



Institute for Language Education in
Transcultural Context

**ACTFL 2023 Convention and World
Languages Expo**

November 17-19
Chicago, IL

**Why Ask your Heritage Language Learners to
Share their Work with the World?**


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Education




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Agenda

- Reasons to include a public audience
- Our WordPress website, *We Authors*
- How the site is used in teaching
- Learner feedback
- More questions and comments

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Reasons to Include a Public Audience

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Learn to Write



- Write to learn → practice linguistic forms and vocab
- Learn to write → learn how to express meaning in a second or heritage language

Work by Heidi Byrnes, Cecilia Colombi, James Paul Gee, Richard Kern, Hiram Maxime, Kate Paesani, Mary J. Shleppegrell, Janet Swaffar, and others.

- Evidence of development
 - Colombi, 2002; Norris and Pfeifer 2003; Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010; Gatti & Graves, 2020-2023 IPAP Project

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Learn to Write



- Teaching explicitly and modelling how writers do what they do (genre based, multiliteracies)
 - Role of context
 - Role of genre
 - Use of features
 - Role of modality
 - Role of intended audience



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Learn to Write



Write for an audience while **in development**



We Authors

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We Authors...



- is a website for multilingual students in heritage courses across CUNY
- is open to teachers of all heritage languages @ CUNY
 - **Arabic, Chinese, French, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish**
- was piloted in 2021-22 in three **Spanish for HLLs** courses at three CUNY colleges
- provides students with **public-facing component** to assignments
 - **Facilitates learner engagement, advances writing proficiency**

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Website Tour

weauthors.commons.gc.cuny.edu

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How the website is used in teaching

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Integration into an Existing Course



SPANISH ^ LANGUAGES COMING

DÁNDOLE VUELTAS

SIN VUELTAS

- Two types of writing
 - Last step of a process involving several drafts; the “best” a learner can achieve at that point (“Final Round”)
 - Share low-stakes, self-directed writing resulting from a class activity (“On my mind”)
- Use site once or multiple times
- Fully integrated, or as extra-credit activity, by invitation, or other?

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Model 1 from Pilot



- One four-year, one two-year college
 - First-semester course for Spanish HLLs
 - Second- and third-semester course for Spanish HLLs
- Proficiency levels (ACTFL):
 - From IM to AM
- All students share writing at their own level
- Fully integrated into the curriculum

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Model 1 from Pilot



- The classroom as a writing place
- Text-based curriculum developed by A. Gatti for the Investigating Pedagogies for Advanced Proficiency project (IPAP)
- Writing as a process: ongoing drafts and revisions
- Two main functionalities of *We Authors*
 - Last stage of the writing process
 - Modeling: analyzing students' posts from other semesters, colleges or classes

"Creating Extended Scaffolding Writing Tasks for Heritage Language Learners"

Saturday 11/18
10:15 - 11:00 AM

McCormick Place -
West Building

Room W179a

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Model 2 from Pilot



- Four-year college
- First-, second-, and third-semester course for Spanish HLLs
- Optional use of *We Authors* (not integrated into the curriculum)
 - by invitation
 - as extra credit activity

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Learner Feedback

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Recurrent Themes in the Feedback



- Audience awareness
- Vulnerability; lack of confidence in writing
- Community with classmates
- Gaining confidence (before/after)
- Pride

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(all **boldface** added)



Student 1 | Audience awareness, community

"I was pretty indifferent regarding publishing my work on a public site. I did not mind having to do so but I also did not fully understand the meaning behind it.

"However, it did **encourage me to try that much harder** when creating the second chronicle since I now had the knowledge that it would be getting published, and a **better idea of what kind of website it would be getting published on**. After reviewing the website, I also gained a better idea of how my writing should look in comparison to other students who also uploaded their work."

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Student 2 | Vulnerability



“I felt **nervous and vulnerable** publishing my work on a public site. This is because I never write for myself or share my work with other people. Anytime I write its fact-based or based on a research related topic. The writings we did were different than the research-based papers I've written in the past, they were personal events. The work I published was personal and that's what made me feel vulnerable.”

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Student 3 | Joy



“I feel very good about publishing my work on a public site. I feel a **sense of joy** publishing my work because of all the work that was put into it.”

Student 4 | Joy, community

“I thought it was kind of cool publishing my text on a public site it **gets your voice or the story you told out there** along with your classmates.”

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Student 5 | Gaining confidence/pride



“I believe it was a bit **intimidating** because im not used to publishing work online for others to read. Im a little **insecure of my writing** I feel like it lacks something but I can never find the thing it lacks. Really im not much of a writer and in spanish its harder to write but I tried and thats the good part.

“Today I published my other piece the last step of the chronicle and **honestly I was not intimidated instead I was proud of my work.** I felt like finally I wrote a good piece for class and I was totally fine with publishing that final piece. Adding a picture also was good because now my writing piece has an image of what im writing about.”

We Authors L2



- Pilot with Japanese learners

We Authors | Second-Language Writing

Multilingual Student Voices in Second-Language Writing

WELCOME JAPANESE LANGUAGES COMING SOON STUDENTS SUBMIT FACULTY Q

Welcome to We Authors | Second-Language Writing, a space for work by language students across the City University of New York.

Visit our sister site, *We Authors | Heritage Writing*, at weauthors.commons.gc.cuny.edu.

“We Authors Second Language Writing – Student Todoku Project”

Saturday 11/18
5:30 - 6:15 PM
Session

McCormick Place
West Building
Room W178b

RECENTLY POSTED WRITING

わたしのすきなひとたち
母 (はは) のオムライス料理 (りょうり)。
Rat Cafe ネズミのきっさてん
カビバラ
Grand Prize

Thank you all for joining us today!
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 for participating in the pilot; and
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 Tech, and John Jay



Your Questions/Comments

Contact us at ILETC@gc.cuny.edu

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Citations

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Gatti, A. and Graves, S. (In preparation). Investigating Pedagogies for Advanced Proficiency.

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