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**This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible**

due -

## Discussion #1-Personal Language Experience

12 54

### Discussion Reflection 1:

#### Watch:

*Immersion* by Richard Levien

[Immersion](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6Y0HAjLKYI) [\\_\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6Y0HAjLKYI\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6Y0HAjLKYI)



[\\_\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6Y0HAjLKYI\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6Y0HAjLKYI)

Also watch: What You Didn't Know about Language Barriers

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiM48j\\_NZOU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiM48j_NZOU) [\\_\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiM48j\\_NZOU\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiM48j_NZOU)



[\\_\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiM48j\\_NZOU\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiM48j_NZOU)

Ponder on your experience in being an English Learner and/or in working with English language learners of any age (child through adult), in any capacity. Watch *Immersion* by Richard Levien about a 10-year-old boy from Oakland, Ca. who struggles to communicate in his new school with limited access to his native language and/or people who can serve his needs.

Then, consider how our students feel on a daily basis when trying to take in all the information we deliver to them in English. While this is a film about a young boy, it transcends age. Teens, adults, and elders all feel the struggle when not having access to tools necessary for language development. Depending on the audience you teach or plan to teach, reference the struggles Moises experiences and what you learned in *What You Didn't Know about Language Barriers* to help you respond to the questions below. in your own responses below where appropriate.



language.

#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?

#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?

Respond **by Saturday** and then to 2 others **by Sunday**.

← Reply



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 26, 2020

**#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

My first experience learning another language was in my freshman year of high school when I took a French class. My experience at that time was one of confusion, frustration, boredom, and ultimately disinterest. I found learning the language to be tedious as there was list after list of vocabulary words to memorize, verb conjugations, grammar rules, pronunciation, and so on. I met the graduation requirements for world language with two years of French class and while I remember a few phrases that helped when I was in Quebec and France, and some swear words, I mostly looked for English speakers when I needed to communicate. Later, in college, I took Spanish. This time I was more invested in learning the language because I knew it would be useful living here in Los Angeles. Even with the added interest in the language, it was still really difficult for me. There were still long lists of vocabulary words, verb conjugations, grammar differences, spelling differences, intimidating language labs, difficult reading assignments, and so on. The process was at times tedious, and always challenging. I took a total of 4 years of Spanish in my adult years and then have continued to self-learn over the years through Babel, audio books, and print books in Spanish. I also worked for years with a clientele whose family members were often monolingual Spanish speakers and though I utilized a translator when communicating with family members, I was exposed to Spanish daily and had an opportunity to continue working on my fluency. My learning has been spread out

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**#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack thereof?**

Fear and discomfort were a large part of my experience in high school. I was easily embarrassed as a teen, so anytime I had to answer a question or demonstrate understanding in my French classes, I wanted to crawl under my desk. The fear of looking dumb and the discomfort and embarrassment that came with making mistakes in front of my peers resulted in apathy. I became uninterested in learning the language, because if I was uninterested my lack of ability was intentional rather than a lack of ability.

Later, in my adult years, it was still uncomfortable making mistakes in class, and even in the real world. I remember trying to purchase street tacos in a little town just over the border and trying to conduct the transaction in Spanish after only having a year or two of classes. It was pretty comical, but the guy spoke more English than I did Spanish, so it worked out. I also remember a taxi ride in Costa Rica where the driver (who was a native Spanish speaker, but fluent in English) decided I needed to further practice my Spanish on the way to my accommodations. I'm pretty sure my face was red with embarrassment the whole hour long ride, but I was grateful to him for the lesson.

**#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

I am not currently working as a teacher, but in my previous work as a psychologist, our agency employed Spanish speaking mental health therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, case managers, and administrative staff and when there wasn't a Spanish speaking staff member we utilized translators to assist. There was an effort to place monolingual Spanish speaking clients and even English speaking clients whose parents were monolingual Spanish speaking with a Spanish speaking therapist or psychologist to ensure optimal quality of services. All of our paperwork including all paperwork explaining client rights were offered in Spanish to those who preferred it. When we made community referrals we made an effort to link Spanish speaking clients and families to resources that provided services in Spanish. We also linked families to English language classes if they expressed an interest in learning English. I am continuing to work on my Spanish proficiency while pursuing my TESOL certification. It's slow going, but I'm making progress.

[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 26, 2020





I focused on in class instruction learning options for the students, while your focus on centers on providing services for students in their native language.

Im curious to know what type of support ideas you will have for students in a learning enviorment ?

← [Reply](#)



**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 28, 2020

Hi Monta. Thanks for the question! I agree that in class support is important as well as linking students and families to resources outside the class. I like some of your ideas- apps to improve language skills, checking biases about student's dialect, or ideas bout how a student should be progressing in their English language learning. I also think extra help during or outside of class, or peer teaching/coaching can be useful to support students. I would advocate for changes in policies that prohibit the use of the student's native language while they are becoming proficient in English so that they don't fall behind, lose confidence or lose motivation. I'm sure there's much more that can be done and I enjoy learning and developing new ideas from you and my other classmates.

← [Reply](#)



**Kelly H. Kim** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907>)

Oct 27, 2020

I definitely understand the fear and discomfort you described in your response to Q#2. I can't agree more with the part you mentioned that you still feel the same level of discomfort in making mistakes when speaking in Spanish. I feel the same way with English. Although I became quite fluent now, I sometimes doubt myself way too much in the fear of making stupid mistakes. After spending more than half of my life in English speaking countries (Canada and USA combined), I still have those moments time to time. Another odd thing about human brain is that sometimes, I feel the same fear/hesitation with speaking in Korean too. I can't be exactly sure but English might have replaced my native language when it comes to certain context or subject. I agree with you that these

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[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 28, 2020

Hi Kelly. Thanks for sharing your experience. That's really interesting about the fear or hesitation when speaking Korean because it wouldn't have occurred to me unless you told me. It makes total sense though, especially if you are using different languages for different parts of your life. I have a friend who many years ago went into the Peace Corps and lived in Bolivia for two years speaking predominantly Spanish (and learning Quechua as well). He told me that after a certain point he began dreaming in Spanish and that's when he knew he had reached a whole new level of proficiency. I hope to be dreaming in Spanish one day.

[← Reply](#)[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)

Oct 31, 2020

Hi Erin,

Thank you for sharing your story. I totally understand how uncomfortable it is to make mistakes as a teen and as an adult. I started learning another language when I was very little, and I was not hesitant to make mistakes. But as a teen at my school, I guess I was a little more careful not to make huge mistakes in front of classmates.

[← Reply](#)[Erica Wahlgren \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386)

Oct 26, 2020

### **#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

I went to a small school from kindergarten through 8th grade and learning Spanish was part of the curriculum for each grade. I also took Spanish as my second language in high school. The elementary school Spanish teacher I had was phenomenal and developed engaging, fun,



after elementary school. School is a major influence for kids from ages 5-18 and much of daily life is shaped around it. If schools do not incorporate regular practice of and exposure to languages many students whose primary language is English will not become proficient in another language. The video *What You Didn't Know About Language Barriers* discusses the benefits of exposing children to multiple languages and school is the most logical, ideal environment for that.

### **#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?**

In high school fear and discomfort definitely played a role in my language learning. I was afraid to make a mistake in front of everyone and I was afraid of getting a bad grade. I think that fear and discomfort paired with a lack of support resulted in me not practicing Spanish. There is plenty of evidence demonstrating that a lack of opportunity to practice makes learning and maintaining a second language very difficult, if not impossible.

### **#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

This is such an important discussion that I am grateful we get to have in this course and I am looking forward to reading what everyone has to share!

For my classes, I have been making lesson videos and posting them to YouTube. I take the time to make sure they are all captioned correctly for my students. By doing so my students can pause or rewatch the videos as many times as they need. They can also take the video transcript and use a translator if necessary. I also curate and share a resource page for my students. There are some standard resources I include, such as Khan Academy for grammar practice, but I also add resources for things my students have asked about or requested that may not fit into the scope of our class or might be specific to just one student.

This past semester I had a student request a copy of my syllabus in Spanish. I am still working with the school and researching the best approach for this moving forward. My students would benefit from essential course materials being available in more languages than just English. I am not proficient enough in any other language to translate them myself and as far as I can tell, many schools do not have an accessible system in place for support with this. Community colleges often offer programs with materials in Spanish and both academic and personal support for bilingual students/first-generation students/immigrant students/etc., but only for credit classes. I teach in the non-credit department and we do not have the same programs in place. The burden of finding and accessing these resources for students each semester falls on the shoulders of individual instructors who are not paid for this time/effort. Although many instructors, including myself, do this regardless it is not a fair or sustainable system. Non-credit

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[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 26, 2020

Its great to see instructors sucu as yourself going above your teaching duties to assist the students erica. It almost as if the school creates roadblock as it relates to educational resources for the students.

[← Reply](#)**Kelly H. Kim** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907>)

Oct 27, 2020

Erica, I enjoyed reading your post. I would love to see your videos on YouTube! That's a brilliant way to support your students' learning experiences as they can always go back and review your lessons in their own pace. I remember my old days of learning English as a teenager. Back then, YouTube didn't exist so the best resources were radios and movies or tv shows. I used to record some of my favorites to listen to them repeatedly. It's exciting to see that now we have an infinite number of resources made available on YouTube to help students learn better.

[https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/discussion\\_topics/508215#](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/discussion_topics/508215#)

[← Reply](#)**Erica Wahlgren** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386>)

Oct 27, 2020

Hi Kelly,

I have them unlisted on YouTube but here are a few! My students loved the easy to access videos.

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Resume

[← Reply](#)[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Nov 1, 2020



Hi Erica,

This is amazing! I understand that you'd have to dedicate extra time to making videos like these. The last part about working non-credit teaching jobs was so insightful. Thank you for sharing and making it known that some students are at a disadvantage from the start because teachers don't get paid for the extra prep time and efforts outside of work hours.

[← Reply](#)[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Oct 27, 2020



Hi Erica!

It's awesome that you went to a bilingual school. I wish more schools had dual-language immersion programs.

You're right, instructors and students in non-credit departments face challenges that faculty and students in credit departments do not. My college has both credit and non-

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**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 28, 2020

Hi Erica. What a great opportunity to attend a school where Spanish was integrated into the curriculum for every grade. I really wish this were the norm. I think waiting until high school to begin learning really misses a great opportunity for our children to become proficient in another language.

The YouTube videos are a fantastic resource for your students. Thanks for sharing them. It's such a simple and relatively easy way to make use of technology to provide valuable resources to our students.

[← Reply](#)**Melissa McConnell-Quinn** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617>)

Oct 28, 2020

Hi Erica. Thank you for the new learning. I am not a college instructor so how that system works is beyond my common knowledge. "Non-credit instructors are only paid for time in the classroom and are not paid for prep time, office hours, etc. This puts students at a disadvantage because many ESL and ELL classes and programs are classified as non-credit." Your entire last line really highlights how once again, students are at an unfair disadvantage from the start. And like you also mentioned, many instructors will go above and beyond to see their students succeed because that is simply what teachers do. I didn't know this about the higher education system. Thank you for sharing. MQ

[← Reply](#)**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 26, 2020

My early exposure to learning a second language occurred during my Middle and High School training session. I got the opportunity to learn French in Middle School and Spanish 1-2 in High School. Learning both languages, or should I say getting a passing grade in the class, was not difficult. I was able to retain some common phrases, which was a plus. However, I faced the



isn't resonating. Looking back, if I could've comprehended that at the time, I would have continued my studies of each language during my college studies. Who knows where that skill would have taken me. Thankfully during this "quarantine time," I spend 30 minutes a day studying French on a trusted app called "Duolingo."

Watching the video on Moises had me reflecting on the crucial role an instructor must play in a student's education. You almost have to take on the duty of being a co-conspirator and have the cultural competence to respectfully engage with each student. As I mentioned before in our past discussions, instructors must go above and beyond their paid role of teaching a subject. It is the instructor's responsibility to provide the student with the education needed to excel in school and their future endeavors in the real world. We must do it without exhibiting prejudice toward students' language dialect and their progress in learning what is deemed "Proper English" by the learning institution.

While most of the assistance occurs in the classroom, there are other avenues in supporting student's language needs. Technology is a useful tool in today's educational landscape. To provide extra support for students, I would distribute learning app tools such as Duolingo and Mondly to continue learning outside the classroom. Another source I would incorporate is the development of after school tutoring programs. I would acquire assistance from native speakers of that student's language and cultural background. This strategy does two things. One, it connects them with individuals from their ethnic group that they can culturally connect with. Secondly, depending on the volunteer's economic status, it can show the student the benefits of what learning a second language can take you in life.

Parents are bound to their child's education, which is why they also deserve language support. Counseling sessions must be developed first to discuss the language needs of the families. Once those needs are addressed, I would acquire the assistance of translators who are knowledgeable in both English and the parent's native tongue to assist in communicating with parents on their student's progress. This idea also bleeds into possible meetings hosted by the school. School Meetings' purpose centers on introducing parents to the learning facility's customs and serve as an avenue of making new connections with other parents. Those meetings will also have language translators, which will help the same purpose as one-on-one parent conference.

[← Reply](#)



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Hi Monta,

I completely forgot about Duolingo! What a great idea to use it as a teaching tool. It is a fun and interactive resource for students to continue practicing outside of class.

It also provides them with immediate feedback. No matter how hard an instructor tries it is difficult to give every student personalized and immediate feedback with class sizes getting so large these days.

← [Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Oct 27, 2020

Hello Erica. Another great thing about Duolingo is it is free. There is a monthly payment option that offers more learning opportunities. However, the free option aids in a variety of fundamental language learning concepts.

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 28, 2020

That's a great use of quarantine time! I'm continuing to learn Spanish during this time, but it's been here and there when I find extra time. I'm going to make time daily and put it on the calendar.

As I said in my comment above, incorporating language apps into learning is a great idea. I also really like the idea of the tutoring program and matching students with someone who speaks their native language and is from the same culture. Not only does it address the immediate needs of the student to feel valued, respected, and support their learning, but it also gives them a real life example of what is possible for them.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Nov 1, 2020

Hi Monta,

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and school meetings are definitely ways to bridge the gap.

← [Reply](#)



[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Nov 1, 2020

Hey Russell great point. Having counselors can provide an outlook in aids with the mental struggles a student goes through. In addition, the coupler can collaborate with the instructors. The counselor for instance will present finding during thier session, which can aid the instructor on strategys of helping the student in class sessions.

← [Reply](#)



[Kelly H. Kim \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146907)

Oct 27, 2020

### **#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

I was born and raised in Korea until I was thirteen years old and for as long as I remember, learning English as a second language was always a big part of my life. My parents, understanding the cognitive benefits of learning languages at an early age, sent me to a kindergarten with bilingual English programs. When I entered the elementary school, I continued to study English as one of my core subjects. Although my school used Korean as its primary language, as all Korean schools do, mine also highly valued the English education and embedded it into their curriculums. Being exposed to English language at a young age, it wasn't so difficult for me to acquire the 'interpersonal language skills'. There is no doubt that Korean was my first language growing up but I can say that acquisition of English also came pretty naturally as well. While my 'academic language skills' in English might have been lacking compared to those of my Korean, I was able to develop solid foundational language skills in English early on. This was helpful in adjusting to a new environment in Canada, where I moved to attend my secondary school, which is equivalent of middle and high school combined. The school used English as a primary language and required all students to learn either French or Spanish as part of their curriculum. This was very challenging for me. Suddenly, I was required to advance my English academically as well as in my daily life while learning another new language simultaneously, which is in fact, a third language to ESL

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which was also taught in English. I remember waking up early in the morning to listen to AP News on the radio to study expressions and practice listening skills. I also carried around decks of flashcards in my pockets to memorize new vocabs every day. I tried to read a lot of articles and different passages in English to assimilate to the language and its culture. I remember as my English advanced, my Spanish also advanced because it became easier for me to comprehend the Spanish teacher's lessons taught in English and I was able to make friends at school to work on Spanish together. I was very focused on adjusting to the new environment, so I didn't pay much attention to maintaining my native language at that time. However, my Korean was already developed enough at that point that my acquisition of English and/or Spanish was more 'additive' than 'subtractive.'

### **#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack thereof?**

I think fear and discomfort played a big role in my language learning experience in my teenage years. Because I was thrown into an English-speaking country to survive as a teenager at the age of fourteen, I was overwhelmed by all sorts of fear and discomfort. As delicate as I was at that time, I feared rejection, failure and being judged by my peers. I was not comfortable talking to my peers let alone speaking up in my class. I was in fact that 10-year-old boy in the *Immersion* video, except my native language was Korean and his was Spanish. It was not easy. However, with the tremendous amount of support from my parents, teachers, and classmates, I was able to turn these into my motivations to study English. I wanted to make more friends, excel academically and most importantly, wanted to be my confident self at school. I wanted to be able to express my thoughts and communicate my opinions freely. The only way to do that was to become fluent in English so I devoted more hours in learning the language.

### **#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

Although I'm not teaching yet, I can think of many examples of great teachers that helped me in my own language learning experience that I hope to emulate in my own classrooms in the future. My ESL teacher at my Canadian secondary school is one of them. With her cultural competency, she was always keen to understand her students and their backgrounds in depth. It was evident that she paid attention to her students' individual situations and struggles which made them feel valued and respected around her. I remember feeling very comfortable speaking to her even when my English sentences were still very much broken and unfinished. She always encouraged me to 'give it a try' and acknowledged small improvements. She also took extra time to speak to the parents, sometimes even outside of her office hours if necessary. When my mom visited the school for the first time, I remember she chatted with my



system which we were all fairly new to. I hope to bring in such level of attentiveness to each student of mine. I believe the trust and respect between the teacher and students as well as with the parents are critical in supporting language needs of students.

← [Reply](#)



[Erica Wahlgren \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135386)

Oct 27, 2020

Hi Kelly,

Thanks for sharing! I am so glad that as you learned new languages you had support all around. Your experiences are a great reminder of how much of a difference support, encouragement, and positive reinforcement make.

Although you haven't taught yet, I think you will do great when you do. Your experiences as a student have shown you how a teacher can be supportive and how that often goes beyond academics.

← [Reply](#)



[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Oct 27, 2020

Hi Kelly!

Thank you for sharing your experience! I'm glad you had a caring ESL teacher who knew how to interact with students who might be experiencing anxiety when speaking, reading, and writing in English. It's incredible how much of an impact teachers have on the motivation and success of students.

← [Reply](#)



[Erin Lynch \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296)

Oct 28, 2020

Hi Kelly. I appreciate you sharing your experience. I wish more schools and English speaking families here valued learning other languages in elementary school. I think we're

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example she is for all of us.

← Reply



[Melissa McConnell-Quinn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617)

Oct 28, 2020

Hi Kelly. You have a fascinating story. Thank you for sharing. I cannot relate to learning in another language and having to study it nonstop to maintain my studies. And learning Spanish...taught in English. I hadn't ever considered that. You said that you are not teaching yet. The fact that you have this life experience and a connection to learning a new language gives you the empathy and supportive skills that your future students will need. They will be lucky to have you.

← Reply



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 31, 2020

Hi Kelly!

I'm not a teacher yet either. I liked the story about how your mother spoke with the ESL teacher a long time. This taught me what a difference it makes for teachers to develop communication and relationships with the students' parents. That sounds a lot like dedication, which is what all great teachers need and have. I will remember this when I become a teacher. Thanks for sharing!

← Reply



[Luis Orozco \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/146922)

Oct 27, 2020

**#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

I was lucky because I attended elementary school when bilingual education still existed in California. Therefore, I was taught in both Spanish and English. As a child, I was able to easily

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I had a harder time with my Spanish, especially reading and writing. Even now, I read and write much slower in Spanish than I do in English, revealing my hindered proficiency in Spanish. I'm sure it does not help that I read novels and books in English almost all the time and rarely do so in Spanish.

### **#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?**

I am grateful that fear and discomfort did not play a role in my language learning. Children tend to be resilient, and I was also in a supportive environment with other English learners. What is more, I was eager to learn, and I wanted to practice my English as much as possible. We did not have many books at home, however, (mostly school textbooks) so I would read the backs of cereal boxes and food packages. I suppose I was starving for reading material.

Unfortunately, one bad experience where my mom had to pay for a lost book, soured the ability to rent books from the public library for all of us, especially since those few dollars could have been spent on rent, food, or bills. Therefore, I would spend my lunches in the school library. I loved reading about Greek mythology, space, and devoured the "Eyewitness Books" that detailed historical periods. I tell my students how lucky they are to have access to digital public libraries through the Libby app. Even now, there is, at least, one book in my Libby or Kindle app.

### **#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

More and more, I have foreign students who learned English in their native countries in my composition classes. I like to encourage them to speak since they tend to be very quiet (which is also a cultural custom) by giving them a chance to speak in groups and asking them questions in low-stakes assignments so that they become more and more comfortable volunteering ideas and questions during class. On the occasion that I have a hard time understanding their question or comment, I use "I" statements to have the burden of understanding on me versus making the students feel like they may not be speaking clearly. For instance, I might say, "I'm sorry, I didn't understand your important question. Can you repeat it?" or "I want to make sure I understood your excellent comment. Can you repeat it?" I try to add a positive adjective to create a supportive environment and to encourage students to participate in the future.

← Reply



**Erin Lynch** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147296>)

Oct 28, 2020



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more encouraging space for students to share their comment or question, but to also practice communicating in English in a nonjudgemental environment. Also, thanks for reminder about the Libby App. I need more books in Spanish!

[← Reply](#)[Monta Wiley \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624)

Oct 28, 2020

Hey Luis. I saw you mentioned foreign students coming into your class knowing English. How do you contend with a class with a merge of students who know English well and those that are still at the beginning stages?

[← Reply](#)[Aya Takeichi-Leitz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001)

Oct 31, 2020

Hi Luis,

Thank you for sharing your story. Reading through this discussion board, it seems that you and I are one of a few people who say fear and discomfort did **not** play a role in language learning. We both started learning an early age, and I think that helped a lot. As a child, I didn't have to worry about making mistakes, and I was always very curious, and actually having fun learning.

[← Reply](#)[Melissa McConnell-Quinn \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/148617)

Oct 28, 2020

Oh my goodness, did the video about Moises make me angry and sad! Wow. I nearly shut off the video; instead I paused it and returned to it after a few minutes. I felt so bad for him and my already resistant feelings towards standardized tests skyrocketed watching Moises struggle and then get bullied.

I had a boy in my 3rd grade class last year who was brand new to our country from Italy. He did not speak English. Bless his heart, he had several frustrated breakdowns with tears in my

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✓ Subscribed

I've never been in a situation where I've had to learn a language to survive or succeed where I reside. I cannot fathom the frustration ELs feel at times because they are in a situation where they have to learn to go to school or interact in their new home environment. When I was in high school, I took the mandatory two years of a language. I took Latin because my parents thought it would help me with my SATs. I knew I had to get through two years of it and I knew that I had to get a C and I'd pass. My parents required A's and B's, however, they saw me struggle with Latin and told me that as long as I kept trying, they'd allow a C. I don't think they should have told me that because that made me care less. I knew Latin was a dead language and I never saw the point in taking it. I had no connection to it therefore no drive to learn it. I wish I would have taken Spanish.

In my current position, 90% of my students are ELs. They are five years old and adapt pretty quickly to English. I read a LOT of books to them. I use visuals all the time: pictures, videos, hands-on. We sing songs for EVERYTHING. Just today, I sang the *Days of the Week*, the *Months of the Year*, the *Good Morning* song, and the song for the color red. I work hard to acknowledge the 8 Multiple Intelligences and incorporate them in my class. We have a silent hand single for "I don't understand". The great thing about working with young children is that they haven't developed the filters yet that older children and adults do. My "Question of the Day" yesterday was, "*Have you ever studied birds?*" Immediately, my little Siwoo yells, "what is studied?" I also make my students respond in complete sentences to nearly everything. I try to get them to orally use academic and conversational language as much as possible. Today's Question of the Day was, "*Do you like doing art projects?*" They had to respond with, "Yes, I like doing art projects," or "No, I do not like doing art projects."

The families are not as easy to communicate with. There is usually one parent who speaks English but even so, they are not fluent. We communicate via Google Meet, email, or phone calls. Because of where I live, there is usually someone who can help me translate with parents. Just recently, I had a parent who needed technology help. My pictures via email and oral/written explanations were not helping this parent. She speaks Hindi. I asked someone in the office who speaks Hindi to help me. She did and our issue was solved. I'm blessed with resources for language here!

[← Reply](#)[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411)

Oct 29, 2020

Hi Melissa,

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✓ Subscribed

time. I feel that it is very effective especially for young kids.

← Reply



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>)

Nov 1, 2020

Hi Melissa,

Your reactions to the material and anecdotes from your teaching experience are the best things about having you in the class. I learn so much from reading your responses.

The story about the Italian kid was insightful because I never once considered a kid from a European country to struggle. In my experience, it's usually the Hispanic and Asian students who seemed to have a hard time.

I related to your story about learning Latin. I once considered it so that I could do better on the SAT's. Because it's a dead language, it seemed like I wouldn't be able to use it after SAT's were over. So I picked French because it sounded cooler. Sometimes I wish I picked Spanish. My friends told me at the time that it's more useful, and I didn't take it to heart until I left my bubble.

I like that you have "Question of the Day." I will use that when I become a teacher some day. I also liked that you make them answer the question in an interview style, where the context of the question is in the answer.

One thing I didn't consider when speaking with students' parents: language barrier. That's something to be mindful of, so thank you for sharing!

← Reply



[Michelle Akamine](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411>)

Oct 29, 2020

**#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

I went to an elementary school that had two separate immersion programs: one in Spanish and one in Japanese. My parents enrolled me into the Japanese immersion program. It was difficult for me to understand why I had to learn Japanese since I did not use it outside of the



important. I finally started getting interested in learning Japanese after visiting the country and actually seeing how the language was used. I continued Japanese through middle and high school and even in college. Looking back, throughout my language learning experience I mostly learned through content-based learning. In other words, I learned a lot of Japanese by learning about other subjects like science and history. Although I learned a lot through this method, once I moved to Japan, I realized that I still had a lot to learn. I had difficulty communicating about practical things like insurance but I had knowledge about topics I would not probably use in a conversation like the water cycle or dinosaurs. I understand that there is still a lot more to learn so I try read in Japanese if I can.

### **#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?**

I think my experience was unique in that I had a lot of confidence when it came to language learning. I was pretty shy in all of my other classes but I think my self-driven motivation to learn Japanese really helped me. That being said, I know how much a language teacher can impact students' fear and discomfort. My Japanese teacher in high school was anything but supportive for students like me who attended the local immersion elementary school. By the time we reached high school, we already had about 10 years of Japanese learning experience but she would look down at us for not being native speakers. She called me stupid despite having good grades in her class and discouraged me from taking AP saying that I would just fail. I knew that I could pass and took it anyways in my sophomore year. For many of my classmates, however, they were stuck taking Japanese for another two years before taking AP. Others simply took the language to finish the language requirement or changed to another language because they could just not deal with her. It was extremely unfortunate that so many students stopped language learning because of her but it made me realize just how much impact a teacher can have on their students. Teachers can help lessen the amount of fear and discomfort even just by encouraging and praising students for their growth.

### **#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

I am not currently teaching but I can remember some simple ways where the school was able to provide support for students and their families. Paperwork that parents/guardians needed to fill out were printed in both English and Spanish. To save paper, most of the time they were double-sided with English on one side and Spanish on the other. As other people mentioned, parent-teacher conferences were also a way for parents to understand more about their child's education. Coming from an area where there were many Spanish speakers, there was also adequate access to translators. Teachers would also have individual conferences with students from time to time to ask how felt in class and find out what they might be struggling

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**Monta Wiley** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/126624>)

Oct 29, 2020



Hi, Michelle, I hope your day is going well. With the frequent use of technology, especially in today's online learning climate, do you feel that printed paperwork for parents to sign will be replaced by computerized documents?

and also does it create a dilemma for parents who are not tech-savvy?

sorry if this sounds out of the box, the idea came to mind when thinking about how many documents are done through a computer than physical paper work.

← [Reply](#)

**Michelle Akamine** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411>)

Oct 30, 2020



Hi Monta,

Thank you for your question. I was thinking back to when I was a student so paper printouts were often used, but yes, times have changed. I do think that paperwork is moving to be more electronic, even more so with the ongoing pandemic. It would probably be difficult for parents who are not tech-savvy but I think that is why it's difficult to move paperwork completely online. If paper printouts are available at the school for parents who want hardcopies, then it might help to solve the problem.

← [Reply](#)

**Geronima Garcia** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244>)

Nov 1, 2020



Hi Michelle,

First, I think it is super cool that you were in a school where there were two language pathways for immersion. When I was in elementary school, my district offered a Spanish immersion program but that was taken away by third grade, I am assuming on account of the legislation mentioned in the lecture notes. Recent immigrant students, or students whose parents wanted their kids to learn Spanish, as well as English lost a valuable



these affluent families saw great value in multilingualism. Seeing this really made me question why second language acquisition wasn't more important in public schools. I started to see English only as subversive, a means to undermine the value of other languages and to force assimilation.

I think what helps students to find an interest in other languages, especially as they get older are teachers who demonstrate passion for the language and the ability to travel or gain appreciation for a culture/place. You mentioned both in your response. First, how your view of Japanese changed after you visited Japan. Finally, you mentioned a teacher who made it incredibly challenging to continue your language acquisition and how "teachers can help lessen the amount of fear and discomfort even just by encouraging and praising students for their growth." This is crucial.

Thank you for sharing,

Geronima

[← Reply](#)

○



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/128284>



Oct 29, 2020

#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.

I was not born a native speaker of English. I learned English in the Hong Kong school the Asian way: learning the language like a math formula. Grammar rules like tense, conditionals, and relative clauses are taught deductively. Teachers told students the rules and gave them tons of drilling exercises to practice inside and outside the classroom. Immersing students into a completely English-speaking environment? And encouraging students to read and write English extensively? They were nothing but a pipe dream. The English language was regarded as a functional language helping students study at college. Overall, English was learned and used as a foreign language, though English was the official language in the British territory.

In my teens, my family moved to the United Kingdom, where English is a lingua franca. To survive, I learned the language to not only study but also work and live in the country. So, the old learning way was no longer applicable. For instance, whether grammar rules were accurate or not was not very important to my daily life like shopping in the supermarket or DIY store. Nevertheless, at the same time, to succeed academically, my English proficiency had to

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All in all, I learned the English language as a foreign, second, and finally native language.

#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?

When I was learning English as a foreign language at school, I had few chances to use the language the authentic way. Like many other fellow students, I had no nerve to try new expressions in writing and speaking. I had very little access to English native speakers who gave me an exposure to authentic use of the language. Therefore, I was unsure if the new expressions I would like to try would be correct or not.

When I was in the UK, my exposure to authentic English was immense. Nevertheless, my fear or discomfort was that my English expressions were not local or native enough. I badly wanted to speak English the local way within a short period of time. As time went by, I noticed that reaching a native command of English in a short period of time was impossible and unnecessary. So, I began to learn English in a relaxed manner and it turned out to be more effective than pressing myself unreasonably hard.

#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?

I introduce many quality online dictionaries like Cambridge Dictionary (English-Chinese) at <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-chinese-traditional/> (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-chinese-traditional/>). The dictionary gives both English and Chinese meanings, UK and US pronunciations, and loads of sample sentences to its users. I also introduce pronunciation dictionary <https://howjsay.com/> (<https://howjsay.com/>) to my students. It pronounces words not included in many online dictionaries. My students are encouraged to look up difficult words in the dictionaries on their cellphones inside the classroom.

TED talks introducing ways to learning English as a second/foreign language and English learning videos and channels on YouTube are uploaded on Moodle for students' self learning.

← [Reply](#)



[Silver Park \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686)

Oct 31, 2020





← Reply



**Russell Fung (He/Him/His)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480>)

Nov 1, 2020

Hi Ting,

Thank you for sharing your experience! My family is from Hong Kong, and I never quite understood their English language learning experience until you shared yours.

← Reply



**Caitlin Flynn** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934>)

Oct 29, 2020

**#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

I didn't start learning another language for practical use until sixth grade. When I started taking Spanish. I remember we used Hebrew for prayers but I didn't know what the words meant and I never really thought about them as being language until I was much older.

I really struggled and have continued to struggle with learning languages. I really like language as a concept and I love learning the grammar and syntax and history of language but when it comes to using it I fall apart.

**#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?**

discomfort has certainly played a role in my language learning. I've never been someone who has particularly liked talking and less so when I feel frustrated by being unable to say what I want to say. I think that is one reason why my reading skills in other languages usually far outstrip all other skills. I can practice that on my own and it's often less frustrating to practice.

**#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

I don't have students at the moment. I think some fairly easy to do practical steps that I would like to do if I had students is to have important paperwork printed in multiple languages. Allowing recording devices so students who can't follow my classes at the time can have the

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**Silver Park** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686>)

Oct 31, 2020



Learning a language can be very frustrating, and even to push yourself to speak of that language. But it is true that you can always practice reading skills on your own!

[← Reply](#)**Gabriela Miranda Laguna (She/Her/Hers)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/142177>)

Oct 30, 2020



### Discussion #1-Personal Language Experience

1) I learned German as a second language in my school, it was in my early education where I had access to multiple cultures because we had the obligation to write some letters to other children and share some experience. We used to have many pen pals from Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and northern Italy. With whom we shared ideas and our visions regarding our cultures. I think it was very favorable, since living in a country so south from the world like Chile, it was an entertaining and valuable way to meet children with other views of the world. When I grew up and became an adult, it was beneficial when I was looking for a job, since by my profession many pharmaceutical industries are German or Swiss, so the German language felt like something familiar if one mastered it. Although the official language was always English, I could use German to get closer to people and to make better ties of friendship and closeness. I remember doing a couple of job interviews in German, which was great for interfacing with people who spoke German as a first language.

As a university student, the language was English. At this stage of my life, I repeated to myself and to my parent every day that I would have preferred to have studied in an English school instead of one that gave so much importance to the German language. I cannot deny that German helped me in many ways, but I would have liked to have devoted more hours to studying English, to have been able to feel more confident, self-reliant, and natural when speaking in English.

Knowing English is essential to thoroughly benefit of the material available as most of the content is in English, like, magazines, conferences, TED, articles, academic papers, etc. I

Search entries or author

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2) Of course the discomfort, self-doubt, and panic play a role when I am trying to speak or write in English or German. It is present every single time. It is difficult to overcome the fear of being wrong or making mistakes. I try to think that the only way to overcome this fear is to dare and try to read, speak, and write more and more in the language that I am training. Only then I will feel more confident every time. I am convinced that being wrong is better than not doing something, therefore I always try even if it scares me to this day.

3) The school where I do one hour of science classes in Kindergarten, teaches free English classes twice a year (before the pandemic), there I participated as one more student helping other mothers who can hardly express themselves in English. This has helped me a lot to realize the family environment of the students, what challenges they face when they get home. I have learned to sympathize with people who are asking with great effort to help to understand English.

When I teach a child, I know that it is very difficult for him to review the concept learned at home, so I try to teach as friendly and entertaining as possible (doing "kitchen experiments"), hoping that they will comment on what they learned at home and they can motivate his family to learn something new too.

← Reply



**Michelle Akamine** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411>)

Oct 30, 2020

Hi Gabriela,

I think it's great that you were able to have pen pals to communicate with. I think it helps, not just to practice the language, but to learn about other cultures. I could relate to the part where you said "This has helped me a lot to realize the family environment of the students, what challenges they face when they get home." I remember feeling frustrated as a child when my parents could not help me with science homework since they did not understand Japanese. But, looking back, they would still try to help me and, in the process, I think they were able to learn more Japanese.

Edited by [Michelle Akamine](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/153411) on Oct 30 at 10:37pm

← Reply



**Aya Takeichi-Leitz** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147001>)

Oct 31, 2020



## #2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack thereof?

I was born and raised in Japan. My primary language is Japanese. I started learning English because my parents wanted me to give tourists some simple directions. My parents' house is located right in the middle of the touristy area of Kamakura, Japan. Mom and dad do not speak English, and they were asked for directions many times. They wished they could help, so they decided their daughter, yes it's me, should be able to speak English! My journey started as simple as that. It was just a hobby for me, and it was fun! I first went to ESL school for kids. The school's method was immersion in English. Many times we were listening to CASSETTE tape-recorded English (back in those days). A few times a year, we had a "cooking in English" day, and that was my favorite.

I actually never had that confused, sad, discomfort moment as in the YouTube "Immerse". I did not NEED to learn English to escape or transfer to a new country. Also, I was still so young that I did not need to think about how English can be beneficial to get a better job, etc. It was just a hobby for me, and it was fun! I was having fun imagining the world outside of where I live, and I was so curious about what it looks like to live overseas. As I kept learning, I was able to naturally advance to intermediate, and then to advanced level. At that point, I stopped going to an ESL school and started to just listen to CDs and textbooks by myself while on a train ride to go anywhere. Eventually, I decided to move to the US to really experience living outside of Japan – out of pure curiosity!

Maintaining Japanese – I don't do anything. That's my primary language, and I constantly read, write, and speak Japanese so I really don't need to study. I do, however, have to keep learning English even though now I live in the US for many years. I visit Japan at least 2 times a year, and every time I come back to the US, right after the trip, English just does not come up quickly in my head. It comes back pretty quick but it's like my brain is now shifted in Japanese mode, and it takes time to switch back. This happens because when I'm in Japan, I'm really immersed in Japanese, and it becomes very natural to only speak Japanese. It's like I turned my English to "Off".

## #3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?

I am not currently teaching. So I will talk about my future class. Back in my English learning days many many years ago, teachers had me carry and look up in those very thick heavy dictionaries. But I think those days are gone. Technology is way more advanced now, and we

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what I really like, and I do use for myself a lot is Google Translate. I like the computer version better since it gives me better translations, but if you are on the move, then there is an app for that. Google Translate app can instantly translate text by pointing your phone's camera at the target language. I think this is very useful for my students. I experimented to see how accurate this app translates Japanese to English, and vice versa. The translation came out a little unnatural, but I understood what's written. It seemed unnatural because the structure of English and Japanese are different. However, the Google Translate app is a fun and practical tool that works in real-time. I can use this app in my class when we practice being a tour guide. For example, to explain how to get to a shrine, students can look up the vocabulary words for directions and signs instantly.

By using this app, students can eventually remember the targeted translation. I think this is a fun and friendly way to start learning English for a beginner who has very limited English vocabulary. Better still, students can keep learning outside of the classroom by simply pointing the camera to the target language. They can help their families as well. I believe consistency is the key to learning English, and this is a very fun and sustainable way to start learning. We just need to know that this is not perfect, but it will greatly help to keep the conversation rolling without hesitating due to a lack of vocabulary.

[← Reply](#)**Caitlin Flynn** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/135934>)

Nov 1, 2020

Hi Aya,

I think it's really cool that you had such a good time learning English. It sounds like it was a really great environment to learn in. I agree with your assessment about the utilization of technology. I think it's a great tool for helping communication and hopefully language learning.

[← Reply](#)**Geronima Garcia** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244>)

Oct 31, 2020

I learned English and Spanish simultaneously. Because English was the language of school, I became more proficient in English. I could speak and understand Spanish, but I struggled to

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introduced me to different types of Spanish music. This exposure helped my pronunciation significantly. Also, during this time, I finally had the option to learn Spanish at school. I took two years of Spanish language and one year of Chicano studies. Through these classes I was finally able to learn academic Spanish including writing and grammar skills. I also was exposed to Spanish literature and eventually was able to pass both AP Spanish tests. However, I am not oblivious to the fact that I had a significant advantage in having foundational language skills, but even more so that I had the benefit of being able to ask clarifying questions in English and to have my teachers understand me.

In watching the video, *Immersion*, I could not help but think of my middle school students. For students like Moises, understanding assignments/content and demonstrating proficiency is so much harder than for native speakers. In my classes, assignments typically take twice as long as I expect them to because I want students to have enough time to translate, review vocabulary, and get feedback. One of our greatest challenges is communication, especially since my students speak many languages other than the ones I speak and we now communicate through Zoom. Teaching English Learners in an immersive setting is incredibly frustrating because sometimes you know that assessments or curriculum materials are too hard, but there is often little support for making that content accessible. Everything falls on the classroom teacher. For instance, my district adopted an online curriculum for our virtual school this year and my Newcomer students received an identical curriculum to my mainstream students. Within the first hour of looking at the curriculum I knew it was too hard, so I reached out to my district and asked if there was an EL component to the program that I was missing. There isn't. Instead they suggested I use it as is and make sure to scaffold. Like the teacher in the video, I am aware of the challenges my students face, and I feel like I'm often on my own to advocate for them and solve our problems. I haven't given up though, instead I have been rewriting much of the content and have been creating alternate assignments. My students deserve an accessible curriculum, they deserve to learn just as much as native speakers, and they deserve a teacher who cares enough to try.

[← Reply](#)[Silver Park \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147686)

Oct 31, 2020



**#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

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with. Getting used to American food, the directions, the neighborhood, the weather, and things were pretty good for me to accept, but learning to use English was a difficult experience at first. Over the first three years I struggled a lot, but once I got into college and started living with my peers, I became comfortable speaking English as my own language.

### **#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?**

Ms. Roxanne from *What You Didn't Know about Language Barriers* have said that you feel wrong all the time when you're first learning a language. This was my experience of fear and discomfort using another language that I did not grow up with as a child. I felt wrong all the time when I would try to speak English. Fear and discomfort come along when you're trying to learn something new every time, but this is where you need to have the strength and encouragement to break through the barriers you have within you.

### **#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

I try to share my experience with my friends and family who want to learn English that they shouldn't be intimidated by what they have not mastered yet. It's not that they are really in lack of something but they are on the way of filling themselves more with experience and education. I also give them tutors and try to have conversations over English. And by taking this course to be able to support more in my community!

← Reply

[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480)

Oct 31, 2020

#1: My experience learning Cantonese was a frustrating one, because it wasn't the dominant mainstream language spoken in my world. I grew up in San Francisco, CA. My mother spoke English to me. My dad spoke Cantonese to me. I chose to focus on English because it sounded "better" and it was the language used in children's television shows. Cantonese sounded "foreign" and "harsh" to me, so I didn't like it. I spoke it less, except when speaking to grandparents. Maintaining Cantonese was extremely difficult once my grandparents passed away. I felt the language was useless to me after that time in my life. It turns out I was wrong, because I would need it again later when traveling on screenwriting jobs in China. Fortunately, I remembered enough to get by, because I was immersed in Cantonese at a young age.

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it felt "unfair" that other kids didn't have to do this during the summer. They didn't have to learn something that would make them seem more foreign. That fear was a legitimate one at the time, because I'd see other Asian kids get made fun of for their Chinese accents.

#3: I'm not a teacher yet, but when I do become one, I would first have to develop more compassion and understanding so I could better support English learners. Currently, I am dismantling the very bad habit of correcting other people's grammar and looking down on people with accents. It used to annoy me when I read messages, signs, and internet posts that lacked correctness. I was an English grammar Nazi. I later learned not to make fun of people with foreign accents. They know two languages, whereas many of us know only one. For someone to have proficiency in English is already a win, so that's not something to make fun of. I was one of those Asian American kids that didn't want to sit with the Asian foreigners in the school cafeteria because I didn't want to be associated with them. Looking back, I should've supported the language needs of my peers in a positive way. Not in a judgemental, accusatory way. Because of this mistake, I'm motivated to right my wrongs and I know I would never do this again as a teacher.

Edited by [Russell Fung \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/147480) on Oct 31 at 11:52pm

[← Reply](#)

[Shuo Niu \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757)

Nov 1, 2020

Hello Russell,

OMG, it is so funny (yet touching) to read your post. Mine was exactly the opposite. I struggled to immerse myself in the English environment. I started to learn English when I was 5, so I don't really have much of an accent. So, interestingly, when I was in the school cafeteria, no real Asian kids will approach me and sit with me because they thought I was born and raised in America and I usually sit with my hallmates and few others who are mostly white. Then, I had no people to talk Chinese to...and they are all saying I'm very hard to approach(which I did not know until the 3rd year of college...) I guess the bias is both ways.

BTW, I SO TOTALLY want to learn Cantonese!! I think it's super cool! But I never really had a chance because none of my family can speak it. I'm so jealous!

Shuo

[← Reply](#)

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Oct 31, 2020

**#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.**

I have learned Korean thanks to my parents and grandparents. At home, because my parents were both at work, my grandparents spoke to me in Korean. Naturally, as I grew older, I became fluent in Korean. I definitely maintained my language by constantly surrounding myself with the language and culture. I watched a lot of Korean variety tv shows, listened to music, and also enrolled myself in Korean Saturday school.

**#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack there of?**

I did feel a lot of discomfort when I was learning Spanish. I actually when on a study abroad trip with my MA cohort last summer to learn the culture and language in Spain. Though the Spanish there is a little different from the Spanish here, I was able to learn a lot of the basics. I felt like I was being judged by everyone when I tried speaking Spanish. It made me feel really overwhelmed and afraid to try to conjure up sentences even though I knew how to say it

**#3: What are you doing currently to support the language needs of your students and their families?**

Right now, I'm trying to think about how I support my students' language needs and their families and I don't think I am doing any active support. I do provide translations in Spanish because a majority of my students' families speak Spanish, but I feel that I should have translations available in other languages as well. I also try to encourage students to speak their language to other or to teach me theirs when we come across a word in class. I teach them how to say a vocabulary word in Korean and they share their language's translation of the word. I try to encourage them to embrace their language and culture. Though I do wish I had more ways to incorporate language support in the classroom.

[← Reply](#)**Shuo Niu** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757>)

Nov 1, 2020

Hello Grace,

Thank you for your post. I am so jealous you had the great opportunity of learning Korean. I started to learn Korean when I was in grade 8 because I fell in love with a Korean pop

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Shuo

[← Reply](#)[Shuo Niu \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/139757)

Nov 1, 2020



#1: Explain your own experiences learning another language and/or maintaining your native language.

I can still remember, 8 years ago, when I was first in the United States. At first, I was overtaken by the excitement of a new environment. Everything was so fresh and exciting. But then after a while, I started to experience extreme anxiety because I was not able to use my native language. I started to learn English when I was 5 and I am pretty comfortable with the language. But I never would have thought that "to speak English every day" is actually very different than "had to speak English if you want to communicate". My school at that time had very few Chinese students that I can actually talk Chinese with. And it is impolite to speak another language when there are people around who don't understand that language. So, I almost never had a chance to actually speak Chinese with people except to call my own parents... I got very tired and unwanted to talk to anyone. Until about two months, my situation got better. I found some Chinese students and also I got used to using English most of the time. Now that I am back in China, I really have to try to maintain my English abilities by speaking English more frequently. It is a challenge...

#2: Did fear or discomfort ever play a role in your language learning or lack thereof?

I got extremely uncomfortable during the adjustment period that I was even afraid to go to class. I don't want to listen to the Professor because they all speak English. I can actually understand what they are saying, but I just don't want to hear it. So, for the first and second midterm, my grades are bad. I assume some of my professors probably thought I am lack of learning talent (or not as smart?) When I was finally adjusting to the environment, I started to go to class, and my grades went up. And then one of my professors thought it is rather bizzar. He called me to his office and implied that I might be cheating. Luckily, in the final exam, I got an A too. He, later on, didn't fail me and admit to my grade in midterm 3, but I'm still happy that he doesn't teach in that school anymore...(because of other reasons of course)



I currently don't have any students. But when I was teaching in New Oriental Foreign Language School, I normally create an environment for my students to speak English constantly and remember English words even in a Chinese environment. I sometimes ask them to write flash cards and post it on their cupboard or fridge. Sometimes, I would ask the whole class to go on a class trip and we are only allowed to use English on that trip.

[← Reply](#)



[Geronima Garcia \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/30870/users/130244)

Nov 1, 2020

Hi Shuo,

Your response gave me a lot of insight. Last year, I had a student who refused to do anything. She had made minimal progress despite starting school in America in second grade (she was now in 7th grade). She was a nice, respectful kid but she did zero work and she tried to nap through my classes. I experienced a constant struggle regarding what to do. I did not want to call attention to her and make her feel embarrassed, but I also didn't want to sit back and watch her fail. One day, I finally asked her to talk with me after class. What she told me was eye opening. She basically said "I don't want to be here." By "here" she did not mean my class, she meant America. She was angry because she didn't have a choice in moving to the US, she didn't have many friends, and she felt out of control. She was sad because she missed her family and friends in Korea. She was scared because she didn't know the "right" way to communicate in English and she didn't want to be embarrassed. Your response and this student's experience reminded me that there is so much that goes on in a person beyond school. Sometimes academic performance reflects more than just school work, it can reflect the underlying concerns our students are experiencing.

Thank you for your honest and insightful post,

Geronima

[← Reply](#)