

Are you a Heritage Speaker/Learner of Spanish?

You are considered a Spanish heritage speaker if you have a personal, familial connection to Spanish but received the majority of your formal education in English.

Typical situations include:

- You were raised in a Spanish-speaking household where one or both parents spoke Spanish and received your formal education in English
- You were born in a Spanish speaking country or community but then moved to an English speaking community when you were a child

Benefits of taking a Heritage Speaker Course (Spanish 211/212):

- Study Spanish in an academic setting in the same way that native English speakers study English
- Polish both oral and written language skills
- Learn more about your language and your cultural heritage
- Meet students with similar interests and experiences
- Gain awareness and understanding of the Hispanic cultures
- Increase career/internship opportunities
- Take a class that counts toward a major, minor or humanities requirement
- Get a competitive edge in your career /obtain salary incentives
- Increase career options such as interpretation/translation jobs

The term **heritage speaker** refers to second or third generation immigrants raised in a natural environment where the minority language was spoken in addition to the majority language. Typically, heritage language learners do **not** receive formal instruction in the home language until later in life (high-school or college) but have oral skills. This, however, is not always the case and heritage speakers/learners comprise a broad range of experiences, and competency across the bilingual continuum.

Students exposed to Spanish during early childhood or adolescence, and identify themselves as heritage language learners **have different learning needs** (how to write effectively, difficulty with sociolinguistic and cultural aspects of the heritage language, difficulty with specific advanced grammatical topics).

What constitutes a heritage language learner is based entirely on **previous linguistic background** (exposure to the family language during early childhood or adolescence – generally before the age of 14) and not on ethnic or cultural background. Note: Students who immigrate to the United States past the age of 14 typically have a fully developed native grammatical system.

Spanish 211/212 Prerequisite Challenge Evidence

Step 1. Check each box that applies to you:

- I have the consent of my Spanish instructor
- Spanish is/was spoken at home
- I attended some years of elementary or high school in a Spanish-speaking country
- I learned Spanish primarily through oral immersion
- I speak Spanish sometimes or most of the times
- I blend Spanish and English frequently
- I can read enough in Spanish to get the main ideas and meaning
- I need to learn grammar and spelling and develop vocabulary

Step 2. Register for Spanish 211!

For additional information contact ML Department Chair by email at
claudia.acosta@canyons.edu