

Heritage Speakers of Spanish and Foreign Language Anxiety: A Pilot Study

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The purpose of this pilot study was to examine if heritage speakers of Spanish experience foreign language anxiety in a first-semester Spanish class and, if so, compare that with the levels of foreign language anxiety found in non-heritage speakers. The study also examined if students felt the use of computer-mediated communication in the class could help reduce any anxiety they might experience. Participants for the study filled out a background questionnaire, completed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and answered several yes/no questions regarding anxiety and computer-mediated communication. The findings revealed that (1) the heritage speakers experienced low anxiety (87.1 on the FLCAS), (2) the heritage speakers experienced less anxiety than the non-heritage speakers, and (3) a majority of the students felt that computer technology could help them learn Spanish, but less than half of them were interested in trying to learn Spanish online.

Introduction

The study of foreign languages has a long history in the United States. Recently, increasing numbers of students who already have some degree of proficiency in the language are enrolling in foreign language courses. These students are now being referred to as “heritage language speakers/learners.” While several studies have looked at the effects of foreign language anxiety on traditional foreign language learners, few have investigated the effects of foreign language anxiety on heritage speakers. This study attempts to fill that void. A secondary goal is to find out if students feel the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in the foreign language class could help reduce any anxiety they might experience.

Review of the Literature

Heritage Languages and Heritage Language Speakers/Learners

Definitions

What are a “heritage language” and a “heritage language speaker/learner”? Valdés (2001) and Lacorte and Canabal (2003) point out that “heritage language speaker” is a relatively new term. Other terms that have been put forth include *home background speaker*, *native speaker*, *quasi-native speaker*, *bilingual speaker*, *semi-lingual speaker*, *residual speaker* (Draper & Hicks 2000; Valdés 1997), *ancestral language*, *allochthonous language*, *home language*, *language of origin*, *immigrant minority language*, *community language*, *LOTE* (Language Other Than English) (Van Deusen-Scholl 2003), and *false beginners* (González-Pino 2000). Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) notes that despite the fact that the terms *heritage language*, *heritage language*

speaker, and *heritage language learner* are gaining currency, “the concept remains ill-defined and is sensitive to a variety of interpretations within social, political, regional, and national contexts” (212).

Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) also points out that the word “heritage” itself can be interpreted as negative or offensive by some people. Baker and Jones (1998) argue that the term “heritage language” makes people think more of the past than the future, and thus there is a danger that the heritage language will be seen as more “primitive.” Krashen (2000) notes that heritage languages are usually not maintained and are rarely developed (i.e., “language shift” occurs) and provides some reasons for why “shift happens,” including lack of input in the heritage language as well as affective factors (e.g., reluctance to use the language because of the negative reactions of other heritage language speakers).

Fishman (1999), cited in Van-Deusen-Scholl (2003), defines a heritage language as “a language of personal relevance other than English.” Fishman (2001) divides heritage languages into three types: (1) indigenous – the language of Amerindians; (2) colonial – non-indigenous languages that were already established here before the United States came into being (e.g., Dutch, Swedish, Finnish, Welsh); and (3) immigrant – languages brought to the United States due to immigration. It is in part because of recent immigration that Spanish is so prevalent in the United States.

Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) states that the “most commonly agreed-on definition sees the heritage learner as bilingual in English and a home language other than English with varying degrees of proficiency in the home language” (221). She also notes that the degree of proficiency in the language seems to be the most contentious element in the characterization of a heritage learner, whereas ethnic heritage tends to form the core of the definition. That is, for some people a heritage learner should demonstrate some degree of bilingualism (active or passive), whereas for other people ethnic identity is more important.

Lacorte and Canabal (2003) define heritage language learners as “students from homes where languages other than English are spoken, or who have had in-depth exposure to another language” (107). Peyton, Ranard, and McGinnis (2001) define heritage languages as “the non-English languages spoken by newcomers and indigenous peoples” (3). Campbell and Rosenthal (2000) state that children develop some degree of heritage language proficiency due to hearing their parents and grandparents speaking the heritage language in the home. Cho, Cho, and Tse (1997) define a heritage language as “the language associated with one’s cultural background and it may or may not be spoken in the home” (106). González-Pino (2000) notes that a heritage speaker can refer to those who speak the heritage language in the home and community, those who hear the language in the home and community, those who are foreign-born and perhaps at least partly educated in a country where the language is spoken, and those who may have spoken or heard the language in the home or community and studied it in school at some level for some period.

Wiley (2001) states that defining “heritage language” is problematic and that most definitions focus on the perspective of the language learner. He describes three additional perspectives that can be important in a definition: (1) the educational program (heritage language speakers have different needs from those of other students); (2) the community (it is important to describe the vital role that communities can play in language education; cf. “funds of knowledge” in González 2001); and (3) the language itself (looking at relationships between language varieties will provide a better idea of who the learners are and what they need).

Valdés (2001) provides three main criteria for identifying heritage language students: Heritage learners (1) are raised in homes where a non-English language is spoken; (2) speak or merely understand the heritage language; and (3) are to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language. This definition by Valdés is one of the most accepted and widely-used in the literature, even though Valdés (2001) concludes that researchers will continue to look for a better term to describe these learners.

Characteristics

Campbell and Rosenthal (2000) provide several characteristics of a “typical” heritage language learner: (1) they have acquired nearly 90% of the phonological system of their ancestral language; (2) they have acquired 80% to 90% of the grammatical rules; (3) they have acquired extensive vocabularies, although the semantic range is limited to a few sociocultural domains; (4) they have typically acquired appropriate sociolinguistic rules (see also Lacorte & Canabal 2003); (5) they have learned and adopted many of the customs, values, and traditions (i.e., the culture) of their community; (6) they rarely have opportunities to gain literacy skills in their ancestral languages; and (7) they present a wide range of reasons for wanting to study their ancestral languages. They conclude that these (semi-) bilingual heritage students are different from the more traditional foreign language students. Many researchers agree that heritage language learners are good at oral skills but lack literacy skills (see Fishman 2001; Valdés 2001; Klee 1998; Quintanar-Sarellana, Huebner & Jensen 1993).

Arnhart, Arnold and Bravo-Black (2001) state that there are several types of heritage language speakers: diglossic bilinguals (those who use either language depending on the context); proficient bilinguals (those who speak both languages, although they may not be biliterate); passive bilinguals (those who understand the language audibly but do not speak it); and covert bilinguals (those who, due to socioeconomic factors, refuse to use the language and insist on not understanding it). Valdés (2001) agrees that there are many types of bilinguals and states that bilingual abilities fall along a continuum, involving different types of competence. She further notes that the heritage language is usually seen to be underdeveloped in comparison to English, although Krashen, Tse, and McQuillan (1998) conclude that heritage language students have increasingly positive attitudes toward their ancestral language.

Why Do Heritage Language Learners Want to Learn the Heritage Language?

Lacorte and Canabal (2003) summarize several reasons that heritage learners may have for studying the heritage language: (1) to seek a greater understanding of their culture or to seek to connect with members of their family (Mazzocco 1996); (2) to reinforce the development of their own identity as members of a group with specific cultural characteristics (Benjamin 1997) (cf. Anzaldúa 1987/1999 and González 2001 and the idea of “I am my language”); and (3) to take advantage of the demand for graduates with professional-level skills in a foreign language (Brecht & Ingold 2002). Tse (1998) notes that some language minority group members move from a stage of “Ethnic Ambivalence or Ethnic Evasion” (in which they have little interest in the heritage language and may even avoid using it) to a stage of “Ethnic Emergence” (in which they get interested in their ethnic heritage). Tse notes that those in this latter stage may be quite motivated to develop their competence in the heritage language. Perhaps the heritage students

are motivated to learn the heritage language at this point to show that they are members of that Discourse community (cf. Gee 1996).

Peyton, Ranard, and McGinnis (2001) argue that the heritage language movement developed due to immigrants and indigenous peoples wanting to preserve their languages and cultures. In fact, in 1998 the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) launched the “Heritage Language Initiative” (Brecht & Ingold 2002). The goals of this initiative are “to strengthen the ability of the United States to participate effectively in an increasingly interdependent world, produce a broad cadre of citizens able to function professionally in both English and other languages, and build an education system that is responsive to the national language needs and the heritage language communities in this country” (Peyton, Ranard & McGinnis 2001, pg. 14).

Why Are Heritage Languages Important?

According to Tesser (2000), respondents to the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese’s 1999 Survey of the Membership cited heritage learners in **the** classroom as a concern second only to the “graying of the profession” (14).

Fishman (1966) was one of the first to call for a preservation of heritage languages. Campbell and Rosenthal (2000) note that interest in reviving and retaining heritage languages has coincided with increased recognition of minority rights (both civil and linguistic), a new appreciation for multiculturalism and societal diversity, and the effects of massive migration of people from one country to another who are looking for a better way of life.

Krashen (2000) concludes that there are clear advantages to continuing heritage language development, both to the individual and to society. On the individual level, he states, research indicates that those who continue to develop their primary language have certain cognitive advantages over their English-only counterparts (cf. Hakuta 1986). In addition, better heritage language development means better communication with family members and with other members of the community (cf. Wong-Fillmore 1991; Cho, Cho & Tse 1997; Cho & Krashen 1998). And heritage language development may also help promote a healthy sense of multiculturalism, an acceptance of both the majority and minority cultures, and a resolution of identity conflicts. Krashen also notes that society benefits from bilingualism in terms of business, diplomacy, and national security.

Many researchers have concluded that heritage languages should be seen as a national resource (Campbell & Rosenthal 2000; Campbell & Peyton 1998; Latoja 1996; Peyton, Ranard & McGinnis 2001). Brecht and Ingold (2002) state: “To meet the demand for professionals skilled in languages, a strategy is needed for developing the untapped reservoir of linguistic competence that exists in heritage language speakers” (2). Brecht and Rivers (2000) concluded that the need for individuals with proficiency in languages other than English for use in social, economic, diplomatic, and geopolitical arenas has never been higher. Brecht and Ingold (2002) point out that even before the events of September 11, 2001, more than 70 government agencies reported a need for individuals with foreign language expertise. Compton (2001) argues that heritage language communities and schools should be cherished.

Instruction/Curriculum Issues

Does it matter if Spanish classes have a mixture of heritage learners and non-heritage learners? For the most part, foreign language courses are designed for monolingual speakers of English, and many researchers agree that in such classes the needs of heritage language speakers/learners are not being met (González-Pino 2000; Campbell & Peyton 1998; Arnhart, Arnold & Bravo-Black 2001; Ingold, Rivers, Tesser & Ashby 2002; Quintanar-Sarellana, Huebner & Jensen 1993; D'Ambruoso 1993; Peyton, Ranard & McGinnis 2001). Campbell and Rosenthal (2000) point out that the language needs of the two groups of students differ: because some heritage language learners can already speak and understand the target language, they need to focus on reading and writing skills; in contrast, the true beginners need to develop listening and speaking skills in addition to literacy skills. Valdés (2001) argues that instruction for heritage language students should build on the language skills the students already possess. She also points out that most teachers have not been properly trained to work with these students. Fishman (2001) also calls for the development of special teacher training programs for heritage languages. For example, teachers of heritage speakers of Spanish in the southwest United States should be aware of the features of Chicano/Mexican-American Spanish and acknowledge that dialect; teachers should also acknowledge the students' identity and culture and realize that these students are not starting from scratch in the language learning process (cf. Smitherman 2000).

Peyton, Ranard, and McGinnis (2001) make the point that heritage language learners also differ from traditional foreign language learners in that many heritage language learners are dealing with identity issues. Krashen (2000) adds: "Heritage language speakers are in a no-win situation in foreign language classes. If they do well, it is expected. If HL speakers do not do well in foreign language classes, the experience is especially painful" (441). Arnhart, Arnold, and Bravo-Black (2001) point out that this results in a lack of motivation, low academic achievement, high absenteeism, behavior issues at school, a high percentage of dropouts, and a disconnection from mainstream society. Compton (2001) provides some possible solutions: raising public awareness; cultivating broad-based support; improving articulation with other groups and institutions; improving curriculum and materials; developing teachers; and fostering support among parents and elders.

Quintanar-Sarellana, Huebner, and Jensen (1993) point out that the demographics of public schools are undergoing a dramatic change (with the number of Hispanics and Asians attending public schools increasing at a faster pace than the Anglo population) and that the graduates of American public education are not as competitive internationally as they once were (with Chinese, Japanese, and Taiwanese students repeatedly performing significantly better than American students; see Stevenson, Stigler, Lee, Lucker, Kitamura & Hsu 1985). According to Campbell and Peyton (1998), 43% of heritage language speakers in the United States are Hispanic Americans, and this group is the fastest growing population group in the country. Consequently, their enrollments in universities are picking up all over the country. Kagan and Dillon (2001) observe that heritage language instruction is now becoming a legitimate subdiscipline within the field of foreign language education.

Foreign Language Anxiety

An interesting question in second language acquisition is why some people can learn a foreign language (sometimes quickly and easily) while others fail at this task. Researchers have

looked at many different possible causes: (1) language aptitude, (2) learning styles, (3) social contexts, and (4) affective factors, including motivation, attitudes, and anxiety.

Anxiety can be defined as “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986, p. 125; from Spielberger 1983). “Foreign Language Anxiety,” first proposed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), can be defined as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (128) and is made up of communication apprehension (a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people), test anxiety (a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure), and fear of negative evaluation (apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986). Most researchers accept the idea that foreign language anxiety is a situation-specific anxiety related to the language learning context and that it can play a significant causal role in creating individual differences in language learning. Horwitz (2001) notes that several studies have found foreign language anxiety to be largely independent of other types of anxiety.

Levine (2003) looked at student and instructor beliefs and attitudes about target language use, first language use, and anxiety. He states that the findings in his study suggest that “students who come from bi- or multilingual backgrounds may tend to feel less anxious about TL use than students from monolingual backgrounds” (354). However, to date no research has been done on the effects of foreign language anxiety on heritage speakers/learners. The purpose of this study is to determine if foreign language anxiety exists for heritage speakers/learners of Spanish, and, if so, compare that with the levels of foreign language anxiety found in non-heritage speakers.

This study will also briefly look at the effects of foreign language anxiety with the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC). Several studies have shown that students feel less anxious communicating in the target language in an online format (Beauvois 1995; Kern 1995; Warschauer 1996). For example, Kroonenberg (1994/1995) states that “the most timid language students can come alive while creating meaningful communication via the keyboard and screen” (24). Kern (1995) reported that most students enjoyed CMC, with some evidence of reduced anxiety. Warschauer (1996) found that students did not feel stress during online discussions. Sullivan and Pratt (1996) state: “Hypothetically, the networked classroom would offer the less proficient speaker more time to think about what to ‘say,’ thus reducing anxiety and the probability of error” (492). Sullivan (1998) argued that CMC can improve the participation of minority students in a language classroom.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed:

1. Do heritage speakers of Spanish experience foreign language anxiety?
2. If so, how does their level of foreign language anxiety compare to the level of foreign language anxiety found in non-heritage speakers?
3. Do students believe they would experience less anxiety if part of the course were conducted in an online format (e.g., Blackboard exercises, online chats, etc.)?

Methodology

Participants for this study came from six sections of first-semester Spanish (Elementary Spanish I) from a small, private university in the southwest United States ($N=101$). The course introduced students to fundamentals of Spanish, with activities for developing abilities in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The class met twice a week for fifteen weeks, with each class session lasting one hour and fifteen minutes. The objectives of the course were to (1) prepare students to speak and understand Spanish in a variety of basic situations, (2) introduce the writing system and give practice in reading and writing simple material, and (3) present the culture of the countries/regions where Spanish is used, primarily in terms of everyday attitudes and behavior, and popular culture. The instructor of the course was a non-native speaker of Spanish who was born in the area and had been teaching at the university for approximately 12 years.

All participants filled out a background questionnaire, completed the “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale” (FLCAS)¹ (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986), and answered several yes/no questions regarding anxiety and CMC (see Appendix for the questionnaire). The FLCAS contains 33 items, each answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” It measures a person’s level of anxiety by coming up with an anxiety score by adding up the ratings on the 33 items. The theoretical range is from 33 to 165; the higher the number, the higher the level of foreign language anxiety. Horwitz (1986) reports that internal consistency using Cronbach’s alpha was .93, based on a sample of 108 participants. Test-retest reliability over a period of eight weeks was .83. The construct validity of the FLCAS is based on correlations which indicate that the FLCAS can be distinguished from measures of other types of anxiety.

Results

Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, a measure of internal consistency, yielded a coefficient of .96. The mean and standard deviation were also calculated. Table I compares the results of this study to the results of Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986), the study which originally established the idea of foreign language anxiety, and Aida (1994), a study which validated foreign language anxiety and an adapted FLCAS for students of Japanese.

The mean anxiety score for the present study was 96.3, which is very close to the scores reported by Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986) – 94.5 – and Aida (1994) – 96.7. The standard deviation for the present study – 26.8 – was slightly higher than that found in the other two studies. The interesting fact, however, is the mean anxiety score for heritage students – 87.1 – and the mean anxiety score for non-heritage students – 104.6. Using a t-test, this mean difference of 17.4426 was found to be significantly different ($p<.001$).

Table 1: Comparison of studies

	<u>Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986)</u>	<u>Aida (1994)</u>	<u>Present Study</u>
Sample Size	108	96	101 Heritage = 44 (43.6%) Non-Heritage = 57 (56.4%)
Language Level	First year	First year	First semester
Language	Spanish	Japanese	Spanish
Cronbach's Alpha	.93	.94	.96
Mean	94.5	96.7	96.3 Heritage = 87.1 Non-Heritage = 104.6
Standard Deviation	21.4	22.1	26.8

As far as the students' responses to the questions regarding the use of computer-mediated communication, results can be seen in Table 2. Both heritage students and non-heritage students are about evenly divided in terms of whether they would like to try to learn Spanish partly online. However, a majority (79%) believe that computer technology can help them in learning Spanish (75% for heritage students, 82% for non-heritage students). On the other hand, while 42% of non-heritage students believe they would be more comfortable if part of their Spanish class were conducted online, only 23% of heritage students felt the same. Finally, a majority of the students (70%) felt that they could develop their writing skills more with the use of technology.

Table 2: Answers to CMC Questions

	<u>Heritage</u>	<u>Non-Heritage</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Would you like to try to learn Spanish partly online (e.g., having chat sessions with your classmates in Spanish on Blackboard during part of the regular class)?			
Yes	55%	51%	52%
No	45%	49%	47%
2. Do you think computer technology can aid in your learning of Spanish?			
Yes	75%	82%	79%
No	25%	18%	21%
3. Do you think you would be more comfortable or less comfortable (or neither) if part of your Spanish class were conducted online?			
More	23%	42%	34%
Less	30%	25%	27%
Neither	48%	33%	40%
4. Do you think you could develop your writing skills more with the use of technology?			
Yes	68%	71%	70%
No	32%	27%	29%

Discussion and Conclusions

As far as the first research question (Do heritage speakers of Spanish experience foreign language anxiety?), it can be seen that the level of anxiety for heritage speakers (87.1) is significantly lower than the anxiety level found in non-heritage speakers (104.6). This is not surprising, as we would expect students with some background in the language to experience less anxiety than students who have no background at all. It is possible that the higher level of anxiety found in the non-heritage students is due to the **presence of** heritage students in the class.² That is, having to speak in front of people who already know the language (to varying degrees) may cause the non-heritage students to experience more communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation.

This suggestion is strongly supported by the following comments provided on the questionnaire by two of the non-heritage students:

It seems like the people taking Spanish ALREADY know Spanish, which makes me look stupid! We are all supposed to be beginning Spanish, but many students know Spanish from home already which makes it harder for those of us who don't understand when they all say they do understand. It's like there are a couple of us who don't know what the teacher is saying and we can't speak up out of fear of being the minority.

I also worry about what others think. Almost everyone in my class has had Spanish before & this is my first time. I'm afraid they'll laugh at my pronunciation(s).

Both of these students were studying Spanish in school for the very first time and were obviously upset that many students in their classes had previous exposure to the language (either in their homes growing up or by studying it in high school).

Based on student comments on the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, other areas of concern for non-heritage students included being overwhelmed by the pace of the class (six students), not feeling as advanced as others in the class (five students), worrying about what classmates might think of them (five students), and worrying about their pronunciation (five students).

It is also interesting to note that the anxiety score for heritage speakers is somewhat high, considering that no anxiety is represented by a score of thirty three. It is possible that some of the anxiety experienced by these heritage speakers is caused by test anxiety – due to their lack of literacy skills (as all exams for first- and second-year Spanish courses at this university include a written composition) – and perhaps fear of negative evaluation. Analysis of students' comments on the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire revealed that ten heritage students reported not feeling confident when speaking Spanish and nine reported worrying about their pronunciation.

Further research is needed to study in more detail the type of anxiety experienced by heritage speakers – perhaps a different type of anxiety, such as “heritage language anxiety”³ (as the language is not a “foreign” language for these students).

As far as the second research question (How does their level of foreign language anxiety compare to the level of foreign language anxiety found in non-heritage speakers?), the difference

between the anxiety score for heritage students is significantly different from the anxiety score for non-heritage students ($p < 0.001$). Again, this is not a surprising finding.

Finally, with regards to the third research question (Do students believe that they would experience less anxiety if part of the language course were conducted in an online format?), the results are very interesting. About three-fourths of the students believe that computer technology can aid in their learning of Spanish (75% for heritage speakers, 82% for non-heritage speakers), especially with their literacy skills (70%), but at the same time a little less than half the students (45% heritage, 49% non-heritage) are interested in trying to learn Spanish online. It seems, therefore, that the students do believe that technology can help in the learning of Spanish, but the motivation is lacking. Finally, 42% of non-heritage speakers felt that they would be more comfortable if part of the Spanish class were conducted online, whereas only 23% of heritage speakers felt the same. This is not surprising, as many non-heritage students would probably experience less anxiety in an online format (i.e., avoiding the face-to-face contact in the classroom) whereas the heritage speakers (who are usually very comfortable in the classroom, where listening and speaking skills are emphasized) would not feel as comfortable learning online (where reading and writing skills would be emphasized).

It is important to note the limitations of this pilot study. First of all, it is purely a descriptive study. Second, it only looked at one level of instruction (first semester). Finally, results are based on self-reports by the students and some researchers question the validity of such reports. However, because anxiety is a construct which cannot directly be observed, self-reports are necessary for this type of investigation.

The results of this study provide several implications for teaching. First of all, as pointed out in Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), teachers need to help students learn to cope with foreign language anxiety and also need to try to make the learning context less stressful. Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that teachers also need to consider the needs of the heritage students in their classes. It may be necessary to develop special classes devoted exclusively to these students. Or, if that is not possible, teachers could use heritage students as resources ("language experts") in the classroom. As Rashid and Gregory (1997) point to the importance of older siblings in school literacy development for bilingual children, teachers can use heritage students as tutors who can serve as mediators to the new language and the new culture for the non-heritage students. That is, the heritage students can help the non-heritage students gain apprenticeship into the new Discourse community (cf. Gee 1996) by "creating opportunities for authentic and meaningful interaction both within and outside the classroom, and providing students the tools for their own social, cultural, and linguistic exploration" (Warschauer & Meskill 2000, p. 308). Another way to do this is by using computer technology (i.e., CMC). Warschauer and Meskill (2000) state: "The computer is a powerful tool for this process as it allows students access to online environments of international communication. By using new technologies in the language classroom, we can better prepare students for the kinds of international cross-cultural interactions that are increasingly required for success in academic, vocational, or personal life" (308).

This study also provides several areas for future research. First, it is necessary to examine different areas of anxiety in heritage speakers (e.g., listening comprehension anxiety, reading anxiety, writing anxiety). Second, we should look at anxiety at different levels of instruction (e.g., beginning students vs. intermediate students vs. advanced students) as well as at different points in the semester (e.g., the beginning of the semester vs. the end of the semester). Finally, including a qualitative approach (e.g., informal interviews with students) would

probably provide rich data input as to what students actually think about foreign language anxiety.

About the Author

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² I would like to thank Dr. Elaine K. Horwitz for this observation.

³ I would like to thank Dr. Joel E. Dworin for this observation and for the term “heritage language anxiety.”

APPENDIX

SECTION I:

Please provide some demographic information about yourself.

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age:
3. Major:
4. When did you first start learning Spanish?
 Home Preschool Elementary School Middle School
 High School University
 Other (Please specify):
5. Do you consider yourself a heritage speaker/learner of Spanish or a non-heritage speaker/learner?

NOTE: For this study, a heritage speaker/learner is defined as someone who grew up in a home where the Spanish language was spoken; you may not even speak Spanish, but you might understand it. A non-heritage speaker/learner is defined as someone who did not grow up in a home where the Spanish language was spoken; you may have studied Spanish before in school, but you were not around the language while growing up.

Heritage speaker/learner Non-Heritage Speaker/Learner

6. If Spanish is your native/first language please check here.

SECTION II:

Directions: Below is a list of statements. Be sure to read them carefully and check the response that best describes your attitudes and feelings. For each statement, indicate whether you (1) **strongly agree - SA**, (2) **agree - A**, (3) **neither agree nor disagree - N**, (4) **disagree - D**, or (5) **strongly disagree - SD** by circling the appropriate number on the line following each statement. Please give your first reaction to each statement and mark an answer for every statement. Answer with “Neither” if you have no opinion or if a statement does not apply to your situation.

SA	A	N	D	SD
1	2	3	4	5

1. I never feel quite sure about myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I *don't* worry about making mistakes in language class.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.

1 2 3 4 5

4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.

1 2 3 4 5

5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.

1 2 3 4 5

6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.

1 2 3 4 5

-
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
- 1 2 3 4 5
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
- 1 2 3 4 5
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
- 1 2 3 4 5
14. I would *not* be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.
- 1 2 3 4 5
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
- 1 2 3 4 5
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
- 1 2 3 4 5
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
- 1 2 3 4 5
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
- 1 2 3 4 5
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
- 1 2 3 4 5
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.
- 1 2 3 4 5
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.
- 1 2 3 4 5
22. I *don't* feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
- 1 2 3 4 5
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
- 1 2 3 4 5
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
- 1 2 3 4 5
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
- 1 2 3 4 5

SA	A	N	D	SD
1	2	3	4	5

26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

1 2 3 4 5

27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.

1 2 3 4 5

28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

1 2 3 4 5

29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

1 2 3 4 5

30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

1 2 3 4 5

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

1 2 3 4 5

32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

1 2 3 4 5

33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

1 2 3 4 5

SECTION III:

Please answer the following questions.

1. Describe in your own words how you feel about speaking Spanish (e.g., Why do you feel that way? What do you worry about the most when speaking? etc.)

2. Would you like to try to learn Spanish partly online (e.g., having chat sessions with your classmates in Spanish on Blackboard during part of the regular class)?

_____ Yes _____ No

3. Do you think computer technology can aid in your learning of Spanish?

_____ Yes _____ No

4. Do you think you would be more comfortable or less comfortable (or neither) if part of your Spanish class were conducted online?

_____ More Comfortable _____ Less Comfortable _____ Neither

5. Do you think you could develop your writing skills more with the use of technology?

_____ Yes _____ No

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Studying heritage languages is a new field in the realm of linguistics. It takes up research on the person's first language and the acquisition of the language, language attrition and bilingualism as heritage speakers are a part of the bilingual category. Special type of bilinguals. The many characteristics of heritage language speakers make them quite special. Expert translators who are native speakers of a language pair ensure that the translations of documents are 100% accurate, which is what Day Translations, Inc. offers. We only work with native speakers of more than 100 languages. They are located in major cities around the world to ensure that we can serve our clients anytime they need language services, as we are open 365 days a year. Participants for the study filled out a background questionnaire, completed four anxiety scales, and answered several open-ended questions. The purpose of this pilot study was to investigate whether (a) heritage students of Spanish experience foreign language anxiety in a second-semester Spanish class, (b) scores of heritage Spanish students on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale correlate with their scores on three other anxiety scales (listening, reading, and writing), and (c) there are any differences in the quantity and quality of language output produced by anxious students and nonanxious students. Participants for CONTINUE READING. Heritage Speakers of Spanish and Foreign Language Anxiety: A Pilot Study. Michael A. Tallon. Psychology. 2011. The present study examined whether heritage speakers (HSs) of European Portuguese (EP) who were born or moved to a German-speaking country before the age of eight years were perceived as native speakers of EP. In particular, this study more. Aims and objectives: This study examines the language anxiety that occurs in immigrants' daily lives when speaking the heritage language and the majority language, both in their host country and during visits to their home country. It more. It compares the levels of heritage language anxiety and majority language anxiety across three