

ABSTRACT

Developing a Spanish for Heritage Speakers Program for Universities in Texas

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In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 37.6% of the persons in Texas were of Hispanic or Latino origin, up from 32.0% in 2000. As demographic trends across Texas show growing Hispanic populations, universities face increasingly Hispanic classrooms. For university-level Spanish programs, this increase demands a response to the fundamental learning differences between Spanish heritage speakers and foreign language learners. While some universities have implemented Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS) Programs, there exists a continuing need for state-wide expansion. This thesis argues for the development of SHS Programs in Texas by presenting various approaches to the teaching of SHS and by investigating the success of those already existing programs. This study provides a basis for the development of such a program, using the ACTFL Position Statement on Language Learning for Heritage and Native Speakers. Finally, the thesis proposes the development of these programs on a state-wide level.

Developing a Spanish for Heritage Speakers Program for Universities in Texas

by

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A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Modern Foreign Languages

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts

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Accepted by the Graduate School
May 2013

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACTFL – American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

FLL – Foreign Language Learner

HLL – Heritage Language Learner

OPI – Oral Proficiency Interview

SHS – Spanish for Heritage Speakers

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There is no way to adequately acknowledge all those who have contributed and supported this project. To begin, I must recognize Dr. Christine Kepner for inspiring me to pursue a graduate degree. I would like to thank the faculty of Wheaton College and Baylor University for their instruction and backing over the last six years; my thesis committee whose input and encouragement forged the foundation of this thesis; and most especially Dr. Linda McManness, for her guidance and reassurance throughout each stage of the process. Also, during data collection and writing I was very grateful for the provision of syllabi and correspondence provided by various professors across the state of Texas.

More personally, I would like to thank my colleagues and my students for listening to me and spurring me onward each and every day. I am most grateful to my family for always believing in me and to my husband for caring even when he didn't understand. I am so thankful for my church for your constant prayers and my friends for your loving support. Finally, I must thank my heavenly Father, without whom I would be nothing.

To my parents, who gave me my two greatest passions in this world: my love for language and a faith in my Lord Jesus Christ. You are an inspiration to me always...

... and to my sweetheart, Aaron, for being my greatest supporter and for pushing me to be more than I could ever have dreamed. I love you

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Quien habla dos lenguas vale por dos.

The person who speaks two languages is worth two people. This common Spanish saying calls attention to the value of speaking a second language, and is extremely relevant to the condition of the heritage speaker. A heritage speaker is someone who speaks the target language at home but may or may not have formal education in the language or speak the language in the wider community. Heritage speakers may appear to be fluent in the language, but upon further examination could have very limited language skills. They bring their own sets of challenges and abilities, and their mere presence in our classroom demands our attention as educators and as policy-makers.

According to the 2010 Census, 37.6% of the total population (or 9,460,921 people) in Texas were Hispanic or Latino. At that time, almost half a million of these Texas Hispanics were enrolled in colleges and universities across the state. With such an increasingly large Hispanic population entering college, many of whom speak Spanish as heritage speakers, the need for a spotlight on Heritage Language Education is growing.

While there is currently a surge of research being conducted in this area, most of the work being done focuses on specific issues, such as placement and methods. Meanwhile, there is an unmet need for suggestions for the practical development of Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS) programs at universities across the United States

and, more specifically, in Texas. It is evident to nearly all Spanish instructors in Texas that the growing numbers of Spanish heritage students indicate an imminent reform in methods and teaching, however, the development of such reform is constantly under discussion. This discussion must be regarded as an important political, social, and educational issue.

This thesis proposes the continued development of SHS programs among universities in Texas and provides parameters for the development of such a program. Through a study of seventy institutions of higher education in Texas, including major state, public, private, and liberal arts colleges, this thesis first of all determines which programs have implemented SHS programs and then goes on to discover the success of those programs according to the goals set out by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in their Position Statement on Language Learning for Heritage and Native Speakers.

The available syllabi from seventeen different institutions and thirty different courses are examined. Each syllabus is judged based on five different criteria, taken from the ACTFL Position Statement mentioned above. Finally, these findings are discussed and become the basis for a proposed program which can then be implemented at universities across the state. Various resources are also provided in order to facilitate the development of such a program, such as a sample syllabus and a review of the three most common textbooks used in SHS courses.

The thesis begins with a review of relevant literature, in which the unique challenge of SHS is discussed, some approaches to SHS are offered, and placement, methods, and desired outcomes are presented. The following chapter provides an

overview of census data, an introduction to Spanish programs at Texas colleges and universities, and a summary of the seventeen institutions that currently offer SHS courses. Finally, the data from the third chapter is analyzed, the ideal SHS program is outlined, and resources are provided for the development and implementation of such a program.

The goal of this project is to promote the continual expansion of SHS programs in Texas. Through this methodical study of the current state of those programs that exist and a proposal for the further development of SHS programs in the state of Texas, this thesis will join the ongoing discussion of how to best serve this unique population.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The Challenge

In the last thirty-five years, the issue of Heritage Language Education has risen to the attention of instructors and policy-makers alike. Currently, much of the research on Spanish for Heritage Language Learners (HLL)¹ focuses on specific issues, such as placement and methods. However, suggestions for the practical development of a SHS Program are needed at universities across the United States and, more specifically, in Texas. While the growing numbers of Spanish heritage speakers indicate that major reform in methods and teaching should be forthcoming (and such reform can be seen across the state in various institutions), the challenge of Spanish heritage language acquisition is still prevalent and should be analyzed in depth as a serious political, educational, and personal issue. This chapter seeks to present some of the literature and research available in order to build a clearer understanding of how Spanish Heritage Program development should be approached.

¹ The politics of the language surrounding heritage language learners was considered in this essay and the term Heritage Language Learners was chosen. Davidzon agrees that “different terminology is used to describe Spanish speaking children who converse in one language at home and another when they are at school, with their friends or in the community. They have been referred to as ‘native speakers, quasinate speakers, residual speakers, bilingual speakers, and home-background speakers’” (12). According to Kondo-Brown, “the term heritage language learner encompasses a huge, heterogeneous population” (564). Valdés defines a HLL as one who “is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken” and who “speaks or at least understands the language and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English” (Kondo-Brown 564). Beaudrie suggests that the term HLL is embraced by HL professionals (Beaudrie 330).

Defining Heritage Speakers

Carreira argues that it is important to understand and define the term, Heritage Language Learner, in order to meet the needs of this unique population (Carreira). In that regards, the ACTFL *Position Statement on Language Learning for Heritage and Native Speakers* defines Heritage Speakers as “those raised in an environment where the language was most likely spoken in the home”. Carreira advances this short definition by suggesting that one must regard the learner’s place in the heritage language community and culture as well as the learner’s proficiency in the heritage language in order to classify someone as a HLL. The key here is the personal connection to the heritage language and culture as part of the HLLs identity and upbringing. However, as Wilma Feliciano so eloquently points out, it is also important to recognize the heritage speaker as one who exists “*entre dos mundos, dos lenguas, y dos culturas*”² (68). A heritage speaker is one who bridges the two cultures and the two languages, and so the challenge for the development of a Heritage Language Program is to meet the unique needs of this unique population.

Understanding the Unique Competencies of the Heritage Speaker

Daniela Davidzon approaches this challenge in her 2008 thesis. To begin with, she explains that HLLs do not have the same linguistic capabilities as those of native speakers. Davidzon points out that “research shows that as a rule within two or three generations most non-English speaking immigrants lose, or almost lose, their heritage language” (21). This has caused various problems, specifically a confusion as to the actual competency of a HLL who is able to discuss day-to-day events but may have

² Between two worlds, two languages, and two cultures

difficulty with more complex topics or ideas. In the classroom, other students may resent the HLL's apparent fluency while in fact they themselves are struggling with the mechanics of writing, grammar, and syntax (Davidzon 21).

The differences between Spanish HLLs and Foreign Language Learners (FLL) are dramatic. Gignoux agrees that in order “to serve heritage students’ needs, the professions’ areas of interest need to extend to include a population of students who are very unlike traditional foreign language learners at the beginning, intermediate, and even advanced levels” (Gignoux 6). Montrul and Lynch discuss the possibility that heritage language learning is quite a bit like second language learning, however, both conclude that courses must be designed to accommodate the specific needs of heritage speakers apart from those of traditional FLLs. While the integration of heritage speakers in a traditional Spanish Foreign Language classroom can prove to be beneficial for both the HLL and FLL (Blake and Zyzik; Dunlap), it is more likely a source of frustration for both students and instructors. Foreign language classes tend to “focus on teaching students language competencies that most HL learners have already mastered” (Beaudrie 322), which makes for a difficult learning environment for both HLLs and FLLs. Overall, the research suggests that instruction of grammar, conversation, composition, and culture is more effective for both groups when curricula and methods are targeted to either the needs of the HLL or the FLL.

Developing Heritage Language Instruction

Clearly, the HLL demographic cannot be compared nor grouped either with the native speakers or with the FLLs. The prevalence of HLLs demands a certain type of Spanish instruction that varies from that given to either native speakers or FLLs. The

good news is that Spanish Heritage Language (SHL) courses are being offered at many universities across the country. Davidzon points out that, “although interest in heritage language instruction, sometimes referred to as Spanish for native speakers, began in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s particularly on the high school level, it is in the forefront of foreign language education today” (22).

Valdés et al. sampled 52 institutions in California communities of Latino populations at and below the state mean and found that 45.7% offered a first-year Spanish for heritage speakers course and 57.1% offered a second-year Spanish for heritage speakers course. 37.1% offered a composition for heritage speakers course, 40.0% offered an advanced grammar for heritage speakers course and 20.0% offered an oral communication for heritage speakers course. (Valdés et al. 8). Of the colleges offering heritage programs, 80% responded that they were satisfied with the achievement of students in the programs, as measured by course examinations and/or by success in subsequent courses (Valdés et al. 16). This survey of California institutions shows that various Spanish for HLL programs do exist, however, the differences between these programs can be vast.

Differences in world language requirements across the country are striking, and while SHL programs continue to grow, there remains a need for continued development in areas where Spanish HLLs are more prevalent. In her 2011 article, *Spanish Heritage Language Programs: A Snapshot of Current Programs in the Southwestern United States*, Beaudrie investigated the current situation in SHL instruction in the Southwestern states of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Nevada, and Utah. She found that the percentage of SHL programs is rapidly growing and her

findings suggest a trend towards increasing SHL programs in the Southwest (332). In the state of Texas specifically, she found that 32% (20 out of 63 total) of 4-Year Universities offered SHL courses. In the Southwest in general, 38% of Spanish language departments offered SHL courses. These numbers show “positive trends for the presence of SHL programs in the Southwest” (Beaudrie 327).

However, while there are factors supporting SHL programs, which Davidzon praises for: a) narrowing the Latino achievement gap; b) stimulating pride for heritage, culture and customs of an often maligned group; c) proficiency in foreign language is a skill very needed today because of national and local security and employment opportunities; and d) the practical purposes of student placement in foreign language class (22), there are also various impediments to the nationwide development of such programs, such as the lack of resources and motivation to do so. An argument must be made in each individual institution, based on the numbers of HLLs and the possible success of such a program on their language acquisition.

The challenge that must be faced, therefore, is the continued development of SHL programs that meet the needs of the HLL at every level. The most significant research into the development of SHL programs has been done by Beaudrie, Valdés, and Davidzon. The remainder of this chapter will explore the questions of curricula, methodology, and outcomes of the development of a SHL program for universities in Texas.

Some Approaches

When approaching the issue of how to place heritage speakers in the Spanish classroom, there are three main possibilities which prevail: 1) integration of HLLs and

FLLs, 2) separation of HLLs and FLLs with similar instruction, or 3) entirely different instruction for HLLs and FLLs. Each approach has strengths and advantages for both the HLL and the FLL, but the drawbacks can also be serious.

Total Integration

Some linguists and educators argue for the total integration of HLLs and FLLs, for the mutually beneficial possibilities. Dunlap suggests that utilizing heritage and native speakers as resources in the classroom not only can help FLLs improve pronunciation and vocabulary, it can also help the HLL “realize the value of their Spanish-speaking abilities” (25). By arguing that instructors at all levels can use heritage speakers to benefit their own perceptions and attitudes as well as those of the non-native speakers, Dunlap supports the integration of HLLs and FLLs at all levels. She goes on to provide an investigation into the perceptions of HLLs as well as the benefits that FLLs receive from such integration in certain phonetics courses, including but not limited to the awareness of dialectal variances and sociolinguistic distinctions across the Spanish-speaking world. She concludes that “taking advantage of the language resources provided by the ever-increasing numbers of Spanish-speakers in the phonetics classes not only achieved the goals of the course, but also enhances the self-esteem of these Spanish-speakers in regard to their language skills” (Dunlap 28).

Edstrom also provides ideas for the integration of HLLs and FLLs in her 2006 article. Using an activity that combined grammar with sociolinguistic issues, Edstrom proposed focusing on narratives to work through some of the non-standard issues students faced in speech and text. She found that native, non-native and heritage speakers each had different issues, but also learned to work together to explore some

common linguistic matters, such as forms of address, language attrition, dialectal variation, prescriptivism, and code-switching. In doing so, all learners were able to benefit from each other's knowledge and insights. Clearly, these kinds of approaches to the issue of HLLs in the classroom can be very effective.

Separate Instruction

However, not all scholars agree that HLLs should be integrated in the classroom. While it is true that learners may sometimes benefit from the abilities of others, it is also important to recognize the fundamental differences between HLLs and FLLs and how, when integrated, these differences may often cause difficulty for both instructors and students. Castillo acknowledges that “educators have become more aware of the profound differences between teaching Spanish to non-native speakers and teaching it as a native language” (52). Consequently, dual tracks for FLLs and HLLs are increasing. Beaudrie assesses the effects of these distinct approaches and concludes that HLLs in a SHL course outperform both traditional FLLs in the traditional Spanish course as well as HLLs in the traditional Spanish course. Her findings suggest that the development of separate courses can be extremely beneficial for the HLL.

Peyton et al. agree that HLLs need special courses which “offer Spanish-speaking students opportunities to study Spanish formally in an academic setting the same way that native-English-speaking students study English language arts” (Peyton et al.). However, they acknowledge the variety of issues that face instructors of such courses. Many instructors are not trained to teach Spanish to Spanish speakers, and even if they were, the variety of levels of language proficiency among heritage speakers, dialectal and

cultural issues, and matters of identity and prestige demand that the SHL course be taught in an altogether different way than the traditional Spanish course.

Correa agrees that “having different language tracks is not enough” (308). In her 2011 article, Correa advocates separate courses for HLLs which will empower them to acquire the adequate language competence while not betraying individual regional and dialectal varieties. She points out that putting HLLs and FLLs together is threatening to both parties, since the FLL feels that the communicative level is too high while the HLL are not as grammatically competent as their traditionally-taught peers. However, in an HLL-only course, a critical pedagogical teaching style can both encourage and instruct learners to use and improve their language effectively.

Colombi also presents a method similar to Edstrom’s model previously discussed. She focuses on the use of systemic functional linguistics to increase literacy in HLL to show how understanding of the Spanish grammatical system and cultural differences can help HLL understand the semiotic choices they are making. This sort of explicit instruction in meaning-making in a heritage language is only one of the many types of approaches that can benefit students in a separate SHL course.

While most scholars agree that the activities and objectives of a SHL course are vastly different from those in a traditional Spanish course, the issues which remain to be resolved are many. According to Davidzon, “Even if there is agreement that a program of this type is beneficial many challenges exist. These can be separated into two broad groups, administration and content” (Davidzon 25). In the following sections, I will examine the topics of placement, methodology, and outcomes as discussed in the relevant

literature, in order to provide sufficient theoretical foundation to build on in the chapters which follow.

Placement

The topic of how to place HLLs of varying levels in a SHL course is one very commonly discussed in literature concerning Spanish HLLs, however, Valdés et al. point out that “only 31% of departments that offer heritage courses use a general placement examination to place heritage students in appropriate courses” (9). Other methods for placement may include those suggested by Said-Mohand, who discusses the history of language testing and current practices, such as the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) offered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which consists of a face-to-face or telephonic interview in order to determine speaking proficiency, and claims that “a more accurate assessment would have to include a combination of direct and indirect measure such as language background questionnaires, self-rating scales, language samples, etc.” (Said-Mohand 99).

The complicating factor is, of course, that the term HLL applies to students with such a variety of language skills. Valdés explains that bilingual students’ abilities in both languages falls somewhere along a continuum with monolingual language A at one end and monolingual language B at the other. Between the two extremes lie many varieties of strengths and weaknesses in each language. While incipient bilinguals may have only a small understanding of language B, which would be indicated by Valdés with a variation of the symbol Ab , as generations go by the second language may actually become more dominant as represented by Ba .

as the FLL. Fairclough draws from student mistakes on placement exams to recommend ideas for both future testing as well as class design. Her conclusions state that placement exams for HLLs should distinguish between spelling accuracy and language accuracy, should include compound tenses (which better indicate heritage learners' proficiency), and should provide sufficient context for accurate response (Fairclough).

These sources indicate the continued need for testing reform among SHL programs across the country. In designing and developing a heritage program, placing incoming students correctly is imperative to the success of the program. Students must first be in the appropriate class in order to receive excellent instruction that will further and enhance their linguistic skills. The following sections will present literature which discusses methodology for heritage language instruction as well as desired outcomes.

Methods

According to one of the authorities on the subject of heritage language acquisition, Valdés, "Heritage language educators are concerned with such questions as the acquisition of a standard dialect, the expansion of bilingual range, the transfer of reading and writing abilities across languages, and the maintenance of immigrant and other heritage languages" (Valdés 14–15). Said-Mohand refers to three main factors in the instruction of heritage speakers: 1) The social identity of the bilingual speaker and the use of labels in academia; 2) the language proficiency levels of heritage speakers; 3) the "undeveloped" academic register of U.S. HLLs. Peyton et al. also use this model to understand the goals of SHL instruction, citing the importance of language maintenance, expansion of the bilingual range, acquisition of a prestige variety, and transfer of literacy skills. In the following analyses, the goals are synthesized into language maintenance,

expansion of register, and literacy development, in order to summarize the arguments made by various instructors regarding the methodology of heritage language instruction.

Language Maintenance

Hispanic heritage speakers face many deep prejudices and challenges regarding their linguistic skills. Carreira speaks to these issues and argues that the SHL Program is the best place to dismiss such preconceptions while also encouraging language maintenance and growth. In her 2004 article, *Validating and Promoting Spanish in the United States: Lessons from Linguistic Science*, Carreira challenges instructors to encourage students to embrace the standard prestige variety of Spanish while not rejecting the vernacular.

Potowski's 2002 article explains why such an approach must be explicit. Potowski reports on the experiences of both the students and instructors and explains that most participants referred to their Spanish as "bad Spanish" or "ghetto Spanish" and recognized the disadvantages in not knowing grammar rules (Potowski 37–38). Because of the underlying stigma surrounding the linguistic skills of the HLL, the first goal for a SHL instructor is to affirm and encourage maintenance of language traditions and practices. To fulfill this goal, Ducar suggests activities that improve sociolinguistic awareness, such as ethno linguistic observations, linguistic autobiographies, or local surveys. She proposes that students become aware of their own or their communities' linguistic usage through personal observation, for example, students could look at specific forms, like the second person singular preterit, and analyze the use among specific language communities. Similarly, students could report on their own language

practices through a critical reflection of use and context. Such activities focus on the active involvement of student investigation versus prescriptive instruction (Ducar).

Expansion of Register

While it is important to encourage language maintenance, most heritage language instructors recognize the necessity of explicitly teaching register in the SHL program. Said-Mohand discusses the undeveloped academic register of HLLs, based on the fact that their “Spanish language repertoire has been acquired mainly through interaction with family and friends” (95), and then goes on to discuss the ideas of labeling and the social identity of the HLL. Similarly, Valdés reports that heritage languages “reflect the class origins of their first-generation speakers” (10). Since the heritage languages are spoken primarily in private, low-level situations, the full value of registers and styles may not carry over into future generations of heritage speakers. Therefore, it is important for educators not only to focus on language maintenance, but also to encourage correct development of register and literacy in order for students to obtain a fully-developed prestige variety of Spanish. For this reason Carreira claims that the challenge is “accepting the standard without rejecting the vernacular” (340).

However, Ducar does not necessarily agree. In 2008, she investigated students’ opinions on SHL practices. She mentions that, “though the bulk of research on language use in the Spanish heritage language context centers on the issue of academic language, only a small percentage (28%) mention acquisition of an academic variety as their goal” (425). She advocates keeping students’ goals in mind when designing courses in order to aim towards common outcomes.

Presentation Mode involves speaking, writing, or showing language skills to an audience. She discusses possible activities to incorporate each of these into the SHL classroom, such as using “aspects of the oral tradition such as proverbs, tongue twisters, riddles, jokes, folktales, myths, legends and nursery rhymes” (Durán-Cerda 46) in order to engage the Interpersonal Mode; using critical thinking skills to analyze short stories or poetry in the target language and subsequently highlighting regional dialects to engage the Interpretive Mode; and finally presentations, debates, theatrical re-enactments, or role-playing to engage the Presentational Mode.

Valdés et al. found that the two most highly rated objectives for university-level heritage programs is to “identify and correct anglicisms, archaisms and other dialectal or non-standard forms in their writing” and “identify and correct anglicisms, archaisms and other dialectal or non-standard forms in their speaking” (Valdés et al. 11) and that the most effective instructional practice for HLLs is the “drafting, writing and rewriting of compositions by students in order to correct errors” (Valdés et al. 14).

As part of the important task of literacy development, grammar instruction has received much attention, specifically the topics of mood and agreement. It is important in a section discussing suggestions for methodology not to dismiss such concepts, and so what follows is a brief review of the issues at hand.

Mood. By and large the most prevalent grammatical topic discussed in articles regarding heritage speaker instruction is the issue of the Spanish subjunctive. Generally speaking, mood simplification is taking place in the usage of U.S. Hispanics. However, Hislope et al. analyze various aspects of this issue through the lens of the heritage speaker. Mikulski compares HLLs and FLLs acquisition of the subjunctive in volitional

constructions. She found that HLLs scored higher than FLLs on average when faced with both a grammaticality judgment task and an editing task. This indicates that HLLs have some set of native-like intuitions when it comes to mood. Similarly, Martínez Mira studied the retention of the subjunctive in concessive clauses and found a surprisingly high percentage of oral maintenance among New Mexico speakers.

These examples seem to demonstrate that heritage speakers are maintaining subjunctive use; however, it is also clear that even heritage speakers need explicit instruction when it comes to the subjunctive. Through a study of ten students of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage, Hislope questioned the idea that implicit technique such as a Focus on Form style of input flooding could be beneficial for heritage speakers by increasing exposure to a certain grammatical constructions. Under this style, instruction directs learners' attention to notice grammatical items, thus allowing them to focus on the grammatical form and flooding their senses with examples of each grammatical feature. However, her study concluded that such techniques do not actually benefit the student and that explicit instruction remains necessary.

Agreement. Another grammatical topic that must be addressed in the teaching of heritage speakers is the issue of agreement. Several important studies have shown that the abilities of HLLs regarding grammatical agreement significantly influence their language abilities in the classroom. In his 2009 dissertation, Lew-Williams used eye movements to measure the response time of native and non-native Spanish speakers in processing article-noun sequences. He then applied this same measure to elementary school HLLs and SLLs. Lew-Williams goes on to suggest that grammatical gender

acquisition in L1 occurs at a very early stage, resulting in a quicker response time for the HLLs, suggesting a deeply learned grammatical gender.

These abilities do not disappear as HLLs mature. In her 2010 study, Martinez-Gibson reports on the spoken gender errors in the Spanish of high-school aged first and second generation heritage speakers as well as in the Spanish of second language learners. Her findings predictably show a drastic increase in gender agreement errors with both article/noun combinations and noun/adjective combinations in the speech of the SLLs with fewer errors in the speech of the second generation HLLs and even fewer in the speech of the first generation HLLs. Clearly, HLLs have ingrained linguistic abilities that must be understood and built upon.

In a similar study of “competence differences in the syntactic and semantic distribution of definite articles” (Montrul and Ionin 450), which was based on a study of the interpretation of definite articles with plural noun phrases in both English and Spanish applied to heritage speakers. The results showed above 90% accuracy in English for both English native speakers and Spanish heritage speakers. However, in the Spanish portion of the test, Spanish heritage speakers scored significantly below Spanish native speakers, showing, as Montrul consistently argues, that “heritage speakers should be treated as cases of incomplete acquisition rather than adult attrition”(Montrul and Ionin 470). Once again, the linguistic and cultural abilities of heritage speakers continue to necessitate appropriate curriculum.

Conclusions. It is clear that research shows the need for sensitivity in the development of a curriculum for SHL instruction. Such curriculum should maintain and encourage correct use of Spanish, expand the students’ register in order to acquire a

prestige variety of Spanish, and develop literacy skills covering a broad range of grammatical and conversational topics. It is important that the methodology of heritage language instruction is considered, and while the current research has been presented here, in the following chapter I will examine criteria and practices in order to suggest the best possible development of a SHL program.

Outcomes

Finally, the development of a SHL program must include an outline of desired outcomes, not the least of which is the ever-important linguistic abilities previously mentioned. However, and perhaps even more importantly, every SHL instructor should expect the main outcomes of a SHL course to include the validation of the cultural and linguistic abilities of students, in addition to the general validation of the Hispanic culture and Spanish language in every sphere. Many students enter the language classroom full of anxiety. However, HLLs come with a unique set of issues. While heritage learners have a “cultural literacy” that beginning foreign language students do not have (Davidzon 22), they also carry with them various linguistic and cultural prejudices, such as those outlined by Carreira in her 2000 article. She supports the need to allay students’ anxieties and not criticize or reject students’ linguistic abilities. As many linguists have pointed out, it is important to remember that “learning cannot flourish in an educational environment that undermines the linguistic self-esteem of students” (Carreira 337). Carreira goes on to provide explanations for sources of linguistic prejudice and reasoning to reject them in order to support the preservation of U.S. Spanish and encourage U.S. Hispanics to overcome the social and psychological factors that stand in their way.

Similarly, Castillo argues that teachers must honor the dialect of their students, saying, “We must maintain and promote the native Spanish spoken in the United States as well as encourage bilingualism and biculturalism. We must stop belittling dialect speakers in traditional foreign language classes. We must expand the linguistic repertoire of students to include a formal register but not at the expense of their dialects” (Castillo 56). A teacher must take into account the great variety of Spanish language and culture found in the United States as well as accept the informal varieties of Spanish which are so prevalent among heritage speakers.

This acceptance goes beyond merely linguistic prejudice. Frederick suggests that heritage language courses can teach much more than just language, in fact, she claims that they can contribute to the “semiosis of self” or the “meaning making of themselves” which students so desperately need. Wilma Feliciano discusses the need for conversation about culture and “the experience of living *entre dos mundos, dos lenguas, y dos culturas*” (68), and this experience must be taken into account in order to promote and encourage positive self-identity.

Pereira also examines the issue of identity and language in the SHL classroom in her 2010 dissertation. She analyzes the value placed on Spanish and English as well as on standard Spanish and dialectal variations, reporting that such values can be observed as well as constructed in the SHL classroom. However, as Pedroarias argues in his 2011 dissertation, it is imperative that teachers be prepared to handle the prevalent themes of language, culture, power, and identity which are often seen in the SHL classroom.

While there are many more outcomes which could be discussed and analyzed, the issue of identity is key to the development of a SHL program. In addition to discussion

and promotion of the heritage language and culture, a vital factor to include in a heritage language program is the provision of opportunities for HLLs to become involved in their communities. These methods and others will in time promote the final outcome of “not only to teach language acquisition to heritage learners but also to increase student self-esteem which will prepare them to assume professional and political roles and gain the respect their families, culture, and community deserve” (Durán-Cerda 49).

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

The Situation in Texas

Heritage Speakers in Texas

Hispanic population in Texas. Sharing a border with Mexico, Texas has long been a state filled with Hispanic heritage. As a once Spanish colony and subsequent Mexican state, Texas history is filled with both the Spanish language and legacy. In the past few decades, a notable increase in Latin American immigrants, especially those from the nearby Mexico, have continued to carry their language and culture across the border, passing it on to their children and to their children's children (See tables 3.1 and 3.2). These generations of Hispanics and Latinos are those who are now entering colleges and universities across the state, armed with a varied amount of language ability and a rich cultural heritage.

Table 3.1 Hispanic or Latino population growth in Texas from 2000-2010.

Year	Total Population	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Percentage of total
2000	20,851,820	6,669,666	32.0
2010	25,145,561	9,460,921	37.6

Source: "Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000 Census

Table 3.2 2010 Hispanic population in Texas by heritage country

Demographic	Population	Percentage of total population
Total population	25,145,561	100.0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9,460,921	37.6
Mexican	7,951,193	31.6
Puerto Rican	130,576	0.5
Cuban	46,541	0.2
Other Hispanic or Latino [5]	1,332,611	5.3

Source: “Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010: 2010 Demographic Profile Data – Texas.” *American FactFinder*. 2012. Bureau of the Census. Web. 27 August 2012.

Since 2000, the total number of Hispanics or Latinos in Texas has increased from almost seven million to almost nine and a half million, a 42% increase in only ten years. Of the total Texas population, 37.6% are Hispanic and 31.6% are specifically Mexican.

Spanish-speaking ability of Hispanic populations in Texas. Clearly, the Hispanic population in Texas is impressive. However, it is also important to recognize the linguistic abilities of this heterogeneous group. According to the 2010 Census, 29.6% of Texans five

Table 3.4 2010 Language spoken at home in Texas

Demographic	Total	Speak English “very well”	Speak English less than “very well”
Population 5 years and over	23,327,776	85.6%	14.4%
Speak only English	65.2%		
Speak a language other than English	34.8%	58.6%	41.4%
Speak Spanish	29.6%	57.6%	42.4%

Source: “Language Spoken at Home.” *American FactFinder*. 2012. Bureau of the Census. Web. 27 August 2012.

Table 3.5 2000 Language spoken at home by age for the population 5 years and over in Texas (Hispanic or Latino)

Demographic	Total (Hispanic or Latino)	Speak English only	Speak other languages
Total	5,963,049	1,102,517	4,860,532
5 to 17 years	1,675,605	489,7	

home, only 42% speak English less than “very well”¹. Among Hispanics in Texas, more than three quarters speak Spanish at home, and over half of those also speak English “very well”. Clearly, the status of Spanish as a heritage language in Texas is quite strong.

University-age Hispanic population in Texas. But in order to establish the need for SHL Programs in Texas, it is also important to quantify the numbers of Hispanics who speak Spanish as a heritage language that are entering our colleges and universities currently and in the next few years (See tables 3.7-3.10). Of the 3,132,880 Hispanics currently enrolled in school in 2010, 673,623 were enrolled in grades 9-12. These almost seven hundred thousand students are those who are entering college in the next few years. In 2010, 492,544 Hispanics were already enrolled in college, and these are the students who will be imminently graduating. Over the next ten years, 1,514,348 of those Hispanic or Latinos who were first through eighth graders in 2010 will become college-aged and a large number of those will arrive on our college campuses. It is therefore imperative that Spanish departments across the state prepare for them now by developing the SHL Programs that are so desperately needed.

University-Level SFL Programs

The state of the Spanish Programs in Texas is overall encouraging. To determine the existence of Spanish programs among universities in Texas, thirty public universities, thirty-two private universities, and eight liberal arts colleges were surveyed. Medical,

¹ “Selected Social Characteristics in the United States - Texas.” *American FactFinder*. 2012. Bureau of the Census. Web. 27 August 2012.

University-Level SHL Programs

Those same seventy institutions were surveyed to determine the existence of Spanish for Heritage Speaker classes offered (See table 3.12). This study was done in the spring of 2012, and reflects the information provided on online college catalogs. Of the universities surveyed, fifteen public universities, two private universities, and zero liberal arts colleges offered Spanish for Heritage Speaker classes in the spring of 2012. Only two universities, TAMU-Kingsville and Howard Payne University, offered beginner-level SHL classes. Eleven of the seventeen offered intermediate-level classes, and five offered advanced classes.

Of the seventeen institutions, five were in

Table 3.11 Colleges and Universities in Texas Surveyed

Public Universities	Private Universities	Liberal Arts Colleges
University of Houston	Abilene Christian University	Austin College
University of North Texas	Baylor University	Dallas Baptist University
University of Texas at Arlington	Concordia University Texas*	University of Dallas
University of Texas at Austin	Dallas Christian College*	McMurray University
University		

Table 3.12 University Level SHL Programs

PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES 15/30	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
University of Houston		2307, 2308	
University of North Texas			3080
University of Texas at Arlington			3304, 3305
University of Texas at Austin	</		

University of Texas System

University of Texas Arlington

SPAN 3304 SPANISH FOR HERITAGE SPEAKERS I (3-0) This course is designed for heritage speakers of Spanish who demonstrate an ability to comprehend and produce Spanish but who may lack previous formal instruction in the language. Capitalizes upon students' existing language skills, expands their knowledge base, and develops their ability to read, write, and communicate more effectively in the language. Special attention is given to regional and dialectal differences. Prerequisite: Equivalent of SPAN 2314, or consent of the department(F

an accurate, effective, and informed manner within a variety of sociocultural situations.

- SPAN 611D Heritage/Bilingual is the second course in the bilingual track in the Spanish language program geared towards native and/or heritage speakers. The course focuses on further developing speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in Spanish while building vocabulary, learning advanced grammatical rules and terminology of Spanish grammar, and gaining a deeper understanding of Hispanic cultures in order to communicate in an accurate, effective, and informed manner within a variety of sociocultural situations.
- SPAN 327G Heritage/Bilingual is designed to help students master grammar points and perfect grammar skills of particular concern to native and heritage Spanish speakers. Students will also develop and apply composition skills, critical thinking skills, and reading

SPAN 327W Bilingual/Bicultural is designed to build the students; awareness of academic discourse, consolidate and broaden their understanding of the topics under study, develop thinking, researching, and writing skills, and perfect their grammar skills in order to write scholarly papers in Spanish on language, literature, or culture, for a United States audience. Students complete both informal and formal writing tasks to meet those goals that may include summaries of texts, critical analyses, essays that develop a theme or answer a question, and a short research paper. Students will understand how writing is integrated with reading, listening, and discussion about the core content; develop strategies for collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting new information from external sources; analyze and practice a variety of rhetorical and reader-based organizational patterns; apply appropriate schemata to content studied in course-related readings; and evaluate and revise content to

SPAN 2315 Basic Spanish for Bilinguals II - This course is a continuation of SPAN 2313. It is not for Spanish and Bilingual Education majors or minors.
Lec 3, Cr 3.

University of Texas at El Paso

SPAN 2303 Spanish for Spanish Speakers One (3-0) A first course for bilingual students who have acquired listening and speaking skills in Spanish because it is spoken in their home or social environment. Development of reading and writing skills, with attention to spelling and use of the written accent. Entrance into

University of Texas Pan-American

SPAN 2307 Intermediate Spanish for Native Speakers [3-0] A comprehensive review of Spanish grammar with special emphasis on writing.

Prerequisite: SPAN 1304.

SPAN 2308 Intermediate Spanish for Native Speakers [3-0] A continuation of SPAN 2307. Prerequisite: SPAN 2307.

language. Capitalizes upon students' existing language skills, expands their knowledge base, and develops their ability to read, write and communicate more effectively in the language. Special attention is given to building vocabulary and strengthening composition skills in Spanish. Taught exclusively in Spanish and for heritage or native speakers only. Prerequisite Spa 232 or equivalent by exam. Note For students majoring or minoring in Spanish or bilingual education, this course replaces the Spa 331 requirement.

SPAN 334 Spanish for Heritage Speakers II (3) A continuation of Spa 333, consisting of a detailed study of advanced Spanish grammar with emphasis on written expression. Capitalizes upon students' existing language skills, expands their knowledge base, and develops their ability

TAMU International

SPAN 2313 Spanish for Heritage Language Spanish Speakers I (3) Conducted in Spanish. A course for students from an English-Spanish dual language environment who have been exposed to spoken Spanish, but have little or no formal study of the language. A systematic presentation of oral and written conventions in Spanish will be presented along with identification of regional varieties of usage. This is the first part of a two-part introduction to Spanish for Spanish speakers. Prerequisite: Departmental Placement exam.

SPAN 2315 Spanish for Heritage Language Spanish Speakers II (3) Conducted in Spanish. This is the second half of a

course stresses reading and writing skills. Language laboratory required. Prerequisite: departmental approval.

TAMU International

SPAN 2313 Spanish for Heritage Language Spanish Speakers I (3) Conducted in Spanish. A course for students from an English-Spanish dual language environment who have been exposed to spoken Spanish, but have little or no formal study of the language. A systematic presentation of oral and written conventions in Spanish will be presented along with identification of regional varieties of usage. This is the first part of a two-part introduction to Spanish for Spanish

formally in an academic setting in the same way English-speaking students study English. Because the course requires oral competency, it will hone reading and writing skills for heritage speakers. This course will prepare students to take upper-division Spanish courses.

SPAN 2315 Spanish for Heritage Speakers II Prerequisite: SPAN 2313 and consent of instructor. Continuation of SPAN 2313. Formal study of Spanish language in the academic setting in the same way English-speaking students study English. Focuses on verbal conjugations, irregular verbs, reading, and academic writing. Course requires oral competency and will prepare students for upper-division Spanish courses.

University of North Texas

- SPAN 3080 Advanced Spanish Composition and Oral Practice for Bilinguals (3 hours) Principles of academic writing, spelling, and grammar in Spanish, directed specifically towards bilinguals (Spanish heritage and native speakers). Taught in Spanish. Prerequisite(s): Demonstrate native or near-native language ability as defined by results of departmental proficiency exam and/or consent of department.

Texas Tech University

University of St. Thomas

SPAN 2333 Intermediate Spanish I for the Heritage Speakers Review of the basic elements of language; builds vocabulary and comprehension, and develops both oral and written expression, all in cultural context. Designed for heritage speakers.

SPAN 2334 Intermediate Spanish II for the Heritage Speakers Review of the basic elements of language; builds vocabulary and comprehension, and develops both oral and written expression, all in cultural context. Designed for heritage speakers.

live and work in an increasingly multilingual environment in the U.S. Native speakers (those raised in an environment using mainly a language other than English) and heritage speakers (those raised in an environment where the language was most likely spoken in the home) benefit from instruction that draws on and enhances their native or heritage language skills and cultural knowledge. In addition, research has shown that continuing to learn their native and heritage language benefits them in their acquisition of English language proficiency.

In keeping with the goal of an educated citizenry that reflects the rich multicultural and multilingual nature of U.S. society, ACTFL encourages the active recruitment, training, and retention of heritage and native speakers as teachers. ACTFL further supports pre-service training and ongoing professional development for all language teachers to help them address the unique learning needs of heritage

- opportunities for heritage and native speakers to become involved in their language communities beyond the classroom; and
- systems to award credit or appropriate placement for oral and written proficiency and prior learning for native and heritage speakers.

Approved by the ACTL Board May 22, 2010

This position statement provides certain criterion for successful heritage language programs. The following points will be the basis of a systematic evaluation of the syllabi which were available from surveyed institutions. The ACTFL Position Statement on Language Learning

Available Data

The following chart provides an overview of each program and available syllabi, reflecting the success of reaching each goal listed above: (* indicates lack of data yet)

Table 3.13 Texas SHL Program Syllabi Success Rates

University	Syllabus	1	2</
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of this course is to improve the linguistic abilities of bilingual students at the advanced level through intensive oral and written practice. “Action learning” will be used daily in order to achieve language growth, fluency and cultural competency. All four skills will be stressed, with special emphasis on reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary skills and grammatical competence.

2. Build upon existing linguistic skills and cultural heritage and knowledge:

Spanish 2307 is the second semester of the Spanish for Heritage Language Learners track (which includes 1507, 2307, 2308, 3307, and

It is apparent from the syllabus that language and culture are integrated well in assessments but literature is lacking.

4. Provide opportunities to become involved in language communities beyond the classroom:

Students will select an aspect of Latino culture, identity, community, language, etc. in Houston, will conduct some research, and will prepare questions about the topic to conduct two or three videotaped interviews in Spanish to members of the Hispanic community. The interviews should add up to at least 10 minutes [5% of the grade].

order to achieve language growth, fluency and cultural competency. All four skills will be stressed, with special emphasis on reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary skills and grammatical competence.

2. Build upon existing linguistic skills and cultural heritage and knowledge:

Pre-requisites: Students should know basic grammatical concepts (e.g. verbal tenses: present, preterit, imperfect, future, conditional, perfect tenses, subjunctive mood, etc. – object pronouns, etc.) in order to take this course.

University of Texas Arlington – 3304/3305 (Prieto) Spring 2012

1. Reflect the different needs of native speakers and heritage students:

Course Objective: This course is designed for heritage speakers of Spanish who demonstrate an ability to comprehend and produce Spanish but who may lack previous formal instruction in the language.

2. Build

2. Build upon existing linguistic skills and cultural heritage and knowledge: Course

Objective: *La clase toma como punto de partida las habilidades lingüísticas previas del estudiante, profundiza en su conocimiento de la lengua y desarrolla su competencia oral y escrita en español. El curso incluye, además, una selección de cuentos y dos películas. A partir de la lectura, el análisis y el comentario de los textos y los videos se buscará generar la producción escrita y, al mismo tiempo, propiciar un acercamiento a las manifestaciones culturales y/o al diario acontecer del mundo hispánico. En síntesis, este curso se concentra en:*

1. Reflect the different needs of native speakers and heritage students:

Course Description: This course is an intensive writing course designed to develop critical thinking skills and academic writing proficiency. The course is primarily intended for Heritage and Native speakers with a strong command of oral communication skills but inexperienced in the writing of academic essays, research papers or original prose in the Spanish language.

4. Provide opportunities to become involved in language communities beyond the classroom:

Not Specified

5. Award appropriate placement for oral and written proficiency:

Not Specified

- develop knowledge and understanding of the interrelationships of disciplines, particularly the arts, geography, history, and literature as they relate to the study of the Spanish language and cultures.

General Education Course Intellectual Competencies: Students should demonstrate the competencies listed below, but this course will provide them with ample opportunity to refine their existing skills in the following six areas:

1. Reading: Reading at the college level means the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials.
2. Writing: Competency in writing is the ability to produce clear, correct, and coherent

Grading: 30% Exams, 15% Quizzes, 20% Homework, 10% Compositions, 25% Final
Comprehensive Exam

Lacking emphasis on culture and literature in assessments

4. Provide opportunities to become involved in language communities beyond the classroom:

Not Specified

6. Computer Literacy: Computer literacy at the college level means the ability to use computer-based technology in communicating, solving problems and acquiring information.

Grading: 30% Exams, 15% Quizzes, 20% Homework, 10% Compositions, 25% Final Comprehensive Exam

Lacking emphasis on culture and literature in assessments

2. Build upon existing linguistic skills and cultural heritage and knowledge:

Online Resources: *My Spanish Lab* is a new, nationally hosted online learning and assessment system for elementary Spanish courses. This convenient, easily navigable site offers a wide array of language-learning tools and resources, including powerful voice tools, a flexible grade book, an interactive version of the Español Escrito Student Activities Manual. In *My Spanish Lab*, students are recognized as individuals with individual learning needs. For example:

- Readiness Checks: At the beginning of each chapter, students may

you placed into 2304, you enroll in 2304 (unless you show your instructor written permission from the Placement Director to drop back to 2303). The Department of Languages and Linguistics reserves the right to rectify errors in placement caused by a student's failure to observe these guidelines, including the option to drop a student enrolled in an inappropriate course.

University of Texas El Paso – 2304 2009

1. Reflect the different needs of native speakers and heritage students

Grading based on 6 Compositions, Online Homework, 3 Exams, Final Exam. It is apparent from the syllabus that language, culture and literature are integrated well in assessments

4. Provide opportunities to become involved in language communities beyond the classroom:

Not Specified

5. Award appropriate placement for

4. Provide opportunities to become involved in language communities beyond the classroom:

Not Specified

5. Award appropriate placement for oral and written proficiency:

Not Specified

following chapter and suggestions will be made for programs to develop such requirement.

Finally, it is clear that placement methods must be examined and institutionalized in order for programs to offer fair and appropriate credit to students who already possess some degree of knowledge of Spanish or previous instruction. This too will be discussed in the following chapter.

This study can reveal important facts about the state of SHL programs in Texas. What follows is a proposed development of a SHL program and further expansion for current programs through a deeper discussion of the results of this study and the goals and ideals provided by ACTFL and other relevant resources on the teaching of heritage languages.

