorizing the lexicon or grammar
- the learner is too shy and doesn't want to speak because of the others
- the teacher is not able to motivate the learners, and propose activities that are too complicated
- a learner doesn't have the feeling of improving
- a learner feels pressured or when s/he has to face remarks from the teacher
- when too much emphasis is put on grammar
- when there are too much noise in the classroom.

3. Didactic tools and techniques used in class

Teachers have been asked to score from 0 to 3 (0 = never; 1 = rarely; 2 = sometimes; 3 = frequently) the didactic tools and techniques used in class. The table below summarizes their answers and calculates the rank.

Aims	Teach 1	Teach 2	Teach 3	Teach 4	Average	Rank
Structure exercises and vocabulary	3	2	3	2	2,5	
Listening exercises	3	3	2	3	2,75	1
Songs	2	3	1	3	2,25	
Board games	1	2	1	0	1	
Role-plays or drama activities	2	3	2	3	2,5	
Oral presentations	2	3	3	3	2,75	1
Discussions and debates	1	3	3	2	2,25	
Individual production of texts	1	2	1	2	1,5	
Creating stories in a group	1	3	2	1	1,75	
Films, documentaries or adverts	2	3	3	3	2,75	1
Tests to assess the level	1	2	2	2	1,75	
Reading short texts with a current and cultural subject matter	1	2	3	2	2	
Reading newspapers, novels or comics, etc.	2	2	3	2	2,25	

“Listening exercises”, “Oral presentations” and “Films, documentaries or adverts” are the tools that are the most used. The less used are “board games” and “individual production of texts”. The results show that teachers put an emphasis on the understanding of spoken Spanish and on oral communication. Tools that imply to write are less used. “Structure exercises and vocabulary” have also some importance.

Teachers sometimes use other tools and techniques that are:

- videos of songs;
- videos of serials;
- recording by the learners of their oral work on MP3 or video;
- internet quests;
- participation in competitions with production of videos.

All tools and techniques are used with all levels.

4. Specific problems according to the level

The four teachers express the existence of specific difficulties linked to the level of the learners. They are detailed below.

- A 1

Difficulties to learn because of some individualities (age, motivation).

In the case of oral or written understanding, some learners are more visual and other more auditory. This may create difficulties when working one type or another.

The personality of the learner has also an influence. The young pupils tend to reproduce and can speak without fear. It is different for adults who usually think more before speaking and who are afraid of making mistakes in front of the others.

- A 2

Difficulty to run debates because of a lack of vocabulary.

Lack of vocabulary.

- B 1

Communication may be difficult with learners.

Difficulties to express without notes.

- B 2

The older learners don't want to be recorded, or when they accept, they don't want the other to listen or see their work.

5. Experience with theatre (and role-plays)

None of the four teachers has experience of using theatre for teaching. Two of them have a very strong interest in theatre of various styles and two of them are very keen to learn about this practice. Nevertheless they are using role-play and they think the method is very useful and motivating, especially for the younger ones. Through role-plays, they learn with dialogue in an easier way, expressions and vocabularies. The involvement of all learners is much stronger.

Aspects of role-plays or drama activities that contribute to increasing student motivation:

- The staging done by the learners + the preparation of the exercise with audiovisual material
- The strong and direct involvement of learners
- The interactions between learners.
- The use of accessories
- The fact of being someone else during the play
- It allows self-evaluation
- The fact of being in situation of daily life or a situation of interest
- The fact of feeling able to express in another language
- The group aspect

Possible barriers or handicaps when it comes to putting them into practice:

- Learners being shy
- Difficulties to speak in public
- Maybe technical difficulties if recording is necessary
- Lack of vocabulary

II. DATA COLLECTED FROM STUDENTS

19 learners mainly from high schools have responded to the questionnaire, aged between 16 and 19. The majority of them have a B1 level. The table below shows how they have self-evaluated themselves for each skill of the European framework for languages.

Level	A2	B1	B2	C1
Listening	5	13		1
Reading	3	12		2
Spoken interaction	8	9	1	1
Spoken production	5	12	2	
Writing	5	11	3	

The duration of a lesson varies between 1 hour and 2 hours; 1 hour being usually a little less, 55 minutes and being the most common case. The annual total duration of the course¹ varies from 72 to 162 hours. They are all engaged in Spanish courses for the first time (no previous dropping-out).

1. Enrolment in Spanish course

Reasons evoked	Number of answers	Ranking
Compulsory course	17	1
Spanish certificate or exam	8	3
Required for work purposes	1	6
Need a new hobby / interest	3	5
Communicate in Spanish	15	2
Get to know Spanish-speaking cultures	6	4

As most of the students participating in the survey are high school students and they take Spanish courses as part of their school curriculum, they ranked as n° 1 the compulsory aspect. However, if we eliminate this item we see that they are interested to learn Spanish so that they can communicate.

2. Methods, course book and materials used for learning Spanish

The main resources are text resources, made from the various course books edited in France and additional documents prepared by the teacher. In addition, digital material retrieved from internet, but also videos, cartoons, songs, radio, TV serials, newspapers and CDs. All learners interviewed have benefited from exchange with native speakers.

3. Use of Spanish during classes

The teachers usually use Spanish in classes. The only exceptions mentioned are “*when we don’t understand something that is too complicated*”.

4. Factors influencing motivation

Learners have been asked to evaluate a list of factors by giving a mark between 0 and 10 (0 being the lowest and 10 the highest). A blank space was left for free expression but none of the respondents have filled it. The following table summarizes their answers and calculates the rank.

¹ This question was not appropriate for most of the learners because they usually take several years with an annual duration varying from 72 to 162 hours. Most of them don’t know the total duration as it is part of a curriculum where the figures are given per week (2, 3, 3.5, 4, 4.5).

Criteria	Average	Rank
Easy and relaxed atmosphere	5,4	5
Being involved in the activities	5,4	5
Possibility of choosing topics according to tastes	3,8	7
Feeling comfortable and accepted	6,2	2
Appropriate course level	5,6	4
Interaction with the other students	5,7	3
Clear understanding of the activities purpose	6,2	2
Feeling of progress or improvement	7,3	1
Competitiveness with the fellow students	5,2	6

The answers of the learners are consistent with the answers of the teachers. Learners need to have a feeling of progress and also they have to know where they go with a clear understanding of the objectives of the activities. They like to feel comfortable and accepted and they value the interaction with other students (their favourite activity is role-play). They don't value very much the possibility to choose the topics (probably because the topics are already well chosen by the teacher) and competitiveness is not a motivating factor.

5. The most difficult skills to acquire: reading, writing, listening or speaking

Learners have been asked to evaluate the acquisition of skill by giving a mark between 1, the most difficult, to 4 the easier. The following table summarizes their answers and classifies them.

Skills	Average	Classification
Speaking	2	1
Writing	2,22	2
Listening	2,26	3
Reading	3,44	4

The easier thing for learners is reading Spanish. Then it is difficult to make a real difference between listening, writing or speaking. "Speaking" being a bit more often quoted as the most difficult. Nevertheless it is consistent with the objectives of ESEDI that focus more on developing speaking capabilities.

6. Important activities for the teacher

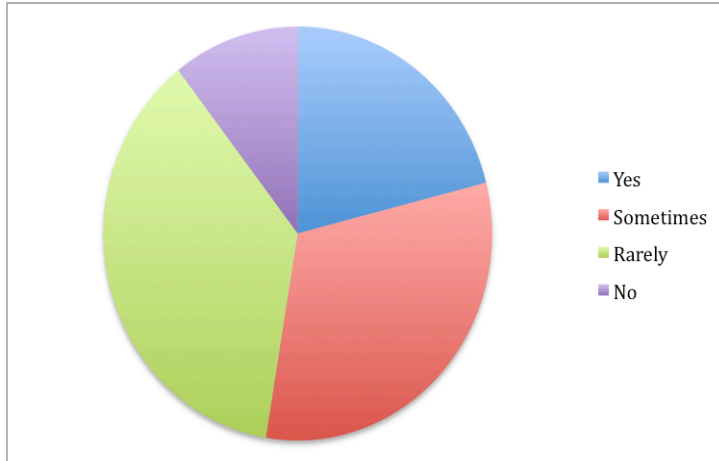
Learners have been asked to order a list of activities by giving a mark between 1, the most important and 6, the less important. The question was "During the lessons teacher attaches the greatest importance to...". Of course this question doesn't necessarily reflect the reality, but perhaps more important, the perception of the learners. The following table summarizes their answers and classifies the activities.

Activity	Average	Rank*
Teaching grammar	2,58	1
Exercising speaking	2,89	2
Teaching vocabulary	2,95	3
Exercising listening	3,84	4
Exercising writing	4,05	5
Exercising reading	4,68	6

For that question also, the difference is clear for the less important activity conducted by the teacher that is exercising reading. Teachers tend to give more importance to teaching grammar, exercising speaking and teaching vocabulary. Even if it is a tradition in the French education system to focus on grammar, it is interesting to note that learners don't feel that there is a much strong focus on grammar than on speaking exercises. Foreign languages are taught with the purpose of giving the learner the possibility to develop oral communication (speaking + vocabulary).

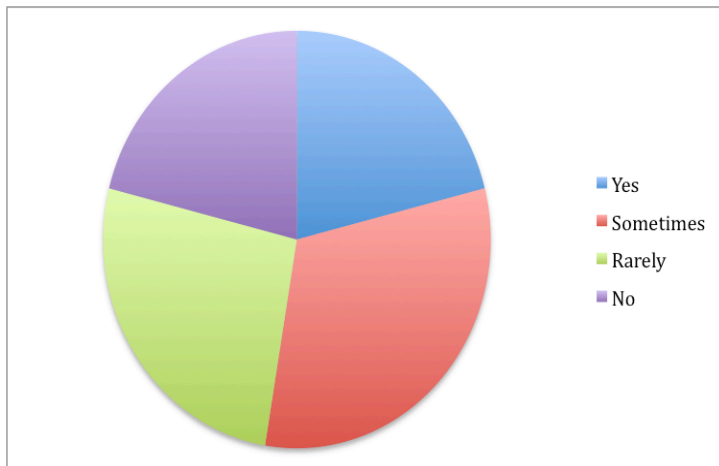
7. Feeling unproductive during Spanish classes

There is a certain feeling of being unproductive but it is not so strong as one could imagine. The answers show nevertheless that the classes could be improved by introducing activities involving all learners.



8. Feeling bored during Spanish classes

The repartition of answers (yes+sometimes) vs. (rarely+no) is exactly the same as for the question regarding productivity. The difference resides in a larger number of learners who say "I don't feel bored". In a way it seems possible to associate the fact of feeling bored with the fact of feeling unproductive: involving more learners and making them more active will decrease their impression of being bored.



Here it is worth mentioning that the learners who never feel bored or rarely are learners whose Spanish teacher implements a lot of role-plays. The reasons why the others may feel bored is the lack of oral communication or the repetition of oral communication exercises. Three learners quote not interesting topics. Four have the feeling of having a too low level for participating actively. There is also a feeling of being evaluated too often.

9. Preferred exercises

The activities that learners preferred are role-plays and MCQ. They are very different in nature (and even there are some learners who quote both type of exercises). Roles-plays require an active involvement and some imagination from the learners. MCQ are very plain and passive activities. We can perhaps explain this by the fact they are easy and reassuring and perhaps act as short games (many magazines propose MCQ on funny matters).

Activity named by the learner (number of occurrences)

1. Role-plays (11)
2. MCQ (10)
3. Dialogues (5)
4. Questions after listening texts (3)
5. Taking notes about a movie, working with movies (2)
6. Competition girls/boys (1)
7. Speaking exercises (1)

10. Level of information about the culture and customs in the Spanish-speaking countries

As shown by the answers given below [*answer: justification (number of occurrences)*], learners are very satisfied by the importance given by their teacher to the knowledge of the Spanish culture and Spanish-speaking countries. It makes the core of their courses.

- Yes (5)
- Yes: a lot, it is our only topic (5),
- Yes: a lot of work has been done related to the culture of Latin American inhabitants and Spanish-speaking areas (6)
- Yes: each time there is a cultural/traditional event in Spain, we develop it and discuss about it
- Yes: The cultural aspect is quite valorised during the Spanish courses
- Yes and no (2)
- It depends on the countries.

11. Interest in joining a course in Spanish, using theatre for the purposes of language learning

Almost 60% of learners would be interested to participate in a language course using theatre.

Conclusion

It seems that the experimentation of Spanish classes based on theatre will take place on a fertile ground. Learners and teachers prefer and use active methods that develop oral interaction and communication. They have not been so far as to base a course on a developing a play but they are using as far as possible role-plays. Both categories of actors are very satisfied by role-plays and the majority seem ready to accept to cross the step towards theatre. As it is a new concept, it will have to be explained in detail to learners so that they perceive the added value. Before each class it will be important to stress the objectives of the day and what will be acquired. Short debriefings will also have to be organised. The progression of learners will have to be demonstrated. The elaboration of the play will give a (active) role to each learner so that they don't feel unproductive (nor bored). More than learners, teachers seems willing to participate but as they have no previous experience in that method, they will have to be trained and benefit from the ESEDI partners experience.

The Greta should organise a Spanish course for the new group of young adult learners preparing the diploma of qualified technician. The teachers would have more "freedom" than if they were working with learners preparing their *Baccalauréat* (eq. leaving certificate). The Greta will make this course compulsory for the learners. They already have their *Baccalauréat* and some of them may have already taken Spanish courses. The duration will be one or two hours per week. An additional motivating factor will be the fact that they will be able to choose Spanish as an optional subject for their exam, in order to obtain more points (and to have more chances to obtain their diploma).