

Spanish Heritage Speakers in Study Abroad Programs

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SPANISH HERITAGE SPEAKERS IN STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

A guide for students and administrators

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Part 2: Fostering Language Development

Introduction

The second part of this guide discusses some of the linguistic characteristics that are typically exhibited by heritage language (HL) students. Then, it analyzes some of the barriers that heritage students (HS)¹ often face in study abroad programs when trying to develop their language skills in Spanish. With the objective of helping improve the language experience of heritage learners, some didactic considerations are presented regarding two possible classroom scenarios: on the one hand, courses specifically designed for heritage students and, on the other hand, what is known as mixed courses, that is, when heritage learners and second language learners are together in the same classroom.

Linguistic Characteristics of Spanish Heritage Speakers

In Part 1 of this guide, we presented the following three definitions of heritage speakers (SHs) that manifest the wide variety of linguistic profiles that these individuals present in their heritage language. Which one of the following descriptions do you identify yourself with?

Definition 1

“Those individuals who were raised with a strong cultural connection to a particular ethnolinguistic group and have a ‘heritage motivation,’ but who do not speak or understand the language at all. These latter individuals [...] are often linguistically indistinguishable from traditional second language (L2) learners” (Potowski, 2014, p. 405).

Definition 2

A student who is “raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and English” (Valdés, 2001, p. 38).

Definition 3

“Students who arrived from a Spanish-speaking country after the age of 12, who typically have developed adult-like proficiency (Montrul, 2008; Silva-Corvalán, 1994) and are usually considered ‘native’ or ‘homeland’ Spanish speakers” (Potowski, 2014, p. 405).

Individuals who fall under the first definition are linguistically closer to typical second language learners, and in many cases they can benefit from L2-focused instruction. Those who fall under the third definition are usually considered native Spanish speakers, with a well-established linguistic system. For this reason, we are going to focus on the speakers who can identify themselves with the second definition, which assumes a certain degree of bilingualism in Spanish and in English. This is the student profile that is more commonly found in language classrooms as well as in study abroad contexts. We will now discuss some of the most typical linguistic characteristics of this group of students (mostly pertaining to Generations 1.5 and 2, as described

¹ As a reminder, in this guide the terms “heritage language learner” and “heritage speaker” are used interchangeably.

in Part 1 of this Guide). As you read through the next paragraphs, think if these common characteristics apply to you or not.

One of the commonalities of this group is that they experience what Silvina Montrul (2005) calls the “**benefit of first language acquisition**” as they are exposed to their HL as children². However, heritage language acquisition typically slows down or stops once they start schooling and they become dominant in English, the majority societal language. During schooling, children learn to write and read in English and are exposed to increasingly complex grammatical structures. They also learn English vocabulary associated with a wide range of sophisticated and academic topics (in science, history, math, etc.). This kind of language and scientific content is not commonly supported at home, so literacy and other academic skills are mostly acquired in the majority language, English. This learning history is frequent in this population and has consequences in their heritage language growth “given that the language acquisition process is still ongoing during these early years. As a result, we see gaps in knowledge and skills associated with being a heritage speaker but at the same time, these speakers retain the benefit of childhood exposure to the language, and in many cases, continue to use the HL into adulthood and are quite proficient in it.” (National Heritage Language Resource Center, 2017). Does this description apply to you?

In this section, we will focus on describing the main linguistic characteristics of this group of students. It is important to reiterate once again that the following paragraphs are aimed at providing a general overview of some of the commonalities exhibited by HSs as described in the second definition above. This does not imply that all HSs in this group follow the same linguistic patterns. As a matter of fact, their linguistic proficiency in the heritage language can, and does, vary substantially from individual to individual (Part 1 of this Guide describes some of the main factors that influence HSs’ linguistic development).

In order to characterize HS linguistic features, we will first do so in terms of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). Although this tool was developed with L2 learners in mind, and it is questioned whether it is sensitive enough to capture the subtleties of HS’s linguistic abilities (Escalante, Viera, & Patiño-Vega, 2021), it is indeed the most frequently used global proficiency assessment tool employed in the United States and it has been used in several studies focused on language development for both L2Ls and HSs (Gatti & O’Neill, 2018; Martin, 2013; Sanz & Torres, 2018; Swender, Martin, Rivera-Martínez, & Kagan, 2014).

Martin (2013) found that, in terms of the ACTFL OPI, the typical heritage speaker is at **the intermediate level**. It is important to know that the intermediate level is comprised of three subcategories (intermediate high, intermediate mid, and intermediate low). According to ACTFL’s proficiency guidelines (2012), speakers at the intermediate level:

- are distinguished primarily by their ability to create with the language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life.

² This early use of the language will provide certain linguistic advantages (which will be discussed later on in this part of the Guide), even to those speakers with lower levels of proficiency in the heritage language.

- are able to recombine learned material in order to express personal meaning. Intermediate-level speakers can ask simple questions and can handle a straightforward survival situation.
- produce sentence-level language, ranging from discrete sentences to strings of sentences, typically in present time.
- are understood by interlocutors who are accustomed to dealing with non-native learners of the language.

This means that it is relatively easy for them to communicate in most informal settings that center on predictable, familiar topics related to daily activities and personal experiences, but it may prove difficult for HSs to discuss unfamiliar topics, such as current events or academic matters, especially in an abstract way, or to engage in tasks removed from a familiar routine, such as presentations or interviews. In terms of language structures, for the most part heritage speakers have control of basic sentence structures involving simple sentences, and their fluency and pronunciation are often native-like, but they struggle with producing paragraph-length discourse that has appropriate connectors and is cohesive overall and also lack control of some linguistic structures. Additionally, their language often shows interference from English (National Heritage Language Resource Center, 2017). How does this description sound to you?

Now that we have a general sense of HSs' linguistic abilities, we will now proceed to a more complete characterization of HSs by describing some typical commonalities as they pertain to different linguistic levels, namely, phonology, vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and register (based on Carreira, 2017).

Questions for reflection

This first section has introduced some common linguistic patterns typically associated with heritage speakers. As discussed, these patterns do not necessarily apply to all heritage speakers.

1. In your particular case, do you see yourself reflected in these descriptions?
2. Maybe some parts fit your case while other parts do not. If this is your case, describe which elements of these descriptions resonated with you and which ones did not.

Phonology

Phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies the sound system of a language or dialect. Phonological knowledge is one of the strongest abilities of heritage speakers, who frequently exhibit a native-like proficiency when it comes to pronunciation, accent, and the intonational contour and stress pattern of speech (prosody). According to Carreira (2017), this seems to hold true even for receptive bilinguals, that is, those speakers who grew up hearing the language at home and who can understand the language but show limited production skills. The pronunciation of these students are more closely aligned with monolingual native speakers of the language than L2 learners.

The advanced pronunciation proficiency that heritage speakers typically exhibit may cause others (instructors, local community members, host family, etc.) to think that they are indeed native or native-like speakers of the language. Linguistic expectations created based solely on HL learners' pronunciation skills will undoubtedly provide a miscued profile of their overall language abilities. This may lead to wrongly placing students in courses that require a more advanced overall competency of the language than what they really have. This can create uncomfortable experiences for the students when they cannot *perform* to the level *expected* by others, causing them more insecurity and frustration. Beware of that! If you believe that your overall linguistic competency has been wrongly evaluated based on your pronunciation proficiency, speak up, especially if you think you have been placed at a higher level than you should. Having said that, do not undervalue your own linguistics skills. Heritage speakers oftentimes have a sense of insecurity about their own heritage language, and would rather be placed at a lower level than where they actually should be. This is not a good idea, as many times these courses become boring and will not advance your language skills. You should be placed at a level that provides a certain level of challenge, so that you can grow from it. You are the best evaluator of your own proficiency. Do not feel afraid to talk to your instructor if you feel that the level of the course is too low, too high, or just feel unsure about it. And do it as soon as you come to this realization, so that a solution can be found as early in the term as possible.

Since phonology and pronunciation are not topics that HL learners typically struggle with, this is probably an area where instructors may not want to spend a lot of time with (so they can focus on other areas that would require more attention). This does not mean that phonology and pronunciation should be completely avoided, since there are aspects that may be important to reinforce and practice. For instance, in Spanish, HL learners may have difficulty pronouncing certain letter combinations or finding the stressed syllable in a word. Is this your case?

There is also a potential problem area when it comes to phonology: dialectal variation. HL speakers may display a variety of accents influenced by the dialectal variation their families use (Caribbean, Mexican, etc.). Even though some dialects could be associated with more prestigious variations of the language, it is important to remember that there is not a single correct native accent, and we should be mindful not to correct or criticize dialectal pronunciations that are native but may not be so prestigious.

One final point regarding phonology: as we have already established, you may have learned your heritage language as a child at home, mostly from your interactions with family members, friends, and community members. This acquisition is mostly based on oral communication until forms of literacy are introduced. This is where phonology interacts with writing. Until writing skills become more developed, oral competency will often interfere with your writing. That is, in many cases you may be able to pronounce a word perfectly, but have difficulties writing it. Is this the case for you? In Spanish, common spelling problems surface in the following cases (Llombart-Huesca & Zyzik (2019):

- Distinction between “b” and “v”
- Distinction between “j” and “g”
- Distinction between “s”, “c” and “z”

- Distinction between “y” and “ll”
- Distinction between “c” and “qu”
- Words with “h”
- Words that in English require a double consonant, but in Spanish do not.

Questions for reflection

1. How do you feel about your pronunciation skills in Spanish?
2. Are there letter combinations or sounds that you struggle with in Spanish?
3. Do you feel that you can read aloud in Spanish proficiently?
4. What is your opinion on the use of dictation in Spanish classes for heritage students?

Vocabulary

Considering the wide diversity of linguistic competency displayed by HL learners, the size of the vocabulary and the types of words known by these learners will undoubtedly vary from individual to individual. However, research (as cited in Carreira, 2017) has shown that HL learners typically already possess vocabulary related to their upbringing at home, which includes vocabulary about the household (kitchen, food, clothes...) and social and family events (sports, church, celebrations, etc.). They exhibit a better knowledge of concrete nouns (e.g., *zapato*, *ventana*, *cuarto*) than abstract nouns (e.g., *valentía*, *ingenio*, *certeza*) or academic and formal words (*estereotipado*, *espurio*, *escudriñar*). Likewise, they tend to retain nouns more easily than verbs or adjectives. What do you think about these general patterns? Would these apply to you?

At the same time, HL learners may show negative linguistic interfere (from English into Spanish) in their use of **false cognates** and **calques**. False cognates are words in two languages that are similar in form or sound but have different meanings. For instance, the Spanish word *fábrica* may be used by HL speakers to mean *fabric* when it actually means *factory*. Students may also get confused with words that sometimes are good cognates and other times are false cognates, depending on the context. For instance, the English word *decadent* is a true cognate of the Spanish equivalent *decadente* when referring to something that is old and in decline. However, the Spanish word *decadente* does not have the meaning of self-indulgence and luxurious that the English word has (a more appropriate equivalent in Spanish would be *lujoso* or *de excesos* among other possibilities). Have you found yourself using false cognates in Spanish? Were you aware of the examples provided in this paragraph?

Calques can also be a problem for HL speakers. Calques or loan translations are word-for-word translation from one language into another. As with cognates, calques may work in favor of the students (for instance, the *mouse of a computer* is expressed the same way in Spanish: *el ratón de una computadora*) or against them (*a paper* or academic essay is not expressed in Spanish as its literal translation *papel*, which only refers to a white piece of paper). Students may calque also

whole expressions, imitating the English structure in their Spanish. For example, they may say *¿Quién estás con?* to say *Who are you with?*, when the Spanish language does not allow a preposition at the end of a sentence and would prefer the following word order: *¿Con quién estás?* Did you know this?

It is important here to bring up the topic of *register*. Your use of false cognates and unidiomatic calques are probably completely understood, accepted (and probably expected) in your colloquial use of the language with family members and friends. Instructors must value this knowledge, and respect it, since it is completely functional in your community. Instead of following a subtractive approach where instructors are trying to “get rid of” all the aspects of your language that are not grammatically correct or appropriate, teachers should follow an additive approach. That is, build on top of what you already have and convey the idea that you do not have to substitute your colloquial register by a formal one in all cases. Rather, you are adding to what you already know alternatives that are more appropriate in formal and academic contexts. The topic of register will be considered more extensively in a later section.

So, what are some good strategies for teaching vocabulary to HL learners? As with L2 learners, lists of uncontextualized words will not typically do much. Hirsch (2013) states that “following a systematic curriculum that presents new words in familiar contexts can help learners make correct meaning-guesses unconsciously.” That is, knowing about a topic has a powerful effect on learning, so instructors need to spend time activating background knowledge as this will help deciphering written (and oral) texts. It has also been found that a large portion of vocabulary learning by children is incidental in nature and results from reading (Huckin & Coady, 1999) or listening (Nagy, Anderson & Herman, 1987). This is why it is also very important to provide as many opportunities as possible for reading and listening.

The above strategies emphasize incidental vocabulary learning. However, it is also good to teach purposeful vocabulary learning strategies that involve noticing and raising awareness of words. For instance, instructors can focus on deconstructing words and figure out their meaning using morphology (roots, prefixes, suffixes). It also helps not to teach words in isolation, but words in clusters. Clusters can include words with the same root (act, action, activity), words that are related semantically (bird, nest, fly), or collocations, that is, words that are frequently found together (declare love, declare peace, declare husband and wife). Research indicates that vocabulary learning occurs as a word is encountered repeatedly in context. For this to happen, students must be exposed to large amounts of comprehensible input (Nagy, 1995). That is, it is important to provide repeated and spaced exposure to vocabulary. Research from psychology tells us that learning happens best when you keep coming back to the same notions (e.g. vocabulary items) leaving some time in between.

Lastly, individualized glossary creation of unknown words can also help you become effective word users. Glossaries can include different fields that would provide a deeper understanding of the term. For instance, in addition to a translation and a definition, you can include words that have the same root, or words that are related. In addition, you could include a couple of sentences (maybe taken from an available corpus) where the term is used in context. This deep level vocabulary activity could be based on your readings or on a content area of your interest (maybe within your major or field of study).

Questions for reflection

1. Would you say that false cognates and calques interfere in your ability to communicate effectively in Spanish?
2. What does it mean to you to “know” a word?
3. What strategies can you apply to avoid the use of false cognates and calques when you are communicating in Spanish?
4. In what ways could you increase your vocabulary repertoire? What kind of terms would you focus on?

Morphology

Morphology refers to the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011). It also refers to the mental system involved in word formation. In other words, morphology tells you who is doing what to whom, when the action is occurring or occurred and more. Without morphology, sentences can not be interpreted correctly. It could be said that HL learners have more issues and have more knowledge gaps with morphology than with phonology or vocabulary (Carreira, 2017). In most cases, HL learners tend to **simplify** and **overgeneralize** the morphology markings (e.g., applying regular verb morphology to irregular verbs; for instance, saying **traducí* instead of *traduje* in Spanish). Morphology markings may be inconsistent within the same student, that is, a single student may build a grammatically incorrect verb form in one phrase, and do it correctly in the next one. Morphology use can also vary greatly between students, with more advanced students showing a stronger use of morphology. Despite this diversity, some general patterns can be established. Let’s take a look at some morphological aspects of noun and verb morphology based on the research conducted by Montrul (2015) on the acquisition of heritage languages. As you read along, think if this information applies to you or not.

In terms of noun morphology, we will focus on gender agreement. In Spanish, adjectives have to agree in gender (and number) with the noun that is describing (e.g. *comida sabrosa*). HL learners may exhibit some inconsistency in making gender agreement, especially when there is a long-distance dependency, that is, when the noun and the adjective are separated by two, three or more words (e.g., *la comida que hizo tu madre ayer estaba muy sabrosa*). This is one case when learners who are quite good with agreement tend not to make the agreement. As we have already established, the lower the HL proficiency, the more affected the noun morphology.

When considering verbal morphology, Montrul (2015) was able to observe five general trends in the competence of HL learners:

1. Tense³ and agreement morphology tend to be better preserved than aspect⁴ and mood⁵;
2. Within tense, the morphological future is more affected than present and past;
3. Within aspect, imperfect morphology (actions that are ongoing) is more affected than perfective morphology (actions that have concluded);
4. In languages that have morphological mood, the subjunctive and the conditional are often replaced by indicative morphology;
5. The lower the HL proficiency, the more affected the verbal morphology.

So, in short, HL learners tend to have more difficulties with the imperfect aspect (e.g., *Estaba comiendo en el restaurante*), the conditional verb tense (e.g., *Iría al cine si tuviera dinero*), and the subjunctive mood (e.g., *Cuando llegue, te cuento lo que me pasó*). In these cases, HL learners may use other verb forms that show a simplification of the overall verb system in Spanish, relying on verb morphology that they are more familiar with. For instance, in the last example, they could use the present tense in the indicative mood instead of the subjunctive form (e.g., *Cuando llego, te cuento lo que me pasó*). Here again, we need to consider that HL learners with a lower proficiency will find more difficulties in mastering verbal morphology. Now, reflection on your own experience, do you see yourself reflected on these general patterns?

With this information that we have now, what are the implications for teaching and learning? In general, it does not make much sense to follow an L2 approach to learning grammar, where activities start from “zero” and progressively add details and complications as instruction proceeds. HL learners do not start from zero. You already possess a lot of knowledge, even when you are unaware of this knowledge. In HL teaching, a more efficient approach is to target the topics known to be problematic with specific grammar explanations and activities (Carreira, 2017). But in order to do it right, instructors need to do some action research in their own classrooms to investigate what their students already know and where the gaps are so that they can target those more efficiently.

Questions for reflection

1. Morphology is an area where HL learners feel more insecure. Is this your case?
2. Which of the following areas within morphology do you struggle the most with?
 - a. gender agreement (niño alto, niña alta)
 - b. number agreement (niño alto, niños altos)
 - c. prefixes (antbacteriano)
 - d. suffixes (casa-casota)

³ Verb tense refers to when the action in a sentence takes place—whether it happened in the past, is happening in the present, or will happen in the future.

⁴ Verbal aspect is a property of verbs to indicate whether the action they express has concluded or not at the moment of reference indicated in the sentence, i.e., it refers to the different states of development of the action expressed by the verb.

⁵ Verb moods are classifications that indicate the attitude of the speaker. Verbs have three moods—indicative, imperative, and subjunctive.

- d. compound nouns (abrelatas)
- e. verb tenses in the indicative (hablar, hablaba, hablé, hablaría, hablaré)
- f. verb tenses in the subjunctive (hable, hable/hablase)

3. What strategies can you use to become better with the morphological aspects of the language?

Syntax

Syntax is the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language. As mentioned in the above sections, HL learners mastery of syntax will depend on their overall heritage language proficiency level. However, some general trends can be identified, as explained in Carreira (2017). Probably, the most noticeable one is that heritage language learners tend to stick to subject-verb-object order (which is common in English), when Spanish allows for a lot more flexibility. Even though Spanish is typically also a SVO language, variations of this order are common, particularly when the speaker or writer wants to emphasize one part in the sentence. So, changing the expected order will affect the meaning of the sentence. HL learners should be made aware of this and think of word order strategically and purposefully.

Another problem area of HL learners is the construction of complex sentences. Heavily influenced by the oral modality, which is mostly based on short simple sentences, HL learners may struggle to build more syntactically sophisticated and complex sentences. There are two ways to do this: coordination and subordination. Coordination is a complex syntactic structure that links together two or more elements at the same level (e.g. *Juan baila y Lupe salta*). Subordination, on the other hand, is the process of linking two clauses in a sentence so that one clause is dependent on (or subordinate to) another (e.g. *Aunque no tengo ganas, voy a limpiar la casa*). There is a rich typology of subordinate structures, depending on the kind of semantic connection established between the main clause and the subordinate clause. Covering all types of coordinated and subordinated structures at once or in a short period of time will most likely be overwhelming to students. Complex sentences are difficult to master and require a lot of practice in the classroom.

Questions for reflection

1. Do you feel comfortable changing the word order of your sentences in Spanish to add emphasis or different nuances?
2. Do you feel comfortable constructing long sentences in Spanish?
3. What strategies would you use to improve your abilities to construct longer and more complex sentences?

Register

Register is considered a variety of a language used for a particular purpose, with a particular person, or in a particular situation. Thus, we can establish different kinds of register, depending on

the context and the participants in the communicative act: formal register, academic register, neutral register, informal register, slang register, vulgar register...

Typically, HL learners come into a classroom with an informal or colloquial register. Their linguistic input takes place primarily in the home, it involves everyday interactions, normally happens during the early years, and it involves primarily oral input. Students need this register to communicate effectively with local speakers, peers, family members and in certain situations and occupations (e.g., social work, local businesses, healthcare...). We have to add that for the most part, HL learners have had very limited access to more formal and academic registers. Some HL learners do have some schooling in their heritage language. However, this does not always result in exposure to, let alone mastery of, the academic register, which takes many years of instruction and a lot of exposure.

It is important that teachers we help students distinguish between informal register and a formal register, and expose them as much as possible to formal registers of communication. Equally important is to convey the message that by doing this instructors are not trying to erase or replace their informal register, since this works well in their communities. They are just trying to increase their abilities to use a formal register when they need it in academic and professional settings. This will help them reach a wider audience and pursue their professional goals, which is one of the main reasons that HL learners study their heritage language (Beaudrie, Ducar & Relaño-Pastor, 2009; Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Feuerverger, 1991; Schwarzer & Petró (2005). Is improving your Spanish language skills motivated by a professional goal?

Questions for reflection

1. At the end of this document, find Appendix 1, and fill out the Language background questionnaire for heritage speakers of Spanish. Reflect on the questions asked in this questionnaire. Why do you think these questions are important in determining your linguistic history? How do you think your language background history affects your language proficiency in Spanish?
2. What strategies would you use to further develop your formal and academic register?

Barriers for the Language Development of Heritage Speakers

When Spanish heritage speakers decide to study abroad in a Spanish-speaking country, one of their objectives oftentimes is to improve their Spanish language skills. Definitely, living in an immersion situation, surrounded by native Spanish speakers, is one of the best ways to increase their linguistic competence in Spanish. However, when seeking out opportunities to interact and engage with locals, heritage speakers may find themselves in some situations that they may find discouraging or disappointing. These barriers may affect negatively their overall study abroad experience and prevent them from achieving their fullest potential in terms of language

development during their time abroad. In the next paragraphs we will mention some of these barriers. As you read through, reflect if these barriers apply to you or not.

HL speakers may feel ridiculed by their language abilities. Locals, not accustomed to this student profile, may create expectations based on their appearance, social background, economic status, etc. Heritage speakers may find themselves held to unrealistic expectations and inappropriate linguistic and behavioral standards. If they fail to meet these standards, they may not be considered legitimate speakers of the heritage language, despite having used and identified with it throughout their childhood. When these unrealistic expectations come from program administrators or their own teachers, HL learners may feel, and rightfully so, discouraged to use their heritage language. They may also feel misunderstood and excluded from the rest of the group.

Related to the previous point is that **heritage speakers may not be immediately afforded “privileges of the intercultural speaker”** (Kramsch, 1998). Non heritage speakers normally use less complex grammatical structures, they code-switch, they make errors, etc. and this is all allowed. Locals understand that L2 learners are actually *learning* the language and this includes making mistakes along the way. However, in many cases, heritage speakers are not expected to deviate from the “native norms,” which can generate a lot of anxiety and insecurity. In other words, they are not allowed the privilege of being a learner of the language.

Insecurity. Linguistic insecurity has been defined by Labov (1972) as a speaker’s relative confidence in the perceived “correctness” of this or her language use. Most heritage speakers need help overcoming the insecurity they feel in Spanish academic environments because their exposure to Spanish is mostly oral. They need to receive positive reinforcement in the classroom from their instructors, who could, for instance, explain to them how languages are acquired by natives, the advantages of being bilingual, and the notion of linguistic intuition. As a matter of fact, HL learners should be reminded that very few bilingual speakers acquire full grammatical, textual, illocutionary, and sociolinguistic competence. So, it is completely normal and expected that they have a deeper knowledge of one language (typically English) over the other (Spanish).

Stigma. Heritage speakers need guidance to deal with the psychological effects of the stigma attached to their vernacular speech, which could be quite strong among Spanish monolinguals and some Spanish instructors. Learning about the origins of the Spanish language in Latin America and its strong relation to their vernacular can be a good way to break the stigma. Class discussions and debates can also help cement the idea that not one variety of a language (in this case, Spanish) is better than others. They are just different variations and manifestations of one language. In addition, HL learners may also exhibit a deficit-oriented approach to their own language, in which they have to correct their incomplete or flawed knowledge of the target language. It is important to remind them that the language they use is not only useful, but also appropriate, for most of the daily interactions they engage in at home and with their communities.

Pressure. In many cases, heritage speakers are expected to improve their proficiency in the heritage language, especially by parents and family members. Not achieving this goal, can be quite shameful for the students. Although the pressure of becoming more fluent after a study abroad experience can also be felt by L2 learners, this pressure can become more apparent in the case of HL learners, since they could be “tested” by their parents and/or other family members upon their

return home. In addition, if studying abroad has involved a significant sacrifice on the part of the family (either financial or personal), the pressure to improve the language may be even greater.

All these barriers, among others, may create an environment that may make it harder for heritage language learners like you to maximize the opportunities to increase their language proficiency during their time abroad. This is why it is so important that programs do everything they can to compensate for some of these barriers. One of the main ways programs can help students is by providing language courses that have been specifically designed around their needs. Taking into account all of what we have learned so far based on the existing research, these courses should then focus on the areas that HL learners tend to find more challenging.

Given that L2 learners and HL learners have very distinct language learning trajectories, experiences and difficulties, programs will ideally offer separate courses in order to meet their unique needs more appropriately. This does not mean that all courses in a program need to be separate. For instance, it is common that Spanish programs offer heritage language courses at the intermediate level (typically second year courses) separate from L2 language courses. Then, at the upper division courses, both groups of students come back together for content courses on literature, linguistics, translation, culture, etc. The following section centers on the ideal practice of offering at least one Spanish language course specific for heritage speakers in study abroad programs.

Questions for reflection

1. Do the aforementioned barriers apply to you?
2. If so, have you surpassed those barriers? Elaborate your answer.
3. If you are still struggling with some of those barriers, how do you feel about it?

Courses Specific for Heritage Speakers

The objective of this section is to familiarize yourself with the benefits of enrolling in a course specific for heritage speakers. Your study abroad program may or may not offer such a course. If it does, the following paragraphs provide information on best practices regarding this kind of courses. Although this information is more relevant for instructors and program administrators, it will give you some ideas on how a course like this could or should look like. Also, if you are enrolled in such a course and you find that the instructor is not meeting students' needs efficiently, this section can provide you with some arguments and points to talk about with your instructor or program director.

If the study abroad program has a group of Spanish heritage learners and the program budget allows it, the best option is to have at least one language course centered on their particular needs. For a HL course to be successful, the instructor must have appropriate training on this specific

student population. This is not always the case, as this is a relatively new student profile in the field of study abroad. Instructors in this setting tend to have solid training and experience in the area of *second language* acquisition, but not so much in *heritage language* acquisition. Even experienced instructors with many years of teaching on their backs and who know the Spanish language in and out, may not be prepared to appropriately teach a heritage language course without adequate training.

One key aspect of the development of courses specific for heritage speakers is that of **differentiated instruction**. As already established, the learning acquisition journeys of HL students are a lot more varied than traditional L2 learners. Second language learners, for the most part, follow a similar learning trajectory, so it is easy to predict at any point what they have learned so far and what they still need to learn. This is not the case for heritage learners. And even though we have mentioned some general patterns earlier, these do not necessarily apply to all students. It would not be surprising to have a group of students who exhibit very different proficiency levels in their heritage language, with different strengths and weaknesses. For that reason, it is also hard to predict what students are going to need before meeting them. This is the reason why it is fundamental to conduct some kind of language evaluation at the beginning of the course, with the objective of identifying where those strong and weak points are. This evaluation could consist of two parts:

1. a language background questionnaire that elicits information on language history, language use, self-proficiency, and language attitudes.
2. a language proficiency assessment.

The following site from the National Heritage Language Resource Center provides a number of questionnaires and assessments tools that can be used for this purpose: <https://nhlrc.ucla.edu/nhlrc/research#researchproficiency>. A sample background questionnaire and a sample assessment tool are provided in the Appendix section, at the end of this document. It is important to note here that standard assessment tools designed for L2 learners may not necessarily give us the information that we need. These tools normally work under the assumption that if a student responds well to item C, that means that they already know items A and B. This is, again, because L2 learners' trajectories are more predictable. Heritage language learners that take these standardized assessment tools may score lower or higher than their current proficiency level, depending on the kind of questions and activities that they are asked to do. For instance, HL learners tend to perform better when the test is heavy on receptive skills with multiple-option questions, while they could do worst if the test focuses on writing, spelling, or the explicit knowledge of grammar rules. The assessment tools used for HL learners need to be sensitive to this fact and use various types of questions and activities that look into all skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking).

When it comes to syllabus design, we have to think of the variability of proficiency levels and linguistic needs of the students. This is why a static, pre-set syllabus may not be the best idea for this kind of course, since it would be hard to predict what one particular group of students would need before even meeting them. If instructors want to address the specific needs of their HL learners, it would be a good idea to move away from the traditional static syllabus and adopt an **adaptive syllabus**, where teaching points organically emerge from what happens in the classroom

as students work on different communicative activities. The research on the linguistics patterns commonly observed in HL learners that we have covered in the previous sections can only guide us part of the way, as we can make certain predictions of what their problem areas might be. However, our knowledge of students needs to give us more information as to what specific areas our learners need help with. An adaptive syllabus help instructors do that: to be flexible and put more emphasis on some topics over others. The idea of adaptive syllabus connect with the concept of differentiated teaching and learning, where different students with different needs work on different activities that would address their individual learning needs. More information on differentiated teaching is found in the following section on heritage speakers in mixed classrooms.

When teaching a HL course, there are some concepts and ideas that will help instructors be more successful (Carreira, 2017). The first one is **spot-treat grammar**, that is the targeted teaching of grammar points, based on general research and the instructor's knowledge of their own students. At times HL learners feel very insecure about the language they already know and ask to be taught everything from the very beginning. This is not an efficient use of classroom time, and its utterly unnecessary (and incredibly boring for them after a while). Even when they are not aware, HL learners come to the classroom with a good functional grammar. A more efficient approach to grammar is to explain and practice just those aspects that they need the most in order to communicate effectively. And this is a second important concept to remember: **communication-driven instruction**. The reason to know a language, the purpose of speaking, the purpose of writing, even the purpose of reading and listening is communication. So, communication should drive everything that instructors do in the classroom. An important technique to do this is to **create form-meaning connections** (another big concept). Forms are not learned to just practice that grammar point in particular, but because specific forms are used to communicate specific meanings. For instance, learning the subjunctive mood is important and necessary if we want students to be able to express, for instance, wishes, suggestions, and desires. These are important communicative purposes that will not be expressed correctly unless students know how to use this mood.

Another important point when teaching a heritage language course is that of **correction**. Many HL learners do not have the highest self-esteem when it comes to their language proficiency. In many cases they have a deficit-oriented approach to learning the language, in which they think that they have to correct their incomplete or flawed knowledge of the target language. This can cause high levels of linguistic insecurity in the language. This is why correcting HL learners must be done with tact and purpose. One criterion for correction could be: does it interfere with communication? Another criterion can be well-formedness. And this gets to two questions: Does the form exist? Is it well formed? Under this criterion, there is a difference whether the student produces a form that exists (even though it may not be the best option for a particular context), and whether the students produces a form that is not well-formed. This criterion can help instructors guide corrections, prioritizing things that are not well-formed.

One last point to take into account in the HL classroom is that of **dialectal variation**, especially in study abroad programs, where the dialect of the local community (and the instructor) may be different from the dialect of the student. A student who pronounces certain sounds differently or who uses words or expressions that are not commonly found in the host country are not making mistakes and they should not be treated as such. We have to be mindful not to put students down

or invalidate the dialects that they speak at home. Instructors need to be sensitive to this fact, and when encountered in a situation where the student produces language that does not sound idiomatic in the host culture, before labeling it as wrong, instructors need to figure out if this is a form of dialectal variation they are not aware of.

Having a course specific for heritage language learners is the ideal solution for these students, as we target their linguistic needs in a purposeful individualized and meaningful way. However, this option may not be available in all study abroad programs for different reasons: there might not be enough students to justify the expenses associated with teaching this course, or they may be other administrative considerations or limitations that make this an unviable solution. In these cases, heritage speakers are integrated in courses with non-heritage learners in what we call mixed classrooms. This is probably the most common situation in study abroad contexts. The next section brings to light some pedagogical considerations in regards to how best integrate HL learners in mixed classrooms in a way that benefits both L2 and HL learners.

Questions for reflection

At the end of this document, find Appendix 2, and fill out the DELE Proficiency Test.

1. What results did you get?
2. In what areas did you well? In what areas did you do not so well? Why do you think this is?
3. Do you think this section provided you with knowledge that you can use to advocate for a quality education for yourself when enrolled in a Spanish for Heritage Speakers course?

Heritage Speakers in Mixed Classrooms

This section, just like the one above, is mostly meant for instructors and program administrators who may have the ability to make decisions regarding the type of education that you receive during your time abroad. We hope that this information is helpful for you, especially because heritage speakers most frequently take courses with non-heritage speakers. Sometimes, instructors may lack the preparation and training to successfully meet the learning needs of both heritage and non-heritage speakers who share the same classroom. Thus, if you are enrolled in such a course and you find that the instructor is not meeting students' needs efficiently, this section can provide you with some arguments and points to talk about with your instructor or program director.

The reality in many study abroad programs is that the number of heritage speakers may not be enough to justify the creation of specific courses dedicated to them. As a consequence, these students are placed in courses together with second language learners. The divergence of pedagogical needs exhibited by these two student groups can present a great challenge to instructors. In most cases, one could predict that these instructors have been prepared for teaching Spanish *as a second language*, but may lack the preparation necessary to teach heritage students. Even more complicated would be teaching Spanish in mixed classrooms where these two types of

students share a common space. Instructors may be at a loss as to the pedagogy to follow in these circumstances.

A common strategy in these cases is to assign heritage students the role of "assistant instructors," who serve as expert peers for L2 students in the classroom. In some cases, these heritage students serve as leaders in small group work and are even assigned mini-lessons to prepare for the rest of the students. However, although this approach represents an attempt to integrate heritage students into the classroom by giving them a role of importance in the learning community, we should ask ourselves what real benefits these students receive by following this role.

This section analyzes different aspects related to the teaching of Spanish in mixed classes. The information shared here is mostly taken from the book by Clara Burgo (2018) *Clases mixtas: L2 y lengua de herencia* (Mixed classrooms: L2 and heritage language), probably the most up-to-date volume on this topic. Mixed classes are already a reality in Spanish courses and programs in U.S. universities (Lynch, 2008) and, given the increasing number of Latino students in universities, it is easily foreseeable that mixed classrooms will continue to be a common mode of instruction in Spanish classes in the future (Potowsky & Carreira, 2004), especially in upper-division courses on culture, literature or linguistics. This situation brings a series of challenges for all parties involved (L2 learners, HL learners, and instructors), but also some important benefits that will be discussed in the next paragraphs.

Beginning with challenges, L2 learners often experience feelings of intimidation, resentment, or anxiety as a result of sharing the Spanish classroom with HL learners. This is because L2 learners feel more insecure and less able to take risks and make mistakes, so they tend to be more reluctant to participate in class, especially in activities where they must demonstrate oral fluency (Burgo, 2018; Tallon, 2009). On the other hand, HL learners often find themselves in courses that were probably not designed with them in mind. That is, in many cases the curriculum has been designed for the "traditional" Spanish L2 learner, which includes certain linguistic and cultural expectations. In these cases, heritage students may find themselves in a course that does not meet their particular needs. Moreover, instructors, who in many cases are not accustomed to this learner profile, may rely on the strengths of the HL learner for the benefit of the L2 learner. We may end up in a situation in which the HL learner helps the L2 learner, but not the other way around. There may also be an expectation that the HL learner has to adapt to the L2 learner so, instead of developing their skills, these are ignored. As Randolph (2017) explains, instructors expect HL learners to be a source of support and wisdom for the L2 learner, but not to be too advanced or overly participative so as not to make L2 learners feel uncomfortable or insecure. This can lead to boredom and lack of motivation on the part of HL learners. In some cases, as mentioned earlier, instructors treat heritage students as native speakers (rather than a different type of Spanish learners), adding preconceived assumptions about their knowledge and identity. Sometimes instructors place high expectations on these students, which may make them feel that they do not meet these expectations, especially when it comes to some of the weaknesses these students often exhibit, such as grammar knowledge, accentuation, or spelling.

The challenges exhibited by L2 and HL learners are, naturally, also challenges for the teacher, who finds him or herself with two different types of learners, with different abilities and at different stages of acquisition of the target language. This makes the dynamics of the class more complex,

even more so if the instructor has not received the necessary training to teach this type of class (Burgo, 2018). However, the knowledge and application of best practices will undoubtedly help both groups of learners since, in fact, mixed classes can provide great advantages and learning opportunities for everyone.

With the right methodology, mixed classes bring many benefits for all students. For this to happen, it is essential to foster a sense of individual and collective empowerment (Burgo, 2018). Both types of learners should know that they bring something valuable to the class and that they also receive something (Carreira, 2011). Collaborative work in groups and pairs facilitates interaction with each other to eliminate potential feelings of intimidation, embarrassment, or frustration that may occur, ultimately strengthening personal relationships. For Spanish L2 learners of Spanish, having heritage students in the classroom offers the opportunity for real immersion, i.e., authentic input and interaction that can make learning more fluid and natural. Edstrom (2007) cites other advantages for L2 learners, such as awareness of cultural differences, linguistic diversity, their exposure to a native accent with consequent improvement in their listening comprehension, and access to an informal register in addition to the academic one. On the other hand, mixed classes can also offer advantages to HL learners. For example, the opportunity to take Spanish classes with L2 learners allows them to take on academic leadership roles in the classroom, which can provide them with feelings of pride and security. Similarly, the L2 learner can help LH learner by providing metalinguistic knowledge (Randolph, 2011), for example, with spelling, grammatical rules, or issues related to formal register.

Given that, despite the challenges, mixed classes can actually provide a fertile ground for development and growth for both L2 and HL students, what best practices can the instructor use to maximize learning for both groups?

The most recommended methodology in the literature is what is called **differentiated instruction** (Alarcón, 2010). This pedagogical approach consists of using materials specifically designed for the individual needs of these two types of learners with the objective of achieving equity in their learning possibilities. It is a methodology centered on them. This way, they can progress at their own pace with the goal of achieving high levels of language proficiency. This methodology increases learners' chances of success, motivating them to participate more in class and to be more interested in the subject matter. According to this methodology, even in group activities, different tasks are assigned depending on the needs and linguistic competence of each type of learner. This is different from traditional L2 classes, where all learners work on the same task at the same time (Burgo, 2018).

Regarding the type of activities, Carreira (2016a) proposes leveling the complementary skills of both types of learners through reciprocal learning. According to this researcher, it is important to take into account three factors when designing activities: identifying the objective of the task, determining which type of learner is going to find the task more difficult, and incorporating an additional task that is challenging for the other type of learner. Burgo (2018) includes sample activities of how to implement differentiated instruction. Here we include one as an example, in which an L2 learner and an HL learner work together:

The Ethnographic Interview

You are going to conduct an ethnographic interview with your partner to collect a testimony from the Latino community.

Step 1: Brainstorm and choose with your partner a culturally relevant topic in the Latino community, such as immigration or identity.

Step 2: (L2 learner): Write the interview questions.

Step 3: (HL learner): Interview a member of your family about the topic in question in order to collect their oral testimony.

Step 4: (HL learner): Write a report with the most important ideas gathered in the interview.

Step 5: Orally compare with your partner your experience and perspective on the issue in your community with respect to that of the interviewee. Is it similar? Can we say that this interview is a good testimony on the issue in question? Why yes or why no?

In general terms, Carreira (2016b) proposes that a "micro" approach (typical for the L2 learner) should be combined with a "macro" approach (typical for the LH learner) in order to foster collaborative learning and make the activities effective for both types. Carreira proposes a combination of project and task-based instruction along with a focus on the community through cultural activities from different Spanish-speaking countries, including the U.S. With the "macro" approach, the learner is exposed to a full range of native-like linguistic input through authentic materials and tasks with form-focused instructional support, whereas with the "micro" approach, the focus is on typical errors (e.g., grammar or register). Another important factor to consider is **assessment**. Kagan and Dillon (2009) propose using portfolios to evaluate mixed classes with differentiated instruction. It is a way for the learner to complete activities throughout the semester and recognize academic progress.

Question for reflection

Sometimes students have to advocate for their own education. The role of an instructor in mixed courses is not easy, since they have to attend to the needs of two very different student profiles. Understanding that there are limitations on what the instructor can and cannot do in this kind of situations, you also want to make sure that you are getting the most of the course.

1. Do you think this section provided you with knowledge that you can use to advocate for a quality education for yourself when enrolled in a mixed course?

Other Ways of Fostering Heritage Language Acquisition

In addition to formal classroom instruction, study abroad allows students to advance their language proficiency in more spontaneous and natural ways. Living in an immersion situation, surrounded by native Spanish speakers is one of the best ways to increase your Spanish language proficiency. However, it is necessary to remember that the mere fact of living for a while in a culture where Spanish is the dominant language will not automatically increase your level of Spanish. To do so, you must do your part, get out of your comfort zone and take advantage of every possible opportunity to interact with native speakers.

Program administrators typically provide their students with opportunities that facilitate students' interactions with locals in different ways, for instance, by providing lodging with a Spanish family or Spanish speaking students. They also may plan activities for which they have to interact with locals, such as conducting ethnographical interviews about a certain topic or completing a scavenger hunt around town. They could even organize a conversational exchange program where Spanish speaking students and English speaking students are paired to informally practice their respective target languages once or twice a week. The more input they get in Spanish, the better.

All the above-mentioned ideas would, for the most part, trigger informal conversations, which is the register HL learners are typically most comfortable with. This is why program administrators should try to incorporate other ways to promote linguistic exchanges for heritage learners where a more formal register is required. Existing literature suggests that HLs who were raised speaking the heritage language at home and in their communities are more likely than L2 learners to bring stronger linguistic and cultural knowledge to their study abroad experience (Davidson & Lekic, 2013; Potowski, 2012, 2014). Since they can generally communicate more effectively with native speakers (Gorman, 2011), HLs may find it easier to connect socially with the local community in the target language from the onset (Petrucci, 2007). This makes them great candidates to get involved from the beginning of their study abroad experience in activities for which a higher proficiency level is required, such as volunteer work, service learning opportunities, or even internships.

A study by Jiménez Jiménez (2021) that focused on the impact of service learning on heritage language learners suggests that a service learning component may have a positive influence in the areas of linguistic awareness, cultural understanding, and personal growth. In this study, the service learning experience in a nursing home enhanced students' awareness of the Spanish language, expanding their repertoire of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. In addition, it provided students with ample exposure to register and dialectal variation, increasing their awareness and appreciation towards linguistic diversity, including their own. Secondly, the service learning substantially enhanced students' understanding of the host culture in many of their representations (including food, music, dance, sports, games, etc.). Lastly, and maybe most importantly, the experience sparked in them a sense of civic engagement and responsibility.

Questions for reflection

1. How does your study abroad program help promote experiences outside the classroom in which students interact with members of the host community?
2. Does your study abroad program provide volunteering opportunities in the community? If not, are there ways for you to volunteer outside of the program?
3. Does your study abroad program provide service learning opportunities? If not, are there ways to advocate for the inclusion of this component in the program in the near future?
4. Does your program provide internship opportunities? If not, are there ways to advocate for the inclusion of this component in the program in the near future?
5. In what other ways can you expose yourself to interact with locals in more formal and academic settings?

We hope that the information included in this Guide help you maximize your study abroad experience from a linguistic standpoint. We recommend that you continue reading Part III of this Guide, which focuses on some cultural topics and some identity issues that you may encounter during your time overseas.

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Appendix 1



Title: *Language background questionnaire for heritage speakers of Spanish*

Author: Julio Torres

Date: 2012

<http://nhlrc.ucla.edu/data/questionnaires.asp>

IRB # _____

PARTICIPANT # _____

Sex: M F (Circle one)

AGE: _____

Number of years living in the United States _____

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. At what age did you begin learning Spanish? (for example: from birth or age 5)

2. At what age did you begin learning English? (for example: from birth or age 5)

3. Did you start school in the United States? Circle one: YES NO

4. Have you studied in a Spanish-speaking country? (e.g., Puerto Rico, Mexico)

Circle one: YES NO

If you answer YES.... What country? _____ From age _____ to age _____

5. Have you studied in a bilingual education, immersion or dual language program (a school where you learned Spanish and English at the same time)?? Circle one: YES NO

If you answered YES.... Which grades? _____

6. Do you study Spanish in school now? Circle one: **YES NO**

Have you studied Spanish in the past? Circle one: **YES NO**

If you answer **YES**, please write how many academic years you have been studying Spanish:

7. If you study Spanish, write briefly your main reason for studying Spanish.

8. Do you both of your parents or caregivers work? Circle on: **YES NO**
or only one of them? Circle one: **YES NO**

If you answer **YES**, please write the profession of your parents/caretakers:

Parent/Caretaker #1: _____

Parent/Caretaker #2: _____

9. What generation are you in the United States (1st, 2nd, 3rd)? _____

10. Do you travel to your family's home country? **YES NO**
If **YES**, how often: _____ For how long?

11. Mark an **X** for the language(s) you used most in the following periods of your life:

AGE	SPANISH	ENGLISH	BOTH SPANISH & ENGLISH	OTHER LANGUAGES
0-5 yrs. old				
6-12 yrs. old				
13-18 yrs. old				
18+ yrs. old				

12. Rate your proficiency in Spanish and English (speaking, reading, writing, listening) according to the following scale (write the number next to each skill):

6 = NATIVE FLUENCY

5 = NEAR (ALMOST) NATIVE FLUENCY

4 = ADVANCED FLUENCY

3 = INTERMEDIATE FLUENCY

2= BASIC FLUENCY

1=BEGINNING FLUENCY

SPANISH		ENGLISH	
Speaking		Speaking	
Reading		Reading	
Writing		Writing	
Listening		Listening	

13. Read the following statements about Spanish and write an X to indicate YES or NO.

a. Knowing Spanish is an important part of who I am.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

b. Knowing Spanish is useful.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

c. Knowing Spanish made school more enjoyable.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

d. Knowing Spanish has helped me make friends.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

e. Knowing Spanish is a valuable skill.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

f. Knowing Spanish is a necessary skill.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

g. Knowing Spanish at times is embarrassing.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

h. Knowing Spanish has been a barrier to learning English.

STRONGLY AGREE **AGREE** **DISAGREE** **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

i. Knowing Spanish has made school more challenging.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY DISAGREE

j. Knowing Spanish has made school less enjoyable.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY DISAGREE

k. Knowing Spanish had made it difficult to make friends.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY DISAGREE

II.

Please answer the following questions about your daily language use. Circle each answer.

For English:

1. I speak English with my parents or caretakers.....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

2. I speak English with my brothers and sisters.....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

3. I speak English with my relatives (cousins, uncles, grandparents)....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

4. I speak English with my friends at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

5. I speak English with my friends in my neighborhood....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

6. I speak English with my teachers....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

7. I speak English to the school staff....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

8. I speak in English in my community (grocery stores, mall, supermarket, church, community center)....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

9. I write in English at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

10. I write in English (notes, e-mails, text messages, chat) at home....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

11. I write in English at work....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

12. I read in English at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

13. I read in English at home....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

14. I read in English at work....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

15. I listen to English at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

16. I listen to English at home....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

17. I listen to English at work....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

18. I watch T.V. in English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

19. I listen to music in English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

20. I watch movies in English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

For Spanish:

1. I speak Spanish with my parents or caretakers.....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

2. I speak Spanish with my brothers and sisters.....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

3. I speak Spanish with my relatives (cousins, uncles, grandparents)....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

4. I speak Spanish with my friends at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

5. I speak Spanish with my friends in my neighborhood....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

6. I speak Spanish with my teachers....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

7. I speak Spanish to the school staff....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

8. I speak in English in my community (grocery stores, mall, supermarket, church, community center)....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

9. I write in Spanish at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

10. I write in Spanish (notes, e-mails, text messages, chat) at home....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

11. I write in Spanish at work....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

12. I read in Spanish at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

13. I read in Spanish at home....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

14. I read in Spanish at work....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

15. I listen to Spanish at school....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

16. I listen to Spanish at home....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

17. I listen to Spanish at work....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

18. I watch T.V. in Spanish....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

19. I listen to music in Spanish....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

20. I watch movies in Spanish....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

21. When I speak to my parents/caretakers, I switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

22. When I speak to my siblings, I switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

23. When I speak to my friends/peers, I switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

24. When I speak to my teachers, I switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

25. When I speak to members in the community (stores, supermarket, church), I switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

26. When I speak to the staff at school, I switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

27. I feel more comfortable speaking with people who can switch between Spanish and English....

ALWAYS FREQUENTLY SOMETIMES RARELY NEVER DOESN'T APPLY

Appendix 2



Title: DELE Proficiency Test

Author: Dr. Silvina Montrul

Date: June 12, 2012

<http://nhlrc.ucla.edu/data/proficiency-assessments-example-proficiency-exams.asp>

Research ID Number _____
Name _____

Multiple Choice Test

Each of the following sentences contains a blank indicating that a word or phrase has been omitted. Select the choice that best completes the sentence.

1. Al oír del accidente de su buen amigo, Paco se puso _____.
a. alegre b. fatigado c. hambriento d. desconsolado

2. No puedo comprarlo porque me _____.
a. falta b. dan c. presta d. regalan

3. Tuvo que guardar cama por estar _____.
a. enfermo b. vestido c. ocupado d. parado

4. Aquí está tu café, Juanito. No te quemes, que está muy _____.
a. dulce b. amargo c. agrio d. caliente

5. Al romper los anteojos, Juan se asustó porque no podía _____ sin ellos.

- a. discurrir b. oír c. ver d. entender

6. ¡Pobrecita! Está resfriada y no puede _____.

- a. salir de casa b. recibir cartas c. respirar con pena d. leer las noticias

7. Era una noche oscura sin _____.

- a. estrellas b. camas c. lágrimas d. nubes

8. Cuando don Carlos salió de su casa, saludó a un amigo suyo: -Buenos días,_____.

- a. ¿Qué va? b. ¿Cómo es? c. ¿Quién es? d. ¿Qué tal?

9. ¡Qué ruido había con los gritos de los niños y el _____ de los perros!

- a. olor b. sueño c. hambre d. ladrar

10. Para saber la hora, don Juan miró el _____.

- a. calendario b. bolsillo c. estante d. despertador

11. Yo, que comprendo poco de mecánica, sé que el auto no puede funcionar sin _____.

- a. permiso b. comer c. aceite d. bocina

12. Nos dijo mamá que era hora de comer y por eso _____.

- a. fuimos a nadar b. tomamos asiento c. comenzamos a fumar
d. nos acostamos pronto

13. ¡Cuidado con ese cuchillo o vas a _____ el dedo!

- a. cortarte b. torcerte c. comerte d. quemarte

14. Tuvo tanto miedo de caerse que se negó a _____ con nosotros.
a. almorzar b. charlar c. cantar d. patinar
15. Abrió la ventana y miró: en efecto, grandes lenguas de _____ salían llameando de las casas.
a. zorros b. serpientes c. cuero d. fuego
16. Compró ejemplares de todos los diarios pero en vano. No halló _____.
a. los diez centavos b. el periódico perdido c. la noticia que deseaba
d. los ejemplos
17. Por varias semanas acudieron colegas del difunto profesor a _____ el dolor de la viuda.
a. aliviar b. dulcificar c. embromar d. estorbar
18. Sus amigos pudieron haberlo salvado pero lo dejaron _____.
a. ganar b. parecer c. perecer d. acabar
19. Al salir de la misa me sentía tan caritativo que no pude menos que _____ a un pobre mendigo que había allí sentado.
a. pegarle b. darle una limosna c. echar una mirada d. maldecir
20. Al lado de la Plaza de Armas había dos limosneros pidiendo _____.
a. pedazos b. paz c. monedas d. escopetas
21. Siempre maltratado por los niños, el perro no podía acostumbrarse a _____ de sus nuevos amos.
a. las caricias b. los engaños c. las locuras d. los golpes
22. ¿Dónde estará mi cartera? La dejé aquí mismo hace poco y parece que el necio de mi hermano ha vuelto a _____.
a. dejármela b. deshacérmela c. escondérmela d. acabármela

23. Permaneció un gran rato abstraído, los ojos clavados en el fogón y el pensamiento _____.

- a. en el bolsillo b. en el fuego c. lleno de alboroto d. Dios sabe dónde

24. En vez de dirigir el tráfico estabas charlando, así que tú mismo _____ del choque.

- a. sabes la gravedad b. eres testigo c. tuviste la culpa
d. conociste a las víctimas

25. Posee esta tierra un clima tan propio para la agricultura como para _____.

- a. la construcción de trampas b. el fomento de motines c. el costo de vida
d. la cría de reses

26. Aficionado leal de obras teatrales, Juan se entristeció al saber _____ del gran actor.

- a. del fallecimiento b. del éxito c. de la buena suerte d. de la alabanza

27. Se reunieron a menudo para efectuar un tratado pero no pudieron _____.

- a. desavenirse b. echarlo a un lado c. rechazarlo d. llevarlo a cabo

28. Se negaron a embarcarse porque tenían miedo de _____.

- a. los peces b. los naufragios c. los faros d. las playas

29. La mujer no aprobó el cambio de domicilio pues no le gustaba _____.

- a. el callejeo b. el puente c. esa estación d. aquel barrio

30. Era el único que tenía algo que comer pero se negó a _____.

- a. hojearlo b. ponérselo c. conservarlo d. repartirlo

Cloze Test

In the following text, some of the words have been replaced by blanks numbered 1 through 20. First, read the complete text in order to understand it. Then reread it and choose the correct word to fill each blank from the answer sheet. Mark your answers by circling your choice on the answer sheet, not by filling in the blanks in the text.

El sueño de Joan Miró

Hoy se inaugura en Palma de Mallorca la Fundación y Joan Miró, en el mismo lugar en donde el artista vivió sus últimos treinta y cinco años. El sueño de Joan Miró se ha _____ (1). Los fondos donados a la ciudad por el pintor y su esposa en 1981 permitieron que el sueño se _____ (2); más tarde, en 1986, el Ayuntamiento de Palma de Mallorca decidió _____ (3) al arquitecto Rafael Moneo un edificio que _____ (4) a la vez como sede de la entidad y como museo moderno. El proyecto ha tenido que _____ (5) múltiples obstáculos de carácter administrativo. Miró, coincidiendo _____ (6) los deseos de toda su familia, quiso que su obra no quedara expuesta en ampulosos panteones de arte o en _____ (7) de coleccionistas acaudalados; por ello, en 1981, creó la fundación mallorquina. Y cuando estaba _____ (8) punto de morir, donó terrenos y edificios, así como las obras de arte que en ellos _____ (9).

El edificio que ha construido Rafael Moneo se enmarca en _____ (10) se denomina “Territorio Miró”, espacio en el que se han _____ (11) de situar los distintos edificios que constituyen la herencia del pintor.

El acceso a los mismos quedará _____ (12) para evitar el deterioro de las obras. Por otra parte, se _____ (13), en los talleres de grabado y litografía, cursos _____ (14) las distintas técnicas de estampación. Estos talleres también se cederán periódicamente a distintos artistas contemporáneos, _____ (15) se busca que el “Territorio Miró” _____ (16) un centro vivo de creación y difusión del arte a todos los niveles.

La entrada costará 500 pesetas y las previsiones dadas a conocer ayer aspiran _____ (17) que el centro acoja a unos 150.000 visitantes al año. Los responsables esperan que la institución funcione a _____ (18) rendimiento a principios de la _____ (20) semana, si bien el catálogo completo de las obras de la Fundación Pilar y Joan Miró no estará listo hasta dentro de dos años.

Research ID Number _____

Name _____

Cloze Test Answer Sheet

1. a. cumplido b. completado c. terminado
2. a. inició b. iniciara c. iniciaba
3. a. encargar b. pedir c. mandar
4. a. hubiera servido b. haya servido c. sirviera
5. a. superar b. enfrentarse c. acabar
6. a. por b. en c. con
7. a. voluntad b. poder c. favor
8. a. al b. en c. a
9. a. habría b. había c. hubo
10. a. que b. el que c. lo que
11. a. pretendido b. tratado c. intentado
12. a. disminuido b. escaso c. restringido
13. a. darán b. enseñarán c. dirán
14. a. sobre b. en c. para
15. a. ya b. así c. para
16. a. será b. sea c. es
17. a. casos b. aspectos c. niveles
18. a. a b. de c. para
19. a. total b. pleno c. entero
20. a. siguiente b. próxima c. pasada

Answer Key: Multiple Choice Test

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. d | 11. c | 21. a |
| 2. a | 12. b | 22. c |
| 3. a | 13. a | 23. d |
| 4. d | 14. d | 24. c |
| 5. c | 15. d | 25. d |
| 6. a | 16. c | 26. a |
| 7. a | 17. a | 27. d |
| 8. d | 18. c | 28. b |
| 9. d | 19. b | 29. d |
| 10. d | 20. c | 30. d |

Answer Key: Cloze Test

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. a | 8. c | 15. b |
| 2. b | 9. b | 16. b |
| 3. a | 10. c | 17. c |
| 4. c | 11. b | 18. a |
| 5. a | 12. c | 19. b |
| 6. c | 13. b | 20. b |
| 7. b | 14. a | |

Total points possible: 50

Advanced	40 to 50
Intermediate	30 to 49
Low	0 to 29