

Students' Perspectives on Foreign Language Anxiety

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Abstract

Von Wörde identifies those factors which may contribute to anxiety and those which may reduce anxiety in learning a second language.

Introduction

Research (Aida, 1994; Bailey, 1983; Crookal and Oxford, 1991; Ely, 1986; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Horwitz & Young, 1991; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Krashen, 1985b; MacIntyre, 1995; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1988, 1989, 1991; 1994; Muchnick & Wolfe, 1982; Price, 1988, 1991; Schlesinger, 1995; Trylong, 1987; von Wörde, 1998; Young, 1990, 1991, 1992) has consistently revealed that anxiety can impede foreign language production and achievement. Indeed, Campbell & Ortiz, (1991) report perhaps one-half of all language students experience a startling level of anxiety. Language anxiety is experienced by learners of both foreign and second language and poses potential problems "because it can interfere with the acquisition, retention and production of the new language" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, p. 86).

Krashen (1985a, 1985b) maintained that anxiety inhibits the learner's ability to process incoming language and short-circuits the process of acquisition. An interaction is often found among anxiety, task difficulty, and ability, which interferes at the input, processing, retrieval, and at the output level. If anxiety impairs cognitive function, students who are anxious may learn less and also may not be able to demonstrate what they have learned. Therefore, they may experience even more failure, which in turn escalates their anxiety. Furthermore, Crookall and Oxford (1991) reported that serious language anxiety may cause other related problems with self-esteem, self-confidence, and risk-taking ability, and ultimately hampers proficiency in the second language. Foreign language anxiety is a complex psychological construct, difficult to precisely define, perhaps due to the intricate hierarchy of intervening variables as noted by Trylong (1987).

The goal and methods of the present research

The primary goal of this research was to identify those factors, as perceived by students, that may contribute to anxiety, and those factors that may reduce anxiety in an attempt to understand more fully the role that anxiety may

play in learning a foreign or second language.

This study utilized the qualitative research tradition, the phenomenological interview (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Rubin & Rubin, 1995), with the inclusion of a quantitative component. Attention was focused on the participants' beliefs, experiences, and feelings in order to generate an enlightening narration of the participants' perspectives of foreign language anxiety. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to capture the students' own voices and to examine their words and beliefs in an attempt to understand the phenomenon and to answer these basic research questions:

1. Do students believe that anxiety hinders language acquisition?
2. Which factors do students believe contribute to anxiety?
3. Which factors do students believe may help to reduce anxiety?
4. How is anxiety manifested in the students?
5. Do students believe any one of the three languages being investigated to be more anxiety provoking than another?

Students from a diverse set of language classrooms (French, German, and Spanish) were interviewed using a set of 10 questions developed to elicit answers to the 5 research questions.

The participants also completed the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)* developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) before the audiotaped interview began. The response of each participant to every question on the scale was entered into a database, number coded to assure confidentiality, and later compared with the qualitative narrative as a validity check. The *FLCAS* is a 33-item, self-report measure, scored on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and was developed to capture the specific essence of foreign language anxiety in a classroom setting and to provide investigators with a standard measure. The *FLCAS* is based on an analysis of potential sources of anxiety in a language classroom, integrating three related anxieties (communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation) as posited by Horwitz et al. (1986). This scale has been used in many studies of anxiety in foreign language learning and found to be a highly reliable measure (Aida, 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Price, 1988; Schlesinger, 1995).

A general interview guide was followed, using this set of questions that were developed to elicit answers without limiting or inhibiting the respondents.

- 1) Please describe your feelings about your foreign language class.
- 2) Please tell me what you like best about your foreign language class.
- 3) Please tell me what disturbs you the most in your foreign language class.
- 4) Are there other things that disturb you about your foreign language class that you can tell me, and how do you react to them?
- 5) Do you believe that you are good in your language study (that is, are you confident of your ability)?
- 6) How do you think people in your classroom will react if you make mistakes?
- 7) When you find yourself in a stressful situation, do you primarily worry, or do you actively seek a solution?
- 8) Have your instructors played a role in your feelings, either good or bad, about your foreign language classes?
- 9) Do you have any ideas of ways to make the foreign language class less stressful?
- 10) How do you feel now after addressing this issue?

The answers provided rich detail used in answering the basic research questions. Interview questions 5, 6, and 7 were specifically formulated to elicit information regarding student beliefs concerning ability and contexts. That is, are students "ruminating about causes and feelings" (Ford, 1992, p. 113) or do they take action to "solve a problem or reduce feelings of distress" (p. 113)? Question 10 was included in an attempt to understand if the students may have learned more about foreign language anxiety or might have benefited otherwise from their participation in the study.

The taped interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed according to basic categories developed from the interview questions: factors believed to cause anxiety, factors believed to reduce anxiety, manifestations of anxiety, student awareness of anxiety, and most anxiety-provoking language. Under each separate category, portions of dialogue were detailed according to individual participant response. In this way the source of the quotation was readily identifiable. The factors were then extrapolated from the dialogue portions and listed. Where appropriate, subcategories were also developed. Concomitantly, the transcriptions were analyzed to seek out commonalities and patterns emerging from other interview questions. The qualitative narrative was generated from these data.

The participants were eager to talk. Each had a story to tell that often became a diatribe against a particular teacher or methodology. It was somewhat of a surprise to this researcher to hear how vivid and explicit the memories of painful or exasperating situations were, even though Price (1991) had reported similar findings. Some of these negative experiences originated in high school classes, and for many this emotional baggage seemed to intrude into their current study.

Findings

The interviews revealed extremely negative experiences with the language class. When asked to describe their feelings several students provided examples of how anxiety can lead to frustration and even anger. These interviews presented the students with an opportunity not only to express their problems and concerns, but allowed them to vent much of their frustration. With the exception of the most highly anxious student who said that nothing helped her, most of the students reported positive benefits from their participation in this research. Several appeared relieved to learn that they were not alone in their anxieties.

For example, one student revealed, "at first, I thought my God, am I the only one who's getting nervous, the only one whose heart is beating, like pounding really hard? But now, I know I'm not the only one." Foss and Reitzel (1988) also found that anxiety was reduced for many students merely by knowing that they were not alone in their fears or beliefs.

Discussion

The Research Questions

Do students believe that anxiety hinders language acquisition?

Some students were unaware of foreign language anxiety, others were unsure, but still conscious of a generalized feeling of uneasiness. Other students appeared to use the terms frustration, nervous, and anxious interchangeably. One student seemed to equate getting angry with being anxious. He mentioned that he got so frustrated that he wanted to break the desk.

Which factors do students believe contribute to anxiety?

The participants cited numerous and various sources for their anxiety, such as speaking activities, inability to comprehend, negative classroom experiences, fear of negative evaluation, native speakers, methodology, pedagogical practices, and the teachers themselves. The sources of anxiety often were intertwined, causing difficulty in teasing out a discrete factor or source. The following discusses the most frequently cited anxiety-generating factors.

Non-Comprehension. The inability to comprehend what was being said in the classroom provoked considerable anxiety. Many complained that the teacher spoke much too fast, or refused to use any English at all which resulted in an inability to keep up during class, and consequently carried over into the homework assignments. Young (1992) also noted that listening might generate anxiety if it were "incomprehensible" (p.68). The inability to comprehend the taped exercises or the instructional videos was also cited as anxiety- provoking by several students. One student reported nervousness even before the taped dictation just looking at the machine.

Speaking activities. Many of the anxiety-provoking factors reported by the participants appeared to be generated by various speaking activities normally encountered in a language class. The fear of communicating orally and public speaking anxiety have long been accepted psychological phenomena. Daly (1991) noted that the fear of giving a speech in public exceeded even such phobias as fear of snakes, elevators, and heights. Whereas those with public speaking concerns have only to perform, language learners have a dual task. They must not only learn the new language but perform in it as well (Foss & Reitzel, 1988). One student of Spanish complained, "I don't want to be the focus of attention so that my errors are put on display." Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) reported that students are very self-conscious when they are required to engage in speaking activities that expose their inadequacies, and these feelings often lead to "fear, or even panic" (p. 128). As expected, the participants were sensitive to both peer and teacher evaluation of their speaking. Additionally, a few seemed to project negative thoughts on to the teacher. One highly anxious student reported feelings of frustration that the teacher thought she didn't know anything when she really did.

Students also report feeling overwhelmed and anxious when speaking, perhaps due to an immature vocabulary or limited grammatical knowledge. One frequently cited anxiety-provoking factor in the interviews was simply being called on in class, whether prepared or not.

Pedagogical and instructional practices. Test anxiety was mentioned during the interviews, particularly in connection with oral testing or listening exercises. One student admitted at being near tears during the final exam when he had to give an oral presentation, and was upset, shaking and sweating.

Several students were concerned that the language class moved so quickly that they did not have sufficient time to digest the rules and vocabulary. A few commented that the amount of material to be covered in one semester was excessive, remarking "all of the more advanced grammar came in one semester and it wasn't enough time to absorb it." Several other students made comments regarding the "speed" of the course and complained that teachers "just keep on going" and do not layer and reinforce the grammar items. An extremely anxiety-provoking technique, and one used by most foreign language teachers, is calling on students one after another in seating order. The most explicit description of this technique was given by a student who said, "I think that builds tension, builds anxiety, just

sitting there knowing that in a few minutes you're about to be called, and it's almost *execution style*." Other students voiced similar concerns regarding this practice and used words like "stupid," "idiot," and "torture" in their descriptions. The pedagogical practice and teacher idiosyncrasies were quite often inextricably bound. The most disturbing aspect of the class, according to many students, was directly related to the teachers themselves; that "the teacher was trying to make you feel stupid," and this indicated a lack of respect on the part of the teacher. An astonishing number of negative comments were made regarding the teachers, such as "very intimidating," "apathetic," "condescending," "a nasty person," "very stern and mean almost and so she scared me," and even "obnoxious." One caution: This is a small sample (15) of students who perceived themselves to be anxious in foreign language class for any number of reasons, and were offered an opportunity to have their voices heard. There was no intention to indict teachers, merely to report the factors cited by this particular sample as anxiety-provoking. Some students reported instances where the teacher had either humiliated them or made them feel very uncomfortable. A student of German expressed her feeling about the importance of the teacher stating, "the instructor will either make or break the course, that's how I look at it."

Error correction. Another pedagogical practice cited as anxiety-provoking by the participants concerned error correction. One student reported being disturbed when teachers "begin to reprimand" students for making errors. Students reported becoming frustrated when the teacher would correct the error before they had time to completely formulate a response. Comments made by several students pertained to teachers interrupting to correct speaking errors. These interruptions would frequently cause students to lose their focus.

Native Speakers. Another anxiety-provoking factor cited by many participants concerned native speakers in the classroom. This appeared to be a problem mainly in Spanish classes, but was also mentioned by one student of French. Some students believed that the teachers somehow taught to the higher level, or deferred to the native speakers in some way. The students seemed to have a perception of being compared negatively to the native speakers.

Which factors do students believe may help to reduce anxiety?

Clearly, for these students, foreign language classes generated considerable anxiety. Therefore, it was anticipated that the students themselves would offer concrete suggestions for alleviating this anxiety, which they did. The proposals ranged from simple suggestions to complex curriculum and textbook changes.

A sense of community. One common thread running through the responses was that of communality or connectedness. It was suggested that students be encouraged to get together outside the classroom and know each other personally. When students felt alone with no friends, they were "more self-conscious." A lunch group was suggested as one way for students to interact, and several participants mentioned working in groups or having study partners. Properly structured, group work and study groups appear to reduce anxiety for some.

Pedagogical practices and classroom environment. The desire for a feeling of community was also reflected in suggestions regarding seating in the class. Suggestions were made that the students should sit in a semi-circle or oval because "in a circle you're kind of like one in a crowd." The participants named having a relaxed classroom environment as paramount in reducing anxiety. It appears that a relaxed environment or atmosphere is likely related to how the teacher conducted the class.. The participants were quite clear in noting the connection between anxiety and teacher behavior. Several students mentioned that having a more "personal relationship" with the teacher was helpful. The teacher's attitude toward the language itself also appeared to play a role in reducing anxiety. For example, one student reported that "personality is what makes the class."

Similarly, the students reported that they were less anxious with teachers who "made the class fun," "made it fun to like learning," or "makes the class more animated," and with "teachers who make it interesting by using interesting situations."

The majority of students mentioned that "not being put on the spot" in class would help them to be less anxious. When asked to explain, one student said, "Um, I guess not just abruptly calling on someone." Another responded, that being "put on the spot" would "let everyone stare, which makes everything worse." As several students pointed out, gentle error correction or modeling the correct response "helps to relieve anxiety."

Some classroom activities named as anxiety-reducing were skits, plays, and games. However, it should be noted that some students are uncomfortable in these kinds of activities. Several students mentioned that they might feel more comfortable if the instructional material were more relevant to their life or goals. One student suggested that the teacher do a short presentation on anxiety the first day of class to let people know that it is a common problem. The results of this study also suggest that a target-language-only approach may be distressing for lower level students without some English reference points. Nearly all the participants offered three other suggestions: 1) speak slowly, 2) use English to clarify key points and for homework assignments, 3) to make sure that everyone understands by a continuous layering and reinforcing of the material. Other than use of videos, error correction, excessive homework assignments, and immersion techniques, only two participants articulated clear references to instructional materials and methodology.

Role of teacher. These interviews suggest that the role of the teacher is paramount in alleviating anxiety, more vital perhaps than a particular methodology. Teachers who provide a supportive and understanding environment, who employ nonthreatening teaching methods, and who use appealing and relevant topics seem to enhance the foreign language experience. These findings were congruent with those of Price (1991) who reports that her research clearly showed that "instructors had played a significant role in the amount of anxiety each student had experienced in particular classes" (p. 106) as well as that of Young (1990) who noted that anxiety decreased when instructors "create

a warm social environment" (p. 550). The interviews also indicate that an atmosphere of cordiality, communality, and friendship among the students themselves appears to ease learner anxiety. Samimy and Rardin (1994) also reported that group solidarity seems to lighten emotional barriers like anxiety and may intensify language learning.

How is anxiety manifested in the students?

Physical. Some of the physical symptoms include "headaches"; "clammy hands, cold fingers"; "shaking, sweating"; "pounding heart"; "tears"; "foot tapping, desk drumming"; "I clamp up, I get very tense and I start balling my fists"; "my stomach gets in knots"; "I get all red"; and "I get really tired." One student would hunch over her desk in a kind of protective shell. Another student reported similar behavior: "I kind of turtle up and hide from the teacher." Hiding from the teacher in one way or another was a common manifestation of anxiety.

Internal and functional. Students mentioned that they projected their nervousness days in advance of the class, thus affecting classroom performance. A student of French reported that in class, "I just completely blank out and everything is like a jumble in my head." Other participants reported more subtle or internalized manifestations. A student of French described her reaction as internal as though "the time bomb was ticking in here," and that she was "petrified in that class, just totally petrified." Some students said they reacted by losing patience or becoming angry. One thought he projected his anger over a former French teacher on to his present German teacher. The almost compulsive need to look ahead in the book was not uncommon among these participants. One student said that she became aware of other students' anxiety when "people start flipping through the book, they don't know."

Avoidance. Avoidance was another fairly common manifestation of anxiety; "oftentimes people will begin to not show up to class." Other students practiced a more subtle form of avoidance. One student of French said that he wrote in his book, drew pictures in it, or organized his date planner during class. One student reported a rather extreme form of classroom avoidance, "I've seen people just go right to sleep."

Do students believe any one of the three languages being investigated to be more anxiety provoking than another?

The majority of participants had experience with more than one language and appeared to equate difficulty with anxiety. The perception that a language is difficult seems to suggest that it is also anxiety-provoking. Often when the participants attempted to cite an anxiety-provoking language, they equivocated, gave ambiguous answers, or offered elaborate reasons for their choice. Based on the student perception that the difficulty of a language determines the extent that it provokes anxiety, and their comparisons of different languages, the responses suggest that French is the most anxiety-provoking with German a close second.

Summary

Both the interviews and the responses to the *FLCAS* (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) questions revealed that 73% (11) of the sample of 15 participants would be considered anxious learners with 34% (5) of these considered highly anxious.

The participants described physical manifestations of anxiety as well as more internalized reactions, and cited numerous and various sources, such as speaking activities, inability to comprehend, negative classroom experiences, fear of negative evaluation, native speakers, methodology, pedagogical practices, and the teachers themselves. As mentioned, sources of anxiety were frequently closely intertwined, creating difficulty in teasing out a discrete factor or source. The most anxiety-provoking factors appeared to be related to speaking and listening activities. This is consistent with other research that cited speaking in the foreign language as the activity most anxiety provoking (Daly, 1991; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Koch & Terrell, 1991; Price, 1988, 1991; Young, 1990, 1992).

Teacher-generated anxiety was also documented, stemming either from pedagogical practices or individual instructor idiosyncrasies. These findings were congruent with those of Price (1991) who reports significant teacher-generated anxiety and those of Young (1990, 1992) who examined instructor-learner interactions. A relaxed classroom environment was cited as key in reducing anxiety and is likely related to how the teacher conducted the class. This may suggest that the role of the teacher is paramount in alleviating anxiety, more vital perhaps than a particular methodology. Most all the participants wanted the teacher to speak more slowly, use English to clarify key points and for homework assignments, to layer and reinforce the material to aid comprehension and retention, to provide instructional material more relevant to their life or goals, and to be aware of individual learning styles. Some classroom activities named as anxiety-reducing were skits, plays, and games, though not everyone agreed. The interviews also indicate that an atmosphere of cordiality, communality, and friendship among the students themselves appears to ease learner anxiety, similar to the findings of Samimy and Rardin (1994).

The final component of this research, the grade and *FLCAS* score comparison, revealed a significant negative correlation between the final foreign language grade and the *FLCAS* score ($R = -.58$, $p = <.046$), and the answers to the research questions further elaborated on and helped to clarify the role of anxiety in foreign language learning. The findings of this study seemed to give support to the conclusions of other researchers as well: primarily, that anxiety can negatively affect the language learning experience in numerous ways and that reducing anxiety may enhance learner motivation (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Horwitz & Young, 1991; Krashen, 1985a, 1985b, MacIntyre, 1995; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Price, 1991; Samimy & Rardin, 1994; Young, 1990, 1991).

Although this was a small sample of 15 participants and only limited generalization may be warranted, several recommendations for reducing anxiety in the classroom were extrapolated from the voices of the student participants

and other findings in the present study. These recommendations include intensifying awareness of foreign language anxiety and suggestions regarding pedagogical practices.

Awareness

As a first step in reducing foreign language anxiety, awareness of such should likely be enhanced for teachers, students, and possibly program planners. While teachers may be cognizant that some students are uncomfortable or even distressed in language learning classes, they may not understand why. Additionally, teachers are often hampered by any number of administrative and time constraints. Therefore, unless teachers are sensitized to the issue of classroom anxiety, they may not feel the need to expend the additional time and effort in confronting the problem or may not realize that a defined problem exists.

As the findings from the present study seem to suggest, frequently students believe that they are alone with these anxious feelings and fears. This may not only hinder acquisition of the language, but also threaten their self-esteem or self-perception. Therefore, if students gain an awareness that anxiety is a rather common problem in the foreign language classroom, they might realize that others may likely share the same fears and feelings of discomfort.

One way to increase awareness might be to offer workshops for both teachers and students on foreign language anxiety, much in the way that workshops are given for performance and test anxiety. The workshop could present suggestions for alleviating anxiety as well as clarify causes and explain the negative effects. Teachers might also become familiar with the FLCAS instrument (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) to heighten awareness of foreign language anxiety and to better understand the many ways in which students experience such. An on-going concern for the teacher is to ensure that the levels of anxiety do not escalate as the class progresses. As MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) have argued, students experience anxiety only after repeated negative experiences in the language learning context, and this appeared to be so for many students in the present study. The positive motivational aspects of anxiety reduction might be explored as well, by helping to identify goal orientations in language learning contexts. Vygotskian psycholinguistic theory claims that the "initial motive for engaging in an activity is what determines its outcome" (in Gillette, 1994, p. 212). Therefore, emphasizing foreign language skills as valuable personal goals might help to increase motivation and so assist students in pursuit of another language.

Suggestions for pedagogical practice

As Young (1991) noted, some sources of anxiety are bound up with instructional and methodological practice, and may indicate that practitioners are doing "something fundamentally unnatural" (p. 421) in the methodology. However, the majority of the participants in the present study recommended no drastic curriculum changes for

reducing anxiety. Indeed, the focus of this research was not to create new curricula nor to recommend a particular methodology, but to more thoroughly elaborate on the nature of foreign language anxiety, identify causes, and offer suggestions for reducing anxiety.

A relaxed classroom atmosphere or environment is significant in reducing anxiety. This might include the teacher's individual personality as well as attitude toward both the language and the students. The participants stressed that anxiety decreases when teachers make the class interesting and fun. Similarly, using topics and themes relevant to the students' own lives and interests appeared to reduce anxiety and increase learner motivation for many. A sense of communalism in the classroom seems to contribute greatly to a relaxed atmosphere. When students feel that they are among friends, oftentimes anxious feelings are allayed and the fear of making mistakes is decreased. The teachers may consciously foster a communal and friendly atmosphere, and may also suggest that the students themselves take a proactive role in creating such an environment. Anxiety may decrease within the classroom context if students interacted in activities that contribute to a feeling of group identity and support outside the classroom. Students might attend target language movies and videos, have lunches together, form study groups or join language clubs.

The participants in the present study endorsed group work, in general, as a means to both practice material and interact with their peers. Small group work might allow anxious students additional time to practice before they are expected to participate with the entire class. Skits, plays and games may also contribute to a relaxed atmosphere, with one caution. Some of these activities thought to reduce anxiety may have the opposite effect for some individuals. That is, some students are markedly uncomfortable with such activities, perhaps depending on learning preferences. This kind of discomfort was noted by Koch & Terrell (1991) and also cited by two students in the present study.

Many students recommended that less material be covered during the semester so as to more thoroughly process and digest it. The amount of course work is often an administrative function over which teachers have little control. However, teachers might make a more conscious effort to layer and reinforce the old material before moving on to the new. This may seem obvious and yet several students complained that it was not routinely done in their particular classrooms.

Nearly every student became anxious at one time or another because they did not understand the homework assignment, primarily because it was given orally and in the language. It is not clear if this is a form of communication

apprehension or relates to learning preference. The suggestion is that teachers write homework assignments on the blackboard and repeat it in English. This appears to be especially important in the lower levels.

The theme of learning styles or preferences was also suggested from the interview data. Several students said they became anxious without visual aids or named other areas of specific preference. Similarly, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) noted that foreign language tests given orally may induce both test anxiety and communication apprehension. Clearly, no two students are alike and what may provoke anxiety for some may reduce it for others and vice versa. Consequently, teachers may wish to become aware of the learning styles or learning preferences of their students and attempt to use a variety of activities and practices during a class period that may honor all learning preferences.

Conclusion

The findings of this study appear to corroborate other studies in suggesting that anxiety can negatively affect the language learning experience in numerous ways and that reducing anxiety seems to increase language acquisition, retention, and learner motivation. Therefore, it is suggested that awareness of foreign language anxiety be heightened and taken seriously by teachers and students alike. This may be accomplished by means of workshops or presentations elaborating foreign language anxiety and exploring the positive motivational aspects of anxiety reduction. It may also be helpful for teachers to become familiar with the FLCAS instrument (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) to better understand the many ways in which students experience anxiety. Recommendations suggested by this study are that teachers strive to:

- create a low stress, friendly and supportive learning environment;
- foster a proactive role on the part of the students themselves to create an atmosphere of group solidarity and support;
- be sensitive to students' fears and insecurities and help them to confront those fears;
- use gentle or non-threatening methods of error correction and offer words of encouragement;
- make judicious use of purposeful group work or collaborative activities;
- use relevant and interesting topics for class discussions and exercises;

- consider decreasing the amount of new material to be covered in one semester;
- consider ways to layer and reinforce the material in an attempt to aid acquisition and retention;
- give written directions for homework assignments;
- speak more slowly or consider using English to clarify key points or give specific directions;
- attend to the learning styles or preferences of the students; and
- hear and appreciate the voices of students for valuable insights, ideas and suggestions.

One further research topic might be to attempt to determine if anxiety levels decrease as exposure to the language increases. Two measures of exposure may be investigated; the amount of time the language has been studied or by time spent in the target country, such as visits or semesters abroad.

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