

# The Spanish Language Track: Addressing Language Barriers in Healthcare

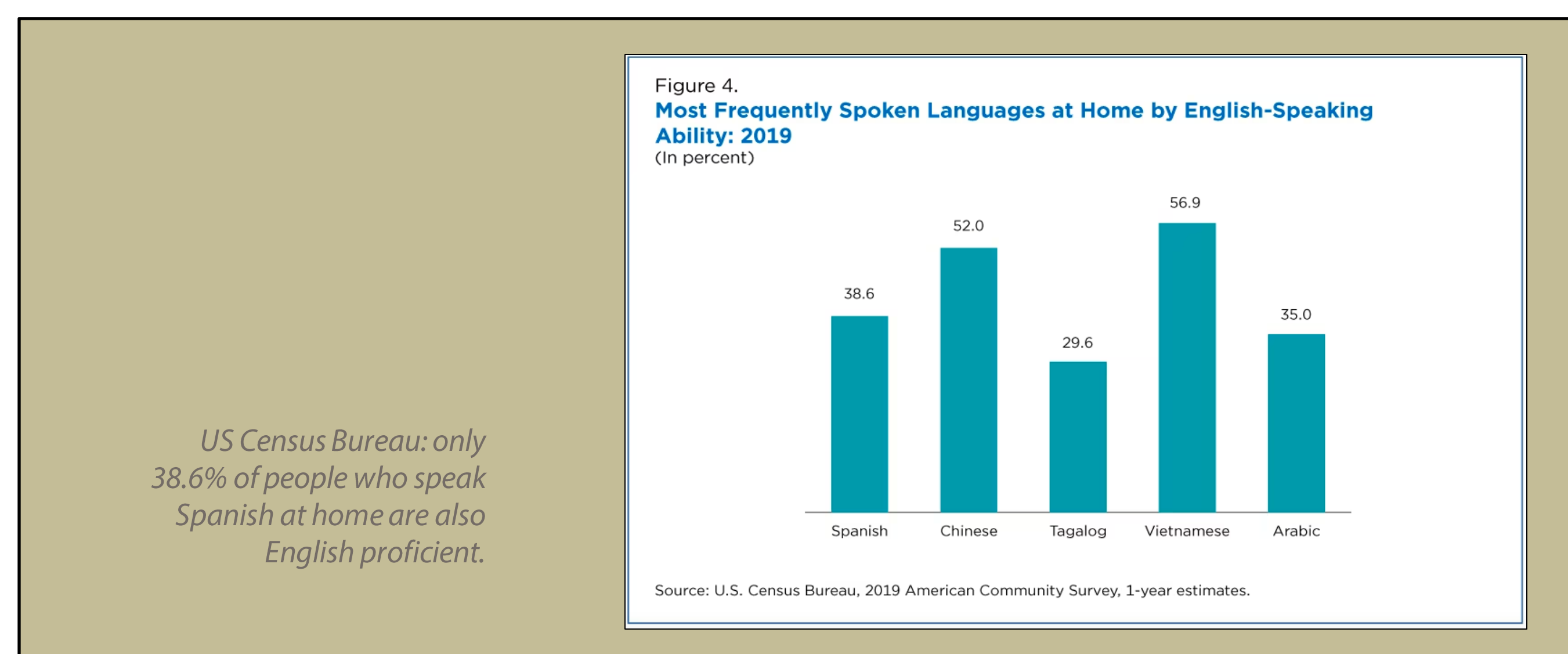
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REFERENCES

## INTRODUCTION

- **The Spanish Language Track (SLT)** was created and implemented by the Center for Health Equity and Innovation (CHEqI) within the Purdue University College of Pharmacy in 2021.
- **The mission** is to provide student pharmacists opportunities to understand and practice language-concordant healthcare delivery and promote improved health outcomes in Spanish-speaking populations.
- The Hispanic population is the largest minority group in the US, accounting for 17.8% of the United States population in the third quarter of 2023. In 2022, Indiana had approximately 6.5 million Hispanic/ Latino individuals, which is an increase of 42.4% since 2010.
- In the United States, people of Hispanic backgrounds face disparities in access, quality, and outcomes to health care. Studies show that implicit bias about race/ ethnicity cause providers to:
  - Associate these individuals with noncompliance and risky behavior, along with
  - Form general stereotypes about the race.
  - Alterations in patient- provider interactions, treatment decisions, patient treatment adherence, and patient health outcomes.



## OBJECTIVES

- Establish Spanish- proficient Pharm. D graduates
- Develop an understanding of the social determinants of health
- Provide students with opportunities to understand and practice language and culturally- concordant healthcare delivery
- Promote improved health outcomes in Spanish- speaking populations

## METHODOLOGY

While in the cohort, students have the opportunity to be involved in:

Spanish for the Professions minor	Cultural immersion conversations/ activities
Medical Spanish learning through CANOPY learn	Health access events with CHEqI
Biweekly Patient Appointment Sessions (PAS) held by Visiting Clinician Scholars from the Colombia- Purdue Partnership	4- week Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) rotation with la Universidad de Antioquia in Colombia
Interactive healthcare panels	8- week APPE rotation with the underserved clinic at Eskenazi Health in Indianapolis

## IMPACTS

The SLT provided members with pre and post program surveys where the results focused on various themes including:

### 1. Initial involvement and motivation to engage:

- The results revealed the main motivators for involvement included, wanting to meet the healthcare needs of the growing Spanish- speaking population; appreciation and love of the Hispanic/ Latino culture; and SLT opportunities for professional growth and development.

### 2. Language skill development:

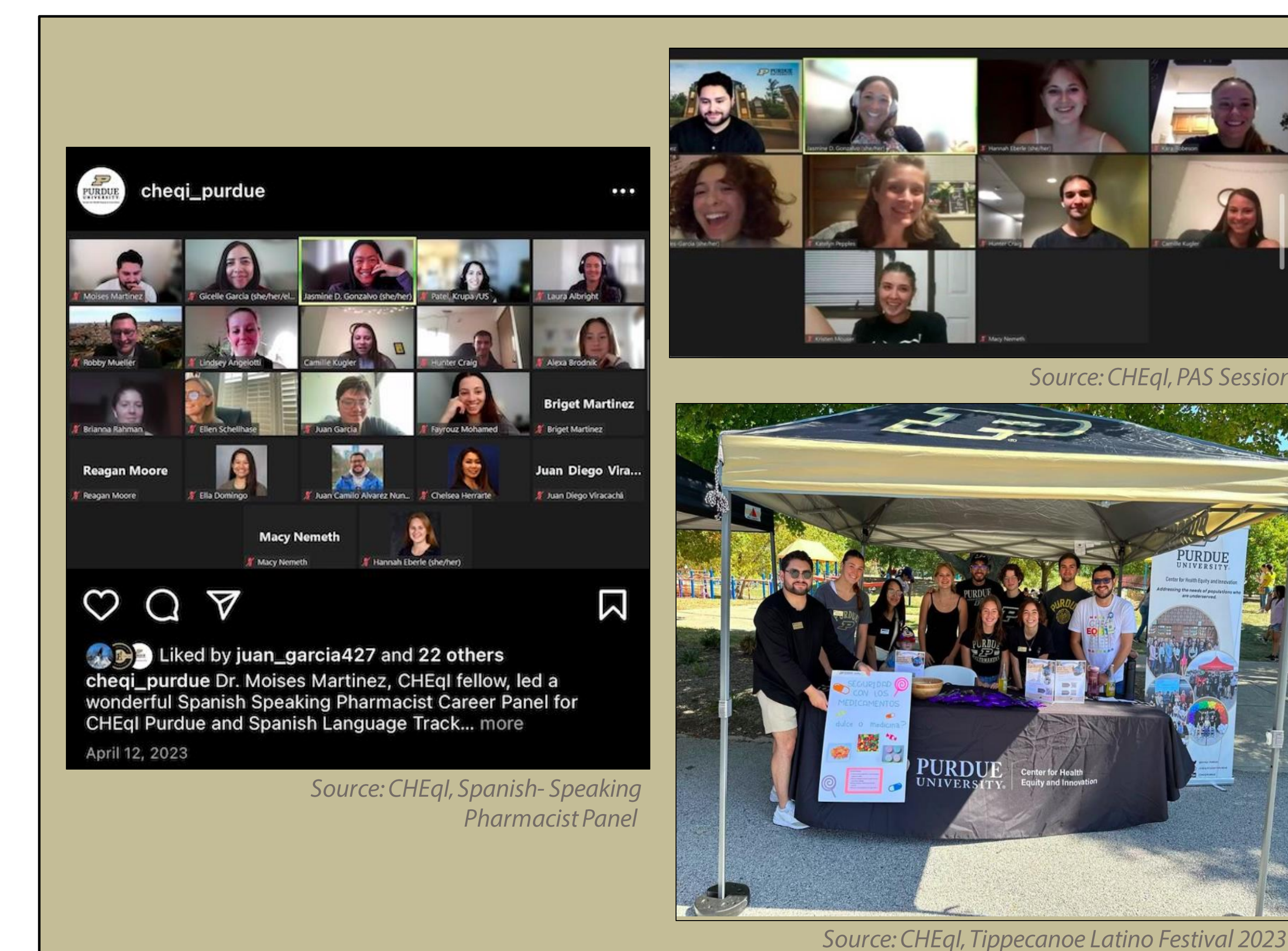
- The students participated in PAS to stimulate pharmacist- patient interactions in Spanish.
- Participants feel more confident when interacting with both Spanish and English- speaking patients, along with their Spanish medical terminology.
- 71% of students indicated that the PAS and Spanish Language sessions were impactful on their language development.

### 3. Health focused language immersion:

- Immersive opportunities such as the Tippecanoe Latin Festival and Gleaners and St. Vincent DePaul food pantries allowed students to make an impact in the community by bridging pharmacy practice with engagement in the Spanish- speaking community.

### 4. Strong relationships within the cohort:

- The cohort size of 17 students creates an intimate environment where they have the opportunity to interact with others who share similar passions and interests.



## REFLECTION & CONCLUSION

There were certain challenges that impeded on the success of the cohort.

- The knowledge gap among younger students during PAS sessions created difficulties simulating a full patient- provider interaction, as the intention is to practice speaking Spanish. To improve these sessions, we shifted so the student could play a role as the Spanish- speaking healthcare provider or the translator between a Spanish- speaking patient and provider. The option to translate conversations helped with the engagement of the younger students in the cohort.
- Most PAS sessions were via Zoom. Online sessions typically didn't allow for all students to participate, So the cohort started meeting in person for about half of the required meetings. Students were better engaged during the in-person sessions.

In conclusion, the SLT has given students the confidence to deliver healthcare in Spanish. The PAS sessions and Spanish- speaking volunteer opportunities were the most impactful for students.

In the future, cohorts will continue to be recruited during their P1 year. PAS sessions will continue, and facilitators will bring guests with different dialects of Spanish for the best practice. SLT will also be partnering with Dynamic Health to allow students the opportunity to assist in translation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Juan Camilo Álvarez Núñez, Visiting Clinician Scholar
- Juan Diego Viracachá, Visiting Clinician Scholar
- Professors and fellows at the Center for Health Equity and Innovation, CHEqI
- Department of Pharmacy Practice, College of Pharmacy - Purdue University



Self-Assessment of Ability to Speak and Use the Spanish Language						
*Question/Prompt	Pre (N = 10)			Post (N = 10)		
	n (%) Strongly Disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	n (%) Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	n (%) Strongly Disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	n (%) Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean
I am self-conscious when I speak Spanish	2 (20)	8 (80)	1.8	1 (10)	9 (90)	2.0
<sup>b</sup> I hesitate to speak in Spanish because...						
I am embarrassed that I will make a mistake	1 (10)	9 (90)	1.8	4 (40)	6 (60)	2.4
Of my limited Spanish-speaking ability	7 (70)	3 (30)	2.7	6 (60)	4 (40)	2.6
I am reserved in front of new people	7 (70)	3 (30)	2.3	6 (60)	4 (40)	2.6
I am uncomfortable with Spanish medical terminology	2 (20)	8 (80)	2.0	2 (20)	8 (80)	2.1
I want to use the Spanish Language after I graduate in my professional setting	0 (0)	10 (100)	4.0	0 (0)	10 (100)	4.0
<sup>b</sup> I am comfortable...						
With traveling to a Spanish-speaking country and speaking primarily Spanish conversationally	4 (40)	6 (60)	2.8	3 (30)	7 (70)	3.1
With traveling to a Spanish-speaking country and speaking primarily Spanish in a healthcare setting	7 (70)	3 (30)	2.0	4 (40)	6 (60)	2.6
Giving a presentation in Spanish	1 (10)	9 (90)	3.1	1 (10)	9 (90)	3.5
*Question/Prompt	Pre (N = 10) Mean			Post (N = 10) Mean		
Assess your ability in using the Spanish language...						
Understanding (Listening)			3.7			3.8
Understanding (Reading)			4.1			4.0
Speaking (Spoken Interaction)			3.4			3.4
Speaking (Spoken Production)			3.4			3.4
Writing			4.0			4.1
<sup>a</sup> Scale items range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree)						
<sup>b</sup> Scale items reverse coded						
<sup>c</sup> Scale items range from 1 (basic user) to 6 (proficient user)						

Evaluating a Spanish Language Track: student survey before and after 1 year in the cohort.