Caring, Community, and Language:

Re-thinking Spanish Heritage Language Pedagogy and Instruction in the Midwest

By

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Dedication

To the memory of my grandma Willie Mae Lawrence,

who taught me the power of the transformative role of education.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

The field of research often referred to as Heritage Language (HL) Education is not a new area of research in the United States (U.S.). In particular, scholars in this field have concentrated many studies on the education of Spanish speakers. However, the term heritage language and its importance in research, policy and practice only began to gain traction in the 1990s in the U.S. (García, 2005; Hornberger & Wang, 2008) when discussions about school-based language policies and practices became a part of national discourse. As current qualitative studies in HL education have not deeply examined the perspectives of students enrolled in HL programs, researchers have called for an expansion in this area of HL studies in the U.S. (Alarcón, 2010; Beaudrie, Ducar, & Relaño-Pastor, 2009; Ducar, 2008; Valdés, Fishman, Chávez, & Pérez, 2008). Additionally, certain regions of the U.S. are underrepresented in Spanish heritage language (SHL) research (Beaudrie, 2012; Potowski, 2016).

In my dissertation, I answer this call to research by examining the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in SHL courses in the Midwest. Research in this area has yet to achieve a level of breadth and depth that could illuminate the influence of students' perspectives and experiences on HL instruction (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Felix, 2009; Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Knutson, 2006; Pak, 2018; Potowski, 2012). This study contributes to expanding our understanding of HL curriculum and instruction in post-secondary settings from a student-centered perspective. Specifically, an analysis of students' self-reflections highlights the importance of an approach to HL teaching and learning that is more responsive to the social, affective, and linguistic needs of the student population. For example, students wanted to focus on real-world uses of Spanish that would be beneficial in their future careers. Students

had few opportunities to interact with other Spanish speakers on campus; therefore, they benefitted from their classroom communities in which they could express themselves with a group of students with whom they developed a sense of solidarity due to their experiences growing up with Spanish as a HL. Students also appreciated the opportunity to use Spanish in new ways in off-campus Spanish-speaking communities. A caring curriculum held students to high standards and decreased students' insecurities as heritage speakers of Spanish who, through messages from society, had been told that their Spanish was deficient.

In recent years, legislation and referenda have both created and dissolved programs that promote bilingualism throughout the U.S. for K-12 students in various stages of bilingual development. Ovando (2003) describes the history of bilingual education in the U.S. while Wiley (2015) provides a review of language policy and planning in education. California Proposition 227: English Language Education for Children in Public Schools (California Legislative Information, 1998) is an example of a voter-approved referendum that changed the scope of bilingual education in the state of California (see Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Asato, 2000 for an analysis of the early impact on classrooms post-Proposition 227). In opposition to measures that seek to limit bilingual education programs, the Seal of Biliteracy is an initiative that has been adopted by 38 states and the District of Columbia as of January 2020 (Sealofbiliteracy.org, n.d.). The Seal of Biliteracy award promotes bilingualism and biliteracy by recognizing "students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages" (Californians Together & Velázquez Press, 2015). This award is typically conferred upon students as they graduate from high school; however, some schools/districts have honored students at earlier stages in their bilingual trajectory (Californians Together & Velázquez Press, 2015). This movement has gained traction since the California legislature approved the first seal

of biliteracy in 2011. Subsequently, researchers such as Gándara (2015) and Giambo and Szecsi (2015) have advocated for the use of statewide seals of biliteracy as a means of preserving and promoting bilingual education.

As the pendulum swings for and against the acceptance of bilingual programs in elementary and secondary education, we tend to lose track of post-secondary institutions' contribution to fostering bi/multilingual speakers and communities, as this context allows for the coming together of learners that share similar language goals and needs. One specific context in which this occurs is the HL classroom. Students enrolled in HL courses bring with them a gamut of experiences, skills and knowledge of the heritage language that is often linked to notions of family, friends, community(ies), identity and culture for these students (García, 2005). This unique connection to the target language stands in contradistinction to the experiences of second language (L2) students since these learners are often introduced to a L2 via formal classroom instruction. These students can develop an appreciation for their L2 that fosters an integrative approach to language learning (Noels, 2001); however, their path to bilingualism and biculturalism remains different from that of their HL peers. For most L2 students, their journey begins in the classroom while HL students' bilingual trajectory begins at home where the language (e.g., Spanish, French, etc.) functions as a mode of communication among family members. Hence, it seems critical that we listen to the voices of students enrolled in post-secondary HL courses as their prior experiences with the language might inform HL instruction.

In this dissertation, I argue that an analysis of students' self-reported experiences in their new and recently established post-secondary SHL classes revealed the ways in which these classes did not fully meet students' needs as HLLs of Spanish. Therefore, SHL curriculum must better connect to professional uses of Spanish through contextualized grammar instruction that is

linked to real-world language use. Furthermore, instructors must tap into the resources of the community that is developed in class and the local Spanish-speaking communities as students benefit from informal and formal explorations of linguistic and cultural diversity represented by their classmates. Using Spanish in the local community allows students to use their HL in new ways. Finally, students benefit from a caring curriculum that values students' funds of knowledge and learning interests. This critical caring (Antrop-González & De Jesús, 2006) in the curriculum debunks deficit framings of Spanish and promotes all forms of bilingualism as an asset.

Problem Statement

The unique sociolinguistic, sociocultural and political positioning of students for whom Spanish is a home language does not disappear once they graduate from high school. The U.S. education system has traditionally not provided equitable support and services for students who speak languages other than or in addition to English (see Stafford, 2013 for a discussion of the educational disadvantages that Latinos face in the state of Wisconsin) despite research that has demonstrated the (developmental and social) benefits of bi(multi)lingualism (Baker, 2014; Bialystok, 2011; García, 2009b). Recently, K-12 education had experienced an increase in the number of dual language immersion programs (McKay Wilson, 2011). A primary goal of dual language education is to promote literacy in two languages (Gómez, Freeman, & Freeman, 2005; McKay Wilson, 2011; Unger, 2001) and most of these kinds of programs accomplish this goal by providing content instruction in English and a language other than English (the amount of instructional time dedicated to each language varies according to the model adopted by a school or district). This model strives to foster cultural competence and language acquisition beginning

with young learners of languages and continuing, in some school districts, with older students too.

As I will discuss in greater detail later, our language ideology in the U.S. has changed as the immigrant population has shifted away from Europe (see García, 2005 for a review). There has been growth in supporting and maintaining students' home language(s) among some K-12 educators, administrators, researchers and communities as some schools and districts have started to adopt social justice language practices and policies that do not conform to an English-only program model that devalues students' linguistic repertoire in their home language(s) (McKay Wilson, 2011; Unger, 2001). This evolving position on language education in K-12 settings is not quickly transferring to post-secondary language departments. Hence, a disconnect exists between K-12 and post-secondary education as the former is beginning to offer more support for home language maintenance while the latter is not.

Colleges and universities should make every attempt to meet the diverse needs of their entire student population. Students in liberal arts programs are often required to take second language[1] (L2) courses. These students are typically raised as monolingual speakers of the dominant language in the U.S. (English), and they enroll in college-level language courses having previously taken L2 courses in high school (such students are commonly known as "false beginners"). Most of the language courses offered at colleges and universities in the U.S. are designed for true beginners and false beginners of a language, not heritage speakers of languages (Beaudrie, 2012; Potowski, 2002). Indeed, Felix (2009) notes that these students represent a "largely underserved population" (p. 160) in post-secondary institutions. With regard to the overall governing body of L2 instruction, Kelleher (2008b) confirms that "the American Council

[1] I avoid the use of the word "foreign" because Spanish, like many languages other than English spoken in the U.S., is not necessarily "foreign" to everyone.

on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) officially recognized the unique needs of heritage learners and began establishing standards for these students as part of their national standards in the late 1990's" (p. 13) and a decade has passed since standards for HL education were created. Further research into what HL students experience in the language classroom can help guide HL curriculum design and thus better meet the sociolinguistic needs of students enrolled in HL courses. It is important that educational research point its investigative lens at language departments in post-secondary institutions in order to examine the experiences of speakers of HLs. In doing so, we can create the most positive and beneficial classroom-based language maintenance and development experience for students.

Study Purpose and Goals

My objective in this dissertation was to examine a specific phenomenon: the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish in new and recently established post-secondary SHL classes in the Midwest. These experiences encompass the classroom-facilitated language maintenance and development processes of students as they expand their linguistic repertoire in a language on the continua of bilingualism (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000) and literacy. Classroom-based language experiences can promote positive, effective and beneficial language maintenance and development opportunities that contribute to and build on the dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009a) of students so that they are able to flourish in their HL courses. Counterproductive classroom-based language experiences can: 1) ignore language variety in the classroom, 2) utilize top-down approaches to language teaching/learning in which student voice is not incorporated into the curriculum and 3) reinforce deficit views of students' language abilities that frame language courses as an opportunity to *fix what is broken*.

These types of classroom-based experiences do not meet students' language needs and are dismissive of dynamic bilingualism and thus, they can have an adverse effect on students' language maintenance and development trajectories. I was interested in learning more about the influence of various kinds of classroom-based language experiences recounted by students as a better understanding of this particular phenomenon (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Felix, 2009; Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Pak, 2018) could lead to pedagogical implications for the education of bilingual speakers of Spanish in post-secondary contexts. These pedagogical implications could be useful for educators in K-12 settings too as language sustainability should be, per García and Otheguy (2015), the goal of language programs that engage bilingual students. Kondo-Brown (2003) noted there has not been sufficient research on the efficacy of the majority of HL programs (beginner and/or intermediate classes only) at the university level and this study aspires to contribute to the understanding of how students' experiences in HL classes could inform curriculum and pedagogy for HL courses.

SHL education research (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Felix, 2009; Knutson, 2006; Potowski, 2012) has called for more studies that consider student input and their experiences since current qualitative research has not thoroughly analyzed this area of HL education (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Felix, 2009). Pedagogical design and implementation should not follow a top-down paradigm and when educators make decisions for course curricula, they should listen to and include the voices of the students they teach. One goal of this dissertation was to contribute to the growing body of research that focuses on student-centered understandings of SHL courses. This goal was accomplished by carrying out a phenomenographic study of students' experiences in linguistically diverse SHL classes. Specifically, this study included SHL students in an under-researched region of the U.S. – the Midwest. The researcher asked students

to reflect on the extent to which their classroom-based language experiences aligned with and met their self-reported sociolinguistic needs.

A variety of approaches (e.g.: case studies, narrative inquiries, phenomenological studies, ethnographic studies – just to name a few) could have been used (and in some previous studies, have been used) to conduct research about the experiences of speakers of Spanish in classroom contexts and how these experiences impact language maintenance and development as determined by students' perceptions. The aforementioned methodologies share a common perspective: that of being forms of first-order research. Phenomenography, however, takes a second-order approach to research (Bowden, 2000; Marton, 1988; Orgill, 2007). First-order approaches, by design, focus on the point of view of the researcher, while a second-order perspective strives to focus on the participants. For phenomenographic research, this experiential or second-order perspective seeks to "characterize how something is apprehended, thought about, or perceived" (Marton, 1988, p. 181). A first-order approach calls for researchers to study a particular phenomenon while a second-order approach encourages the study of how a group of people experiences a phenomenon (Orgill, 2007).

Moreover, I believe phenomenography, as a qualitative approach, is underutilized in language studies in the U.S. Per Marton and Pang (2008), the foundation of phenomenographic approaches to research is pedagogical as these studies seek "to identify, formulate and tackle certain types of research questions about learning and understanding in educational contexts" (p. 540) and thus, this line of research can be a useful tool that allows researchers to better comprehend students' classroom-based language experiences. Gaining insight into the ways in which students experience the SHL classroom could help researchers, educators, administrators, textbook authors, etc. better understand how to ensure that HL education is meeting the needs of

bilingual speakers of Spanish and maybe even the needs of bilingual speakers of other languages. Likewise, we could also expand our examination of the ways in which these classroom-based experiences shape language maintenance and development from a student-centered perspective. In the next section, I will discuss the different interpretations of the term heritage language as these definitions influence my conceptualization of what it means to be a heritage language learner (HLL).

Heritage Language Terms and Definitions

The term heritage language is used in various contexts (e.g., schools, communities) in distinct ways in different parts of the world. Therefore, before continuing my discussion, it is important to review some definitions of the term heritage language and to explain how I understand this term as it relates to my study. As Kondo-Brown (2003) indicated, HL "encompasses a huge, heterogeneous population with varying historical and cultural backgrounds" (p. 1) and this description represents many HLs in the U.S., such as Spanish. HL can refer to an ancestral language (Kondo-Brown, 2003) and learners of ancestral languages are most likely true beginners in the language (e.g., a student who chooses to learn German because of his/her German ancestry). The term heritage language is also used in discussions of endangered indigenous or immigrant languages (Kondo-Brown, 2003). Furthermore, Fishman (2001) categorized three types of HLs in the U.S. They are: immigrant HLs, indigenous HLs, and colonial HLs. The first grouping refers to the languages spoken by immigrants that arrived in the U.S. after it gained independence from the United Kingdom. The second category represents the languages of people native to the Americas and the third set includes the languages of the European groups that first colonized the U.S. and are still spoken here today (e.g., Spanish, German and French).

Fishman allowed for overlap between the first and third classifications and he described Spanish as an example of this overlap in the U.S. Moreover, Fishman's "categories emphasize the historical and social conditions of other languages relative to English" (as cited in Kelleher, 2008a, p. 3) by situating them within the English-dominant U.S. society. The abovementioned definitions are not always used in educational settings as argued by Valdés (2005). The language teaching profession restricts the use of the term heritage student to someone who has grown up in a household in which the student is exposed to a language other than English, therefore, the student may be bilingual to some extent (Valdés, 2005). Valdés supports the use of the term "L1/L2 user" interchangeably with heritage student to refer to HL students to capture the unique nature of their bilingualism, which she claims is best understood as existing along a continuum that encompasses various degrees of fluency in Spanish.

In an effort to further nuance and problematize the term heritage language, García (2005) wrote:

> Positioning languages other than English in the United States as *heritage languages* clearly is rear-viewing. It speaks to what was left behind in remote lands, what is in one's past. By leaving the languages in the past, the term *heritage language* connotes something that one holds onto vaguely as one's remembrances, but certainly not something that is used in the present or that can be projected into the future. (p. 601)

For García (2005), the use of terms that focus on the heritage characteristic of a language represents a loss of ground gained during the civil rights movement; however, she also acknowledges these heritage terms serve as a counterpoint to the monoglossic narrative prevalent in many programs designed to educate diverse student populations, namely that of bilingual education. Bilingual education, in mainstream discourse in the U.S., often refers to educational

programs that serve students who speak a language other than English as their home language. However, I like to conceive of bilingual education as a field that includes academic scholarship, programs and policies that aim to support emergent bilinguals (García & Kleifgen, 2010) and bilinguals in both formal and informal learning contexts. Some characteristics of the long bilingual tradition in the U.S. include the use of languages (e.g., indigenous languages and Spanish) before the widespread use of English and a population born outside of the U.S. that has been approximately 10% since 1850 (García, 2005). A shift in the countries of origin of immigrants to the U.S. has been accompanied by a shift in our language ideology that stands in contradistinction to the tolerant language policies of the past (García, 2005). This shift has slandered and silenced the term bilingual education (García, 2005) in many parts of the U.S. and a consequence of this movement is that "multiple identities have been silenced" (p. 605) as one language identity is reduced to a heritage status. As there are 27 million Spanish-English bilinguals in the U.S., García (2005) claims that Spanish is more than a heritage language and "…perhaps it is our bilingualism that is our heritage…" (p. 603).

As previously mentioned, for García (2005), the term heritage language in educational settings challenges current language policies and ideologies by promoting "a small modicum of professional bilingual activity in times of an increasingly bilingual U.S. reality but strict English monolingual imposition" (p. 604). In secondary and post-secondary contexts, HL classes provide bilingual educational opportunities for students that speak Spanish at home or in their communities with varied levels of proficiency (p. 604). Although García (2005) recognizes the benefit of HL education in K-16 settings, she reminds us that the term heritage language also restricts the expression of bilingual speakers' multiple identities.

Considering the reviewed definitions and perspectives, in my research I prefer to use terms such as bilingual speaker of Spanish or simply Spanish speaker. However, like García (2005), I recognize the value of the term heritage language as a resistance to the hegemonic discourses prevalent in education; therefore, I use heritage language learner (HLL) interchangeably with the aforementioned terms. In a 2013 lecture, Potowski discussed the scholarly disconnect that exists in bilingual education and HL education. Instead of two separate fields of scholarly pursuit, I like to describe HL education as a part of the overarching field of bilingual education as both areas (should) aim to support bi(multi)lingual students' languages. This shared goal, in my opinion, places bilingual and HL programs and areas of research into the field of bilingual education – a field that encompasses educational practices and policies across a multitude of levels and includes students of all ages. Nevertheless, I will use terms related to HL research when appropriate in order to not misrepresent the work of researchers that use this term and others related to it (such as heritage speaker) and in order to reference research that investigates the many languages that can be described as HLs in the U.S.

Hence, I approach my research from a "*speaker-centered* view of Hispanic bilingualism" (García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 639) as this perspective better describes the participants. Spanish is more than just an aspect of their heritage; it is a part of these students' linguistic repertoire and it is used to accomplish communicative goals in various contexts. Participants were raised in homes in which Spanish was a language of communication in their family and/or community(ies). These Spanish speakers were educated in the English-dominant U.S. schooling system. They also represent different points on the continua of bilingualism (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000) as their bilingualism is linked to their exposure to and

experience with the HL as many of these students are members of the 2nd, 3rd, etc. generations of Spanish-speaking families in the U.S. (see Valdés, 2001).

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. This current chapter introduced the problem, purpose and goals of this research. My conceptualizations of the term heritage language were also discussed in this first chapter. Chapter two details the theoretical framework and methodology that influenced this study. García and Otheguy's (2015) theory of Hispanic bilingualism frames users of Spanish as translanguagers whose linguistic repertoire is a single interconnected system. This theory shaped my phenomenographic approach to this study. This phenomenography seeks to understand the ways in which a group of people (HLLs of Spanish) experience a particular phenomenon (SHL classes). In addition, the second chapter provides a review of relevant HL literature that highlighted the lack of studies that consider student-centered perspectives. As such, SHL education has not thoroughly investigated students' experiences in their SHL classes and the potential influence these experiences could have on curriculum and instruction. The third chapter presents the research questions that guided this study, and it outlines the methods used in the data collection and data analysis processes. Researcher positionality is also addressed in this chapter.

Each analysis chapter in this dissertation represents an outcome space that emerged through an inductive approach to data analysis (Creswell, 2007). In keeping with a phenomenographic approach to this study, each outcome space is "the relationship among the various categories of description according to their logical complexity and inclusiveness and describes the variation in the possible ways in which a phenomenon is experienced" (Marton & Pang, 2008, p. 536). The analysis chapters represent categories of description that shed light on

the phenomenon at hand – the experiences of HLLs enrolled in new and recently established SHL courses in post-secondary settings in the Midwest. The descriptive categories are "a distinctively different way of experiencing or seeing the phenomenon" (Marton & Pang, 2008, p. 536). The categories of description are presentations of the data collected via interviews with the five participants. The goal was to prioritize the voices of students enrolled in SHL classes as research has not adequately included student perspectives that could inform HL curricula and pedagogy (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Felix, 2009; Knutson, 2006). Specifically, Ducar (2008) called for the addition of student voices to "the debate surrounding the use and teaching of language in the Spanish heritage language classroom" (p. 425). In each category of description, I provide an analysis of participants' responses that highlight the ways in which students' experiences contribute to an understanding of what it means to be a HLL of Spanish in a small linguistically heterogeneous SHL program in the Midwest.

The findings are discussed across three chapters. In the first analysis chapter (Chapter 4), I argue that students' reflections reveal the ways in which the curriculum in their SHL classes did not adequately respond to their planned professional uses of Spanish and their desire to practice the four language skill areas equally. Students were motivated to enroll in a SHL course by their desire to use Spanish in their future careers; however, the use of Spanish in professional settings was not fully explored in the SHL classes. Additionally, grammar guided the SHL curriculum to a focus on language forms instead of real-world uses of Spanish. This chapter also addresses the imbalanced treatment of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in students' SHL classes. Writing was heavily favored while practice speaking, listening and reading in Spanish were not given enough attention.

The second analysis chapter (Chapter 5) highlights the importance of instructors' facilitation of a sense of community both inside and outside of the SHL classroom. Further, many students addressed the "natural" rapport that developed because they felt a connection with peers who shared their linguistic, cultural, racial/ethnic backgrounds and experiences, which they welcomed in the context of a predominantly White campus. Through this community building, students had opportunities to share their linguistic and cultural diversity with their classmates, and a few participants were able to make new connections to their local Spanish-speaking communities.

The final analysis chapter (Chapter 6) tackles external and student-replicated deficit views of Spanish that impacted students' experiences in their SHL classes. Participants expressed reproductions of hegemonic ideologies, and they also observed examples of deficit perspectives held by their instructors. These framings of students' Spanish as deficient contributed to participants' wanting to "perfect" their Spanish and gain the knowledge they were "missing" in order to "fix" their Spanish. This chapter also describes the ways in which deficit framings of Spanish were debunked by the HL curriculum. Spanish was viewed positively by students when their instructors supported language variety and promoted bilingualism an asset. Lastly, the theme of caring emerged to build confidence in students and promote the value of Spanish, which signals the importance of a caring curriculum in HL classrooms.

The conclusions presented in chapter seven underscore the importance of including and respecting the voices of HLLs in conversations about HL education. Students' reflections on their experiences in SHL classes help elucidate, for example, that students wanted to study grammar; however, grammar instruction was often devoid of ties to students' future real-world uses of Spanish. As such, pedagogical implications are discussed. To better meet the social,

affective, and linguistic needs of students, I outline a holistic approach to SHL instruction. This approach can address students' concerns through a focus on real-world language use instead of prioritizing decontextualized language forms. A holistic approach to instruction can also strengthen students' ties to local Spanish-speaking communities by highlighting professional uses of Spanish and by combatting feelings of isolation Latinx students have reported when enrolled in primarily White colleges. Furthermore, holistic education can also foster care in the curriculum, decrease students' linguistic insecurities and balance the practice of speaking, writing, listening and reading in the HL. Finally, limitations of this study and suggestions for future research are included in this last chapter.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the epistemological stance, theoretical perspectives and methodology that have informed this study. First, constructionism and intentionality represent the epistemological underpinnings of this qualitative research. Constructionism shows us that truth comes into existence through our interactions with the world in which we live. Truth is arrived at through students' reflections on their experiences in SHL classes. Intentionality describes the ways in which physical and mental worlds interact. For the participants, the SHL classroom is the physical world and their perception of their experience in that particular space is the mental world. Analyzing students' constructed reality and their interactions in this reality provided insight into how the SHL curriculum could better align with students' needs and reasons for studying their HL.

Next, García and Otheguy's (2015) conceptualization of bilingualism of Spanish speakers is discussed. This framing helped me better understand the HLLs of Spanish that participated in my study. Specifically, this theory made clear the importance of translanguaging practices for young adult Spanish speakers in the U.S., which I discuss later in this chapter. Finally, I examine the ways in which a phenomenographic approach to qualitative contributed to researching the SHL classroom-based experiences of HLLs. This methodology prioritizes the ways in which a group of people experience a particular phenomenon. Thus, phenomenography facilitated a student-centered understanding of post-secondary SHL classes in this research.

The second half of this chapter is dedicated to a review of relevant literature on Spanish as HL in post-secondary contexts. Several themes that emerged during the literature review highlight a research trend, which is a lack of SHL studies that include and respond to

perspectives of students enrolled in SHL courses. Hence, students' voices, traditionally, have not been consulted when making curricular decisions for SHL classes. A goal of my research was to help fill in this gap in SHL scholarship so that we can learn from student-centered perspectives. A better understanding of what students experience in the SHL classroom can highlight how students' sociolinguistic needs are met in new and recently established SHL programs. Potential areas of improvement for SHL curriculum in the abovementioned types of classes can also be identified.

Epistemological Concerns: Constructionism and Intentionality

Constructionism informs us that there is no truth out in the world that awaits our discovery of it. Truth comes into existence through the interactions we have with the world. This point of view does not permit a purely objective nor subjective view of the world. Constructionism brings together objectivity and subjectivity by reminding us that these concepts are inextricably linked as the world and its objects are our partners in the generation of meaning (Crotty, 1998). In accordance with much qualitative research, my work was shaped by a constructionist epistemological stance in which "all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Crotty also posited that "different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon" (p. 9) and therefore, the interaction between subject and object that generates meaning-making can change in accordance with various social, cultural and historical factors. My study has shed light on Spanish speakers' perception of and representation of reality in a SHL classroom. Specifically, I was most interested in students' understandings of their classroom-based experiences and the ways in which these experiences responded to learners' self-reported needs and goals.

Furthermore, the principle of intentionality, as proposed by the 19th-century psychologist and philosopher Franz Brentano (1838-1917), has an important role in constructionism as this concept theorizes how the mental and physical worlds interact. This interaction is of importance when conducting research about classrooms, as the classroom is a space that we socially, culturally and historically define. As such, students (and teachers) often expect to interact with a classroom context in accordance with certain norms and practices. My research sought to highlight the interaction between HL student and HL classroom by investigating the students' experiences in these learning spaces.

In his *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* (*Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*) published in 1874, Brentano reintroduced the notion of intentionality into philosophy and it was later developed into a more complex theory(ies) in the work of his students (Libardi, 1996). Brentano's thesis of the intentionality of thought is described as a "reintroduction" because his conceptualizing of intentionality and the work of medieval scholars such as Thomas Aquinas were based on Aristotelian philosophy (Jacquette, 2004). In his 1874 theorizing of intentionality, Brentano proposes that "mental acts are characterized by intentionality, i.e. they are directed towards something" (Albertazzi, Libardi, & Poli, 1996, p. 12). When we think, we think about something and therefore, thinking is "always directed mentally toward an object" (Jacquette, 2004, p. 99-100). Hence, the consciousness we experience is "always consciousness of something" (Libardi, 1996, p. 59). It is important to note that Brentano's use of the word intentionality is related to the Latin word *tendere* (to tend), which can be defined as "moving towards" or "directing oneself to" (Crotty, 1998, p. 44); thus, we establish that Brentanian intentionality represents the mind's reaching out to something. In this dissertation, I investigated

the ways in which students' minds reached out to, interacted with and interpreted the SHL classroom as the object of their consciousness.

Brentano explained his interpretation of intentionality by dividing phenomena into two aspects: 1) physical phenomena and 2) psychic phenomena (Albertazzi et al., 1996; Libardi, 1996; Margolis, 2004), in which psychic phenomena can be described by "the intentional in-existence of an object" (Albertazzi et al., 1996, p. 12). Thus, Brentanian intentionality establishes and illuminates the connection between mental and physical phenomena. Albertazzi and her colleagues (1996) provided examples of this inextricable connection by proposing that when we are frightened, something frightens us and when we are amused, we are amused by something. These phenomena do not exist in isolation: we cannot just be frightened or amused – something must provoke these emotions (p. 12).

In Brentano's concept of intentionality, there is always an "of," "something," etc. associated with all mental acts (thinking, understanding or experiencing, for example) and this relationship is reflective. The conscious mind's awareness of something reaches out to it and influences the object. This intimate relationship, exemplified by intentionality, is unique to constructionism (Crotty, 1998). Brentanian intentionality underscores that although all phenomena consist of two distinct features, physical and mental attributes, these characteristics are united because the interaction between the two aspects is what leads to the construction of meaning (Crotty, 1998). The object in and of itself is meaningless; however, Crotty (1998) reiterates that without the object, we cannot generate meaning. In other words, meanings are the product of both the physical world and the mental world.

Thus, there is an indivisible link that exists between people and the world in which we live. If someone were to ask us "What is this?" and show us a picture or video of a classroom in

the U.S., most of us would be able to immediately define and describe the image or footage. This task is achievable as we have a shared understanding of what a classroom looks like and what happens in a classroom at any level of study in the U.S. This understanding is made possible through the interaction of our physical and mental worlds that cannot be isolated from one another. My research highlighted the interaction of these two worlds as experienced by bilingual speakers of Spanish in a HL classroom so that we can better understand the ways in which student-centered perspectives could impact HL course design and pedagogy.

A speaker-centered heteroglossic approach to Hispanic bilingualism

One of the greatest influences on my approach to theorizing and undertaking research in bilingual settings is the body of work disseminated by the prominent scholar Ofelia García and her colleagues (see García 2005, 2009a, 2009b, 2013a, 2013b; García, Bartlett, & Kliefgen, 2009; Wei, 2011). In 2015, García and Otheguy published a theory for understanding the bilingualism of Spanish speakers. This theory is "a *speaker-centered* view of Hispanic bilingualism, a disaggregated view of linguistic competence, and a translanguaging view of bilingual practices, all sheltered under what is generally known as a heteroglossic ideology" (p. 639). The use of the word "Hispanic" here captures the use of the Spanish language; it is not used to describe race or ethnicity. In other words, "Hispanic" is an adjective in this theory that refers to the bilingualism of world-wide speakers of Spanish in "multilingual social contexts" (p. 639). Contact between Spanish and other languages has been and continues to be common in Spanish-speaking settings (García and Otheguy, 2015).

This heteroglossic approach calls for a framing of bilingualism that does not ignore the voices of the users of the language. Hence, my research investigated the experiences of Spanish speakers enrolled in SHL courses from the point of view of the student. These experiences can have a positive or negative impact on the language maintenance and development of students as

they expand their linguistic repertoires along the continua of bilingualism (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). As previous studies have indicated (Alarcón, 2010; Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Potowski, 2012; Valdés, 2001), we need more studies that give primacy to student perspectives in HL education research as most of our current theories that influence HL education have not sufficiently considered the classroom-based language experiences of students and the ways in which these experiences could potentially shape HL instruction.

According to García and Otheguy (2015), bilinguals are translanguagers whose languages are not single systems, but rather “sets of disaggregated linguistic features deployed for translanguaging meaning-making” (p. 640). Disaggregated linguistic competence, in which a language “shares the communicative stage with the disaggregated features of other languages,” (p. 640) is not incompatible with other linguistic theories. Heteroglossic theorizing proposes that “structural features of linguistic repertoires have no inherent linguistic affiliation but only external cultural labeling” (p. 644). In other words, it is our society and culture that drives these categorizations. Our interactions in and with the world around us construct ideologies about what is a language and what is not a language. Our interactions also influence how these language systems are described. Language features are flexible; therefore, in some contexts they can be attributed to language A and in others, they are characteristic of language B (García & Otheguy, 2015) and this flexibility supports the notion that meaning is not created; it is constructed (Crotty, 1998). García and Otheguy’s (2015) conceptualizing stands in opposition to theories of ‘language boxes’ by proposing that bilinguals “have an interconnected whole, an ecosystem of mutual interdependence of possible heteronamed linguistic features forming a single web, where translanguaging is the speech product generated by the web” (p. 646).

Further, this position challenges notions of additive and subtractive bilingualism as the authors support an understanding of dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009a) in which focus is placed on the "complex and interrelated" language practices of bilinguals (García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 647). The ways in which multilinguals use language are tied to the goal for communication (p. 648), and bilingualism truly emerges when language users integrate and appropriate new features "within a singular linguistic repertoire" (p. 648). To translanguage is to "use at all times one's linguistic repertoire" (p. 646), and as Wei (2011) reminds us, translanguaging is going between and beyond different linguistic structures, systems and modalities.

A "speaker-centered heteroglossic translanguaging approach to Hispanic bilingualism" (García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 651) also critiques the prestige that is often associated with the "monolingual speaker and setting as ideal, natural" (p. 649) by directing our attention to the fact that language contact, which includes bilingualism in many contexts, has been and continues to be the norm in the Spanish-speaking world (García, 2005; García & Otheguy, 2015). First, 'autonomous languages' is a socially constructed concept (p. 648); Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) emphasized that the process of becoming bilingual involves the continuous adaptation of one's linguistic resources in order to achieve the communicative meaning-making goals linked to a particular context (as cited in García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 248). This interpretation seeks to debunk the well-known concepts of contact-induced change such as borrowing and calquing that are often used to describe Hispanic bilingualism. These concepts, along with code-switching, are uncritical and limited as they reinforce socioculturally created notions of the separateness of languages and a monoglossic ideology (p. 648-49) that is grounded

in comparing the languages of bilingual communities to "the same languages as they are, or once were, spoken in their respective monolingual communities" (p. 649).

Second, García and Otheguy's (2015) theoretical positioning examined the myth that to be a native speaker of a language, one must receive formal education in said language and those who do not are hence labeled as heritage speakers of the language that represent an incomplete acquisition of the 'native' language (p. 650). The authors problematized theories of incomplete acquisition by drawing attention to the lack of a theory that clearly articulates *completeness* against which we can determine *incompleteness* (p. 649). Theories of incomplete acquisition are also weakened by research that has established that children do not construct grammars that perfectly match and reproduce those of the previous generation (p. 649). Moreover, the widely acknowledged "independence of the cognitive-systematic concept of grammaticality from the educationally dictated notion of correctness" (García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 649) does not support theories of incomplete acquisition. We are thus reminded, "attitudes, values and beliefs about languages are always ideological" (p. 649). Current trends in bilingual education discourses tend to support monolingual settings and monolingual speakers "as ideal linguistic archetypes" (p. 649) and in doing so, frame the multilingual as deficient or lacking in some way when compared to the monolingual.

García and Otheguy (2015) continued their argument for a new understanding of Hispanic bilingualism by espousing an approach that approximates the concept of transglossia (see García, 2009a, 2009b, 2013a for a review). Language diglossia represents two different uses: either between languages or within a language (García & Otheguy, 2015). In his work, Fishman (1971) noted that Paraguay is a successful example of language maintenance, as Spanish and Guaraní exist in a diglossic context, thus avoiding language shift (from Guaraní to

Spanish) (as cited in García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 650). The authors' heteroglossic theory "goes beyond both of the harmonious and conflictive models of diglossia" (García & Otheguy, 2015, p. 651) explained by Fishman. As such, they have ascertained that, in some contexts, language maintenance efforts can augment 'linguistic shame' and this increase can then lead to language shift (p. 651). The embarrassment that people experience related to 'limited language' is "an attitude that can only be constructed (and deconstructed) within the bilingual community itself, by educators and sociolinguists valuing their dynamic practices" (p. 651). Instead of promoting language maintenance, we should focus on the sustainability of Hispanic bilingualism in the U.S. as language sustainability is tied to our interactions with the society and culture(s) in which we live and use our linguistic repertoires (p. 651).

The final anchor of García and Otheguy's (2015) theoretical lens was of importance to my study as it encouraged a pushback against the monoglossic ideology of current curricular practices. In bilingual classroom settings, the authors argued that students have "diverse languaging practices" (p. 651) and Vertovec (2007) asserted that these classrooms are often examples of super-diversity. In previous research, García (see 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2013a) has observed that the rigid compartmentalization of languages in dual language programs in the U.S. may contribute to our failure in successfully educating bilingual speakers of Spanish (García & Otheguy, 2015). Consequently, bilingual education, as practiced in many parts of the U.S. educational system, promotes languages as autonomous systems, establishes diglossia as the norm, which, in turn, maintains a dominant language and situates "the other language to a position of inferiority, of minority status, of being simply part of 'the heritage'" of the student (p. 652). Like in Chapter two of this dissertation, this discussion of 'heritage' problematizes this

term and its use in educational settings designed to meet the needs of bilingual users of their home language(s).

In sum, a speaker-centered heteroglossic approach to Hispanic bilingualism, as theorized by García and Otheguy (2015) and other seminal works (see García 2005, 2009a, 2009b, 2013a, 2013b; García et al., 2009; Wei, 2011), is the foundation on which I base my conceptualizations of Hispanic bilingualism in the U.S. It is important to note that in the U.S., Latinx people are a majority minority who speak the second most common language in the country; however, most K-12 bilingual students, who are U.S.-born, do not have access to SHL experiences. This reality was true for the participants. A salient feature of García and Otheguy's (2015) theory is the focus on the bilingual's perspective and practices when generating theories of bilingualism. In other words, our research should avoid stances that silence the voices and lived experiences of the people that participate in our studies. Like García and Otheguy's (2015) theory, my research aspired to center on the perspectives of bilingual Spanish speakers as they participate in the HL classroom to advance our understandings of students' classroom-based language experiences and the ways in which these experiences align with and meet the perceived sociolinguistic needs of students.

The Phenomenographic Tradition

Phenomenographic perspectives, suggest "how we can know the world" (Jary & Jary, 1991, p. 186) or as Crotty explains, "how we know what we know" (1998, p. 8). Svensson (1997) and Pherali (2011) argue that phenomenography was developed as an autonomous research strategy and therefore, it underpins some fundamental ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. I do not believe any approach to research can be developed as an autonomous research strategy and thus be completely atheoretical. Hence, phenomenography, like many other qualitative approaches to research, is "underpinned by the constructivist

principle that we construct meanings of phenomena from an array of social and personal influences" (Cousin, 2009, p. 184).

The foundations of phenomenography can be traced to a group of researchers (Ference Marton and his colleagues) at the University of Gothenburg's (Sweden) Department of Education during the early 1970s (Marton, 1997), when research tended to be pragmatic in nature (Bowden, 2000; Hasselgren & Beach, 1996). In other words, these researchers sought to more directly investigate the links between theories generated by classroom-based research and the application of these theories to classroom contexts. Phenomenography is an approach to research that focuses on describing the world as it appears to someone else (Marton, 1988; Marton, 2015). The SHL classroom and bilingual speakers of Spanish represent these microcosms of reality in my research project. In this way, phenomenography complements a speaker-centered view of Hispanic bilingualism (García & Otheguy, 2015) because this methodology seeks to advance knowledge by directly consulting a group of people (HLLs of Spanish) to better understand their perception of a specific phenomenon (SHL classes).

Phenomenography developed from empirical studies in post-secondary education (Marton, 1997) "as a function of certain results and certain reactions to and reflections on the methods used" (Marton, 1988, p. 192) in mainstream qualitative approaches during the late 1960s. The differences that exist between phenomenography and other approaches such as phenomenological and ethnographic methodologies are due to "differences in interest rather than in basic assumptions" (Marton, 1988, p. 197). For example, while research in phenomenology is a first-order enterprise in which the researcher needs to "bracket" his or her preconceived notions of the phenomenon being studied in order to arrive at the universal essence of said phenomenon (Marton, 1988), a phenomenography attempts to "characterize the variation" (Marton, 1988, p.

193) that exists in a phenomenon by taking a second-order approach that prioritizes the perceptions of the phenomenon as told by the people who experience the phenomenon (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000; Marton, 1988; Marton, 1997; Marton & Pang, 2008). Hence, phenomenography supported a speaker-centered view of Hispanic bilingualism (García & Otheguy, 2015) by focusing on the perspectives of the students (a second-order approach) who were enrolled in post-secondary SHL classes in the Midwest (the phenomenon of interest).

A comparison between phenomenography and ethnography shows us that the "knowledge interests" (Marton, 1988) of these approaches differ. Ethnographic studies traditionally aim to provide descriptive or realistic accounts of cultures (Richardson, 1999) and ethnographers often pursue this line of research by using, for example, participant observations and interviews as research tools. These tools allow ethnographers to corroborate their findings by analyzing what participants said and what researchers observed. Phenomenographers "do not adopt a skeptical attitude towards the statements that are made by their interviewees" (Richardson, 1999, p. 59) because a primary goal of phenomenography is to better understand the relationship a participant has with a phenomenon. Again, the "differences in interest and in explicit or implicit theories of description" (Marton, 1988, p. 197) distinguish phenomenography from other qualitative approaches to research. Marton (1988) argues "that the mapping of the hidden world of thoughts about various aspects of the world around us should be recognized as a specialization in its own right (p. 180) and acknowledges that this specialization (phenomenography) is complementary to other modes of qualitative research. The "phenomenographic knowledge interest" (Marton, 1988, p. 180) is content-oriented in that it seeks to describe phenomena not "as they are," but rather how they appear to people by providing phenomenographic descriptions that consist of four interrelated aspects.

Phenomenographic inquiry should yield descriptions that are: 1) relational, 2) experiential, 3) content-oriented and 4) qualitative (Marton, 1988, p. 181).

Phenomenography aspires to "identify and describe conceptions of reality as faithfully as possible" (Hasselgren & Beach, 1996, p. 12). Experiences are often at the center of phenomenographic explorations as representations of people's lived realities. Marton (2015) broadly defines *experience* as "all the ways in which the world around us is sensed and grasped by us" (p. 108). In education research, the identification and description of "the various ways in which people see and experience things" (Cousin, 2009, p. 184) can then support teaching and learning (Cousin, 2009). Thus, a phenomenographic approach to research sustains a speaker-centered framing of Hispanic bilingualism by focusing the research lens on the ways in which a group of people (HLLs of Spanish) use their HL in bi/multilingual settings. García and Otheguy's (2015) heteroglossic ideology attempts to "look at bilingualism through the bilingual's own eyes" (p. 639). Phenomenography has this same goal as it aims to understand a phenomenon through the perspectives and reflections of people who have lived, and thus interacted with the phenomenon of interest.

In my study, the descriptions of reality that were generated through the data collection and analysis process are based on the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in new and recently established undergraduate HL courses in the Midwest. My findings and results were not representative of all heritage language learners (HLLs) of Spanish in all learning contexts. My goal was not to generalize to all similar student populations, but rather to provide insight into the classroom experiences of a small group of HLLs so that we can continue to broaden our understanding of students' experiences in linguistically diverse SHL courses and

then consider the influence of these experiences on students' self-reported needs that SHL curriculum and pedagogy are expected to meet.

Aims of Phenomenographic Research

In accordance with Prosser (2000), I agree that we should research teaching and learning from the point of view of those engaged in the actual processes of teaching and learning. Prosser (2000) reminded us: "the recent research into teaching and learning showing that students' learning outcomes are closely related to their approach to learning, and that that approach is closely related to their perceptions of the learning context, reinforces the importance of the learners' perspectives" (p. 43). This view contrasts a HL research agenda that does not consider the classroom-based experiences of bilingual students. For example, some lines of HL research focus on the creation of a corpus of speech (samples) from bilingual speakers that seeks to identify linguistic patterns (see Albirini & Benmamoun, 2014; Polinsky, 2011; Said-Mohand, 2007, 2008 for examples). Although this type of data collection is valid and relevant for certain types of research questions and inquiries, HL corpus research does not provide insight into the HL classroom in the U.S. via student experiences.

Prosser (2000) provided further support for phenomenographic studies in his discussion of science education research on conceptual change that has not been successful due to its lack of inclusion of "students' conceptions of learning, or their intentions in the learning process" (p. 43). In other words, a phenomenographic approach to research could help us better understand students' learning experiences and with a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, we could help improve classroom-based learning experiences. I believe that a phenomenographic approach to HL research can contribute to the field by helping expand an area that has not been thoroughly investigated by increasing the number of studies that seek to research students' understanding of their experiences in HL courses. With new knowledge about students' classroom-based

experiences in the HL classroom, we will then be able to determine the ways in which HL courses meet the perceived needs of bilingual students enrolled in HL programs.

Some research often tries to develop prescriptive solutions to problems in teaching and learning, while phenomenography tends to be more descriptive (Prosser, 2000). Prescriptive answers can only be successful if they can take account of individual perceptions of those involved in the teaching and learning process. Phenomenography can examine teachers and learners in authentic teaching and learning contexts with the goal of understanding people's experiences in these educational settings. I believe that phenomenographic lines of research can help us critically reflect on teaching and learning experiences. In my phenomenographic study, I examined HLLs' experiences in new and recently established SHL classes to better understand students' relationship with and understanding of this phenomenon (the HL classroom) and to reveal the ways in which these classroom-based experiences met sociolinguistic needs for the student participants.

Phenomenographic Interests

In his work, Bowden (2000) noted the difference between 'pure' and 'developmental' phenomenographic interests (p. 3). Ference Marton advocates for a pure approach to phenomenography in which the focus is on people's conceptions of various aspects of their everyday life (Bowden, 2000). In contrast, Bowden's developmental perspective promotes a focus on studying how people experience an aspect of their world. It then aims to "enable them or others to change the way their world operates, and it usually takes place in a formal educational setting" (p. 3). Bowden states that he conducts research so that the findings can be used to improve the world in which he lives and works. More specifically, an objective of Bowden's work is to provide findings that could be used in teaching and learning contexts.

Thus, an aim of my research, like Bowden's (2000) application of phenomenography, was to contribute to the improvement of the teaching and study of Spanish in HL contexts. This aim included, but was not limited to, responding to the call for more research that investigated students' experiences in the HL classroom (Beaudrie et. al, 2009; Ducar, 2008; Hornberger & Wang, 2018; Stafford, 2013; Potowski, 2012) so that student voices influence the direction of HL education in the U.S. Developmental phenomenographic research is carried out with the intention of helping participants to learn more about a specific phenomenon in which they exert agency (Bowden, 2000). The results of this phenomenography could shape the planning of learning experiences for students, which, in turn, could lead to more powerful understandings of HL education.

I aimed to achieve these goals by taking a naturalistic approach to phenomenography in which the researcher collects data from authentic situations in order to record what is said or what happens in a situation without direct manipulation or involvement from the researcher and then to analyze the data in accordance to phenomenographic tenets (Hasselgren & Beach, 1996) that call for the creation of descriptions of the relationship between the two aspects of a phenomenon: the physical (the SHL classroom) and the psychic (the experiencing of said classroom). My phenomenographic approach to research applied Brentano's intentionality thesis to the examination of experiences that exist as human-world relationships (Marton & Pang, 2008). We cannot "experience without something being experienced" (Marton & Pang, 2008, p. 535) and consequently, all human experiences are intentional in the Brentanian sense – they are directed toward an object. Therefore, according to phenomenography, "human beings and the world are inseparable" (Marton & Pang, 2008, p. 535). This line of research "is about the

relations between human beings and the world around them" (Marton, 1988, p. 179) and I kept this perspective in mind during data collection, analysis and synthesis.

Response to Critiques of Phenomenography

Webb (1997), in his critique of phenomenography, problematized the ways in which phenomenographers understand thought as "[i]t is difficult to defend the idea that observations can 'simply' be reported or the categories are 'simply there' in some way outside of the historical and social experience of the reporter" (p. 200). Also, Webb (1997) believed that "phenomenographic research will tend to report the history of a particular discipline as it is understood by the researchers and as they reconstruct it through the people they interview" (p. 201). In response to Webb (1997), Ekeblad (1997) wrote that she did not recognize phenomenography as described by Webb. In her rebuttal, Ekeblad (1997) stated that Webb (1997) treated phenomenography as:

> …a homogenous, stable and firmly bounded Phenomenography, rather than as the name of a still developing, socially and historically constituted tradition in educational research – a name that connects texts produced in different contexts at different times for different purposes, and also joins people reading these texts and relating to them to their ongoing educational or research practices in different contexts for different periods of time and for different purposes (p. 221).

Furthermore, Ekeblad (1997) noted that Webb's (1997) critique of the outcomes of phenomenography denied that "in a certain context, for a certain purpose, some ideas are more powerful than others" (Ekeblad, 1997, p. 222). This postmodern relativist perspective negates that something "can ever legitimately be more valued than anything else" (p. 222). For Ekeblad (1997), phenomenography aims to contribute to teaching and learning "by exploring and mapping the variation in ways of experiencing educationally central subject matter content (pp.

221-222). Ekeblad (1997) also countered Webb's (1997) analysis of the role of the researcher in phenomenographic studies by signaling that qualitative researchers are "inevitably involved in co-constructing the reality we research" (p. 220). Thus, the interpretative role of phenomenographers is not unique to phenomenography.

In more recent work, Cossham (2017) reflected on phenomenographic approaches to research. First, Cossham (2017) identified critiques of phenomenography such as a lack of replicability and reliability as "[i]t is unlikely that other researchers would reach the same categories of description" (p. 22) in phenomenographic research. Cossham (2017) reconciled this critique as semi-structured interviews are not expected to be uniform between researchers and participants as interview data represent a "unique conversation" (p. 22) that cannot be replicated.

Moreover, Cossham (2017) observed that other critiques of phenomenography claim that this research approach is "merely descriptive accounts of people's own experience" (p. 23). The author then highlighted that "any qualitative research interview will by its very nature include descriptive accounts of people's experience" (p. 23). Thus, phenomenography does not differ from other qualitative approaches to research that collect data via interviews. Also,

> …the only way to know what participants understand is to ask them to describe their experience, and to evaluate that description. Some participants may be better at describing their experience than others, or may feel more comfortable doing so: that is a feature of much qualitative data collection (Cossham, 2017, 24).

Cossham (2017), in addition, remarked that phenomenography, an approach that expects variation, is "criticised for not meeting positivist standards of scientific rigour that it does not, in fact, intend to meet" (p. 24). Cossham (2017) concluded her reflection on phenomenographic data by explaining that relying on what participants share during interviews "provides a specific

kind of data; it does not provide data that are lacking" (p. 24). Hence, phenomenographic data are a valid source of data that can contribute to gaining a deeper understanding a particular phenomenon.

Finally, Cossham (2017) commented on an inconsistency between the research approach and the position of the researcher in phenomenography. Qualitative researchers attempt to minimize bias in their studies so that they can "report what participants (or the data) communicate" (Cossham, 2017, 24). Phenomenography aims to uncover the ways in which people experience the world which is a second-order approach to research that prioritizes the perceptions of participants. An inconsistency arises as "phenomenographic research is done within the framework of a second-order perspective, but the findings are presented according to a first-order perspective" (Cossham, 2017, 25). This feature of second-order approaches to qualitative research is unavoidable as scholarly work in this area is more than just verbatim transcriptions of what was said during an interview. I agree with Cossham's (2017) assessment of phenomenography as an approach that provides "a rich, holistic and variable understanding of the way people conceptualise a phenomenon" (p. 27) as, in my study, HLLs of Spanish provided insight into their experiences in HL classes which, in turn, demonstrated the ways in which students' experiences can inform SHL pedagogy.

I turn now to relevant literature that has examined the experiences of HLLs of Spanish in post-secondary contexts. One theme that emerged highlighted the inclusion and exclusion of students' voices in SHL curriculum planning. Also, my review detailed the ways in which some varieties of Spanish were privileged in Spanish courses, while "non-standard" varieties were not celebrated. Some of the reviewed studies explored pedagogical approaches to teaching HLLs of

Spanish, and the last section focuses on the few studies identified that sought to ask Spanish speakers about their experiences in SHL classes.

Literature Review

Several themes related to the study of Spanish-speaking students' experiences in the language classroom emerged while reading for this literature review. To prepare this literature review, I began by consulting academic journals that have a history of publishing scholarship on SHL in the U.S. and/or research closely linked to SHL studies. In addition to reviewing the bibliographies of SHL studies, I also searched for works produced by some of the leading scholars in SHL education. Finally, I drew upon bilingual education research, which tends to concentrate on K-12 learning environments. HL education research and bilingual education research do not "talk" to each other enough (Potowski, 2013) and HL education research can learn from the theoretical underpinnings, the methodological approaches and the implications for teaching and learning revealed in studies of bilingual education. As I have previously mentioned, I view HL education as a sub-set of bilingual education and therefore, the scholarly relationship that exists between these two areas can be reciprocal in nature.

In the following sections, I discuss empirical literature related to issues of exclusion and inclusion of students' perspectives and the ways in which HL students' perceptions of (not) belonging in the language classroom can affect students academically and emotionally. Secondly, I address what we (students, teachers, researchers) view as worthy and worthless within the scope of Spanish as a HL in post-secondary settings to highlight a) the importance of recognizing language variety in the classroom and b) the need to avoid frameworks that view learners as deficient. I then address questions about Spanish-speaking students' placement into courses that reflect their proficiency in the heritage language, including how to best evaluate

students' language skills to determine appropriate classroom placement (e.g., a literature versus entry-level course). Lastly, I address research that has analyzed the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in Spanish HL and L2 language courses to show that insight provided by HL students can positively shape SHL pedagogy and curriculum.

Exclusion and Inclusion

Historically, the research dedicated to SHL education has not investigated or accounted for students' perspectives on, evaluations of and experiences in SHL programs. As we will see in this section, the implementation of HL programs tends to privilege course design while making little or no mention of the students enrolled in HL programs and their language needs, backgrounds and linguistic repertoires. The beneficial and productive ways in which HLLs' classroom language maintenance and development experiences can inform program development (or modification) are often not addressed.

First, Fountain (2001) described the SHL program at a small college in an area that, historically, does not have a large Spanish-speaking population. The author provided a plan for the implementation of a SHL program in other similar locations; however, her plan did not include feedback from the students in the HL program. It would have been useful to know in which ways the classroom experiences of HLLs of Spanish in this setting could have shaped the curriculum and I hoped to help fill this gap in the SHL literature by conferring with the primary source of knowledge about SHL classroom experiences: bilingual Spanish-speaking students.

As counterexamples to Fountain's (2001) work, Potowski (2002), Alarcón (2010) and Felix (2009) demonstrated that seeking and including students' voices in program decisions can benefit language programs in many ways. Potowski (2002) conducted a questionnaire and focus group-based case study with the goal of understanding the choices Spanish-speaking students

made about course selection and their classroom experiences in traditional Spanish L2 classes. Twenty-five bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in 100- and 200-level Spanish L2 courses participated in the author's study. Potowski noted the emergence of three themes. The first theme described students' negative self-evaluation of their Spanish as most of them had received little to no formal schooling in Spanish (p. 37). The second theme focused on bilingual students' comparisons to their L2 classmates in which the participants recognized advantages and disadvantages associated with being a heritage speaker of Spanish (p. 38). The third theme that emerged labeled teaching assistants as language authorities who taught *proper* Spanish and provided corrective feedback on the bilingual students' work that was deemed problematic (p. 38-39). The researcher concluded her study with recommendations for Spanish language instructors and departments based on the insight provided by the Spanish-speaking participants.

For her study, Alarcón (2010) used survey research to learn about the "language behaviors and attitudes" (p. 272) as well as backgrounds of five bilingual students enrolled in an advanced HL course. The five participants completed a 56-question sociolinguistic survey at the beginning and end of their SHL course (p. 273). The students' responses yielded a profile of advanced Spanish-speaking students (p. 278), demonstrated similarities and differences between advanced and lower-level Spanish-speaking bilingual students (p. 278-80) and provided suggestions for pedagogy for courses designed for Spanish-speaking students (p. 280-81). Again, as we observed in Potowski (2002), Alarcón's research provided us with a greater comprehension of the affordances of reaching out to the students whom we teach and seek to better understand.

To investigate the experiences of bilingual Spanish speakers in and outside of the Spanish L2 classroom, Felix (2009) utilized a phenomenographic approach to her qualitative study to ask

students about life in the U.S. as a heritage speaker of Spanish; she also delved into participants' experiences in Spanish L2 classes (p. 147). Like Potowski (2002), Felix (2009) collected data via a questionnaire and then focus group interviews (p. 148) with 39 bilingual Spanish-speaking students. The researcher's inductive thematic analysis of the data from the surveys and the transcribed interviews (2009, p. 148) produced two thematic headings for her question about life in the U.S. as a heritage speaker of Spanish (p. 149) and three thematic headings for her research question concerned with Spanish-speaking students enrolled in Spanish L2 courses (p. 154). Students' reasons for taking Spanish classes were both economic (advancement in the workplace) and personal (reconnect with family and culture) (Felix, 2009, p. 155). The second reason is unique to HL students – even those who are ancestral students of their HL (Kondo-Brown, 2003), as most of their L2 classmates do not have cultural ties to the Spanish language. In the classroom, Spanish speakers were sometimes viewed as experts in the Spanish language and hence, they became "instructors" in their classes while their literacy needs were ignored (Felix, 2009, p. 161). Some Spanish-speaking students felt empowered by the task of increasing literacy skills in a language with which they were already familiar; other students expressed feelings of shame and inadequacy when confronted with the preconceptions of their instructors and classmates. The author argued that Spanish-speaking HLLs' participation in L2 classes had the potential to inhibit the expansion of literacy skills in Spanish when they were limited by activities not designed for the HL student (p. 161).

Felix (2009) called for more SHL studies that research the regional needs of bilingual students in order to contribute to the realization of appropriate approaches for the teaching and learning of Spanish as a HL. Finally, this study of experiential knowledge incorporated voices that, historically, have been ignored. Felix recognized the importance of eliminating mismatches

in educational settings between the goals of a HL program and the goals/needs of the students served by the HL program.

In conclusion, the studies examined here showed evidence for the need to include students' perspectives in SHL curriculum. In her article, Fountain (2001) proposed a SHL program at a college in an area with a small Spanish-speaking population. However, this proposal took a top-down approach to curriculum design that did not consult the voices of the HLLs who would have enrolled in the SHL course. Innovation in HL instruction could become stagnant if we only rely on top-down perspectives to curriculum design. If HL education chooses not to be more inclusive in what lines of research are considered valuable and relevant to advancing the field, we might miss the potential to learn something new from certain points of view. Therefore, it is pertinent that we include students' views in the creation and modification of HL programs because of the unique relationship that exists between the HL student and the language of study. Alarcón's (2010) study, for example, exhibited sociolinguistic research that promoted the valuing and implementation of students' feedback into the design of SHL programs/courses. Potowski (2002) and Felix (2009) also provided meaningful insight into the worlds of Spanish-speaking students enrolled in L2 Spanish classes. These studies demonstrated the ways in which student-centered perspectives could potentially influence instruction and program design. My study reoriented the research lens from the L2 Spanish classroom to the SHL classroom in order to focus on the experiences of HLLs enrolled in classes designed for them.

Privileging and Denigrating Codes

While many HL students possess a range of language varieties based on their language histories and backgrounds, instructors' decisions, practices and philosophies in the classroom

related to the privileging and denigration of one code over another (e.g., marking "non-standard" Spanish as incorrect) can have a significant effect on these students' self-perceptions and classroom-based language maintenance and development experiences. The studies that follow illuminate the importance of respecting the linguistic repertoire students bring to the language classroom while also highlighting the value in refuting deficit views in HL education.

Villa (2004) examined the role that writing in Spanish has in the preservation and valuation of a HL. The author detailed the life experiences of two of his former students, Luz and Jesús, whose backgrounds mirrored those of most of the college students with whom Villa works. In this chapter, we learned about the benefits of studying one's HL and this included the transference of literacy skills from one language to another and the lifelong impact this process of *reencuentro* can have on students. For Villa, "writing represents a means to examine the world" and learning is a collaborative, reciprocal activity (p. 89). He also recognized the importance of the role of spoken language in the acquisition of written varieties. Villa (2004) urged that we, as a community, value any and all language skills that students bring to the classroom (p. 90) and that we do not *correct* students' spoken varieties of Spanish (p. 91). Luz and Jesús reported, that like many of Villa's former students, they used their HL in affective contexts (i.e., with family and friends) more often than for instrumental reasons, such as for a job (p. 92). Luz and Jesús' experiences reinforced Villa's call for a focus on the development of literate behavior as opposed to literacy skills and asked that those of us who work with writers to rethink our pedagogical approaches (p. 93), so that one variety/use of a language is not viewed as inherently superior to other linguistic varieties and modes of communication.

Acevedo (2003) noted the importance of the transference of abilities from English to Spanish. In her chapter, Acevedo (2003) described the first offering of a fourth semester

intermediate-advanced Spanish for HLLs course. The students enrolled in the course could hold informal conversations in Spanish, had taken a placement test and participated in a personal interview with the course instructor before the semester began (p. 258). The students in this SHL course were raised in Spanish-speaking households and were members of generations 1a and 2a (p. 257). The author stated that the main goals of the course were to preserve and reinforce the Spanish language (p. 258), and that the course also focused on writing, but at the request of the students (p. 259). Acevedo, like Villa (2004), posited that writing is a process (p. 262) that allows the Spanish-speaking student to incorporate previously-acquired notions of the writing process into his/her developing formal writing in Spanish. These students expressed overall satisfaction with their HL course and, according to the author "al aprender a manipular los textos formales, aumentó también su apreciación por la lengua heredada [after learning to manipulate formal texts, their appreciation for their heritage language also increased]" (Acevedo, 2003, p. 267) at the end of the semester.

In her inquiry into mixed-language background classes, Edstrom's (2007) research surveyed a total of 16 students who are L1 (native speakers), L2 and HL students of Spanish enrolled in upper-level Spanish courses. Her qualitative and quantitative analyses revealed that the HL and L1 students reacted negatively to their instructors' expectations and assumptions at times (p. 759; p. 762). The HL and L1 students provided the example of professor's expecting them to know "everything" about the Spanish language just because they were heritage and native speakers of it. One L1 student also reported feeling infantilized when asked to read a writing sample aloud as she deemed this exercise to not be useful (p. 762). The HL and L1 students also pointed out another area of concern: instances of praise in the classroom. Several of the HL and L1 students perceived that professors were too quick to praise L2 students for

minimal contributions while the contributions of HL and L1 students were often overlooked (p. 763). The issues recounted by the L1 and HL students were important for L2 and HL classroom contexts as they centered on valuing a particular group of students (and their contributions) over another group. In her conclusion, Edstrom (2007) asked if measurable differences existed between students enrolled in upper-level Spanish language courses that served students of all language profiles and students that were not in such classes (i.e., a HL context).

In a review of bilingual education, Krashen (2000) convincingly linked bilingual education to the successful maintenance of HLs by discussing the benefits of connecting literacy in one language to developing literacy in another language (p. 433). The author also claimed that students in K-12 bilingual education programs “who have a better education in their primary language excel in English language development” (p. 434). This principle also applies to heritage language contexts as underscored by the work of Villa (2004), Acevedo (2003) and Edstrom (2007). As Krashen (2000) purported, research showed the maintenance and development of HLs was rare when speakers were faced with the various agents of language shift. Moreover, according to the researcher, maintaining HLs had cognitive advantages, fostered communication and multiculturalism and benefited society, both economically and diplomatically (p. 440). Krashen believed the most successful HL programs were “integrated into the school day” in K-12 education and focused heavily on advancing reading skills in the HL (2000, p. 4). Holding class sessions every day is not an option for all post-secondary HL courses; however, the importance of the reading component is relevant as this is an example of transferring one set of language skills to another language.

As previously mentioned, researchers that study bilingual populations do not learn from the overlap in the field often enough (Potowski, 2013). In a 2006 an essay that parallels some of

the concerns of HL education, Gutiérrez and Orellana challenged the philosophical underpinnings and methodological approaches to research of English Learners. They warned colleagues against using "changing demographics" as a primary reason for research, as doing so can lead to deficit-centered conceptualizations of English Learners (p. 502-03). Gutiérrez and Orellana (2006) continued by reminding researchers to be cautious in their theories of normativity that do not account for "students' existing repertoires of practice" (p. 504). The descriptions we use to characterize students can reinforce notions of normativity and otherness (Gutiérrez & Orellana, 2006) and we must be cognizant of the unintended effects of the ways in which we frame students in our research (p. 506). The analysis of the genre of research about English Learners in the U.S. is an excellent example of scholarship from an area from which HL education could learn (Potowski, 2013) as both areas share many of the same goals and concerns for similar student populations.

Again, I wanted to contribute to the growing body of research that turns a critical lens to the classroom experiences of students who are HLLs of Spanish at the post-secondary level. Here, Villa (2004), Acevedo (2003) and Edstrom (2007) stressed the importance of valuing students' language varieties and integrating previously acquired language skills into the curriculum. A phenomenographic approach could help advance our knowledge and understanding of the sociolinguistic needs of HLLs of Spanish enrolled in new and recently established SHL instructional contexts. Moreover, this type of study could also further examine issues of language variety and the application of L1 language skills to the study of a HL.

Studies of SHL Pedagogy and Curriculum

This section reviews literature that examined HL students enrolled in SHL courses that helped expand knowledge about bilingual speakers of Spanish in academic settings. Principal

concerns in this area are issues of learning strategies and modes of instruction. These lines of investigation are of relevance to my study as they could contribute to a deeper understanding of Spanish speakers' experiences in SHL courses.

During an academic year, Colombi (2000) performed a lexical-grammatical analysis of three academic texts written by Rosa, a bilingual speaker of Spanish. The author selected Rosa's essays because the researcher believed they were a good representation of the development demonstrated by most of the students enrolled in an upper-level SHL course designed to help students develop both oral and written academic Spanish. In these classes, writing was understood as a process (Colombi, 2000), and the researcher employed a systemic functional linguistics perspective to track progress in Rosa's three essays (p. 298). The results indicated the importance of students' combinations of clauses and nominalization strategies as these processes contribute to the development of an academic register in Spanish. The author argued that a better understanding of these concepts could help instructors who teach writing to Spanish speakers (p. 303); however, the study did not ask the participant to reflect on the development of her writing in Spanish. By directly engaging with students, I hope that my study of experiences in the SHL classroom has provided more nuanced, student-centered recommendations for HL instructors.

In a 2003 article, Schwartz described an exploratory case study with three Spanish speakers enrolled in university-level HL classes. The students were 19-year-old women enrolled in either a third or a fourth semester SHL course and the three participants were second-generation bilingual sophomores born in the U.S. (p. 239). Schwartz collected data via a writing strategies questionnaire and a second questionnaire that assessed students' levels of comfort with the four traditional language skills. The researcher also used think-aloud protocols in her case study (p. 239) during students' writing tasks to learn about their writing strategies. The author

discussed the students' different strategies used during the writing process: rehearsing, repeating and rescanning (p. 245-47). Schwartz (2003) also mentioned the ways in which students' lack of confidence in their Spanish skills affected the writing experience (p. 248). She closed by offering a series of recommendations for in-class writing assignments for bilingual students (p. 250-53) that can be made more meaningful by gaining a greater understanding of the self-reported needs of students through my phenomenography that prioritized the inclusion of student-centered perspectives into curricular decisions.

Potowski, Jegerski, and Morgan-Short (2009) conducted a study to determine the effects of different modes of instruction in a SHL context. The researchers wanted to know if processing instruction (PI) and traditional output-based instruction (TI) could promote linguistic development for HLLs of Spanish. One hundred and one Spanish speakers enrolled in beginning- or intermediate-level SHL courses participated in the study, while a group of 22 L2 students served as a comparison group. The PI (meaning focused) and TI (form focused) treatments both tested a very limited use of the past subjunctive mood in Spanish (p. 550; 552). Both groups showed improvement in linguistic development after the implementation of the PI and TI methodologies; however, the variable Time only proved to be statistically significant for the L2 participants for the written grammatically judgment task (p. 559). Overall, the L2 students demonstrated greater gains in linguistic development when compared to their HL counterparts (p. 560). Potowski et al. (2009) concluded by hypothesizing that the results of their study showed Spanish-speaking students' "language development may differ from that of L2 learners" (p. 565) and focused grammar instruction might be beneficial to students enrolled in SHL programs. A phenomenographic approach could help corroborate these findings by investigating students' experiences in SHL classes that use either PI or TI as the instructional methodology.

New phenomenographic research could help bring together several of the aforementioned studies. My research could provide insight into Colombi's (2000) approach to SHL writing instruction and Potowski et al.'s (2009) processing instruction approach could also take place by questioning students' experiences in these particular settings. Additional studies on the use of think-aloud activities (Schwartz, 2003) could prove useful for recently established SHL classes. The studies in this section focused on HLLs enrolled in post-secondary SHL classes. However, unlike my phenomenographic study, the reviewed research did not include students' reflections on their experiences in SHL instructional contexts.

Including the Voices of HLLs

The limited research that has investigated HLLs' experiences in and their understandings of HL classrooms demonstrates that these students are uniquely positioned in HL classrooms to provide insights about the value, effectiveness and responsiveness of curriculum, approaches, and practices. Investigating their unique classroom-based language experiences can inform both HL curriculum and pedagogical practices, and, in the long-term, facilitate language maintenance, greater success for bilingual speakers of Spanish and a greater appreciation of their HL. Even though this body of literature has established that HLLs differ from L2 students because of their divergent sociolinguistic needs and their previous experience with the language of instruction; prior research has not adequately accounted for the ways in which HL students' experiences in HL courses could inform curriculum and pedagogy in HL programs in the U.S. Therefore, this final section of my literature review features research that includes the voices of Spanish-speaking students enrolled exclusively in SHL classes.

Like Ducar (2008), a goal of this dissertation was to move away from studying teachers' perspectives in SHL research and to, instead, try to achieve a better understanding of the

students' point of view in SHL contexts. The impetus for Ducar's (2008) questionnaire-based study was her observation of the influential nature of school on language attitudes (p. 416). One hundred and fifty bilingual Spanish-speaking students completed an eight-page survey as part of a larger collection of data (p. 418). The results of the study focused on the importance of keeping students' goals in mind when designing curriculum for SHL programs. Thus, Ducar called for the inclusion of student voices in "the debate surrounding the use and teaching of language in the Spanish heritage language classroom" (p. 425). As such, her research is fundamental to my belief that the goals of a SHL program align with the goals of its students.

For their qualitative case study, Schwarzer and Petrón (2005) interviewed three bilingual speakers of Spanish to learn about the reality of these students' study of Spanish as a HL. Through emergent thematic analysis, the researchers detailed the four themes as expressed by the three participants: 1) critique of Spanish classes; 2) self-assessment of their proficiency in Spanish; 3) familial reasons for studying Spanish; and, 4) cultural ties as a motivator for studying Spanish (p. 571). The authors then proposed a framework with the goal of providing an outline of what is possible in a university-level HL course based on students' needs and the researchers' knowledge as language educators (p. 574).

Few studies have investigated bilingual students' preferences for instructors in their SHL courses. Therefore, Beaudrie (2009b) conducted research with students enrolled in a large SHL program to determine if "the purported superiority of the native speaker in the language classroom" (p. 95), as reported in prior research, held true for the SHL classroom. The 213 participants completed a 22-item online questionnaire that elicited their opinions on the language status of their instructors (native, nonnative or heritage speaker) as well as the cultural background of their instructors (p. 97). The researcher used thematic analysis to code the open-

ended data and she calculated simple frequencies and percentages for the data based on ordinal scales. Beaudrie (2009b) also utilized Chi-square tests to search for statistically significant relationships among the variables under study (p. 98). The results indicated students preferred that native speakers of Spanish teach their SHL classes (p. 99). However, this belief was tied to students' experience with instructors from different backgrounds (p. 102). Being a good teacher trumped other defining characteristics of SHL instructors (p. 104); therefore, pedagogical training for instructors of all backgrounds was of importance for SHL programs according to the participants' responses (p. 103). Ultimately, by listening to the voices of students enrolled in SHL programs, we can gain insight into their classroom experiences with instructors from varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, comprehending these experiences can help guide teacher training for instructors of SHL courses.

One reason Spanish speakers have negative experiences in Spanish language courses is related to the undervaluing of their cultural identities and valuable cultural knowledge that is too often ignored in SHL curriculum. These types of cultural knowledge are necessary in order to "raise cultural awareness and self-reflection among students" as noted in SHL research by Beaudrie, Ducar, and Relaño-Pastor (2009, p. 166). In their study, Beaudrie et al. (2009) investigated students' understandings of cultural awareness and the impact of instruction on the cultural identity of bilingual speakers of Spanish. The authors, in a mixed qualitative and quantitative research design, found that cultural knowledge (self-cultural, intra-cultural and inter-cultural) were all taught in the classes surveyed (p. 165). Beaudrie et al. (2009) also noted that students acknowledged the importance of both "big C" and "little C" cultural knowledge. These results led to pedagogical suggestions for the SHL program in which the students were enrolled. The researchers believed the inclusion of student voices was of great importance when deciding

on pedagogy for SHL courses (p. 170), which, they stated, could be accomplished by "giving students' voices a forum in which they can be heard" (p. 172).

The results of these four studies contributed to the investigation of students' perspectives by studying what it means to be a bilingual speaker of Spanish enrolled in a SHL course and, as Beaudrie et al. (2009) argued, we should aim to continue the inclusion of the lived experiences of HLLs which will then promote curriculum design to be less of a top-down approach and more of a collaborative effort in determining what is "best" for HL students. My research helped bridge some of the gaps in SHL research, as much work has not been carried out that focuses on the experiences of HL students enrolled in post-secondary SHL classes. Like the aforementioned studies, my research placed emphasis on understanding the nuances of classroom-based experiences of HLLs enrolled in recently established SHL courses. By continuing to include student voices in SHL research, it was my goal to help uncover pedagogical implications for HL courses with a linguistically heterogeneous student population.

Conclusion

SHL research has documented and described the tensions that exist for Spanish-speaking bilinguals enrolled in traditional second language (L2) university-level courses (Beaudrie, 2009a; Beaudrie et al., 2009; Felix, 2004, 2009; Potowski, 2002; Valdés, 1997; Valdés Fallis, 1977, 1978; Valdés, Lozano, & García-Moya, 1981). Spanish-speaking bilinguals have described contexts in which their instructors and/or classmates expected them to be "teachers" or "experts" in the L2 classroom. When completing pair/group activities, bilingual speakers of Spanish reported that they were expected to teach their L2 classmates because of their language abilities (Edstrom, 2007; Potowski, 2002). Some Spanish-speaking bilinguals even perceived that they were teaching the instructors (Felix, 2004) because instructors would often seek answers from a HLL. These students expressed frustration when their teachers and peers treated them like

Spanish language “experts,” as most were not able to fulfill the duties associated with being the language teacher or expert.

Furthermore, bilingual speakers of Spanish have recounted feeling bored, feeling inadequate or devalued (Edstrom, 2007; Felix, 2004) and feeling intimidated in the L2 classroom (Edstrom, 2007; Potowski, 2002). Bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in L2 courses have disclosed feeling intimidated by L2 classmates who know “rules” about the Spanish language (Potowski, 2002). The L2 students had metalinguistic knowledge about grammatical rules and patterns that the Spanish-speaking students did not have because of the way they acquired their Spanish language skills. In the same breath, L2 students have reported being intimidated by their HL peers because of their ability to speak Spanish with a higher level of proficiency (Potowski, 2002). Spanish-speaking students can also experience anxiety in L2 classes and this was especially true for a group of receptive bilinguals (Ducar, 2012) in a university-level L2 Spanish course. Reports of boredom were linked to material deemed to be irrelevant by HL students. Activities that focused on basic oral production did not foster Spanish-speaking students’ interest in learning/using/maintaining the Spanish language. Edstrom (2007) reported that one bilingual speaker of Spanish even felt infantilized in her Spanish class. She did not believe that reading aloud from her composition was a worthwhile in-class exercise (p. 762). HL students have also stated that they become disengaged in the L2 classroom when the course materials do not have a strong link to culture (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011).

Research dedicated to Spanish as a HL has led to a growing trend in post-secondary institutions in the U.S.: the creation and expansion of SHL programs (Beaudrie, 2012; Potowski, 2002). With this increase in the number of HL courses coupled with a commitment to “providing equality of educational opportunity for linguistic minority students…” (Stafford, 2013, p. 144),

we need to better understand HLLs' experiences in these kinds of courses in post-secondary settings and pursuing research into this area will also allow for the exploration of the ways in which these experiences align with students' self-reported sociolinguistic needs. In language departments that can offer various levels in a HL sequence, homogenous groupings of students tend to occur. In these contexts, students often self-select HL courses, take a placement test or they are evaluated by a program director in order to be placed into an appropriate level HL course (Alarcón, 2010; Fairclough, 2006; Potowski, 2002). However, language departments that offer one or two SHL courses tend to enroll students with a more heterogeneous background in terms of their linguistic repertoires in Spanish, including, but not limited to, lexical knowledge, grammatical knowledge, speaking, reading, writing, academic experiences with the Spanish language and familial use of Spanish at home.

The investigative lens in post-secondary SHL research has primarily focused on bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in larger HL programs. Therefore, most of our knowledge about and understanding of SHL classrooms comes from students enrolled in classes in which they share similar linguistic profiles with their classmates. Beaudrie (2012) reminds us "SHL programs are no longer confined to those regions of the United States with large, long-established Spanish-speaking communities" (p. 217). With this shift in and expansion of SHL course offerings in the U.S. along with a commitment to meeting the needs of students, we need to ensure that we seek to understand the perceptions of HLLs of Spanish enrolled in not only homogenous groupings, but also students enrolled in SHL courses in which the linguistic repertoires of the students vary. The research questions I present in the next chapter shaped my phenomenographic inquiry that aimed to expand our knowledge of the classroom-based

experiences of HLLs enrolled in linguistically heterogeneous SHL courses in the Midwest, as this is an under-researched region in SHL studies.

SHL research in the U.S. (Alarcón, 2010; Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Potowski, 2012; Valdés, 2001) has called for more studies that investigate students' perspectives, as current qualitative and quantitative research has not thoroughly explored this area of HL education. Kelleher (2008b) notes dual-track programs emerge "in contexts where a foreign language program exists and heritage language learner enrollments are increasing" (p. 13). The trend in Spanish language departments in colleges and universities in the U.S. favors the creation and implementation of SHL courses as evidenced by the recent proliferation of SHL offerings reported in Beaudrie (2012), a chapter in which she synthesized the state of post-secondary SHL courses. These trends indicated that language departments were attempting to meet the diverse sociolinguistic needs of HLLs of Spanish. However, we must not forget to listen to students as we decide on curriculum and choose pedagogical approaches for HL instruction.

The principal purpose of my phenomenographic inquiry was to uncover the experiences of college students enrolled in new and recently established linguistically diverse SHL courses in the Midwest and then determine the ways in which these experiences align with students' perceived sociolinguistic needs. More specifically, I was interested in advancing our understandings of HLLs enrolled in SHL courses in which students' literacy in Spanish represents a gamut of skills and abilities. Felix (2004, 2009) are the only, to my knowledge, HL studies that have taken a phenomenographic approach to understanding the classroom experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish. Her work focused on these students' experiences in the U.S. at large and experiences in the L2 Spanish classroom. My research, in turn, aimed to

gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of Spanish speakers enrolled in HL courses designed for this population of students.

Of the colleges and universities that offer SHL courses, most of these institutions do not have more than a two-semester sequence (Beaudrie, 2012). Most post-secondary SHL research has been associated with larger SHL programs that existed before the 1990s boom in HL research. These often-researched SHL programs are also located in geographical regions that, historically, have a large Spanish-speaking tradition. Therefore, it is critical that SHL research also investigate students' experiences in new and recently established SHL programs in regions of the U.S. with a growing Spanish-speaking population.[2] For Felix (2009), "an authentic investigation of both the causes and effects of current pedagogical theory and classroom practices" should generate new theories (p. 160).

My research, which focused on the experiences of HLLs of Spanish enrolled in linguistically diverse SHL classes in the Midwest, fosters a deeper understanding of the ramifications of SHL curriculum, pedagogy, approaches, methodologies and materials for these under-researched SHL courses. Researchers, instructors, and administrators need to understand the new language learning spaces occupied by bilingual speakers of Spanish in not only colleges and universities, but also in K-12 settings, as evidenced by the inextricable similarities in the student populations and the potential beneficial ways in which research in both educational contexts could inform the field of bilingual education that includes studies focused on HL research.

[2] See Harklau's (2009) case study of two Spanish-speaking HL students in the New Latino Diaspora for more information on the relationship between Spanish as a HL and societal ideologies and educational policies.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to describe a phenomenographic approach to qualitative research that pursued a deeper understanding of how bilingual speakers of Spanish experience the linguistically diverse HL classroom and how those classroom experiences might align with and meet students' self-reported sociolinguistic needs. A better understanding of the classroom-based experiences of this particular population of students should provide important pedagogical insight into the design of curriculum for linguistically diverse HL courses. I believe that my dissertation research promotes a better understanding of how students experience new and recently established SHL classrooms by conducting phenomenographic research that places students' perspectives at the center of the investigative enterprise. Ultimately, I hope that my student-centered findings are of benefit to various kinds of SHL program models.

In this chapter, I first present the research questions that guided this phenomenographic study of the experiences of HLLs of Spanish enrolled in new and recently established SHL courses in the Midwest. Next, in a discussion of the research methods associated with a phenomenographic inquiry, I detail my research design by outlining the data collection and data analysis plans in accordance with a phenomenographic approach to qualitative research. I also include a statement on researcher positionality.

Research Questions

According to Cousin (2009), "[p]henomenography is not hypothesis driven" (p. 191) and phenomenographic inquiry differs from other forms of qualitative research such as case study and ethnographic research in that phenomenographic research does not interrogate "what is going" on, because a primary goal of phenomenographic studies is to identify variation, which is best described as the diverse ways of experiencing a phenomenon, within a specific context (p.

191). Therefore, phenomenographic research "always starts with the broad speculation that variation of perception is likely to exist in relation to a phenomenon" (p. 191). In this dissertation, the questions that guide the research are:

1) How do HLLs experience the SHL classroom?
    a. What is the SHL classroom environment like for HLLs in new and recently established SHL programs in the Midwest?
    b. What is it like to study Spanish with other HLLs?
2) How do SHL classes meet the self-reported sociolinguistic needs of HLLs?
3) How do HLLs experience the teaching of Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing in their SHL classes?

The SHL Context of the Midwest

Current research has not adequately investigated SHL programs in certain geographical areas of the U.S. (Potowski, 2016). In the fall of 2010, Beaudrie (2012) distributed an online survey with the goal of creating profiles of SHL programs in the U.S. at universities with at least five percent Hispanic/Latinx enrollment. The Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Nebraska, and Wisconsin) had 20 programs which were 37% of the 169 identified SHL programs. Fourteen of the 20 programs in the Midwest were in Illinois, which was one of the ten states with the highest number of SHL programs (Beaudrie, 2012). If you remove Illinois and its 26 universities that met Beaudrie's criteria, the other nine states in the Midwest had six SHL programs across 28 universities. Few studies have focused on college-aged HLLs of Spanish residing in different communities in the Midwest (see exceptions Velázquez, 2015; Velázquez, Garrido, & Millán, 2014). None of the participants in this current study were students in Illinois, while several participants were students at universities that did not offer SHL courses when data from Beaudrie's (2012) study was published. Perspectives from

students enrolled in new and recently established SHL programs in the Midwest could provide insight into the regional needs of HLLs of Spanish in the U.S. Furthermore, as Pacheco (2014) indicated in her study that examined the experiences of a bilingual Latinx adolescent living in a Midwestern community, “analyses of language must account for both the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts of development for bi/multilingual youth” (p. 118). The lived experiences of students must be acknowledged and incorporated into SHL curriculum and pedagogical practices.

This study examined the experiences of HLLs of Spanish in new and recently established post-secondary SHL classes in which students’ linguistic repertoires in Spanish can vary greatly. This kind of heterogeneity tends to occur in educational contexts in which bifurcation based on students’ linguistic repertoires is restricted due to a limited number of course offerings, student enrollment, budgetary constraints, size of HL student population, etc. (Stafford, 2013). Additionally, according to Goulette (2014), this heterogeneity in post-secondary contexts, is the norm in secondary education – a context in which some HLLs first study Spanish in mixed classes of HL and L2 learners. This study sought to understand the different ways in which HLLs of Spanish experience a particular phenomenon – new and recently established linguistically diverse post-secondary SHL classes in the Midwest.

Background on HL Programs in Higher Education

Seminal research on L2 classrooms (see Beaudrie, 2012; Colombi & Roca, 2003 for a review) created HL tracks of study as L2 courses were not a good fit for students who already had some level of proficiency in the language being studied. Feedback from HLLs has contributed to our knowledge about the experiences of Spanish-speaking students enrolled in Spanish language classrooms in colleges and universities in the U.S. (Acevedo, 2003; Alarcón, 2010; Edstrom, 2007; Felix, 2004, 2009; Potowski, 2002); we need to build upon these kinds of

studies to continue the inclusion and valuing of students' voices in research dedicated to Spanish as a HL.

As previously discussed, most post-secondary SHL classroom-based research occurs in contexts in which Spanish-speaking students represent a significant portion of the student body and/or the Spanish language has historical ties to that particular geographical region (Beaudrie, 2012). Hence, these language departments can offer numerous levels in the HL sequence and thus, these language programs are able to create classes in which students share a more homogenous linguistic profile. I want to stress that these kinds of programs are informed by notions of homogeneity in their SHL courses. No two learners are ever the same and therefore, no class can ever consist of students who are 100% linguistically homogeneous (Valdés et al., 2008). On the contrary, colleges and universities with smaller Spanish-speaking populations are limited to offering a HL sequence that is smaller in scope, and my participants were enrolled in SHL courses in language departments that offer no more than two SHL courses. In fact, as Beaudrie (2012) has shown, these limited SHL language course offerings have become the new norm in post-secondary educational contexts as more colleges and universities have begun to offer SHL language courses.

Research Design

A phenomenographic study can investigate the perceived needs of HLLs enrolled in SHL courses at post-secondary institutions. By pursuing this line of research, phenomenography analyzes the experiences of a group of people and then seeks to describe the variation that exists in these shared experiences. A principal purpose of this phenomenographic study was to research the experiences of undergraduate students enrolled in new and recently established linguistically diverse SHL courses in the Midwest. In language classes, bilingual students draw on their

linguistic repertoire, language learning beliefs based on experience with (an)other language(s) and notions of what is important to them in their language maintenance and development process. HLLs' home and community-based use of a language is one detail that justifies the exploration of bilingual students' experiences in HL classes as their pre-classroom language histories differ from those of traditional L2 learners. For me, a goal of HL education is to establish classes appropriate for bilingual speakers of HLs, and these courses can help preserve and reinforce Spanish in the U.S. (Acevedo, 2003).

To ensure we accomplish this goal, we need to expand research that centers on students' understandings of HL courses (Alarcón, 2010; Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Valdés, 2001). As Carreira and Potowski (2011) noted "[t]here is also a critical need for work that connects research findings to the realities of the classroom" (p. 147). Therefore, for this dissertation research, I conducted a phenomenographic inquiry into the experiences of Spanish-speaking bilingual students enrolled in linguistically diverse undergraduate SHL courses at colleges and universities in the Midwest.

Data Collection. The goal of this section is to describe the phenomenographic study that constituted the data collection for this dissertation, focusing especially on how I sought to better understand the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish enrolled in linguistically heterogeneous post-secondary HL courses. A phenomenographic approach to data collection aided in the exploration of bilingual students' experiences in the SHL classroom. Currently, scholarly inquiry dedicated to HL education has not adequately researched HL students' contributions to and understandings of the HL classroom (Ducar, 2008) – and more specifically, those of HLLs in the linguistically diverse SHL classroom. A better understanding of the experiences of this population of students could provide important pedagogical insight into the

strengths and weaknesses of current trends in curriculum/pedagogy for HL programs. Our gaps in knowledge are most evident in the lack of research dedicated to understanding the experiences of the divergent groups of bilingual Spanish speakers enrolled in linguistically heterogeneous HL courses in colleges and universities in the U.S.

Research Sites. Research focused on the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish in a HL context can be conducted in a variety of sites. For the sake of being principled and pragmatic (Heller, 2009), I examined the experiences of HLLs of Spanish enrolled in SHL programs at colleges and universities in the Midwest, as my primary research interests are concerned with post-secondary HL education in new and recently established SHL programs. I identified and contacted 25 colleges/universities in the Midwest with SHL programs that met the aforementioned profile. After receiving approval from IRB Offices, thirteen instructors of HLLs of Spanish agreed to share my research study with their students. The participating colleges and universities were medium and large public and private post-secondary institutions located in urban and suburban areas of the Midwest. Some participants lived in a state with only one post-secondary SHL course statewide. Therefore, to ensure anonymity of the students and their instructors who shared my participant recruitment letter with their students, the identifying details of the research sites (names of states and post-secondary institutions) are not revealed.

A feature of these post-secondary institutions is that they offered no more than two SHL courses. As previously noted, this characteristic of these HL programs is representative of a growing number of SHL programs at colleges/universities nationwide (Beaudrie, 2012), and students enrolled in these kinds of SHL programs tend to represent a linguistically heterogeneous background (Beaudrie, 2012; Ducar, 2008; Stafford, 2013). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, none of the participants were students in the state of Illinois, the Midwestern outlier in

Beaudrie's (2012) study that profiled SHL programs in the U.S. The student body at the participants' universities had a Latinx population between six and 12 percent. At least three of the universities represented did not have SHL classes when Beaudrie (2012) collected data in the fall of 2010.

Participants. The importance of being practical about data collection decisions led me to be mindful of the number of participants in my study (Heller, 2009). Having too few participants makes data analysis and triangulation difficult while having too many participants, in a study of this scope, would have expanded the investigative lens beyond that of a dissertation. When referring to conducting phenomenographic interviews, Cousin (2009) suggested "[t]here is no magic sample size for phenomenographic research but at least ten interviews seems to be a sensible minimum" (p. 192). Thirty-three HLLs responded to a questionnaire (designed and stored in Qualtrics, a secure online data collection tool) about their experiences in their SHL courses. I used the responses to the questionnaire to shape the themes that were examined during the five one-on-one interviews.

Through purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005) based on students' demographic information and linguistic profile, I requested that one-third (n = 11) of the respondents participate in a phenomenographic interview. I wanted the interviewees to be a representative sample of the students participating in the study in order to capture the linguistic diversity of the participant population, as students' linguistic repertoire could influence their classroom experience. However, due to the response rate, I was not able to ensure that the linguistic heterogeneity of the sub-section of students that took part in the interviews reflected that of the larger participant pool. As such, I highlighted the linguistic backgrounds of the five

interviewees to add a level of nuance to the analysis of the phenomenographic interviews conducted. Table 1 provides profiles of the participants (all names are pseudonyms).

Table 1. Participants' Backgrounds

Name	Major	SHL Variety	Year
Ana	Undecided/Business	Argentine	Freshman
Bianca	Criminal Justice	Mexican	Junior
Lupe	Psychology	Southern Mexican	Senior
Rosa	Physiology	U.S. Mexican	Sophomore
Sara	Criminal Justice	Mexican	Sophomore

Students self-reported their SHL variety in the online questionnaire when they responded to demographic questions, or they commented on the variety of their HL during their interviews. Lupe, for example, when describing the linguistic diversity present in her SHL class said: "There were some people whose parents were from northern Mexico, and they speak Spanish differently than we do in southern Mexico." The SHL varieties of students were also linked to the racial/ethnic group with which they identified. This study did not specifically investigate students' identities nor affiliations with a particular variety of Spanish; however, future research on classroom-based experiences of HLLs could examine this area of interest.

Carrying out data reduction and being mindful of matters such as selectivity with participants and kinds of data collected can be beneficial in the narrowing of the research lens of the study (Duff, 2002; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Ochs, 1979; Song, 2009). As previously mentioned, the participants were enrolled in linguistically diverse SHL courses at

post-secondary institutions in the Midwest. These students represented a cross-section of the linguistic heterogeneity of bilingual speakers of Spanish in the Midwest as well as the range of classroom-based SHL experiences this phenomenography seeks to describe (Bowden, 2000).

Research Tools. Student-centered perspectives were the primary source of data for my research. I used a questionnaire (Appendix A) and phenomenographic interviews to acquire student-generated understandings of experiences in new and recently established post-secondary SHL courses. A well-designed open-ended survey can complement phenomenographic interviews by quickly gathering data that can serve as a foundation for the data gleaned from the phenomenographic interviews. I used a questionnaire to collect demographic information from recruited participants. I also asked that students respond to several open-ended questions about their experiences in their HL courses. In this questionnaire, I asked HLLs if they were willing to participate in a one-on-one interview that would be conducted via Blackboard Collaborate, a secure on-line meeting space. Blackboard Collaborate allowed me to audio record each interview so that I was able to transcribe the interviews later. Students' names were anonymized during the data collection process, and the audio recordings were saved on a secure server. Interviews lasted 50-90 minutes.

Like Felix (2009), participants' answers to the questionnaire aided in the creation of eight themes (Appendix B) that were investigated during the five semi-structured individual interviews. Allowing answers to written surveys to shape the questions posed during the interviews meshes well with phenomenographic tenets (Marton, 1988), as this is an example of giving primacy to the voices of the students or, in other words, the experiencers of the phenomenon. Using similar questions in the questionnaire and interviews allowed me to craft themes for the interview that included the voices and experiences of a larger group (n = 33) of

HLLs enrolled in SHL classes in the Midwest. Thus, the one-on-one interviews ($n = 5$) investigated Spanish as a HL with the students in a more nuanced way. In short, these semi-structured interview questions had a foundation in the collective experiences of HLLs of Spanish and not just those who agreed to be interviewed.

In accordance with phenomenographic research, one-on-one interviews allowed students to verbalize their experience so that we, as outsiders, could gain access to the life-worlds of the participants (Felix, 2009). Phenomenographic research collects data by means of dialogic interviews (Bowden, 2000) that are a “conversational partnership” in which the interviewer (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000, p. 302) encourages the participant to reflect on her/his experience with the phenomenon. By identifying themes, “a new understanding of the experience” (Felix, 2009, p. 147) can be achieved. The semi-structured nature of the interviews encouraged students to be reflective so that this new awareness could be revealed.

Phenomenographic semi-structured interviews need to “tease out how the interviewee conceptualizes and experiences…” (Cousin, 2009, p. 192) a phenomenon. Marton (1994) explained that phenomenographic interviews do not require the creation of many questions in advance as most questions should be generated based on the responses given by the participants. Therefore, the five semi-structured phenomenographic interviews began with a general inquiry into the phenomenon of interest (the SHL class) in order to ground the discussion. The discussion then led into a “grand tour” question (Cousin, 2009, p. 193) in which I directly asked students about their experiences with the phenomenon so that they could talk through their experiences (Marton, 1994) in their SHL classes.

Heller (2009) encouraged that data-gathering techniques be multiple so that data can be corroborated and triangulated from varied sources. The use of phenomenographic interviews

paired with responses to a questionnaire, which shaped the guiding research questions, enriched the data collection process by providing a level of nuance to the data set that could not have been achieved by interviews as the sole data collection tool. Also, the incorporation of memo writing (Maxwell, 2005) into the entire data collection (and analysis) process contributed to my research as these tools provide contextual information and a space for reflection on all steps of the research process (Heller, 2009).

Data Analysis: Categories of Description and the Outcome Space

Data analysis began at the conclusion of an interview and it was an iterative process throughout the study. During each interview, I took notes and audio recorded the interviews. I then transcribed the audio recordings with the goal of becoming thoroughly familiar with the data by listening to the interviews multiple times while transcribing. When appropriate and possible, I followed the data analysis plan employed by Felix (2009) in her phenomenographic research. First, I carried out a thematic analysis of the data from the transcribed interviews. This inductive data analysis approach of the interviews created themes that represented thematic headings for the research questions and the themes were then divided into sub-themes in the discussion of the results. I did not approach the data set with a preconceived set of categories; instead, I allowed themes to develop naturally from the data collected (Creswell, 2007) from the HLLs of Spanish. The phenomenographic approach allowed for the formation of categories of description that then led to the creation of typologies (outcome spaces) that exemplified students' experiences.

Categories of Description. Categories of description and an outcome space are the primary results of a phenomenographic approach to qualitative research (Cousin, 2009; Marton, 1997; Marton & Pang, 2008). By analyzing the data, I aimed to "identify distinct ways of

understanding (or experiencing) the phenomenon" (Marton, 1997, p. 100) as perceived by the participants in the study. Phenomenographic findings are represented by an outcome space that is comprised of related categories of description (Marton & Pang, 2008). The categories of description convey "a distinctively different way of experiencing or seeing the phenomenon" (Marton & Pang, 2008, p. 536) and these descriptions are based on a second-order phenomenographic approach to qualitative research that regards participants' accounts of their lived experiences with and understandings of a particular phenomenon as the central source of data. Phenomenographers take an inductive approach to data analysis that affords the researcher an investigative lens that focuses on the views of the participants.

Identifying Themes. I identified emergent themes in the data both within and across interviews through memo writing (Maxwell, 2005), note taking, and reflecting on students' similar and dissimilar experiences in their SHL classes. As an aim of phenomenography is to yield an account of reality as described by a group of people (Bowden, 2000; Marton, 1988; Prosser, 2000), data analysis sought to treat the data set (the five interviews) as one unified depiction of the SHL classroom space as experienced by HLLs of Spanish in a post-secondary setting. The participants' collective understanding provided insight into what students experience in the SHL classroom in a particular context.

Making sense of the data was achieved through the identification of similarities and contrasts without bringing a preconceived set of themes to the coding method (Gray, 2004). Similarities occur when two expressions that are different at the word level denote the same meaning, while contrast exists when two expressions reflect two different meanings. The former represents analogous experiences of a phenomenon and the latter expressions are divergent experiences of the same phenomenon (Marton, 1997). Once themes had been identified, I

"aim[ed] at as deep an understanding as possible of what has been said, or rather, what has been meant" (Marton, 1997, p. 100). In seeking this deep understanding, I connected my thematized groupings to individual and collective contexts as it was important to reference what students had shared about the same aspect of the phenomenon as well as what the same person communicated about other traits of the phenomenon. Cousin (2009) likened the phenomenographic analysis process to a card game in which the researcher organizes the data into different piles according to the characteristics of the data. Each time data were sorted, I reviewed the comments I made while transcribing interviews so that I could adjust, reduce and shift the groupings until I believed I was fairly representing the different ways of experiencing the phenomenon revealed in the data set (p. 194).

Outcome Spaces. Per Cousin (2009), once I had identified the categories of description, I then organized them into outcome spaces based on the relationships that existed among the nine categories of description. Marton and Pang (2008) indicated that the outcome space reveals "the relationship among the various categories of description according to their logical complexity and inclusiveness and describes the variation in the possible ways in which a phenomenon is experienced" (p. 536). Marton (1997) suggested that in order to arrive at an outcome space, phenomenographers need to determine the ways in which the categories of description differ from each other and search for the logical relationships that exist between the groups of categories. These steps then lead to the formation of a hierarchy of the categories of description that represent the study's outcome space (p. 100). Cousin (2009) proposed that the outcome space need not be organized hierarchically as we should not force data into a relationship that does not accurately describing the findings (p. 195).

Researcher Positionality

I am not a HLL of Spanish as I did not grow up with Spanish as a home language. However, I do consider myself a bilingual speaker of Spanish due to my studies and experiences with the Spanish language. I first became interested in Spanish as a HL while teaching Spanish as a graduate student at a large research university in the South. Teaching 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-generation HLLs of Spanish in L2 classes helped me gain a deeper understanding of the sociolinguistic needs of a heterogeneous population, and the ways in which these needs were (not) being met in class. Furthermore, teaching colleagues who were HLLs of Spanish have graciously shared their bilingual/bicultural experiences with me during formal and informal interactions. These professional and personal experiences contributed to my interest in Heritage Language Education. Moreover, these experiences have also shaped my perspectives on Spanish as a HL in the U.S.

My understandings are constructed through both etic and emic perspectives. The combination of etic (outsider) and emic (insider) knowledge can yield a better account of the data collected (Duff, 2002; Heath & Street, 2008). A constant comparative perspective (Heath & Street, 2008) helped me situate etic views of Spanish as a HL in the past, present and future while emic views allowed me to comprehend how the past, present and future have influenced individuals and their understanding of the topic at hand (Heath & Street, 2008). Schweber (2006) provides a comprehensive commentary on the contextualized nature of insider/outsider status and the implications of such a status for qualitative research.

Finally, I want to make clear that I approach research involving HLLs from a social justice perspective. In their essay on social justice in language education, Randolph and Johnson (2017) stated that social justice encompasses “any aspect of the language classroom through

which participants (students, teachers, and other stakeholders) come to a greater understanding of or make progress towards equity in society" (p. 11). As such, I believe the HL classroom should equip students with tools that allow them to deconstruct and dismantle the ideologies and institutions that have marginalized HLLs and the ways in which they use language. My commitment to social justice in language education has influenced many steps in this dissertation project which include, but are not limited to the data analysis process and the identification of implications for SHL classrooms. At every juncture, I considered simultaneously the marginalization of HLLs as well as the potential for them to embody social justice ideals in their observations, critiques, and reflections about how heritage language classrooms and programs should change to embrace their languages and identities.

Validity, Reliability, and Replicability

No discussion of data collection is complete without addressing issues of validity, reliability and replicability. In their discussion of ethnography, Heath and Street (2008) reminded us no one can be an "innocent ethnographer" and I believe this statement holds true for qualitative researchers as we bring our lived experiences to any research project that we pursue. During the data collection process, I acknowledged my hunches, was open to learning, was mindful of limitations and reflexive (Heath & Street, 2008). I made no assumptions while collecting data (Heller, 2009), and I eschewed value judgments by describing what happened and not what I think should have happened (Heath & Street, 2008) so that I was able to collect descriptive data (Heller, 2009). For Marton (1997), the analysis process was not a measurement procedure, but rather a discovery procedure in which:

> the discovery does not have to be replicable, but once the outcome space of a phenomenon has been revealed, it should be communicated in such a way that other

> researchers could recognize instances of the different ways of experiencing the phenomenon in question (p. 100).

Conceptions of reliability and replicability associated with other kinds of social science research are not expected when using ethnographic approaches to research (Heath & Street, 2008) and the same can be said for phenomenographic inquiries (see Bowden, 2000; Marton, 1997); however, we are expected to validate our research (Duff, 2002; Heath & Street, 2008). Phenomenographic research attempts to describe the unique ways in which people experience a specific phenomenon (Bowden, 2000; Cousin, 2009; Marton, 1988, 1997). Validation can be achieved by asking if your research holds up against comparative and contrastive criteria to previous research by explaining similarities and differences (Heath & Street, 2008).

Finally, this study is not without its limitations, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7. Although replicability is not the goal of this phenomenography, the specificity of the study must be acknowledged. For example, a change in the participant population could yield different findings in a similar study. Possible changes that could impact the results are the HL of the participants (e.g., Korean instead of Spanish), gender, (e.g., a group of all men as participants instead of all women), geographic location (e.g., the Northwest instead of the Midwest), etc. Other limitations include the use of semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data collection. Nonetheless, students' reflections on their unique experiences in their SHL classes are a valid source of data as an analysis of their insight can make contributions to furthering our understanding of the ways in which students experience new and recently established SHL classes.

Chapter 4: (Dis)Connections: Failing to Meet Students' Needs in the SHL Classroom

Introduction

This first analysis chapter helps answer my research questions by describing students' experiences in new and recently established post-secondary SHL classes in the Midwest. Both teachers and students have goals for the HL classroom, but far too often students' goals are overlooked in the name of curriculum or competency. Thus, I argue, in this outcome space, that based on students' perceptions of their experiences, their SHL classes did not adequately respond to their needs as HLLs of Spanish. In other words, students hoped that their SHL classes would offer them certain affordances while studying their HL. However, as participants' reflections reveal, there were disconnects between students' goals and the curriculum presented in the SHL courses. To counter these disconnections, SHL curriculum should promote the expansion of students' linguistic repertoires by providing more balanced practice in the four language skills and by contextualizing grammar instruction in a way that focuses on language functions tied to real-world uses of the HL.

The findings in this chapter made clear an outcome space characterized by (dis)connections to students' perceived needs. Table 2 summarizes the key findings for the three categories of description (COD) in the outcome space which were: *Linking Spanish to Success in Careers* (COD 1), *Grammar Guided the Curriculum* (COD 2), and *Imbalances in Practicing the Four Language Domains* (COD 3).

Table 2. Key Findings

	COD 1	COD 2	COD 3
Wanted	Formal recognition of bilingualism for future careers (e.g., minor in Spanish)	Curriculum that addressed linguistic insecurities (e.g., using diacritics)	Curriculum that addressed a documented concern: Writing in the HL
Received	Curriculum had few links to the use of the HL in professional settings	Emphasis on form, not function that promoted a deficit framing of the HL (a focus on what students did not know)	Imbalanced treatment of the other three language domains (especially Reading, another documented area of concern)

To begin, this first outcome space is characterized by (dis)connections as students' self-reported needs were not met by the SHL curriculum. Specifically, I analyze the lack of connection to Spanish in future careers, too great a focus on the study of grammar, and an imbalanced approach to practicing listening, reading, writing, and speaking in Spanish. By providing illustrative examples, I will show aspects of current pedagogical approaches and decisions that inhibited a more thorough exploration of a Spanish. The findings in this chapter reveal factors that motivated students to enroll in a SHL course at their institution. I illustrate that participants' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of were not adequately supported in their SHL classes. Next, I examine analytically the role of grammar in SHL instruction. Learning grammar both foreshadowed students' course expectations and permeated their classroom-based experiences with the Spanish language, which led to a focus on what students did not know. In the last section of this chapter, I analyze the four language domains – listening, reading, writing, and speaking – and the ways in which participants understood and reacted to the inclusion of each domain in their SHL classes. Prioritizing practice writing in Spanish overshadowed practice

in the other skill areas. Together, these three categories of description highlight some of the ways the SHL curriculum did not respond to students' perceived needs.

Linking Spanish to Success in Careers

Students' interest in meeting course requirements thus shaped students' reasons for enrolling in a SHL course, whether it be a requirement for success at the university or a requirement for success in a future career. This professional motivation outranked personal goals for studying one's HL. In this research, meeting a language requirement was a recurring factor that also influenced enrollment in a SHL course.

Second language learners who take Spanish, or another language, for no more than a two- or three-semester beginning sequence are not likely to do so for pragmatic or instrumental reasons (Gardner, 1985) such as using the language in a future career. The completion of a beginning two- or three-semester language sequence is minimally meaningful for a résumé, as students at this stage in language acquisition have not gained a high level of communicative competency (see ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners, 2015). However, both L2 learners and HLLs can be motivated by instrumentality (Gardner, 1985) to enroll in language courses to meet a language requirement. The clear difference between these two groups is that HLLs have a familial connection to the language that has influenced their prior exposure to and use of the HL. Motivations for enrolling in the SHL course were quite similar among the students. These factors provided a clearer understanding of why students enrolled in their SHL courses. As such, it is important that educators keep in mind that the active use of Spanish ranked highly in what students wanted to get out of their SHL class. The burden is on educators to help students comprehend that their SHL course will be much more than just meeting a requirement. More immediate ties to professional uses of the HL can help counter the current

disconnection identified by participants. SHL students' perspectives should influence the decisions that are made about SHL curriculum.

When asked to explain their reasons for enrolling in a SHL course at their university, the students answered with related responses. Four students talked about pursuing a minor in Spanish, and this reason was often linked to using Spanish in the workplace post-graduation. As shown in Table 1, one student had a major in the sciences, three students were studying in the field of social sciences, and one student was considering a concentration in business. Participants believed their future career options associated with these areas of study could call for the use of Spanish in a professional setting. One student mentioned the desire to recuperate the Spanish language skills she was losing and improve on what she already knew. This same student had already met her university's language requirement by studying a different language. Two other participants needed to fulfill a language requirement to graduate; therefore, they enrolled in the SHL course at their respective institutions. One of these students wanted to study American Sign Language to fulfill her language requirement. However, she decided against doing so as she did not want to delay her graduation date. Overall, three students enrolled in a SHL to practice Spanish, while two of the students, through a minor, sought proof of their bilingualism for future careers.

At the time of the interview, Ana, unlike the other participants, had not officially declared a major. However, she stated that she was interested in pursuing a business degree with a possible focus on finance. Ana was one of the students that was considering a minor in Spanish while enrolled in her SHL course as "it would probably be useful… to have proof of being bilingual on a résumé." Ana also suggested that she had an interest in working abroad and

working with people; therefore, she thought Spanish could be of relevance for a future career. Ana shared the following:

> I think I took it because I felt that I may potentially go for a minor in a language since it would probably be useful to be able to have proof of being bilingual on a résumé and in my future career…. [The SHL course] was business focused, to ensure you could use it in the workforce.

Hence, there is a connection or alignment between the self-reported needs of Ana and her SHL course. Ana hoped to use Spanish in a future career in business, and her SHL class focused on using Spanish in professional settings.

Like Ana, Bianca was considering a minor in Spanish. Bianca, a criminal justice major, had already fulfilled her university's language requirement by taking two French classes. She was both externally and internally motivated (Gardner, 1985) to study Spanish as a HL. Bianca expressed:

> I was losing how to speak the language, my original language, so I kinda wanted to take advantage of the class to kinda perfect it and get back the grammar skills that I needed to get better at it….

During the interview, Bianca mentioned that she "kinda grew up speaking" Spanish, and that she was losing Spanish because she was only using English in day-to-day interactions. Possibly pursuing a minor in Spanish and enrolling in the SHL class would allow Bianca to recover the Spanish that she was losing. This framing positioned Bianca as a successful user of Spanish who would have proof of her bilingualism (the minor in Spanish) and she would have recovered lost skills in Spanish during her study of Spanish in her HL class.

Lupe, a psychology major, enrolled in the SHL course that was being offered for the first time at her university because she needed to complete the university's language requirement. Lupe took a placement test that allowed her to receive retroactive credits[3] which qualified her for a minor in Spanish. Lupe's advisor suggested that she begin her study of Spanish in the SHL course that focused on grammar and composition. Lupe shared:

> I graduate this spring, and I needed to finish my foreign language credits. I wanted to take American Sign Language…. I tested out of a bunch of Spanish classes, and they told me to enroll in this one. I think it was the first time it was offered…. Now, I could see myself pursing that [Spanish] more than the psychology major…. I would really like to find a way to put them two of them together.

While taking the SHL course, Lupe learned about the department's Certificate in Translating and Interpreting. Lupe decided to pursue this certificate, a marker of a successful use of Spanish, as she only needed to take two more classes to earn the certificate and doing so would still allow her to graduate during the following semester. Enrollment in the SHL class allowed Lupe to link her study of Spanish to real-world uses of Spanish as she was able to pursue a certificate in translation and interpretation offered by the Spanish department. However, Lupe's SHL class did not explicitly focus on professional uses of Spanish as its focus was on grammar and writing.

Rosa was a physiology major with a minor in Spanish for the health sciences. Her SHL class was a literary analysis course that allowed Rosa to begin meeting the requirements for the minor in Spanish at her university. Rosa had taken Spanish in high school, and she recalled not being required to speak in Spanish often. Like Ana, Rosa wanted to be able to formally document her bilingualism:

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[3] These credits are usually granted for previous study of or experience with a language.

> Well, the first reason [why I decided to enroll in this course] was to start a minor in Spanish. The second reason was just to see how much practice I would need to actually get a job in the real world working, showing that I'm, you know, proficiently bilingual on a résumé.

Rosa also wanted to determine how much practice she needed so that, upon graduation, she could tell potential employers that she is successful bilingual. Rosa wanted her SHL class, and ultimately the minor in Spanish, to serve as proof of proficiency in Spanish on her résumé.

Sara was a criminal justice major which is an area of study that required students to take language courses. Sara was interested in taking a Spanish class, and her advisor suggested that she take the SHL course, which focused on grammar, that was being offered for the first time at the university. Sara was interested in taking the SHL class because it was designed for speakers of Spanish:

> My first reason [for taking this class] is that my major required a foreign language requirement, and I knew that I would probably just want to take a Spanish class. My advisor told me they were offering this new class, so I told her it would be interesting because I speak Spanish and the class was supposed to be specifically for Spanish speakers, so I decided to sign up for it.

Sara, like Bianca, enrolled in a SHL class for both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations (Gardner, 1985). Sara needed to meet the university's language requirement, but she also acknowledged that taking Spanish, her HL, could be an "interesting" experience for her.

Most students focused on instrumental motivators (Gardner, 1985) (e.g., using Spanish in a future career, having proof of their bilingualism) that prompted them to enroll in SHL courses. Practical goals were the driving force behind students' study of their HL and taking a SHL class

helped participants meet these goals (e.g., formal documentation of their bilingualism) or set them on the path to meet their extrinsic goals. To that end, a greater incorporation of experiential learning into SHL curriculum is one way to expand students' views of the language. Experiences using Spanish that link community and classroom are advantageous for HLLs (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) as they can tap into and build on students' funds of knowledge (Moll et. al, 1992). Community-based learning is particularly valuable for students that feel disconnected from their home community or not engaged with Spanish speakers on their college campuses due to population size (Pak, 2018).

Grammar Guided the Curriculum

As further evidence of (dis)connections in the outcome space between students' needs and the SHL curriculum, this section illustrates that students' course expectations often predicted the study of grammar. These predictions were confirmed during the semester in which participants studied their HL. During interviews, students mentioned key words such as grammar, rules, accents, and verb conjugations that support an approach to SHL instruction that gives preference to the teaching of grammar. Teaching grammar and raising metalinguistic awareness are not inappropriate practices for the SHL classroom (Fairclough, 2005). However, in a recent interview, Carreira called for an approach to grammar that expands HLLs' use of their HL in "different contexts and for different functions, not perfecting the use of grammatical forms" (Carreira, Garrett-Rucks, Kemp, & Randolph, p. 14, 2020). As such, teaching grammar should not guide SHL curriculum. Students' reflections provided evidence of a decontextualized approach to grammar instruction that did not place an emphasis of functional, real-world uses of Spanish that respond to students' self-reported needs. Furthermore, this approach drew attention to what students did not know about the Spanish language.

For example, Sara anticipated that her professor would teach grammar:

> So, I don't know how to write with accent marks and all that. I was expecting that they would focus a lot on that because as a heritage speaker, I assume a lot of other students don't learn that at home…. Yes, I can recall most of our quizzes always had something to do with grammar, and the terms they use like the pretérito and using the accent marks. She always had that on the quizzes…. For the curriculum, I would definitely keep the teaching of [and] focusing on the grammar and the accent marks.…

Additionally, Sara believed that the class what focus on aspects of the Spanish language that she did not acquire at home. The quizzes in Sara's class assessed topics such as grammatical tense aspect and diacritics. Sara valued the central role grammar played in her SHL class.

Likewise, Lupe talked about the expectation that she would study grammar in her SHL class:

> I thought that it [the SHL class] would really focus on like grammar and pretty much grammar. That was all that I really thought I would get out of it. I didn't really know what to expect because I'd never heard of a Spanish heritage speakers class before. The name of the class was Spanish for Heritage Speakers: Grammar and Composition, so that's pretty much what you expect it to have. The main focus was definitely composition and grammar.

Studying grammar was not unexpected for Lupe as the name of her class contained the word "grammar." She also stated that writing was the other primary area of concentration of her SHL class. Lupe, like Sara, also talked about key role of learning grammar in her SHL class.

Moreover, grammar was also a central component of Bianca's SHL class:

> One of the main reasons [for taking the SHL class] was that it was for heritage speakers. I kinda grew up speaking the language, and over the years, I lost it in middle school and

> high school. It [the school system] was monolingual. I only spoke English so, I was losing how to speak the language, my original language, so I kinda wanted to take advantage of the class to kinda perfect it and get back the grammar skills that I needed to get better at it…. The class did help me a lot with my grammar, with my writing skills, my oral skills in the language, so there was a lot that I learned. There were many things that I wasn't aware of before about the language which now I know, and it really helped me a lot actually…. The grammar was really important. It was really difficult; I would say at times. Because some rules can get confusing. I know there are a lot of rules that kind of make it tricky and just complex for us to remember....

Bianca sought to recoup the Spanish she had acquired at home but had been losing during her K-12 schooling which was in English. The rules of grammar were "difficult," "confusing," and "tricky" for Bianca; however, she found the SHL class to be of benefit as she was able to expand her knowledge of grammar.

Furthermore, when discussing grammar, the five participants mentioned the study and use of written diacritics as a topic in their SHL courses. Most of the students had linguistic insecurities about the use of written accent marks in their HL. Ana, for example, shared the following:

> The class was just more for people who already knew the language, and it focused more on the needs of someone who is actually bilingual. Like, it focused on how to use accents which is something that I've always struggled with, and apparently, I wasn't the only one.

According to Ana, she had struggled with the use of diacritics and her SHL class addressed this topic that was viewed as important by Ana. Meanwhile, Lupe noted that she did not know the rules that govern the placement of written accent marks:

> [The professor] focused on things like accent marks…. I can hear these accents, and I can hear, you know, the meaning, but not the rules behind it. The teacher was obviously teaching us that…. I didn't even know that I could hear the tonic accent. But I didn't know the rules at all.

Lupe had intuitions about the placement of diacritics; however, she did not know the rules that governed the placement of written accent marks in Spanish. Like the SHL classes of other students, Lupe's class studied this topic which was an insecurity for the HLLs.

Additionally, Sara's in-class assessments tested students' knowledge of written accent marks:

> So, I don't know how to write with accent marks and all that…. Yes, I can recall most of our quizzes always had something to do with grammar, and the terms they use like the pretérito and using the accent marks. She [the professor] always had that on the quizzes….

Sara did not know how write in Spanish with diacritics, and her SHL professor included lessons on and assessments of written accent marks in the curriculum. Including written accent marks in words was difficult for Bianca too:

> I know there are a lot of rules that kind of make it tricky and just complex for us to remember. I would ask her [the professor] about either writing certain words or putting an accent on certain words. I would definitely raise my hand in the middle of class and just ask her and she would fully explain the rules of it, how it works.

Bianca found some of the rules to be "tricky." When she had questions about the placement of diacritics, her professor would provide her with answers and explanations of placement rules.

Rosa, likewise, discussed written accent marks during her interview:

> Accents. We spent so long on accents that I feel like at the end we were more rushed to learn about the subjunctive and all types of verb conjugations. We could have spent a little bit more time on that…. We just spent a lot of time on accents. …this class taught me a lot…. I think [the professor] just taught me everything over again because previous Spanish classes didn't make sure that I was understanding everything…. Especially verb conjugations and stuff like that. She made sure that like we understood that to the best of our abilities.

However, Rosa felt that her SHL class dedicated too much time to this feature of the Spanish language. Therefore, students, according to Rosa, were not able to practice other aspects such as learning about the subjunctive mood. That said, Rosa did appreciate the grammar-focused curriculum in her class as she was able to relearn what she missed in previous Spanish classes.

As some of the students revealed, and as seen is previous research (Carreira & Kagan, 2011), professional reasons are a strong motivation for Spanish speakers who decide to study their HL. The data in this category of description uncovered a disconnection between the sociolinguistic needs of the students and the curriculum presented in their SHL courses. Practicing grammar and increasing HLLs' metalinguistic knowledge can be a gateway that leads to a deeper understanding of the HL. Also, a focus on specific topics, such as writing with diacritics can relieve some linguistic insecurities that students might have about their HL. Students learned rules for placing accent marks in written texts in their SHL classes. As such, the SHL classes addressed a perceived sociolinguistic need of the students. However, this need was

addressed in a vacuum without ties to real-world uses of Spanish that could have highlighted the relevance of written diacritics in some professional settings.

Grammar in the SHL classroom can occupy the role of a link to the ways in which HLLs will use the Spanish language in certain formal settings such as the workplace. Thus, priority is placed on understanding language functions and not studying isolated language forms. Again, various forms of experiential learning – volunteering, job shadowing, service-learning assignments, etc. – provide students with opportunities to use their HLs in new contexts. This community-based approach gets students involved with local Spanish speakers, it combats feelings of not belonging (Pak, 2018), and it also supports the career-centered motivations that encourage students to study their HL. Finally, it is worth noting that students did not highlight pragmatics or intercultural competency when describing their SHL classes. These themes are relevant for using Spanish in academic and other formal contexts, both as a student and future user of Spanish in a professional setting.

Imbalances in Practicing the Four Language Domains

As the students' perspectives indicate in this next category of description, their SHL classes featured an imbalance in the treatment of Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading in Spanish (see Table 3). It was clear from the students' observations of and reflections on their experience in a SHL class that writing was heavily favored as the language domain that was most frequently practiced and assessed. Prior research has shown that writing in the HL is a skill that requires attention in the SHL classroom (Acevedo, 2003; Burgo, 2015; Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Colombi, 2000; Villa, 2004). Nonetheless, the other three language domains should not be shortchanged as the acquisition of academic Spanish, a frequent goal of SHL programs (Acevedo, 2003), "is a lengthy process… that will extend over several semesters" (Fairclough, 2005, p. 137). As described earlier, the students' SHL classes were part of a one- or two-

semester HL sequence at their universities. Some of the students were pursuing or considering a minor in Spanish and therefore, they will have had opportunities to continue expanding their competency in the four language domains. Students who did not match this profile were, subsequently, exposed to practice in primarily one or two language domains in their small SHL program.

Table 3. Perceived Priorities of SHL Classes

Participant	Speaking	Writing	Listening	Reading
Ana	—	+	—	—
Bianca	+	+	—	+
Lupe	+	+	+	—
Rosa	—	+	—	+
Sara	—	+	+	—

Key: + higher priority / — lower priority

Speaking in Spanish. For Ana, the honing of speaking skills primarily revolved around the speaking that occurred during class as their conversations were entirely in Spanish:

> The majority of what we did for speaking was in the class in Spanish: the conversations we would have would all be in Spanish…. It was more of just a matter of practice rather than specific tasks. You had one oral presentation which we had to do in a group, but aside from that, it was mostly just in-class practice.

They had to use the language regularly as “it was a matter of practice rather than specific tasks.” Ana gave one presentation in a small group during the semester. In essence, speaking in Spanish was a byproduct of enrollment in a SHL class. Ana did not seem to place much value on what students produced orally in class.

Meanwhile, Bianca began her reflection on the four language domains by sharing that her language skills were not as perfect as the professor’s:

> I personally went out of my way to ask the professor about certain things because I know that my speaking skills and writing skills aren't as perfect as when compared to the professor.

Therefore, she would directly ask her professor for help and clarifications about grammar (how to spell a word, where to use an accent mark). During the interview, Bianca said that she and her classmates were comfortable with raising their hands during class and asking the professor for an explanation of a rule. The professor would answer, and this was helpful to everyone according to Bianca. This student's feedback on the speaking domain was limited; however, Bianca did remember classmates presenting on muralism and how this art form demonstrated "how Hispanics express themselves through art throughout a city."

Lupe spoke about the requirement to only speak in Spanish in her HL class:

> Well, we could only speak in Spanish in our class. If [the professor] heard us speaking in English, she'd say 'Spanish only, please.' Because we would start working in groups, and then we would get really comfortable with each other and then just switch to English out of habit.

The professor would remind students of her rule if she heard students speaking in English. The atmosphere in Lupe's class seemed to be one of familiarity as she and her classmates defaulted to English when working in small groups (a norm Lupe talks about later that describes how she communicates with some family members).

Lupe also described the type of feedback provided when students were speaking with one another during pair/group work:

> We would speak in Spanish, and [the professor] would ask us 'Do you think this sounds right?' 'Haiga,' words like that, that are kind of nonsense words. She would tell us 'You

> know that's actually not right. So, this is how we conjugate it' and then we would all practice that together.

This approach is an example of an innovative way of focusing students' attention on academic varieties of Spanish during the normal class routine. This method could also be used to teach language functions that correspond to certain contexts (i.e., professional). Hence, SHL pedagogy would respond to student-reported needs and help diminish current trends of (dis)connections. Lupe also believed that providing services in Spanish in a local school was a great way to practice speaking Spanish: "Everybody had to speak in Spanish there to the teachers and the students." Some of her classmates did more than the 10 hours of service-learning required for the course – "a lot of people really enjoyed that aspect of it [the SHL class]" – one student even completed 30 hours.

When the semester began, Rosa noticed that she would have to give an oral presentation at the end of the semester in her SHL course, which required her to speak publicly for no more than ten minutes:

> We had a presentation. It had to be ten minutes total, five minutes per person. It was a partner presentation. [The presentation] wasn't as much of a challenge as I thought it would be in the beginning of the semester when I looked at the syllabus. It was still kind of a challenge because I wasn't super comfortable with speaking for long periods of time in front of the whole class…in Spanish.

The presentation was not as difficult as Rosa initially feared. However, the assignment was still challenging because Rosa was not at ease when speaking in Spanish for an extended period in front of her classmates and professor. Thus, some students felt nervous about speaking in front of

their classmates for an extended period. Rosa did not discuss other in-class activities or assignments that contributed to her growth in speaking abilities in Spanish.

Finally, Sara could not recall specific instances in which her class honed their speaking skills:

> I don't think we really focused much on speaking except for the fact that we were only allowed to speak Spanish in class. … I don't, from what I recall, we really did not spend that much time on the speaking aspect of Spanish.

Sara reported that she and her classmates were only allowed to speak in Spanish in class. Like Ana, Bianca, and Lupe, advancing one's speaking proficiency in the HL was described as incidental to Sara. She did not remember specific activities that required students to practice speaking in Spanish in class. Sara and other students, discussed, at later points in their interviews, some benefits of having been enrolled in a SHL course, such as being more comfortable with speaking in Spanish for extended periods of time. This increased level of comfort was linked to being enrolled in a SHL class instead of a curriculum that included focused practice speaking in Spanish.

Ultimately, the onus is on educators to make clear the role of oral communication so that learners perceive, at the start of their language study, the pedagogical relevance of speaking in the HL in class, which could be supplemented by assignments that necessitate students' use of oral language in the local community. For the participants, speaking in Spanish was the expected norm in their SHL classes. However, this requisite, according to students' reflections, was a de facto aspect of being enrolled in a SHL class. Students provided few examples of moments in which speaking in Spanish was practiced in class.

Writing in Spanish. When discussing writing, Ana initially linked writing to explicit grammar instruction: About once a week we would have a worksheet that had a bunch of instructions on a specific thing, like how to use the subjunctive. It specifically focused on how to use one aspect of the language and then we would practice it. Ana liked the worksheets because they "laid out a step-by-step way on how to use certain things." She often referred to these worksheets during the semester when completing writing assignments for the course.

Later, Ana talked about how the students had weekly writing assignments that helped her assess her ability to write completely in Spanish:

> Once a week we would have to write a short maybe one-page essay. And you just write in Spanish about something. Throughout the semester we had three large essays about four pages that were basically just extended versions of the short ones. The essays were just good practice to see if I could hold up on the writing portion which is definitely a good way of measuring.

Thus, Ana reacted positively to the focus on writing in her SHL class. She wanted to self-assess her ability to write in Spanish and the SHL curriculum allowed her to do so in a way that she thought was appropriate.

When talking about writing, Bianca, like Ana, made a connection to grammar and knowing grammar rules: "The grammar was really important [for writing]. It was really difficult; I would say at times…because some rules can get confusing." Bianca also spoke about including diacritics in her writing:

> [The class] did help me a lot with my grammar, with my writing skills, my oral skills in the language… I would ask her about either writing certain words or putting an accent on certain words.

As such, writing, for Bianca was all about rules. She felt that she needed to know rules about the language (e.g., how to place diacritics) in order to write in Spanish.

Lupe began her reflection on writing by quantifying her classroom experience: “I learned a lot.” She then wished that she had been able to study writing in Spanish sooner:

> I wish they would have offered [heritage language classes] when I was in middle school or high school. I mean, just starting in college to learn [how to write in Spanish] kind of sucks. I wish I could have had more time to develop [my writing in Spanish] instead of starting now.

Again, Lupe provided an example of the ways in which her professor provided feedback and generated discussion about grammar. Lupe’s professor would anonymize students’ work and then share examples of “things that weren’t necessarily written correctly or the right word wasn’t used, or the right conjugation wasn’t used.” For Lupe, this approach was viewed as a positive “because she always built on it.” Instead of describing students’ language as “wrong,” the professor would ask “What’s a better way to say this?” Lupe reiterated that her professor’s approach to analyzing writing built on what she and her classmates already knew in their HL. Writing prompts were used as “tickets in or out the door” and students turned in formal papers approximately every three weeks. It is worth noting that Lupe’s professor had planned to assign another paper at the end of the semester, but she canceled the last one as, according to Lupe: “I think she realized that maybe she had assigned too many.” Ultimately, Lupe liked the amount of writing she completed in her SHL course because she felt that she learned best by writing. However, Lupe recounted “I don’t know if others in my class felt the same. I heard a lot of moaning and groaning about how much writing we had to do [laughing].”

In Rosa's class, students wrote essays and answered questions for homework to improve their writing skills. For example, writing practice for Rosa consisted of reading a story from the textbook and then responding to reading comprehension questions. The most difficult writing assignment for Rosa was an in-class essay:

> The most challenging one was probably the in-class essay because you had to do your pre-writing before class, but you couldn't bring a really solid essay. You had to bring a little outline… so you didn't get to use all the tools you needed like a dictionary or Google Translate [when writing in class]. You didn't have that. So, that one was probably the most challenging one for me.

Students were required to complete a pre-writing exercise at home that they could then bring to class; however, they were not allowed to bring a fully realized essay to class on the day of the in-class writing assignment. They could bring their outline, but they did not have access to resources such as dictionaries and online translators when completing the in-class writing assignment. As evidenced by her comments, Rosa believed that she was not able to perform at her highest level because she did not have access to necessary resources that improve her writing. The professor's approach to in-class writing assignments, more specifically, the use of a pre-writing exercise that students can use while completing their essays written during class is a common approach in L2 and HL courses (Elola, 2018; Lally, 2000). To better respond to the perceived needs of students, SHL courses could include, in addition to the aforementioned tasks, in-class writing assignments that are linked to students' majors/career paths. While completing these in-class writing tasks, students could have access to online or physical resources that they would likely have access to in a professional setting.

Sara asserted that writing was an important element of her SHL course. The students wrote five-six papers in Spanish. The topics varied, and the length of each paper ranged from three-five pages each:

> Writing was very big in the class. We had five or six papers that we had to write completely in Spanish on varying topics. They were all three- to five-pages long. We always did writing exercises in class, or our homework [focused on] writing. [The professor] would take out some of the stuff from our papers that we turned in and use them as examples on quizzes, or we would go over it in class and she would help us correct that.

Here, we have another imbalance among the four language domains in Sara's SHL class. Sara also completed some writing exercises in class, and her homework was tied to increasing proficiency in writing. The professor would use anonymized excerpts from students' papers as examples on quizzes, or they worked in small groups to correct the mistakes.

Writing, as recounted by students, was given precedence in the SHL curriculum. Writing in Spanish was a skill the participants wanted to improve. Previous research (Burgo, 2015; Carreira & Kagan, 2011) has indicated that a common priority of HL students is the advancement of their ability to write in their HL. Thus, there was a connection between the students' perceived needs and the SHL curriculum. According to some students' reflections, writing in Spanish was sometimes tied to grammar and rules. This link draws more attention to the central role of grammar in the SHL classes. Furthermore, the overemphasis on writing shortchanged students' opportunities to practice speaking, listening and reading in Spanish. Reading in the HL, according to data from Carreira and Kagan's (2011) national survey of

HLLs, is another priority for students, and this skill was not of high importance in the SHL classes.

Listening in Spanish. One or two times during the semester, Ana's professor played an audio file in either English or Spanish. Students were required to create a summary of what was said in the other language:

> We had to shorthand what the recording was saying in the other language to practice…switching between languages. I thought [that activity] was interesting. I didn't have many problems with it since that's how I speak with a lot of my family. I thought it was a very clever way of testing that sort of knowledge.

For Ana, this activity provided the class with practice using English and Spanish. This listening activity was "interesting" to Ana, and she did not find it difficult because "that's how I speak with a lot of my family." Ana, however, thought it was a good way to test this area of proficiency. As such, the listening activity described by Ana was relevant for the students in her class as this activity linked to the real-world experiences of the students. Some students, like Ana, had these kinds of interactions as a part of their normal routine. In future careers, the HLLs could find themselves in a situation in which they have to complete a similar task when interacting with patients, customers, colleagues, etc. Meanwhile, Rosa's class listened to TED talks and watched a few videos on topics such as "the disappearances in South America." After these interpretive activities, the professor would give the students a listening comprehension quiz. Thus, Rosa did not perceive practicing listening skills to be a priority of her SHL class.

At first, Bianca had difficulty remembering specific listening activities then she recalled that her class had listened to a few audio files during the semester:

> Um, let me think, there weren't really activities that would help us um... Well, yeah, we would actually hear some audio. I remember this one specific audio we listened to…. This poet recited one of his poems in Spanish. So that helped a lot…. I think that was mainly the main listening activity that we did.

Once, Bianca's class listened to an audio file of a poet recite one of his poems in Spanish. This activity was helpful to Bianca as the poet was Cuban, while she and her classmates "were mostly Mexican" – this difference pushed students to practice their listening skills. Bianca believed that most of their practice came from listening to the professor who was from País[4]. Bianca noted that "[the professor] had a little [bit of an] accent, but it still helped us because she is perfect in that way. Fluent in the language…." Bianca proposed that the class still benefited from listening to the professor (despite her pronunciation) as listening to her speak was viewed as a form of learning for Bianca.

For listening, Lupe, like other students, identified listening to the professor and her classmates as sources for practicing listening skills in Spanish in her HL class. No films were shown in Lupe's class; however, the professor did show a three-minute news clip once. After viewing the news clip, Lupe's professor posed questions to test listening comprehension. For Lupe, an interview project was the most important task that tested and advanced her listening skills. She shared the following:

> I think the biggest one [listening activity] would be that interview. Then the transcribing of that. I had to listen to the words and make sure I transcribed them correctly and got the right word for the right meaning. And just having to listen to it, that was pretty big. That was a lot.

[4] A pseudonym for the professor's country of origin.

The assignment required that students interview a Spanish-speaking member of their community with the goal of learning about the person's life history. While transcribing, Lupe had to hone her listening skills to make sure she captured not only the words, but also the meaning the interviewee conveyed to her.

Like Lupe, Sara focused on the iterative process of transcription as a form of advancing interpretive competency in her HL. Students in Sara's class also had to interview a Spanish speaker in their community:

> I think the big assignment that we had for listening was the interview…. We had to actually turn it into [the professor]. And we also had to do the transcript, and we had to write exactly what we heard, how we heard [the interviewee] speaking and how we heard ourselves speaking in Spanish and kind of explain why we think [the interviewee] spoke that way.

Sara correlated her interview project with listening practice. After interviewing a Spanish-speaking member of her community, Sara had to transcribe the recording and turn it in to her professor. This "big assignment" also required that Sara explain why the interviewee spoke in a certain way.

The brevity of this section on listening underscores the lack of attention that was given to listening in the SHL courses. Participants' reflections signaled a scant number of activities and assignments (e.g., listening to recordings, transcribing an interview) that guided students in practicing the receptive skill of listening in their HL. As observed in the earlier discussion of speaking in Spanish, listening in Spanish was also deemed to be incidental to students' enrollment in a SHL class. For example, some students described listening to their professors and

classmates speak in Spanish during class as the primary way in which they practiced listening skills.

Reading in Spanish. Both Ana and Bianca regarded read aloud activities as a way to practice their reading skills in Spanish. In Ana's class, students would read aloud a literary or cultural passage from the textbook about once a week, and the level of difficulty increased as the semester progressed. Sometimes Ana's class would discuss the post-reading questions from the textbook as a class because they were sometimes required to write "something based on what we read."

Bianca shared that her professor "actually helped us improve a lot. I know there were many, many readings that were assigned to us." For Bianca, some of the readings were lengthy; however, she considered this a positive as it provided the class with practice. Most assigned reading was done for homework; however, they read aloud during class sometimes:

> … then during class time, we would also have some readings to go over, to hear one another pronouncing each word so we can learn from it, and then any error we would make the professor corrected it on the spot saying: 'You know this is how you pronounce it' or 'This isn't how you pronounce it.' Little things like that would help us.

This feedback from the professor was perceived as helpful. Bianca claimed that she and her classmates "…were comfortable enough to make those mistakes because we knew we would learn and that it would help us eventually." As a class, they discussed reading assignments (poetry, for example) and "videos of different aspects of culture." Some of the different themes that the class read about and discussed were "immigration, police brutality and themes that make us who we are," and we explored "what our stories tell." These textual and visual readings

allowed Bianca's class to expand their focus beyond "grammar and oral skills." Consequently, they were able to discuss the culture(s) of speakers of Spanish in the U.S.

Lupe recalled reading "a lot," but in her reflection on reading, she circled back to the primary focus of her SHL class: composition and grammar. When her professor gave reading assignments, articles, for example, she would provide students a list of words "she knew we wouldn't know." Lupe and her classmates were then required to define the list of words based on their understanding of the reading assignment. Furthermore, Lupe was also enrolled in a literature class at the time of the interview:

> There's also a class that I took this semester called 'Advanced Spanish Literature.' I focused more on reading skills in that class than I did in this one [the SHL course], but that class isn't for heritage speakers.

In short, Lupe compartmentalized what was appropriate as an area of study in different language courses. In this vein, the SHL class was not the best context for expanding one's reading proficiency in the HL.

In Rosa's SHL class, the reading assignments (often poems and short stories) focused on topics that she found to be of relevance:

> [The professor] liked a lot of poetry. We did read a lot of poems and short stories. One of the topics that I liked was a short story about Africanism, Afro-Latino people. That's not a topic that you see usually in Spanish classes. [The reading assignments] weren't just boring poems. They have meaning. I felt like she cares a lot for this course.

For example, the class read a short story about people of African heritage in the Spanish-speaking Americas. Rosa enjoyed the short story as it was a topic that she had not read about in a Spanish class. The assigned poetry that Rosa read was deemed to be meaningful and not boring.

Moreover, Rosa linked the reading selections to her perception that the professor cared about students' learning and their success in the SHL course: "she wanted us to do very well, but at the same time learn."

Sara's professor assigned readings from the textbook, or she posted texts to the course website. Students had to answer comprehension questions, and then discuss the readings in class. Sara did share that "most of the readings never showed up on the quiz because the quizzes [tested] grammar. Our homework assignments were based on the readings, and we got points for discussion in class, but [the readings] were never on the quiz." This stance points to a disconnect between Sara's expectations and her professor's use of reading materials. Sara discounted the importance of reading activities as she was not assessed, in a traditional sense, on the content of what she read.

This last category of description is best described by the imbalance between the four language domains in students' SHL classes. Participants did not perceive balanced, structured practice in the four skill areas. The findings suggest students' classes were too heavily focused on writing. Previous research has examined the role of writing in the SHL classroom (Acevedo, 2003) as students are likely to have had limited experiences with writing for academic purposes before enrolling in a HL course (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). Also, writing and reading are the skills that HLLs tend to self-assess as their weakest areas (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). HL curriculum needs to strike more of a balance in the way the four language domains are practiced to support HLLs' language maintenance and development. This balance is of particular importance for students enrolled in new and recently established HL programs as students might have fewer opportunities to take HL courses that are designed to target their specific sociolinguistic needs before moving on to courses with L2 learners, if required to do so in order

to meet a requirement of the university or of their language of study (to obtain a minor, for example).

Conclusion

As a reminder, the data in this chapter described an outcome space based on (dis)connections between students' self-reported needs and the curriculum presented in their SHL classes. The three categories of description were: 1) *Linking Spanish to Success in Careers*, 2) *Grammar Guided Curriculum*, and 3), *Imbalances in Practicing the Four Language Domains*. These categories of description call for a better alignment between the goals of HL instruction and the perceived needs of students.

First, the concept of success shaped students' reasons for enrolling in a SHL course, whether it be a requirement for success at the university or a requirement for success in a future career. Indeed, Carreira and Kagan's (2011) analysis of the National Heritage Language Resource Center's (NHLRC) national heritage language survey identified professional reasons and fulfilling a language requirement as two of the top four motivators that encouraged students to study their HL. According to the NHLRC survey, the other top two motivators for studying a HL were exploring linguistic and cultural roots and communicating with family and friends in the U.S. (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). To be sure, the five interviewees expressed extrinsic motivations for studying Spanish. Students' responses concentrated on the potential career benefits of studying Spanish and being able to use it in a professional setting, and the "proving" of such ability, associated with taking a SHL class and obtaining a minor or other type of credential (i.e. a certificate) in the language. This trend mirrored the results of the Spanish-speaking sub-group of HLLs in the NHLRC survey as 71.1% of the respondents indicated that "they were studying their HL with a future career or job in mind" (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 51). This professional motivation outranked personal goals for studying one's HL. Hence, more

immediate ties to professional uses of the HL can help counter the current disconnection identified by students.

Next, as noted earlier and in previous research (Carreira & Kagan, 2011), HLLs are often motivated to study their HL because of future professional opportunities related to the use of their HL. Students' reflections presented in this category of description revealed a disconnect in the sociolinguistic needs of the HLLs and the curriculum of their SHL courses. Thus, privileging student-centered perceptions calls for a reorientation of the teaching of grammar in SHL classes that are like the ones represented in this research. Approaches to second language instruction place function, and not form, at the center of language teaching and learning (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). HL instruction can, and should, do the same. Sara, for example, appreciated a focus on grammar in her SHL course. Overall, however, a grammar and rules-based SHL curriculum does not align with students' current and future uses of the Spanish language. Developing deep metalinguistic knowledge, of course, can be beneficial to future language educators. That said, it is difficult to imagine a situation in which a student majoring in physiology or criminal justice, like some of the participants, will need to explain, in detail, a specific grammar structure of Spanish.

Hence, SHL pedagogy should reorient the foci of SHL courses as knowing grammar in and of itself does not convey what students can do with their HLs. Applying the National Council of State Supervisors of Languages (NCSSFL)-American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Can-Do Statements (2017) to HL instructional contexts seems appropriate as these statements frame interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational communication in terms of what students can do with a language. The Can-Do Statements (2017) also describe learners' intercultural communication competencies which is of particular

relevance for HLLs' in-class explorations of the culture(s) represented by their HL. Moreover, a focus on grammar also serves as a reminder of what HLLs "lack" in their use of the HL in specific contexts (see final findings chapter for a discussion of deficit-based understandings of students' HLs). As Burgo (2015) signaled, educators need to know their bilingual students and "not confuse a lack of metalinguistic knowledge with linguistic limitations" (p. 223). Therefore, instead of building SHL courses that take a rules-based approach to language maintenance and development by focusing on grammar, HL instruction should strive to focus on language functions that are relevant to and appropriate for the student population.

Finally, participants, across the SHL courses, provided evidence of interactions with the four language domains. Writing, as previously noted, was understood as the area that required the most practice. Sometimes, writing in the HL meant practicing orthographic norms in the HL (e.g., spelling, the use of diacritics) for students. Both Ana and Rosa talked about approaches to writing that allowed for revisions (a focus on the process). Ana mentioned that her smaller writing assignments led to longer essays that were "extended versions of the short ones." Rosa also hinted at a more innovative approach to teaching writing as she was required to complete pre-writing exercises, and she used an outline for the in-class writing assignment. Sara and Lupe both highlighted the amount of writing they had to complete in their SHL classes. Lupe even revealed that her professor canceled the last writing assignment as "she had assigned too many" essays for the semester.

Speaking in the HL with one's instructor and classmates was the most common description for this skill area. Meaningful oral communication in the HL has to offer HLLs something more than what students described. Interpersonal communication in pairs and small groups is beneficial to HLLs as, if they plan to use Spanish in a career, they will most likely need

to engage in this mode of communication. Several students, however, mentioned participating in the presentational mode of communication by giving an end-of-semester final presentation to their classmates. Again, this mode is of relevance in professional contexts. Guided participation in local Spanish-speaking communities, like the projects described by Lupe and Sara, afford new opportunities for HLLs to use their HL in innovative ways.

The participants' SHL classes tend to be characterized by linguistic heterogeneity among the student population (Beaudrie, 2012). Therefore, this resource should be tapped into more frequently in SHL courses. An increased exposure to different varieties of Spanish, both in and outside the classroom, could be of benefit to HLLs as students and future users of Spanish in professional settings. Take, for example, the activity Ana described. In her SHL class, the professor played audio files that actively encouraged translanguaging practices (García, 2013a) that accessed students' linguistic repertoires as HLLs had to use both Spanish and English. For Ana, this in-class activity was reminiscent of the ways in which she communicates with her family. This activity and other forms of focused practice in the interpretive mode, in class and as homework, could help build learners' confidence and ability to interact with multilingual speakers of Spanish from backgrounds that differ from their own. Furthermore, additional experience in this domain in professional contexts (e.g., internships, service-learning assignments, etc.) could reinforce this skill that is often-overlooked in the classroom as it is valuable when using Spanish in the workplace.

Sometimes practicing reading skills was confused with practicing pronunciation in the HL (Ana and Bianca). Bianca defined these "reading" activities as times during which the class could learn from each other's mispronounced words. Neither student explicitly mentioned that the "reading" activities were inappropriate for their level of study; however, it has been

documented that these types of “read aloud” activities tend to infantilize HLLs (Edstrom, 2007). Lupe, Rosa and Sara described this receptive skill as an aspect of their SHL classes that focused on textbook-based reading assignments or supplemental reading such as articles, poems, and short stories. There were no discussions of the professional benefits of being able to closely analyze a text and apply the knowledge gained in practical ways.

In HL classrooms, students bring a unique connection to the language of study. These perspectives should guide a bottom-up approach to HL curriculum design. In this first findings chapter, students have provided insight into the reasons that motivated them to study their HL. These motivations mirrored the patterns reported by HLLs of Spanish on a national survey (Carreira & Kagan, 2011); however, the SHL classes did not adequately address and incorporate students’ career-orientated aspirations into the curriculum. Furthermore, grammar took center stage in the second descriptive category. Students seemingly internalized the expectation that studying grammar was the key to unlocking their HL so that they could gain a deeper understanding of the language. Finally, expanding proficiency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading the HL were not given equal treatment. Students’ classroom-based experiences in their HL contributed to an understanding that placed writing in Spanish as the primary language domain that students needed to practice.

In sum, a salient takeaway from the categories of description was participants’ focus on using Spanish in professional settings upon graduation. Students’ career-oriented motivations influenced their enrollment in a SHL course; therefore, future uses of Spanish in the workplace should have a role in SHL curriculum for adult HLLs. Therefore, educators of HLLs of Spanish must do a better job of connecting curriculum to the real-world needs of students such as career-oriented uses of the HL and a focus on language functions, as opposed to language forms. And,

in order to do so, we must begin by first listening to their voices. My data analyses illuminated these needs through students' reflections on their experiences in new and recently established post-secondary SHL classes in the Midwest.

This phenomenography described the different ways in which people experienced the same phenomenon (Marton, 1988). Hence, for HL programs, it is important that decision-makers get to know the students (Burgo, 2015) enrolled in the HL class(es) so that students' needs can be appropriately identified and met through the HL course offering(s). Moving ahead, the next chapter builds awareness of the ways in which participants perceived community. It is revealed that students' definitions of community are not confined to the physical space that is the SHL classroom, and as such, community exerts influence on students' understanding of the role of their HL in new contexts.

Chapter 5: Communities Inside and Outside of the SHL Classroom

Introduction

In this chapter, my data analysis revealed that the concept of community was important to the participants in SHL instructional contexts. In the first category of description, students painted a picture of what it was like being in a class of Spanish-speaking bilinguals. For example, the SHL classroom was a unique social, cultural, and personal space for Latinx students enrolled in primarily White institutions (PWIs). Students also discussed a growing appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity in SHL communities through extended in-class interactions with Spanish speakers from backgrounds that differed from their own. The last category of description highlighted two participants' off-campus experiences that depicted the transformative role SHL classes can wield on students' participation in Spanish-speaking communities. Therefore, I argue in this outcome space that SHL curriculum should tap into the camaraderie and solidarity students experience in the HL classroom by including activities and discussions that focus on students' linguistic and cultural diversity. These kinds of assignments contribute to building community in the classroom. Furthermore, instructors of HLLs should link students to local Spanish-speaking communities through service-learning projects so that students are able to use their HL in new ways.

The categories of description presented in this chapter deepened our understanding of students' experiences in new and recently established SHL programs in the Midwest. Thus, these student-centered perspectives described the importance of communities in their SHL classes. The participants' SHL classes represent an emerging norm in the Midwest and other regions of the U.S. (Beaudrie, 2012) where linguistically heterogenous HLLs study in SHL programs that are smaller in scope and students have limited opportunities to use Spanish on campus/in the community. Therefore, approaches to SHL instruction should actively foster community-

building in the classroom and include service-learning components that involve students in the local Spanish-speaking communities off-campus in ways that help them understand the value of their Spanish and provide students with opportunities to serve these communities in meaningful ways.

Community-building inside the SHL classroom

The SHL classroom was, for most students, a unique meeting space for a few different reasons. For most of the participants, this was the first time they had taken a class that was primarily composed of bilingual users of Spanish and English. The known exception was Bianca who mentioned that most of her high school classmates were bilingual speakers of Spanish. Also, students were taking a HL for the first time. Furthermore, participants were enrolled in PWIs where most of the student population did not share their linguistic and cultural background.

To begin, Ana had not previously taken a Spanish course specifically designed for HLLs. As such, she commented on this new experience by sharing the following:

> It was really interesting because it was a different atmosphere than any other class I've ever been in. I don't know if it's because there was just a natural camaraderie amongst us because we'd all suffered through terrible Spanish classes and we all were like 'Oh, thank you! Someone [the professor] who actually knows what they're doing. I think it was, I don't know, but it was just very positive in the sense that everyone felt kind of connected just by sharing a language and it just helped also that our professor was just very into what she was teaching. She was good at engaging us.

It is worth pointing out that Ana perceived a natural camaraderie among her classmates who felt connected to one another as they shared a language. The camaraderie and connectedness described by Ana represented the community that was created in this SHL classroom. Ana was able to connect with students who had an experience that was like her own as someone who grew

up with the Spanish language at home. Furthermore, Ana, during her reflection, stated that her professor's teaching practices such as fostering a high level of student engagement contributed to the sense of community in the SHL class. These approaches could enhance or promote community in the HL classroom.

Ana applauded her professor for effectively engaging the students in the class. However, Ana negatively described her previous experience with Spanish in an academic setting. Her Spanish classes in high school were "terrible," and she, along with her classmates, had "suffered" through those classes. Ana's view on taking Spanish classes designed for L2 learners is sometimes shared by HLLs (Edstrom, 2007; Moore Torres & Turner, 2017; Potowski, 2002). At the core of Ana's discontent is that her high school Spanish classes were designed for L2 learners of Spanish. Research has shown that L2 classes are not the best fit for HLLs as bilinguals have reported feeling bored when in-class activities are not challenging (Edstrom, 2007), disengaged when a connection to culture is missing in the curriculum (Leeman, Rabin, & Mendoza-Román), and intimidated by L2 learners' metalinguistic knowledge of Spanish (Potowski, 2002).

Unlike Ana, Bianca had previously taken classes in which most or all the students were Spanish-English bilinguals. For Bianca, being enrolled in a SHL class at her university invoked positive memories from high school:

> I was mostly used to [being in class with bilinguals]. We took classes in English in high school, but most of the classes were filled with Hispanics who were bilingual. So, I was used to it – being in a classroom setting with bilingual students, which was nice because we routinely spoke Spanish with one another….

As such, the SHL class afforded Bianca a space of familiarity as she was accustomed to taking classes with other bilingual speakers of Spanish. This similarity could also help facilitate the transition process from high school to college that some minoritized students find difficult. For example, some Latinx students have reported not feeling like they belong on their college campuses (Strayhorn, 2008) due to a lack of diversity in the student body (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005) or being away from their families for the first time (Gonzales, Brammer, & Sawilowsky, 2015).

Furthermore, Bianca was enrolled in a PWI, and she shared "I don't really see very many Hispanic people on campus." Bianca's SHL class was a microcosm of the diversity present at her university. The class was small, but she appreciated the size of the class as "we were able to contribute easily and get individual help, so that was nice." A salient benefit of the linguistically and culturally diverse SHL classroom was revealed by Bianca's assessment that:

> It was really a unique experience because I was able to work with different Hispanics which is not really something I do, especially not at my university since the students are predominantly White Americans. So, it was a good experience and I really enjoyed interacting with different Hispanics which helped me learn as well.

Instructors of similar HL classes should tap into the linguistic and cultural diversity of the students. The diverse experiences and differing levels of familiarity with the Spanish language of students enrolled in linguistically heterogenous SHL courses is a resource that students can benefit from as they seek to advance their Spanish language skills.

Unlike Bianca, Lupe had little experience being in classes with other Spanish speakers. She shared the following:

> I thought it was neat. I had never been in a class with that many Latinos before or that many people that were bilingual and I thought it was awesome because … some people's parents were from Central America, and then some people's parents were from Mexico. So, everybody kind of spoke a different kind of Spanish. I think it was cool because if I said something in Spanish everybody knew what I meant…. I could just say what I wanted to say in Spanish, and they understood what I was really trying to say. It was also cool that we all had such different levels of how well we could converse in Spanish. I liked it a lot. That was new for me.

The classroom environment had a positive impact on Lupe's experience in this SHL class. Lupe appreciated the cultural diversity of her classmates as their families represented different parts of the Spanish-speaking world. Hence, Lupe's SHL classroom community was made up of students who spoke "a different kind of Spanish." Not only did students speak different varieties of Spanish, they also were at different points on the continuum of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). Linguistic heterogeneity is expected in new and recently established SHL programs like the one at Lupe's university (Beaudrie, 2012). Lupe observed this diversity in her class, and she considered it to be a characteristic that contributed to the favorable classroom environment. Therefore, SHL curriculum should use this heterogeneity to highlight the linguistic and cultural diversity present in the classroom and in local, statewide, nationwide, and international Spanish-speaking communities. Drawing students' attention to the plurality of varieties of Spanish and Spanish-speaking communities could help students feel (more) connected to their HL. Moreover, focusing on the diversity in Spanish-speaking communities could help combat hegemonic ideologies about students' HL and their communities.

Like Lupe, both Rosa and Sara noticed and commented on the linguistic variety present in their SHL classes that helped build community in their classrooms. In her reflection, Rosa shared:

> It was relaxed…. Some people were on different levels than others: some people could read better; some people could write better; and some could speak better. So, she [the professor] tried to keep us all like on a level playing field. So, it was pretty laid back.

Likewise, Sara believed that the linguistic heterogeneity of her class was one element that brought everyone together ideologically:

> I think because we all felt like we had something to learn … we were there for each other. The teacher made it so comfortable for us that we didn't have to worry if we felt like we didn't know enough Spanish, or if we didn't speak it well, if we used different words. We were always willing to learn from each other and listen to each other's experience growing up in Spanish at home.

Key phrases from Rosa "relaxed" and "pretty laid back" and from Sara "so comfortable" and "didn't have to worry" supported the idea of a strong community in their classrooms. The students enrolled in the classes at both universities had different levels of proficiency in Spanish; however, this feature of the student population helped define and build community in the students' SHL classes. Despite the linguistic differences, there was a sense of community and solidarity as Sara observed that her classmates were open to learning from one another. According to these two students' perceptions, their professors were able to allay students' concerns about linguistic heterogeneity by creating a supportive environment in which students could flourish.

Additionally, Lupe noted that English was the language of familiarity among her classmates. According to Lupe: “We would start working in groups, and then we would get really comfortable with each other and then just switch to English out of habit.” It is not surprising that a group of students in a SHL class would communicate with one another in English during small-group activities. However, it is interesting that Lupe would frame English as the language of familiarity in a class designed for Spanish speakers. I believe the notion of an in-classroom community that was fostered by Lupe’s SHL class contributed to Lupe’s reflection on why students used English in class sometimes. Even though the students were enrolled in a SHL class, English was the *lingua franca* – the language that was used by people who have developed a sense of community with one another.

The notions of community and solidarity in the students’ SHL classes were strong. For some participants, this was their first time taking a class with students who were Spanish-English bilinguals. As such, the HL classroom space was a unique one in which students were able to learn with and from other students who shared a background with them that was similar, yet different at the same time. Participants made personal connections with their classmates, and they expressed solidarity when sharing that they felt like they had something to learn. Most importantly, perhaps, they seemed to be open to learning from one another. Students did not comment on who spoke the “best” variety Spanish in their SHL classes as they valued the different varieties of Spanish represented in their SHL courses. The next section in this chapter highlights this appreciation students had for differences present in their culturally and linguistically diverse classmates.

Sharing and valuing linguistic and cultural diversity

As evidenced by the previous section, students and professors were able to foster community-building in the SHL classes. An important aspect of participants' SHL classes was the linguistic and cultural plurality represented by the students. As Beaudrie (2012) noted, new SHL programs have been, and continue to be, developed in regions that, historically, do not have a longstanding link to the Spanish language and the diverse groups of people for whom Spanish is a home language. In these recently established SHL programs, HLLs with varying levels of familiarity and experience using the Spanish language tend to be placed into the same class as the programs usually consist of no more than two classes designed for HLLs. Anyone tasked with placing students into language courses might be concerned with the composition of small SHL classes in which students' linguistic profiles can differ greatly. However, this difference was a resource that was valued by participants. The nature of these new and recently established SHL programs provided students with insight into the variety that exists in the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking cultures of families in the U.S.

In Bianca's SHL class, most of her classmates identified as Mexican; however, "some students [or their families] were from Guatemala, southern Mexico (Oaxaca) and Central America." As mentioned by a few other participants, Bianca felt that her classmates learned from one another. For example, she shared the following:

> People from Guatemala can say a certain word and use it for something else while Mexicans use it for something totally different. There were times when it was actually brought up where someone would say: 'Oh no, we use that word for when we refer to this.' But us Mexicans would say: 'No, this is for that.' And we'd just laugh about it. It was a really unique experience because I was able to interact with different Hispanics which is not something I do at my university since they [the students] are mostly white

> Americans. So, it was a really good experience and I really enjoyed interacting with different Hispanics which helped me learn as well.

Thus, the activities designed by the SHL professor allowed Bianca to "interact with other Hispanics," which was not often possible for Bianca at her PWI. The SHL class, due to its heterogeneity, also exposed students to words and phrases that differed from the Spanish students used in their homes and communities. Hence, SHL classes should include more than just incidental learning among the students; the curriculum should utilize students' diversity as a teaching and learning resource through lessons and assignments that demonstrate and place value on linguistic and cultural diversity across Spanish-speaking communities.

Similarly, most of Rosa's classmates identified as Mexican while "a few students were from South and Central America, and two students were from Puerto Rico." Rosa remarked that "you could tell people were from different countries by the way they spoke." She further commented on the pronunciation and word choice of her classmates: "sometimes people had to, I guess, ask for a translation because not all the same words are used in all countries." The linguistic diversity present in both Bianca's and Rosa's classes allowed for learning that might not have occurred had the students shared similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Linguistic and cultural diversity played a role in Sara's SHL class too. First, there were three students in Sara's class who did not identify as Latinx. These three students had learned Spanish in non-school contexts. For example, one of Sara's classmates had lived in Guatemala for three years, while another lived in Honduras for a year where he met his wife. According to Sara, even though these students were not Latinx, they had "really cool stories of how Spanish was something really important to them." Although these few students were not Latinx, Sara

seemed to appreciate their connection to the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking cultures and the contributions these students made in class.

Furthermore, Sara's classmates represented different parts of the Spanish-speaking world such as Mexico, Central America (the home region of Sara's parents) and the Dominican Republic. Sara continued by stating that she and her classmates "saw the differences in the meanings of words." Differences emerged when students spoke:

> For example, the word for 'car' in Spanish varies from country to country. And so, some girls were like, 'Wait, we don't know what that means.' And we were like, 'Wait you've never heard that word?' So, we were just always open and learning from each other.

This openness to learning from their linguistic and cultural differences extended beyond the classroom for Sara and some of her classmates as they started discussing language variety outside of class:

> I would text with some of the girls from class, or we would walk out the class and, like walk to our next class and we're like, 'Wow! I didn't know it [Spanish] was so different in your parents' country' or 'That's not what I learned at home.'

Again, the uniqueness of a small SHL program afforded Sara, and her classmates, opportunities to engage with the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking cultures in ways that piqued their interest and encouraged them to continue learning beyond what was required or expected during class meetings.

Like other students, Ana mentioned that Mexican varieties of Spanish was the most common in her class as most of her classmates had familial ties to Mexico. Ana's professor was from Mexico while several students had ties to Central and South America (including Ana as her parents were from Argentina). Ana talked about an activity that was repeated during the semester

that built students' awareness of linguistic diversity. Ana's professor would say a word in English, and the students then had to describe how they would express the word in Spanish. Ana realized "there are a lot of different ways to say one word." Ana shared that she had some familiarity with other varieties of Spanish; however,

> it was really cool to see it in practice because it made it a little bit more real, I guess, to hear all the different accents, the pronunciations. There were differences in the way we spoke but we still all understood each other, which is interesting.

In Ana's SHL class, difference united the students. Ana, as a speaker of Argentine Spanish, said that she used *vos* instead of *tú* like her classmates. This characteristic of Ana's Spanish contributed to Ana's membership in her classroom community represented by linguistic and cultural diversity.

Lupe also discussed the role of linguistic and cultural diversity in her SHL class. The students in her class represented Mexico and Central American nations such as Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras. Lupe mentioned that some students' families were from northern Mexico "and they speak differently than we do in southern Mexico." Lupe's family and some of her classmates' families were from this region of Mexico. Moreover, Lupe's professor created activities that highlighted linguistic variety in the Spanish-speaking world for students. Lupe remembered that her classmates with families from Guatemala used a word for "bus" that she had not heard before. Furthermore, Lupe's knowledge was deepened during an in-class discussion about the word "Chicano/a." Some students like Lupe believed the word "Chicano/a" had a negative connotation. Through conversations with her classmates, Lupe learned that "Chicano/a" is used positively as a marker of identity and pride. Again, the nature of the small, linguistically/culturally diverse SHL class provided Lupe with insights into the rich variety that

exists in Spanish-speaking communities at the local, regional, state, national and international level.

The students' descriptions of their SHL classes painted a picture of linguistic and cultural diversity across the SHL courses. The curricular decisions of the SHL instructors in these learning communities helped students better understand that the Spanish language is not monolithic. Participants discussed variation in their own classroom communities and across Spanish-speaking communities worldwide, with a focus on the U.S. Many of the students also seemed to gain a greater appreciation of the cultural heterogeneity present not only in their classes, but in general. SHL courses should further incorporate explorations of cultural and linguistic diversity into the curriculum. Through specific activities and assignments and through informal conversations, students demonstrated that linguistic and cultural diversity was a source of inspiration to their expanding knowledge about one another and the Spanish-speaking world.

Building community outside the SHL classroom

The students attended PWIs, as previously mentioned, that were in regions that do not have a large Spanish-speaking population. As such, it is worth noting the reflections of Lupe and Sara on the role their SHL classes played in connecting them to Spanish-speaking communities beyond the SHL classroom community. Both Lupe's and Sara's SHL professors required that students use Spanish outside of the classroom through service-learning projects and interview projects.

Service learning in Spanish. In some classes, instructors expected students to fulfill a service-learning requirement. For example, Lupe and her classmates had to use Spanish in their local community. The students had to complete a minimum of ten hours of service in an educational context. Lupe "particularly liked" this project, and she believed there were "various opportunities" to meet the project's requirements as "there were a couple of elementary schools

with a large Latino population" near her university. Lupe "provided services in a classroom at the bilingual school" where students were "learning in Spanish three days a week and learning in English two days a week." During the service-learning project, Lupe engaged with elementary-age students in Spanish in their classrooms, and she provided tutoring in Spanish in the after-school program because the school "wanted all of their students to be able to speak and write Spanish nearly fluently." Additionally, Lupe shared:

> I also liked interpreting and translating or interpreting during [parent-teacher] conferences…. I helped in the classroom and interpreted…. I've been speaking a lot of Spanish. Not that I didn't before because I was speaking with my mom, but I think having to write [reflection journal entries and the service-learning report] in Spanish so much I started thinking in Spanish more.

Lupe reflected on the value of the service-learning project that required that she participate in different activities at a local elementary school. This project afforded Lupe the opportunity to use Spanish in a new way in a new setting. She also practiced interpreting and translating which reinforced the certificate she was pursuing at the time. Moreover, she noticed that she was starting to think more in Spanish because of her service-learning project.

Beaudrie and Ducar (2005) recommended that SHL teachers "create a need for students to use Spanish outside of the classroom" (p. 15) so that students gain experience using Spanish in different contexts. The service-learning project designed by Lupe's professor pushed students to use Spanish in new ways. As such, Lupe gained a deeper (re)connection with Spanish through this assignment that led to her thinking more in Spanish. Earlier in this chapter, Lupe described English as the language of familiarity as she and her classmates would default to English when working in pairs/groups. Despite using English sometimes in the familiar SHL classroom space,

Lupe had to use Spanish when she was immersed in the community of the local elementary school and when she wrote her service-learning reflection journals and final report. The service-learning project, and the tasks associated with it, positively impacted Lupe's use of Spanish as a language of thought.

Likewise, the service-learning assignment in Sara's SHL class linked students to local schools. According to Sara:

> One of the big focuses of the class was us learning about bilingual education and how Spanish is used in our school system…. I think that was really good in the way she [the professor] made us go into the community and learn about that. …we had to go to a dual language school and do ten hours of community service to see how they teach Spanish and English in that school.

Sara valued this "good" project during which students learned about bilingual education and the ways in which Spanish is used in this educational context. Through classroom observations and interactions with students, Sara and her classmates gained more knowledge about bilingual education in their local community. Moreover, they had the opportunity to use Spanish in a new context which could not have happened in the SHL classroom alone. Similarly, Lupe clearly believed that she and her classmates benefitted from participating in a service-learning project in their SHL class. Lupe added:

> I think by providing those services in the classroom, everybody had to speak in Spanish there to the teachers and the students. I was fortunate of that [speaking in Spanish at the school], as well. And I know some people went over the ten hours that we had to complete for the class. I think a lot of people really enjoyed that aspect of it. I know somebody got like 30 hours.

Lupe focused on the fact that she had to both speak and write more in Spanish while completing the service-learning assignment. Speaking to students and teachers in Spanish was viewed as a “fortunate” opportunity, according to Lupe. Some of her classmates even exceeded the minimum required hours because they saw the value of using Spanish in their local community.

When asked about which elements of their SHL classes they would keep if they were professors of SHL classes, both Lupe and Sara commented on their service-learning projects. Lupe’s initial comments were:

> I think I would keep the service hours the same. …service-based learning is huge. …it allows you to connect to your community in a different way and to use Spanish in a different way than you’re used to. Having to reflect on those experiences and write about it, I guess, kind of makes you realize quite a bit.

Again, Lupe perceived the service-learning project to be of importance. The most impactful aspect of the assignment was the fostering of connections to the local community via the Spanish language. Lupe developed new connections, and she used Spanish in ways that she had not done so previously in class or with her family. In a similar vein, Sara mentioned that she too would keep the service-learning component of her SHL class. Some of Sara’s classmates, as children, had attended the dual immersion school where they completed the service-learning project. For Sara, who completed her K–12 schooling in English, it was important to see that, in addition to Latinx students, there “were African American, White, and Asian kids” attending the school.

Furthermore, Lupe believed that the service-learning project was a form of “hands-on learning” that allowed her to “apply …knowledge quickly.” Reflecting on service learning, Lupe stated:

> I think so many people are super used to college being 'Going to class, hearing a lecture and doing the homework and that's it.' You know, you don't really ever apply it until you graduate. And I think I think exposing us to her [the professor's] study and conducting research [an interview project] and going to the school and helping. I think it just helped. I think applying it that way was really useful, and it made me think of Spanish in a different way. I've never really thought about trying to get a minor or major in Spanish because I thought it would be useless. But I guess it makes you realize the value a little bit more.

Lupe's SHL class shaped and influenced her conceptualization of Spanish and its role in the community. In short, the professor's HL curriculum that required students use Spanish outside of the SHL classroom helped Lupe better see the value in her HL.

Although the SHL programs were small and recently established, instructors' incorporation of service learning into the curriculum proved beneficial for Sara and Lupe. Service learning aims to get students out of the classroom so that they can engage with their local community in new, exciting, and personally meaningful ways (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Pak, 2018) by incorporating and expanding students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), such as an understanding of the role of education in the lives of children from their communities. The projects described by Lupe and Sara helped achieve this goal. Sara and her classmates were able to see bilingual education in action in their local community. Meanwhile, Lupe and her classmates were able to interact with Spanish speakers during and after school hours. The service-learning projects exposed the SHL students to Spanish and bilingual speakers in a professional setting, and the projects allowed them to tutor young learners of Spanish from diverse backgrounds.

Interviewing speakers of Spanish. Another assignment that promoted links between the SHL classroom and the Spanish-speaking community involved conducting interviews. Both Sara's and Lupe's professors required that students carry out interviews with Spanish-speaking members of their local communities. In both SHL classes, students had to interview a Spanish speaker from the students' home states, transcribe the interview, and write a reflection paper on the process.

For Sara, interviewing a speaker of Spanish was "one of our big assignments" in the course. She had to interview someone who had grown up using Spanish in her home state. Sara had to transcribe the interview she conducted – "we had to write exactly what we heard, how we heard them speaking and how we heard ourselves speaking in Spanish and kind of explain why we think they spoke that way." In addition to using Spanish in a K–12 setting, the interview assignment was another activity that encouraged students' use of Spanish outside the classroom. Sara felt that this task both assessed and helped reinforce her listening skills in Spanish.

Similarly, Lupe's interviewee had to be a Spanish speaker from her home state. She had to transcribe the interview and then reflect on the whole process. In Lupe's SHL class, students' interviews focused on language ideologies and language use. Lupe remembered asking her interviewee questions about how his use of the Spanish language had changed during his life. Lupe had not completed such an assignment, and it was "a lot more difficult" than she had expected. Like Sara, Lupe viewed the interview project as a test of her listening skills. She commented that she had to "listen to the words and make sure I transcribed them correctly and got the right word with the right meaning." Later, Lupe talked about the rigor of her interview assignment when she mentioned: "Just having to listen to it many times, that was pretty big. That was a lot…. That was a big project…."

Like the service-learning project that required that students use Spanish in meaningful ways outside of the classroom, the interview projects described by Lupe and Sara also afforded them the opportunity to use Spanish with someone not enrolled in their SHL courses. Lupe and Sara were able to document and analyze the life history of a Spanish speaker in their respective communities. During this assignment, Lupe learned about the ways in which her interviewee's use of Spanish had changed. For example, Lupe asked questions about how often her interviewee speaks Spanish and shifts in language ideology that have occurred while living in an English-dominant community. This type of task not only engaged students with speakers of Spanish in their communities, it also functioned to practice speaking, listening and writing in Spanish.

Conclusion

Studies in HL education have not given enough attention to the unique affordances of the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of students enrolled in SHL programs like the ones represented in this study. The SHL classroom is of particular importance, especially at PWIs, as it carries a high level of institutional recognition as part of the official course offerings. One problem found on university campuses is that minority students are less likely to express satisfaction with their experiences (Einarson & Matier, 2005; Ovink & Veazey, 2011), and they are less likely to report feelings of belongingness and community (Ostrove & Long, 2007; Strayhorn, 2008; Witkowsky, Obregon, Bruner, & Alanis, 2018). These factors can contribute to non-completion/increased drop-out rates for minority students on college campuses (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). On-campus clubs and organizations can bring together students who have similar backgrounds and students with shared interests. Based on interviews with students, I propose that SHL classes can help students participate in and contribute to communities of Spanish-English bilinguals both on and off campus. HL courses are much more than a language

class as they represent spaces in which instruction is geared towards a group of people that share a (familial) connection to the target language and cultures.

First, the SHL classroom environment was a lively topic of discussion. For some students, like Ana and Lupe, being in a classroom of Spanish-English bilinguals was a new experience. Ana spoke about the "different atmosphere" that made her SHL class stand apart from other courses she had taken at her university. Ana also talked about the positive learning context as she and her classmates felt a connection to one another "just by sharing a language." Lupe used words such as "awesome" and "cool" to describe being in a SHL class as she "had never been in a class with that many Latinos before or that many people there were bilingual." On the contrary, Bianca had taken classes with Spanish-English bilinguals in high school so the composition of her SHL class was not novel to her. That said, she later described her college campus as predominantly White. Because of the lack of racial/ethnic diversity at Bianca's university, she considered her SHL class to be a unique space on campus.

Students also expressed a sense of solidarity in their SHL classroom that contributed to community-building among students. Sara underscored the importance of community when she shared that she and her classmates "all felt like we had something to learn…we were there for each other." Sara's observations depicted her SHL class as a support network as the students "were always willing to learn from each other and listen to each other's experience growing up in Spanish at home." Ana focused on solidarity too when she talked about the "natural camaraderie" she shared with her classmates as they had similar experiences in "terrible Spanish classes" in high school. Ana described her high school Spanish classes as "terrible" because they were designed for L2 learners of Spanish, not HLLs. Later, Ana revealed that she had struggled with learning how to use written accent marks in Spanish. This revelation further emphasized the

building of community through solidarity with linguistic insecurities. Ana noted that she was not alone in her struggle with the use of diacritics as she perceived that some of her classmates felt the same way. Additionally, Lupe echoed sentiments of community and unity when she discussed the joy of being able to express herself in Spanish without having to translate to English: "…if I said something in Spanish everybody knew what I meant…. I could just say what I wanted to say in Spanish, and they understood what I was really trying to say."

Lupe also highlighted the personal connections she had made with her classmates. For example, she stated that "… we would get really comfortable with each other and then just switch to English out of habit." In this statement, Lupe equated English with familiarity and collegiality. Thus, she viewed her classmates as more than just classmates – these were people with whom she had developed connections. Furthermore, as Sara indicated, her classmates were "always willing to learn from each other and listen to each other's experience growing up with Spanish at home." Sara even texted with some of her classmates outside of class to discuss the differences in Spanish from her their families' different home countries. Thus, participants were able to connect with their classmates in meaningful ways beyond the walls of the classroom. Bianca echoed this sentiment of cultural appreciation when she talked about the diversity represented in her SHL class that gave her the opportunity to interact with a diverse Latinx population in her SHL class. Bianca and her classmates were even able to laugh with one another when a word of phrase came up during class that was familiar to only speakers of a specific variety(ies) of Spanish. These interactions, according to Bianca, contributed to her learning as well.

Rosa, Ana, and Lupe learned new words and phrases from students who represented various Spanish-speaking regions in their SHL classes. Rosa explained how she and her

classmates would sometimes have to ask other students to further clarify the word they used as some people were not familiar the word in their variety of Spanish. Ana's professor led students in an activity throughout the semester to build their awareness of the linguistic diversity present in the Spanish language. Ana, a speaker of her family's Argentine Spanish, thought it was fascinating to learn "there are a lot of different ways to say one word." In her SHL class, Lupe mentioned that she learned new ways of expressing words, and she gained an expanded understanding of the word "Chicano/a," and the ways in which it is used in the U.S.

Current research on the importance of service-learning projects in SHL programs has come from scholars teaching in recently established, small SHL programs that cater to linguistically and culturally diverse HLLs of Spanish (see Lowther Pereira, 2016; Pak, 2018; Pascual y Cabo, De la Rosa-Prada, & Lowther-Pereira, 2017). This body of research has demonstrated not only the ways in which SHL classes can connect students to local speakers of Spanish, but also the importance and relevance of these classroom-to-communities connections. For example, Lupe's and Sara's experiences in their SHL classes provided evidence that supported the curricular decisions made by their professors – participating in service-learning projects further enriched students' use of and links to the Spanish language. These projects helped students like Lupe, in particular, understand the value and role of Spanish outside the classroom. Language education in the U.S. is a timely topic for HLLs as exploring this theme helps students better understand the schooling experience of language minority communities.

Both Lupe and Sara acknowledged how the service-learning assignment was of relevance and that it expanded their knowledge about an approach to language education that impacts their communities. Lupe looped back to the service-learning requirement at different times during her interview as she valued the opportunity to visit the elementary school and interact with the

students, teachers, and parents. Likewise, Sara was able to observe dual language education in action, participate in the school's activities and gain a deeper understanding of the populations that are served by dual language programs. The community-based projects encouraged students to use Spanish in new domains. Students regularly used Spanish in their SHL classes, and some even used Spanish to communicate daily with family members and friends. Assignments like the ones described by Lupe and Sara, got HLLs out of the classroom and into their communities.

Furthermore, Sara and Lupe were required to interview a Spanish speaker in their communities for their SHL classes. Both students were attuned to the ways in which an interview project provided them with an opportunity to use their linguistic repertoire in novel ways. In her reflection paper, Sara had to explain why she thought her interviewee spoke in a certain way. After conducting the interview, Lupe wrote about how her interviewee's use of Spanish had changed during his life in their home state. The interview projects described by Sara and Lupe also provided them with insight into one kind of research that is common in the field of language studies.

According to participants, the SHL classrooms were supportive spaces in which they could express themselves in their distinct varieties of Spanish and enjoy being around people who have similar linguistic and cultural ties to the Spanish language. As previously mentioned, students were enrolled in a SHL course that was the only course of its kind on campus or one of two SHL courses offered by a Spanish program. Both the data in this study and previous research (Beaudrie, 2012; Carreira, 2012a, 2012b; Carreira & Kagan, 2011), indicate that diverse levels of proficiency and experience with the Spanish language are the norm in these types of SHL programs in the New Latinx Diaspora (Beaudrie, 2012). Therefore, we should approach SHL instruction in a way that builds on the unique nature of these classes that enroll linguistically and

culturally heterogeneous HLLs. Collaborative assignments and activities such as in-class pair and group work can contribute to building community in the SHL classroom, thus helping combat the isolation some minority students experience on campuses throughout the U.S.

However, not all K-16 institutions have separate tracks for L2 and HL students due to funding or size of student population (Stafford, 2013), just to mention a few constraints. Therefore, Carreira (2007, 2012a, 2016) has been an advocate for increasing differentiated instruction in mixed L2-HL classes. Constraints like the ones listed above could lead to the existence of linguistically diverse HL classes like the ones in which participants were enrolled during the data collection process. When HL tracks do exist, the homogenous and heterogenous HL classroom can and should be a space that addresses the needs of the students while, at the same time, building and reinforcing notions of community both inside and outside of the classroom.

Moreover, approaches such as project-based learning help expand students' ability to successfully collaborate in teams which is a 21st century skill (Bell, 2010) that supports some students' career-driven motivations (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) for studying their HL. In conversations about language education, meeting the diverse needs of HLLs with different levels is a common topic of discussion (Carreira, 2012a). However, it appears that these mixed-level SHL classes were of benefit to the students enrolled in these classes as they helped foster community inside and outside of the classroom, and they introduced (for some students) or expanded (for others) their knowledge and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity present in Spanish-speaking communities.

Chapter 6: Breaking Down and Building Up Spanish as a HL

Introduction

This last analysis chapter addresses an outcome space in which positive and negative characteristics were attributed to Spanish in the HL classroom context. As HLLs, students knew their Spanish was "different" because they had acquired it at home and, for some participants, had only used Spanish in an academic setting when they took Spanish classes designed for L2 learners in high school. A phenomenographic approach to data analysis focused on how students perceived their experience of being enrolled in a SHL course. As such, I argue that instructors should adopt caring perspectives and actions such as fostering a learning environment that is welcoming to students with different levels of proficiency and designing curriculum that aligns with students' interests. These caring perspectives and actions have a positive impact on the study of Spanish in a HL context as they can reduce students' anxiety associated with studying their HL and promote agency when students contribute topics to the SHL curriculum.

In the first category of description, examples of external perspectives that labeled students' Spanish as deficient were present in some students' reflections on their experiences in their SHL classes. Hence, it is important that HL instructors be conscientious of students' affective needs and concerns. Efforts must be made to not frame students nor their HL as deficient. Furthermore, data from the interviews highlighted the ways in which students had reproduced ideologies that support a "standard" variety of their home language by fixating on "missing" metalinguistic knowledge about Spanish, for example. Therefore, SHL instructors should, through the curriculum, help HLLs overcome these negative framings of their HL varieties.

Conversely, in the next section, students shared their thoughts on the value of their HL as some deficit views of Spanish as a HL were debunked during students' enrollment in a SHL

class. For some participants, specific activities and topics of discussion, such as the value of bilingualism, led to a greater appreciation for their HL and its role in both their personal and (future) professional lives. Finally, in the last category of description, students discussed the ways in which care was displayed in their SHL classes. Caring perspectives and actions had a positive impact on participants' study of Spanish in a HL context. As such, instructors should consider the affective dimension that is linked to studying a HL by showing HLLs, through their actions and curricular decisions, that they care about them and their HL.

Reinforcing deficit perspectives

External critics. To begin, some students shared perspectives that pointed to outside forces that promoted a framing of students' HL as lacking in value. Sara, for one, recalled that her professor "kind of explained how we're taught at home to pronounce certain words. But grammatically, it's incorrect." Here, according to Sara, her professor has negated the relevance and value of Spanish as a home language that is used to communicate with family, friends, and members of one's local community. As a reminder, I did not interview participants' professors as a part of this study so I cannot confirm what this professor conveyed to her students as a primary goal of this research was to uncover students' reflections on their experiences in a SHL class. However, it is crucial that we consider students' perceptions of what instructors do and say in the HL classroom. The words and actions of an instructor can have a positive or negative impact on the ways in which students conceptualize their HL.

Furthermore, in Sara's SHL class, students "were only allowed to speak Spanish in class." This rule also existed in Rosa's class:

> So, in this class we only spoke Spanish in class. She [the professor] encouraged us to only speak Spanish in class, so I don't think I was ready for that. Now, I can hold up

> better conversations in Spanish than I could before. She really encouraged us in keeping English out of the classroom…. I wasn't expecting her to like keep English out of the classroom as much as she did.

Sara did not elaborate further on the exclusive use of Spanish in her HL class; however, it was clear that Rosa felt that she benefitted from this rule in her SHL class. A typical goal of HL instruction is usually language maintenance or acquisition (Cummins, 1983) through focused practice in the HL. That said, it is worth asking if having a "one language" policy in the HL classroom violates students' translanguaging practices (García, 2013a; García & Otheguy, 2015). By not allowing space for translanguaging in the HL classroom, instructors are indicating to their students that their HL is flawed as students' HL might contain characteristics that do not align with traditional or prescriptive understandings of what is and what is not a specific language. Moreover, this type of policy reinforces language separation which negates the lived experiences of HLLs. HL classes should strike a balance in which the use of the HL is encouraged without discouraging HLLs' translanguaging practices.

As Leeman, Rabin, and Román-Mendoza (2011) indicated, "when educational practices reinforce language hierarchies and subordinate students' existing identities and language practices, schools can become sites of institutional denigration of the learner's sense of self" (p. 482). Therefore, instructors of HLLs, through their words and curriculum, must push back against ideologies that devalue the HL of students. Linguistic hegemony that privileges some language varieties is sustained "when dominant groups create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard" (Wiley, 2000, p. 113). HL educators need to first acknowledge the hegemonic discourses conveyed to students "through politics, media, as well as institutions" (Wong & Xiao, 2010, p. 162), and then combat these discourses in the HL

classroom so that students do not continue to judge their HL against an idealized "standard" variety that must be achieved to be considered a legitimate speaker of the language. The next theme in this category of description depicts the ways in which students replicated monolingual biases they had been taught. These deficit perspectives delegitimatized students' Spanish and affected their experiences in their SHL classes.

Replicated ideologies. As previous research has demonstrated (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Lowther Pereira, 2010; Wong & Xiao, 2010), HLLs tend to be harsh critics of themselves as users of a HL as they are not able to recognize the intrinsic value of their dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009b). Previous educational experiences with Spanish can "often lead to the marginalization and devaluing of students' language varieties and practices" (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011, p. 482). These messages from society (e.g., schools, media, laws, etc.) teach students that something is wrong with their HL. Furthermore, in a discussion about HLLs' desire to have their Spanish corrected, Ducar (2008) asked if students "have internalized the stigmas that are often attached to bilingual varieties of Spanish" (p. 424). Most of the participants discussed how their Spanish was lacking in various ways. Bianca, for example, sought to perfect her Spanish by enrolling in a SHL class:

> One of the main reasons [for taking the SHL class] was that it was for heritage speakers. I kinda grew up speaking the language, and over the years, I lost it in middle school and high school. It [the school system] was monolingual. I only spoke English so, I was losing how to speak the language, my original language so I kinda wanted to take advantage of the class to kinda perfect it and get back the grammar skills that I needed to get better at it.

Bianca stated that she was losing her Spanish. She details that she wanted to take a SHL class as doing so would help her recover grammar and skills that she had lost. Furthermore, during the closing of the interview, Bianca used the verb "to perfect" for a second time:

> I had already taken two semesters of French, so I had already completed, I think, the requirement for a foreign language. So, this Spanish course was to, you know, perfect my language skills. …I really enjoyed it [the SHL class], and I would definitely recommend heritage speakers to take it because it does really help you with your skills and everything. Um, just learning about, you know, the language and culture.

These instances suggest that, according to Bianca, her Spanish was imperfect, that she needed to "fix it" through formal instruction. The acquisition of skills was one of Bianca's goals as "the class did help me a lot with my grammar, with my writing skills, my oral skills in the language, so there was a lot that I learned." Bianca enrolled in her SHL course voluntarily as she had already fulfilled her university's language requirement by taking two semesters of French. However, despite her focus on skills-getting and perfecting her HL, Bianca enjoyed learning about both the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking cultures.

Likewise, Sara held some internalized deficit views about her HL. She shared the following:

> I think it's hard for students, for heritage speakers to go into a [L2 Spanish] class thinking, 'I can relate to other people.' We learned Spanish at home; it's not 100 percent right. [In this class] we never felt uncomfortable sharing our stories about how we were different from each other and similar too.

First, Sara framed her HL as less than because it was "not 100 percent right." When enrolled in previous Spanish classes designed for L2 learners in high school, Sara felt out of place. Sara was

comparing her Spanish to that of her L2 classmates. The Spanish of Sara's L2 classmates was "right" as they had learned it in school, while Sara's Spanish was "flawed" because she had acquired it at home. However, in her SHL class, Sara was comfortable learning with other HLLs with whom she shared similarities and differences. When Sara stated that she and her classmates "never felt uncomfortable sharing our stories," I believe Sara showed an evolution in her conceptualization of her HL. After being enrolled in a linguistically diverse SHL class in which the professor created an inclusive, supportive environment for learning, Sara began to understand that it was okay for her Spanish, and that of her classmates, to be different as "different" was not equated with "less than."

Studies of HLLs (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Lowther Pereira, 2010; Wong & Xiao, 2010) have documented the self-critiques students make of their HL that are based on messages received from society that discredit their Spanish. Students internalize these negative ideologies and then apply them to their HL. Some students labeled their HL as imperfect due to the self-described language attrition that was linked to their monolingual English schooling in which their home language was not supported. Other participants scrutinized their Spanish when comparing it to the Spanish of L2 learners. SHL was deemed insufficient because it was acquired at home, while L2 Spanish was viewed as correct because it was learned in school.

Another form of reproducing hegemonic language ideologies students have encountered previously that delegitimize some Spanish language varieties while upholding other varieties as "official" or "correct" was linked to the idea of missing knowledge. More specifically, some students focused on what they did not know about the Spanish language such as metalinguistic knowledge, grammatical rules, and diacritics. For example, Lupe observed that in her SHL class

"some people came in already knowing things and some of us didn't know anything about accent marks." Previous research (Beaudrie, 2017; Burgo, 2015; Llombart-Huesca, 2018) has shown that it is normal for some HLLs of Spanish to come to the SHL classroom with limited experience using written accent marks. This norm exists because some HLLs of Spanish have not had many opportunities to use diacritics in their writing. Lupe's SHL class began their first writing assignment during Week 1 of the semester; the assignment included a peer editing step in the revision process. Lupe noticed that "some of us just had better writing skills already than others." Again, in a SHL class, it is natural that students write with differing levels of proficiency (Beaudrie, 2017; Burgo, 2015).

Lupe was a part of the "us" in her first statement about written accent marks. She was not able to place diacritics on words with a high level of accuracy, and therefore, viewed her Spanish as less than as she was missing this knowledge about the Spanish language. Furthermore, Lupe mentioned that there were a couple of students in her class who were not Latinx HLLs of Spanish. She liked having these students in her SHL class because:

> they understood Spanish in a different way than I did. I can hear these accents, and I can hear, you know, the meaning, but they know the rules behind it. The professor was obviously teaching us that [the rules], but it was nice to hear that, like their definition of it.

Like Sara earlier, Lupe compared herself to her classmates who were L2 learners of Spanish. These students had studied Spanish in the classroom. Hence, they were not lacking knowledge about the language – they knew the rules that Lupe did not know, and they were able to explain the rules in a way that differed from their professor's explanation. Lupe, as a HLL of Spanish, could sometimes intuit where written accent marks should be placed; however, she could not

explain why some words needed diacritics. Lupe's reflections demonstrated that she viewed the diverse levels of the HLLs in her class as problematic. Some students did not know where to place written accent marks, while others were stronger writers, and therefore were able to provide better feedback during peer-editing tasks. In addition to commenting on perceived divergent writing skills, Lupe also said "some people spoke in more broken Spanish" when describing the different levels present in her SHL class. In sum, Lupe judged her Spanish and that of her classmates as less than in certain areas.

Additionally, Bianca and Sara, like other students, discussed what they did not know about the Spanish language. Bianca shared:

> The class did help me a lot with my grammar, with my writing skills, my oral skills in the language, so there was a lot that I learned. There were many things that I wasn't aware of before about the language which now I know…. The grammar was really important. It was really difficult…at times because some rules can get confusing. I know there are a lot of rules that kind of make it tricky and just complex for us to remember....

While Sara added in her reflection:

> I was pretty sure that they would teach grammar and just things that I didn't learn at home. So, I don't know how to write with accent marks and all that. I was expecting that they would focus a lot on that because as a heritage speaker, I assume a lot of other students don't learn that at home.

Both students honed in on what they did not know about Spanish (grammar rules) or what they did not know how to do in Spanish (spell words using diacritics). These descriptions marked the students' Spanish as deficient, according to their self-assessments. Earlier in this chapter, Bianca displayed a skills-getting approach to the study of her HL, and her statement here aligned with

this perspective. She mentioned writing and speaking skills while highlighting the importance of knowing about the language. Bianca gave particular attention to grammar rules that she deemed to be “difficult, “confusing,” “tricky,” and “complex.” Similarly, Sara talked about what she did not learn at home – grammar and written accent marks. Thus, her Spanish was lacking in some way, and Sara’s enrollment in a SHL class would be able to improve her Spanish by learning about the language.

The importance of metalinguistic knowledge, grammatical rules, and diacritics, for example, illustrated that some participants reproduced this preoccupation with a lack of knowledge of/in their HL. Recent studies (Beaudrie, 2017; Burgo, 2015; Llombart-Huesca, 2018) have demonstrated that HLLs come to the HL classroom with varying strengths and experiences with certain registers in their HL. Therefore, when students believe they are missing knowledge because they had not previously formally studied their HL, it is vital that HL educators actively work to debunk the myths about sub-standard Spanish that seem to have affected participants’ perceptions and valuing of their own Spanish language varieties.

Ultimately, some students did not deem their Spanish to be legitimate during their reflections on their experience in a SHL class. As such, they had appropriated deficit views about their HL and applied these perspectives to themselves and their classmates. Bianca, for example, aimed to perfect her Spanish by enrolling in a SHL course because she believed she was losing the ability to use Spanish as her K–12 education had been exclusively in English. Other participants wanted to fill in the gaps in their knowledge in/of their HL. A mastery of diacritics and grammatical rules permeated students’ reflections that marked their Spanish as incorrect. Furthermore, some participants perceived examples from their professors that framed students’ Spanish as a HL as deficient. Home uses of Spanish were invalidated and translanguaging

practices were not encouraged. The next category of description drew attention to the ways in which instructors sought to shift students' perspectives toward a more positive framing of their Spanish.

Debunking deficit views

Participants provided examples of the ways in which they had perpetuated deficit framings of their HL. They also discussed external critiques that framed their HL as less than or lacking in some way. These internalized and external perspectives did not promote a constructive depiction of students' HL. In this category of description, students highlighted how Spanish as a HL was described in positive ways. For example, some professors used the topic of language variety as a tool to legitimize Spanish as a HL. Also, in some classes, students studied bilingualism which led to a deeper understanding and valuing of their HL. The SHL classroom was also a space in which some students became motivated to continue studying Spanish as a HL at their universities. Thus, the students' SHL classes were able to debunk some deficit views of Spanish as a HL.

Highlighting language variety. The value of a focus on language variety was a recurring theme mentioned by several students. Discussions about differences in Spanish were both formal and informal across the SHL classes. According to Rosa, her professor actively pushed back against deficit views of Spanish. Rosa shared that "this class taught me a lot about the misconceptions I had from other Spanish classes." Her professor tried to convey that "not one [variety of] Spanish is more perfect or more standard than [another variety]." Rosa believed that "in my other Spanish classes [in high school], we always felt like they were trying to teach us 'perfect Spanish.'" Rosa's professor debunked this perspective by communicating to her students

that because Spanish is spoken by so many people in different countries, there can be no such thing as a "perfect language."

Furthermore, Rosa remembered that her SHL class formally explored language variety as her professor dedicated time to this topic as one of the modules studied in the course. Also, students in Rosa's class could choose language variety as one of the possible topics for their end-of-semester presentation. During class, language variety presented itself informally when, as Rosa recalled, "sometimes people had to, I guess, ask for a translation because not all the same words are used." These formal and informal explorations of language variety served to build up Spanish and Spanish as a HL for Rosa and her classmates.

Likewise, Sara also recounted "interesting" discussions of language variety that highlighted difference as a positive characteristic and not a negative one. During in-class discussions, Sara noted that "some students were like, 'Wait. We don't know what that means.' And we were like, 'Wait you've never heard that word?'" These spontaneous moments allowed students to witness the diversity of the Spanish language in action. Sara described her classmates as "open to learning from each other." Sara even discussed language variety outside of her SHL class:

> I would text with some of the girls from class, or we would walk out the class and, like walk to our next class and we're like, 'Wow! I didn't know it [Spanish] was so different in your parents' country' or 'That's not what I learned at home.'

Sara's in-class conversations continued after class as she, and some of her classmates, found the topic of language variety to be of interest.

Furthermore, Sara mentioned language variety again when discussing the role it played in interactions with her professor:

> …we could see how we were teaching her [the professor] things that we grew up learning. I remember one time somebody in class who was answering a question used a saying that is very common in the Spanish language, and she was like, ‘Wait, I’ve never heard that saying. I don’t know what that means.’ And we were all shocked, you know, because she’s our teacher, like we would expect her to know it.

This informal, unprompted exchange was key as it was an example of a way in which students’ HL is valuable. The professor could have moved on to the next question without asking for an explanation or definition of the phrase her student used. By engaging with her students, the professor demonstrated her interest in their HL, and as someone in a position of power, she showed respect for the linguistic diversity present in her class. Thus, language variety can challenge stereotypes of the language teacher as the sole source of knowledge, since students’ HL can teach the SHL professor new words and phrases.

As observed with other students, Bianca also recounted instances of informal discussions in her SHL class that piqued interest in each other’s variety of Spanish and the differences between the words and phrases they used. Bianca’s enrollment in her linguistically diverse SHL class provided her with interactions with students who were familiar with varieties of Spanish that differed from what she had learned at home. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Bianca identified these moments as opportunities to interact with and learn from a diverse population of Spanish speakers. These interactions were scarce for Bianca as she attended a PWI. Hence, the SHL classroom served as a formal academic space in which a minority population on campus had the chance to collaborate with students with whom they shared linguistic and cultural ties.

To continue, Ana talked about the formal explorations of language variety that her professor included in the curriculum. Ana also explained that these tasks were of importance as

these activities emphasized that Ana and her classmates might have spoken different varieties of Spanish, but not one variety was more or less valid than another. For instance, Ana described an activity her professor repeated during the semester. The professor would say a word in English, and the students would then say how they would express the word in Spanish. The students took notes on the various ways to say the word in Spanish. By participating in this particular activity, Ana learned "there are a lot of different ways to say one word." Ana also shared that she was familiar with other dialects of Spanish; however, "it was really cool to see it [language variety] in practice because it made it a little bit more real, I guess, to hear all the different accents, the pronunciations. There were differences in the way we spoke but we still all understood each other which is interesting." When reflecting on her overall experience in her SHL class, Ana most enjoyed studying language variety. According to Ana, this topic "was the most interesting to me because I got to see more variety, and it was an interesting thing to learn." As such, Ana had the opportunity to learn about a topic that fascinated her. The curriculum in her SHL class included formalized explorations of language variety that underlined difference as an attribute of the students' HL.

Similarly, Lupe formally studied language variety in her SHL class, and Lupe made personal observations of the ways in which the Spanish of her classmates differed from hers. Lupe recalled that the Spanish HL varieties of her classmates represented Mexico, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala. First, Lupe noted that some students' families were from northern Mexico "and they speak differently than we do in southern Mexico." Having linguistically and culturally diverse classmates drew attention to how students' HL can vary even if their families are from the same country. In class, students discussed words that are not the same across the

Spanish-speaking world. Lupe mentioned that her classmates who had Guatemalan Spanish as a HL used a word for "bus" that Lupe previously had not heard.

Furthermore, Lupe's professor dedicated part of the semester to sociolinguistic topics. For example, the class focused on code-switching during this module. One activity required that students listen to two interlocutors and decide if they were code-switching or using direct translations. Lupe also remembered studying language variation between the U.S. and other countries. Lupe noted that a business in Mexico when hiring new employees would probably use "Aceptando solicitudes" in its job announcement while speakers of Spanish in the U.S. might say "Voy a aplicar" when seeking employment. This distinction between the use of "solicitud" and "aplicar" was understood by Lupe as a difference in language variety and not an issue of right versus wrong.

During this module on sociolinguistics, Lupe's SHL class also studied intra-state variation in Spanish. Lupe's university was in the eastern part of her state. Lupe was also born and raised in this region. In the west, as reported by Lupe, "there are huge Latino communities." Lupe added that in the west "they speak a ton of Spanglish," and that she did not hear Spanglish often in her local community. For example, Lupe recounted:

> If I go to the store, they talk to me all in Spanish. When I was in West City[5], I went to the store and asked a question in Spanish and they talked to me in Spanglish within two sentences. It was just different.

The SHL curriculum in Lupe's class included a formal exploration of sociolinguistic topics such as language variation and code-switching. Lupe was then able to link these topics to her personal experiences with Spanish in different regions of her home state. As Lupe assessed, what she

[5] A pseudonym for a city in Lupe's home state.

learned about in her SHL course and what she had experienced outside the classroom highlighted differences in Spanish. Lupe realized that the use of Spanglish in the western part of her state was not an "incorrect" way of using the Spanish language; it was just a different way of communicating.

As this section demonstrated, raising students' awareness of language variety in Spanish was an excellent way of increasing students' confidence in their own Spanish. Having a better understanding of the diversity of the Spanish language helped students not view their HL, and the Spanish of others, as less than or lacking. Some participants noticed and appreciated the differences among their classmates whose families represented different varieties of Spanish. Other students formally studied the topic of language variation across the Spanish-speaking world. This focal topic also included an emphasis on U.S. Spanish in some students' SHL classes. These formal and informal explorations of language variety helped deepen students' insight into their HL and build respect for the numerous ways in which speakers of Spanish vary.

Bilingualism as an asset. For some students, bilingualism was overtly framed as an asset in their SHL classes. A clear, upfront stance from instructors that considered all forms of bilingualism as a positive was an enriching experience for the participants. They received direct messages from their professors and the curriculum presented in their SHL classes that debunked deficit views of their Spanish as a HL.

In Ana's SHL class, students were required to read about Latinx people's bilingual experiences. They read case studies and literature that detailed the ways in which people were discouraged from speaking Spanish; of course, some of the people profiled in the readings lost their ability to use Spanish due to pressures from linguistic and cultural assimilation. For Ana, the assigned readings on people's bilingual experiences "gave me a general appreciation for how

things turned out for me: being able to maintain both of them and not being told to do otherwise." This activity allowed Ana to reflect on and appreciate the fact that she had been able to maintain her HL. The readings also helped affirm the value in HLs.

Sara, in her reflection, discussed the level of interest and appreciation her professor had for students' HL:

> And she was always interested in our home: how Spanish was used at our home; how we use it now that we are adults; how we plan to use it in the future. One of our assignments was actually about how we grew up learning at home, when we will use it once we have our own family. And I think that she was always willing to listen to us if we didn't completely understand how she was teaching or if we wanted to learn something different. She was really good at being open in her teaching the class because it was her first time teaching it, and it was the first time they had offered it at our school.

This professor's words and curriculum attested to her appreciation for students' HL throughout the semester. Sara remarked that her professor wanted to understand how her students used their HL in the past, present, and future. As such, the professor designed an activity that required students to formally explore and reflect on their use of Spanish. These actions displayed the professor's view that the bilingualism of her students was an asset. Students like Sara had primarily only used Spanish with family, friends, community members, etc. The SHL class in which Sara studied her HL verified that her prior use of Spanish was a mode of communication that was equally valid to the academic register she was studying. Moreover, Sara observed that her professor listened to and took into consideration her students' needs and concerns as HL students of Spanish. Being attuned to who her students were as HLLs of Spanish and the ways in which they used, use, and will use Spanish positively influenced Sara's experience in her SHL

class. Also, the approach of the professor could shape her curricular decisions the next time she teaches the SHL course. The linguistic heterogeneity of the SHL classes and the diverse sociolinguistic needs of the students call for reflection and flexibility in pedagogical practices to best accomplish the goals of the HL class while responding to the unique HLLs enrolled in the course.

When commenting on her overall experience in her SHL class, Lupe initially described a review technique of her professor as negative. While discussing this approach, Lupe's perspective shifted as she explained why the professor's technique to reviewing writing was a positive one. Lupe's professor would anonymously share samples of students' writing with the entire class via a projected image. Her professor used this, according to Lupe, "slightly negative" approach to highlight an area of concern such as the misuse of a word or verb conjugation. This technique allowed for a whole-class discussion. Lupe then stated:

> I didn't see that so much as a negative. I saw that as a positive because she always built on it. She wouldn't necessarily say, 'No, that's wrong.' Instead she would ask, 'What's a better way to say this?' So, I guess I wasn't calling it a negative. I always saw that as her building on what we already know. She also recognized that we all spoke Spanish differently so she would understand what people were trying to say, and she would try to find a new way to say it.

Here, Lupe realized that her professor's goal was not to delegitimize her students' Spanish. Lupe added that "she [the professor] would kind of get them to figure out a more formal way to say what they were saying without really changing their words that much to keep their own voice." Lupe's reflection portrayed bilingualism as an asset in her SHL class because her professor sought to build on what her students knew and could do with their HL instead of teaching from a

deficit perspective that would have labeled her students as insufficient or incomplete users of their HL. As Lupe pointed out, her professor understood that the students' Spanish was diverse. The goal of the review activity, which was used throughout the semester, was to practice using Spanish in an academic register, not to deride students' use of their HL.

In conclusion, the positive framing of bilingualism was viewed as an advantageous attribute of students' SHL classes. Reading about the lived experiences of Latinx people whose bilingualism was not supported helped Ana gain a greater appreciation for her HL since she has been able to maintain her bilingualism in Spanish and English. Other students like Sara and Lupe felt that their professors helped validate their HL by expressing interest in how students use Spanish at home. Using different varieties of Spanish in the community and in the classroom did not indicate that one way of communicating was better than the other. It is the onus of HL programs to create a curriculum that overtly frames bilingualism as an asset for HL students.

HL as motivator. The final theme in this category of description, HL as a personal and professional motivator, also contributed to debunking deficit perspectives about Spanish as a HL. In participants' SHL classes, instructors helped students better understand the value of their HL. Some students were even motivated to continue studying their HL because of the experiences they had in their SHL classes. For example, several students declared or planned to declare a minor or certificate (translating and interpreting) in Spanish. Meanwhile, other students were planning to take more Spanish classes for personal enrichment. These SHL classes assisted students in recognizing that their HL is a strength, not a weakness.

When reflecting on her overall experience in a SHL course, Sara shared the following:

> [My SHL class] really did encourage me to take another Spanish class. I will actually be taking two next semester (laughs). It was a good experience for me, and I definitely think

> I learned a lot. I would come home and share with my parents what I learned in class and didn't learn from them.

Because of the positive experience in her SHL class, Sara decided to continue studying Spanish by taking two more classes because she was able to better comprehend the value of her HL. Furthermore, according to Sara, her parents would sometimes tell her that they had taught her something, but she had forgotten it. They would also tell Sara when she shared something with them that they did not know in/about Spanish. Sara's stated that her parents believed they were "forgetting some of their Spanish" after living in the U.S. for so long, and therefore, they could not always help their daughter when she had questions about her Spanish homework. As reported by Sara, being enrolled in her SHL course was "a learning experience for all of us." After taking a SHL class, not only was Sara motivated to take more Spanish classes, she was also able to share her experiences with her parents and strengthen her family's bond to Spanish.

Likewise, Lupe was looking forward to continuing her study of her HL during her next and last semester at her university. Lupe asserted that her service-learning project, learning about and conducting research in Spanish in her SHL class allowed her to "apply your knowledge quickly" instead of waiting until you graduate. These experiences and opportunities made Lupe "think of Spanish in a different way." She continued this reflection by stating, "Like, I've never really thought about trying to get a minor or major in Spanish because I thought it would be useless, but I guess it [the SHL class] makes you realize the value a little more." Hence, Lupe's SHL class helped change her perspective. Her HL was not "useless." It was, in fact, a resource that allowed her to connect with her local community in new ways and to use Spanish to conduct research.

Initially, Lupe wanted to take American Sign Language to fulfill the language requirement at her university. She was not able to do so because she would not have been able to take the minimum number of courses during her last two semesters as an undergraduate student. Therefore, she "found the easiest way" to meet the language requirement which was to take Spanish. Lupe took a placement test and was told to enroll in the SHL course. At the beginning of the semester, Lupe's advisor recommended that she declare a minor in Spanish because she would only need to take the SHL course as Lupe was eligible for retroactive credits that would count towards the minor. Lupe thought: "Alright. Fine" as she reluctantly agreed to follow her advisor's suggestion. However, during her SHL course, Lupe's viewpoint changed as studying Spanish in a HL class was transformative for Lupe. The experience piqued her interest in Spanish so much so that Lupe stated, "I could see myself pursuing that [Spanish] more than the psychology major." Lupe had plans to study psychology in graduate school, and she hoped "to find a way to put the two of them [psychology and Spanish] together" in her future career.

Lupe had registered for two Spanish classes for the spring semester (her last) that would count towards a certificate in translating and interpreting which Lupe did not know about until she enrolled in her SHL class. When discussing the certificate, Lupe shared:

> So, I think I realize the value of, like, being able to write Spanish, to read and write Spanish well more so than I did before. I mean, I always knew that being bilingual was valuable. But I guess if your written and oral skills are better, then you are even more valuable. You know?

Here, Lupe acknowledged the value of her bilingualism. She also recognized the advantages of studying her HL as doing so allowed her to expand her bilingualism to include formal registers of communication for professional settings. In addition to taking two more Spanish classes

during her final semester, Lupe had also agreed to assist her SHL professor with a research project. Lupe's interest in language research was directly linked to the positive experience she had in her SHL class that affirmed the value in her HL.

The other participants did not talk about their SHL class as a motivator to take more Spanish classes with the same level of detail as Sara and Lupe. However, the SHL class was the beginning of their study of Spanish for the two other students. Rosa had already declared Spanish as her minor. Specifically, Rosa's minor was Spanish for the health sciences which aligned with her major in physiology. Rosa enrolled in the SHL class offered at her university to "see how much practice I would need to actually get a job in the real world…;" a minor in Spanish, she reasoned, would show that "I'm proficiently bilingual on a résumé." As mentioned earlier, Rosa was interested in how Spanish could influence her future as a professional in the health field. Likewise, Ana viewed Spanish as potentially advantageous to her life upon graduation as "it would probably be useful to be able to have proof of being bilingual in like a résumé and in my future careers." Therefore, Ana was considering a minor in her HL. In fact, had there been another SHL class offered at her university, Ana said that she would have taken that course too. Ana had not declared a major; however, she was interested in business – possibly finance. Ana hoped to work abroad, and she understood that studying Spanish would be "beneficial… for something like business where you have to work with other people."

Finally, Bianca, unlike the other students, had no investment in her SHL class that was linked to meeting any requirements. Bianca had already fulfilled her university's language requirement by taking two semesters of French. She was considering a minor in Spanish but had not made a final decision. As a teenager, Bianca began to lose her Spanish as her schooling had been in English and there was no support for students' home languages:

> I was losing how to speak the language, my original language, so I kinda wanted to take advantage of the class to kinda perfect it and get back the grammar skills that I needed to get better at it….

Enrollment in the SHL course would allow Bianca to "perfect" her language skills. Therefore, Bianca took the SHL class for personal enrichment as doing so was a way to help her recoup her HL. As such, the SHL class was the motivator that encouraged Bianca to study her HL as this class was designed for students like Bianca. Even though, at the time of the interview, Bianca had not decided if she would choose Spanish as her minor, she did recommend that other HLLs take the SHL class "because it does really help you with your skills and everything. Um, just learning about, you know, the language and the culture." Bianca might not have been motivated to take more Spanish classes; however, the existence of a SHL class encouraged her to enroll in the class as she had a desire to reconnect with the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking cultures.

In the end, students perceived the positive framing of Spanish as a HL in a few different ways. First, SHL classes highlighted the characteristics of language variety. Some professors used this topic as a legitimizer of students' HL. Informal in-class discussions and formalized lessons on sociolinguistics, for example, helped validate all varieties of Spanish for students. Also, bilingualism was portrayed as an asset which increased some students' appreciation for their HL. Lupe noticed that her professor taught from a perspective that sought to build on what students were already able to do in Spanish. Finally, studying Spanish as a HL, for some participants, led them to pursue their studies in Spanish beyond their HL course. A few students had declared or planned to declare a minor in Spanish while others took additional Spanish courses for personal enrichment as their HL class helped them see the value in their Spanish. The

final category of description describes students' views on care in their SHL classes and the role it played in building up their Spanish.

Caring for the student, caring for the HL

This final category of description drew attention to the ways in which students perceived the expression of care in their SHL classes. In her review of caring and its impact on teacher efficacy, Collier (2005) described some characteristics of effective teachers as "set[ting] high expectations for student performance, … develop[ing] improved instructional strategies to meet their students' needs, …view[ing] themselves and their students as partners in the learning process" (p. 352). When reflecting on their experiences in their SHL classes, students perceived the aforementioned attributes, among others, that are linked to caring instruction. More specifically, participants revealed that their professors showed that they cared about their students and their HL in various ways. This motif of caring functioned to build up Spanish as a HL and instill confidence in students.

Demonstrating care for students and their HL validated students as HL users of Spanish. Students' reflections on care drew attention to high academic expectations and a welcoming, low-anxiety classroom environment. Furthermore, a curriculum of caring was highlighted through a fostering of interest in course content and an approach to course design that built on what students were able to do with Spanish. As such, the SHL classroom became a space in which belongingness was affirmed for students. A vital aspect of effective teaching is the establishment of "a climate of warmth, understanding, and caring within the classroom" (Teven, 2001, p. 159). The words and actions of students' professors, along with the curriculum presented in the SHL classes, helped reinforce their self-worth as HLLs of Spanish and their legitimacy as students on their respective campuses.

Expressions of care. Some students remarked that their professors cared for them. These authentic notions of care observed by students positively impacted their experience in their SHL classes. For example, Rosa shared the following:

Rosa: …I felt like she cares a lot for this course.

Researcher: How did that care manifest itself?

Rosa: She wanted us to do very well, but at the same time still learn.

This exchange indicated for Rosa that her professor was invested in the success of her students. Success, according to Rosa's understanding, meant performing well academically while acquiring new knowledge in and about her HL. Students will become more committed when they recognize that the teacher is "personally interested and emotionally invested" (Collier, 2005, p. 355) in their success. Thus, Rosa believed that her professor was dedicated to her students as she aspired to make sure they understood that she had high standards for them because she believed in their potential.

Teven (2001) noted that "teachers attempt to create environments that enhance and yield desired student learning outcomes" (p. 162). Sara, Lupe, and Bianca commented on the classroom environment created by their SHL professor. For example, Sara used the word "comfortable" to describe how she felt in her SHL class. Sara stated that:

> …we all felt like we had something to learn… the teacher made it so comfortable for us that we didn't have to worry if we felt like we didn't know enough Spanish, or if we didn't speak it well, [or] if we used different words. We were always willing to learn from each other and listen to each other's experience growing up in Spanish at home.

Lupe did not use the word "comfortable" in her description of her SHL class; however, she echoed the sentiment expressed by Sara when she shared that "I don't think she [the professor]

ever made anybody feel like their Spanish was broken at all." Both students noticed how their professors created an inclusive environment that made students with differing levels of familiarity with Spanish feel comfortable in a SHL class.

Similarly, Bianca felt that she and her classmates were made to feel at ease in their SHL class. In Bianca's class, "everyone was comfortable enough to just do that. You know, just raise their hand and ask the teacher about certain things they had doubts about. That was really nice, and that was one of the things we did often." Furthermore, as previously mentioned in this chapter, Sara perceived that her professor cared about her students as she was interested in the ways in which they used Spanish at home and "that she was always willing to listen to us if we didn't completely understand how she was teaching or if we wanted to learn something different. She was really good at being open in her teaching the class." The responsiveness and openness of Bianca's and Sara's professors made these students feel like their SHL classrooms were spaces in which they could freely pose questions about their HL and influence the curriculum so that it better aligned with their interests.

The expressions of care characterized by making students feel comfortable in their SHL classes contributed to lowering anxiety for the students. Caring teachers often have "better affective responses from their students and have more positive classroom atmospheres" (Teven, 2001, p. 159). Sara and Lupe did not feel like their level of Spanish was insufficient while Bianca was not intimidated in her SHL class as the professor encouraged questions when students had doubts. Latinx students enrolled in PWIs have reported feeling "marginalized, alienated, isolated, unsupported, and unwelcomed" at their universities (Strayhorn, 2008, p. 303). As such, the previously described examples of care are of relevance as they could help combat feelings of not belonging in the classroom and on campus. HLLs have a familial, personal tie to

the language of study in a HL class. As students have described, they often bring insecurities about their Spanish to the study of their HL. The HL classroom space should help foster success by creating an environment in which students – and their variety(ies) of Spanish – feel welcomed and valued. I believe this is especially pertinent for HL classes in which linguistically diverse students enroll.

Caring through the curriculum. In addition to the expressions of care described above by the participants, they also perceived manifestations of care in the curriculum in their SHL classes. Students' reflections on care aligned with a description provided by Collier (2005) in which caring "motivates action in the best interest of others determined by our base knowledge of the individual, context, and need" (p. 354). In particular, examples of caring through the curriculum were the high level of interest that was fostered, the content covered, and the structuring of the SHL curriculum that built on prior content and knowledge of students. Antrop-González and De Jesús (2006) proposed that authentic care in the curriculum promotes "a not-so-hidden-curriculum that counteracts the informal and formal practices that marginalize Latino/a students" (p. 419). The authors' theory of critical care fomented the need for a curriculum that calls for high levels of student engagement and "high academic expectations" (p. 429) from educators as these features of caring can be transformative for Latinx students.

To begin, the SHL course and the course content piqued the interests of some students. Several students simply stated that they were interested in what was taught in their SHL classes. Bianca used the word "engaged" to convey the high level of interest sparked by her professor's approach to teaching a SHL class:

> There were times where there was no participation, but she would actually encourage it by asking different questions… she made sure we got that practice and skills because she

> knew in the long run we would need them, and she'd make sure we were engaged. That was one of the things that I really liked about her and that she didn't just give us, you know, worksheets to work on. You know, simple things. She would challenge us and make sure we were engaged, listening, paying attention by asking us questions... to make sure we were actively listening… She taught me a lot, and by doing those things I was really engaged throughout the whole semester….

Bianca's interest in her SHL course was fueled by the constant engagement her professor incorporated into the course. Likewise, Ana mentioned "our teacher was just very into what she was teaching. So, she was good at engaging us." According to Ana, her professor was passionate about teaching Spanish as a HL, and she designed a curriculum that engaged her students. Rosa described her interest in her SHL course when she shared the following: "I was interested in what we learned about too. It wasn't just like regular work." To explain what was not an example of "regular work," Rosa commented that the poetry she read in class was not "just boring poems. They have meaning." Furthermore, for Rosa, the themes covered in her SHL class were novel, for example, "…one of the topics that I liked, that she [the professor] had was a short story. It was Africanism, Afro-Latino people… that's not a [topic] you see usually in Spanish classes." The inclusion of exploring diverse identities in the Spanish-speaking world intrigued Rosa and was a theme she had not previously studied in other Spanish classes. Rosa's professor exhibited caring behaviors that augmented the "positive self-image, sense of self-worth, and connectedness" (Collier, 2005, p. 353) of her students by linking the curriculum to their interests and by studying aspects of the Spanish-speaking world that were not very familiar to students.

Ana and Bianca also shared this perspective on the important role of course content that matches students' interests. For Ana, studying different dialects was "the most interesting" topic to her as she was able to "see more variety, and it was an interesting thing to learn." Moreover, when asked what she would change about her SHL course, Bianca mentioned that she would not make any changes because the class was so interesting to her:

> …it was a really interesting class. I don't think I've ever had a class like this that was so engaging and active… I had actually taken a Spanish course in high school… I really didn't like it because the teacher would just give us worksheets. She wasn't really active with us. She didn't challenge us so nobody was really learning. We just did bookwork, and it was uninteresting, and you know, it would lose us. But with this [class], I feel like I actually learned a lot. She actually made it really interesting by talking to us about stuff that wasn't even in the book and the textbooks. She would talk about personal experience or just random facts, interesting facts. That was really interesting to us and [it] helped us with it [Spanish]. So, I would definitely keep all of her techniques… because I saw improvement honestly in my skills and in the other students as well.

Bianca did not feel challenged when she took a Spanish class designed for L2 learners in high school. However, as a HLL, Bianca appreciated when the curriculum in her SHL class tapped into personal connections to Spanish and when a topic that went beyond the material covered in textbooks was introduced. Teven (2001) emphasized that "perceived caring is associated with positive student evaluation of their teachers and increased affective and perceived cognitive learning in the classroom" (p. 162). Thus, this alignment of the course curriculum with the interests of the students conveyed to the participants that their professors made curricular decisions that demonstrated that they cared about their students' Spanish, their interests, and

their success. Specifically, Bianca felt that her learning was amplified by her professor's caring approach to instruction.

Another salient example of caring through the curriculum focused on the ways in which students' SHL classes built on what they already knew. For example, as detailed earlier in the chapter, Lupe commented on how her professor used samples of students' writing to help them build on what they already knew. According to Lupe, her professor would scaffold students' learning by helping them rework what they had written. The professor assisted students in maintaining their voice. According to Lupe, her professor used this approach of "taking examples from our papers and writing prompts in class and building on that" throughout the semester. This approach to revising written assignments as a class did not negate students' home varieties of Spanish. Instead, the professor found a way to positively highlight what her students had written as she helped students convey their ideas in a "more formal" register.

Ana and Rosa also talked about how their SHL curriculum used what they knew or did not know as a stepping stone in the advancement of their HL. Specifically, Ana discussed her daily use of Spanish and the acquisition of a higher register:

> I think, generally, the course did a good job of understanding that most of the people in that class have a fairly good grasp on the language. It was more like practicing using it professionally, rather than teaching us things about the language… which I think was really useful because, I mean, I already use the language on a daily basis. I know how it works. But being able to build it up in a way that I can use it at like a higher register and being able to write proficiently that was really nice.

Ana perceived a curriculum that aimed to build on and build up students' Spanish. Instead of taking a rules-based approach to the teaching of Spanish as a HL, Ana's professor structured the

course in a way that sought to expand students' linguistic repertoire by advancing their development of a register of Spanish that can be used in professional settings. Furthermore, when describing her reaction to the activities used to hone students' speaking skills, Ana mentioned that "learning by doing is probably one of the most effective ways to learn. [Therefore,] having a bunch of people that already know the language do that just helps us retain what we already know in the language." According to Collier (2005), caring relationships include "healthy interactions that allow teachers and student to come know each other as people" (p. 354). As such, Ana's professor got to know her students as HLLs of Spanish. Caring through the curriculum in Ana's SHL class acknowledged what students what were able to do with their HL while fostering students' dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009b) in a way that did not seek to replace or undermine students' home language varieties of Spanish.

When asked to comment on the curriculum in her class, Rosa noted: "I think I would keep the curriculum the same. I like how we learned… I would use a lot of the same assignments that she [the professor] [used], and I like the way she made things build on top of each other." For most educators, it might seem obvious that content should build on what was previously introduced. However, it is important to take note of when students notice this approach to teaching. Rosa, for example, also felt like she relearned Spanish in her SHL class because of the lack of success she had experienced in high school Spanish classes designed for L2 learners:

> …this class taught me a lot. [The professor] just taught me everything over again because previous Spanish classes just didn't make sure that I was understanding everything… especially verb conjugations [and] stuff like that. She made sure that we understood to the best of our abilities.

Contrary to what other students shared, Rosa, in this reflection, believed that her SHL class was able to use what she did not know to build up her Spanish. According to Rosa, her professor cared about her students and their comprehension of the course content. This caring embodied the three factors of empathy, understanding, and responsiveness that Teven (2001) used to measure perceived caring in his study with college students. As such, the SHL curriculum allowed Rosa to relearn certain aspects of the Spanish language (e.g., verb conjugations) which led to a deeper understanding for her.

Caring had an important role in students' experiences of the SHL classroom. Collier (2005) stated that caring in educational settings can become model behavior for students as they can observe and adopt it, and doing so develops a relationship of mutual sharing between teachers and their students. The HLLs perceived various forms of caring in their SHL classes such as the setting of high expectations for students, the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere, and the genuine interest professors had in students' use of their HL. Furthermore, caring was evidenced by course content that built on what students were able to do with Spanish. Participants classified course content they viewed as interesting, meaningful and/or engaging as a form of caring on the part of their professors. Also, students perceived care when they believed their professors placed importance on students' comprehension of course content and when professors were willing to adjust the curriculum to match students' interests. The results of Teven's (2001) study highlighted "the critical role of teachers' communication behaviors" (p. 167) since these can boost perceived caring among students. The SHL professors implemented ideas and activities (Collier, 2005) that were of importance to their students. According to students' reflections, their SHL professors also expressed care through their words and their actions. Teven (2001) signaled that it is important for teachers to know which behaviors

influence students' perceptions of caring and which ones undermine this perception. Hence, in the HL instructional context, the identification of educators' behaviors that are markers of care could positively impact students' classroom-based experiences with their HL.

Conclusion

As previously mentioned, HLLs have a unique connection to a HL that goes beyond intrinsic or extrinsic reasons for studying a language. The important familial, personal link to a HL stands in contrast to ties that L2 learners might have or develop for a specific language. As such, it is paramount that HL education fully embrace diversity in students' HL. Participants reproduced negative ideologies from society that they had internalized and brought with them to the SHL classroom. Students also perceived external perspectives in their SHL classes that framed their HL as deficient in some way.

First, participants noticed some ways in which others framed their HL as flawed or lacking. HL educators must be careful when providing feedback as the internalization of deficit framings of the HL, the desire to speak "standard" Spanish, or the expectation that authority figures (educators) will correct students' HL in classroom settings (Ducar, 2008) could all influence students' interpretation of feedback that could be understood as a judgement of the legitimacy of students' HL. Sara, for example, recounted an instance in her SHL class when her professor described what students had learned at home as incorrect. This kind of feedback should be given in a way that does not negate students' home use of their HL. HLLs' home use of Spanish might differ from what a HL educator might want students to say or write; however, this difference in communication styles does not mean that one form is right and the other is wrong. An Integrated Performance Activity (Adair-Hauck, Glisan, & Troyan, 2013) in which students are required to convey the same idea (either orally or written) to a sibling and to someone in a position of power (e.g., university president, employer, etc.) could help highlight the ways in

which students would vary the way in which they express the idea to different audiences. Hence, different uses of the HL could be practiced in class, and both uses would be framed as equally valid.

In addition, students replicated hegemonic discourses that devalued their Spanish. These beliefs contribute to the harsh critiques develop toward their HL (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Lowther Pereira, 2010; Wong & Xiao, 2010). Educators of HLLs should help their students push back against these negative ideologies of their HL so that they become less critical of themselves as HLLs. Bianca, for example, described how she was seeking to "perfect" her Spanish by enrolling in the SHL course at her university because she had started to lose her Spanish because her K-12 schooling was completely in English. The monolingual schooling of students like Bianca cannot be undone; however, HLL educators can help their students see the value in what they can do with their HL. Pedagogical approaches to HL instruction need to include activities, assignments, discussions, etc. that demonstrate an appreciation for students' HL. The HL curriculum should help students understand that the role of a HL class is to build on what they already know, and not to fix their HL, as a perfect version of a language does not exist.

The idea of missing knowledge was another example of a way in which participants had recreated a "less than" ideology about their HL. In HL classes, students bring with them divergent experiences using their HL (Beaudrie, 2017; Burgo, 2015; Llombart-Huesca, 2018). As such, HL classes should aid students in understanding that their diverse experiences are expected and that these differences among the students do not mean that anyone's Spanish is deficient in some way. Making this norm clear at the beginning of the semester is important – especially in HL programs similar to the classes described by participants. In one- or two-semester HL programs, linguistic heterogeneity is expected (Beaudrie, 2012; Carreira, 2012a,

2012b) as these classes serve a diverse student population. SHL classes should challenge hegemonic and monolithic views of what Spanish is by engaging students in topics that demonstrate the diversity of Spanish and Spanish speakers. Exploring language diversity could help debunk notions of a perfect variety of Spanish that students can attain if they study their HL. Reading assignments and discussions about translanguaging practices and heteroglossic theories on the bilingualism of U.S. Spanish speakers (García & Otheguy, 2015) could also expand students' understandings of what it means to be a HLL of Spanish.

Furthermore, some deficit views surrounding Spanish as a HL were debunked in students' SHL courses. A focus on language variety and bilingualism as an asset had a positive impact on students' experiences in their SHL classes. First, like Rosa's professor, HL educators should overtly state that a perfect version of Spanish does not exist due to the numerous people that speak the language across many countries. Rosa's SHL class also formally studied language variety as a topic. Students chose a specific variety of Spanish and then gave a presentation on it at the end of the semester. An explicit focus on language variety lends credibility to the stance that all varieties of a language are equally valid. Moreover, several students recounted episodes of informal explorations of language variety during in-class discussions. HL curriculum should be flexible so that educators can support impromptu discussions that break down misconceptions about HLs. These informal discussions were common in participants' SHL classes as the students came from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. These HL validating interactions gave students the opportunity to learn from their classmates, and some participants even reported teaching their professors new words and phrases.

Additionally, placing an emphasis on the advantages of bilingualism can aid HLLs in rethinking negative messages they have received about their HL. Reading about the experiences

of Latinx people in the U.S. who were discouraged from speaking Spanish helped Ana appreciate her HL more as she had been able to maintain Spanish. Literary and ethnographic accounts of language loss and language maintenance could be enlightening for HLLs as these depictions help students understand the history of forced linguistic and cultural assimilation along with the efforts to support home language maintenance in the U.S. Other topics such as the role of K-12 education in (not) supporting children's languages, the cognitive and social advantages of bilingualism, and the global importance of languages in the workplace could also assist in the framing of bilingualism as an asset. As mentioned in Chapter four, Differentiated Instruction (DI) could serve as the organizer for the aforementioned recommendations. The linguistically diverse HL classroom, like those of the participants, is an ideal context for the integration of DI into the curriculum so that the diverse needs of students can be more appropriately met.

Also, enrollment in a SHL class motivated students to continue studying Spanish as they gained a deeper sense of the value of their HL. Sara, for example, decided to take two Spanish classes in the following semester because she felt encouraged to do so after taking the SHL class that was offered. Sara even commented on sharing what she had learned with her parents which helped strengthen her family's link to the Spanish language. Lupe was also excited about continuing to study Spanish during her last semester as an undergraduate student. Lupe's SHL class helped her reconceptualize her views on her HL. Ideally, HL programs would catch the students like Lupe before their senior year. Nonetheless, Lupe had a positive experience in her SHL class that prompted her to take more Spanish classes even though doing so was not necessary. She also became involved in one of her professor's research projects because of her enthusiasm and interest in Spanish that grew while taking a SHL course. Furthermore, Lupe had a strong positive reaction to the service-learning requirement in her HL class as it expanded her

understanding on the role of Spanish in bilingual programs that promote bi/multilingualism for all students. Hence, the HL classroom functioned as a gateway to furthering some participants' study of Spanish. An appropriately sequenced HL course (or courses) could enroll HLLs early in their undergraduate study which could lead to a minor or major in students' HL.

Finally, students perceived various forms of care in their SHL classes that validated their Spanish and themselves as HLLs. The perception of professors' personal interest and investment in Spanish as a HL indicated a dedication to students and their success. Students also found it important that their professors had created a classroom environment that welcomed students' varied experiences using Spanish. As such, participants were comfortable sharing their concerns and insecurities with their professors and their classmates. For Sara, this atmosphere was productive as she and her classmates were able to learn from each other without feeling bad about their Spanish. The inclusive SHL classroom helped students develop a sense of connectedness in their classroom community. Furthermore, responding to students' interests was described as a form of caring too. Participants appreciated content and topics that were engaging and challenging. They wanted to learn more about the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking cultures, and their SHL curriculum fulfilled this goal. Building on what students could do with Spanish was also deemed pertinent by students. Instead of teaching the HL from a deficit perspective that views HLLs as students that need to be retaught the language, HL educators should understand who their students are and what their sociolinguistic needs might be by surveying students and by getting to know them.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Introduction

Students' perceptions of their experiences in SHL classrooms were both powerful and personal depictions of the ways in which SHL classrooms were (not) meeting their self-reported needs. Research that focuses on HLLs' metalinguistic awareness, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, mastery of discrete grammatical forms, etc. is only part of the answer when determining how to best meet the needs of HLLs in classroom settings. In a recent interview, HL scholar Carreira (2020) stated the following:

> I am often surprised by the level of interest that linguistic research tells you what [HLLs] do not know. Teachers flock to these presentations thinking that if we can only break that code, then we can teach them…but that is not what teaching is; it is about expanding the ability of HL learners to use their HL in different contexts and for different functions, not perfecting the use of grammatical forms. The scientific research is important, but it is not what should drive HL teaching and curriculum design (Carreira et al., 2020).

Therefore, it is important to include HLLs in research studies in order to better understand in which contexts they want to use their HL and for what reasons. Gaining knowledge about students' experiences in HL classrooms could provide new points of view that have not been considered in HL education.

Research, of all types – especially that which involves people – should strive to contribute to, not only its field, but to the population(s) contributing to the study. Phenomenographic research can open the door to future studies as these lines of research can tap into participants' understanding of phenomena, thus creating the foundation for more discussions and explorations of a phenomenon. I examined the experiences of bilingual speakers of Spanish with the goal of learning more about students' experiences in HL courses to ensure these courses

meet the perceived needs of the students they are designed to serve. Results of the study, which were based on student-generated perspectives, provided suggestions for the modification of curriculum and pedagogical practices for similar HL classroom contexts.

Before shifting to the next sections, I want to stress that the focus of this dissertation was not that of giving voice to bilingual speakers of Spanish as Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2000) proposed. I see their discussion of giving voice and agency to their participants' Spanish and cultural identity as problematic as participants in a study (and people in general) are not without a voice. The issue at hand is whether those in positions of power and privilege listen to other people's voices. HL studies need to provide a space for everyone's voice to be heard and valued – this belief should be central to all lines of education research as the voices of students are the ones too often ignored. As researchers, we tell our own story of experience that "illuminates social process and generates explanations for why people do and think the things they do" (Heller, 2009, p. 250) with the goal of expanding knowledge, and improving teaching and learning.

In this final chapter, I first discuss some limitations of this study. Next, I summarize the findings presented in previous chapters that are based on students' self-reported experiences of their SHL classes. I then outline some of the important implications for SHL education that seeks to meet the local and regional needs of HLLs of Spanish. I also provide suggestions for future research that could advance understandings of students' perceptions of SHL classes and the ways in which their experiences could shape curriculum and classroom practices.

Limitations of the Study

As with all research studies, there are limitations of the findings. First, this study sought to learn from a specific group of students: HLLs of Spanish enrolled in new and recently established linguistically diverse post-secondary SHL classes in the Midwest. Due to the

specificity described, the findings based on students' perspectives cannot and do not aspire to be characteristic of all students' experiences enrolled in similar courses in similar settings. Hence, I do not claim nor do I seek generalizability. However, the findings from this study inform and deepen our understanding of HL learning contexts in the U.S. from a student-centered point of view.

In addition to the specificity of the setting in which the HLLs were studying, the participants also represented certain groups. The five students were women. Including the experiences of men enrolled in SHL classes could have impacted the findings. Also, all but one of the participants reported speaking a variety of Spanish that was linked to Mexico. Again, having students with home varieties of Spanish that differed greatly could have shaped the outcome of this study. Moreover, due to the low response rate, interview data was collected from only five students, which was below the suggested minimum number of ten interviewees (Cousin, 2009) for phenomenographies.

Another possible limitation of this research is that it relied on semi-structured interviews as the main source of data collection. These one-on-one interviews prioritized students' self-reporting of their experiences and sociolinguistic needs. I did not observe students in their SHL classes nor did I interview their instructors. Phenomenography does not require the aforementioned data collection techniques as the aim of phenomenographic research is to understand how someone else experiences a specific phenomenon (Marton, 1988, 2015). However, in a study of SHL learning contexts that seeks to answer different research questions, classroom observations and interviews with professors would be useful.

Summary of Findings

This phenomenography aimed to uncover the ways in which bilingual speakers of Spanish experience linguistically diverse SHL classes across an under-researched region. As a reminder, the following research questions guided this study:

1) How do HLLs experience the SHL classroom?
    a. What is the SHL classroom environment like for HLLs?
    b. What is it like to study Spanish with other HLLs?
2) How do SHL classes meet the self-reported sociolinguistic needs of HLLs?
3) How do HLLs experience the teaching of Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing in their SHL classes?

The findings detailed outcome spaces characterized by (dis)connections, communities, and breaking down/building up Spanish.

Outcome Space 1: (Dis)connections: Failing to Meet Students' Needs in the SHL Classroom

The first outcome space consisted of three categories of description which were *Linking Spanish to success in careers*, *Grammar guided the curriculum*, and *Imbalances in practicing the four language domains*. Participants provided insight into the reasons that motivated them to study their HL. These motivations mirrored the patterns reported by HLLs of Spanish on a national survey (Carreira & Kagan, 2011); however, the SHL classes did not adequately address and incorporate students' career-oriented aspirations into the curriculum. This category of description helped answer research question two as students' experiences in their SHL classes were shaped by instrumental motivators (Gardner, 1985) that focused on attaining success. To be considered successful users of Spanish, the participants needed to prove themselves. In other words, they needed to improve their HL so that would be able to document their bilingualism for

potential future employers. Enrolling in a SHL course, for most students, was a gateway to success in Spanish as this class would allow participants to begin their study of Spanish and gain a minor or certificate in the language. These credentials represented a formal documentation of students' bilingualism as participants' universities would grant them.

Furthermore, grammar took center stage in the second descriptive category. Students internalized the idea that an intensive study of grammar was the key to unlocking their HL so that they could gain a deeper understanding of the language. This point of view of participants corresponded to research questions one and two. Students' experiences were framed through the lens of grammar. A focus on grammar helped meet students' self-reported language needs by reducing linguistic insecurities related to metalinguistic knowledge about Spanish (e.g., learning the parts of speech or the rules for placing diacritics). However, a focus on forms instead of functions did not align with participants' desire to use their HL in professional settings after graduation.

Finally, expanding proficiency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading the HL were not given equal treatment. This characteristic of the SHL classes helped answer research question three. Students' classroom-based experiences in their HL contributed to an understanding that placed writing in Spanish as the primary language domain that students needed to practice. SHL curricula that gave students extensive practice developing their writing skills addressed a documented concern of HLLs (Burgo, 2015; Carreira & Kagan, 2011). However, according to students' reflections, the SHL classes did not devote equal time to reading, speaking, and listening in Spanish. Previous research (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) demonstrated that reading in the HL was the other top concern, along with writing, of HLLs. Hence, it is particularly important that SHL courses provide students with guided practice reading in the HL so that

students become more comfortable reading diverse texts in their HL. Meanwhile, speaking and listening in Spanish were perceived as incidental to enrollment in a HL class.

Outcome Space 2: Communities Inside and Outside of the SHL Classroom

In the outcome space on communities, the three categories of description of were *Community-building inside the SHL classroom*, *Sharing and valuing linguistic and cultural diversity*, and *Building community outside the SHL classroom*. The concept of community was an important element of students' SHL classes. My analysis of the interviews depicted a positive atmosphere in SHL classrooms on the campuses of PWIs, which answered research 1-b. Participants found the SHL classroom to be "awesome" and a "different atmosphere" in which they were able to interact with and learn from other Spanish-English bilinguals. Students' reflections on their experiences also underscored the sense of solidarity they had with their classmates as they looked forward to learning more Spanish and supporting each other in this journey. Having a positive experience interacting with other HLLs could combat overall negative experiences of Latinx students in college and feelings of not belonging (Ostrove & Long, 2007; Witkowsky et al., 2018).

In the next category of description, research question 1-b was also answered by students' expression of their growth in appreciation for the linguistic and cultural diversity represented by their classmates. Participants were able to learn new ways of expressing ideas due to their interactions with Spanish speakers whose language variety differed from what was learned at home. Moreover, some students believed that their professors tapped into the linguistic and cultural plurality of the students by incorporating this heterogeneity into the curriculum. This approach to teaching linguistic and cultural variation in the Spanish-speaking world uses the

students and their diversity to initiate conversations and assignments on this topic which is a practice that better includes students and their perspectives into the SHL curriculum.

The third category of description of this outcome space, captured the importance of linking students to communities outside of the SHL classroom. Recent research (Lowther Pereira, 2016; Pak, 2018; Pascual y Cabo et al., 2017) has demonstrated the significance of linking the SHL classroom to local Spanish-speaking communities. Some students were able to use Spanish in Spanish-speaking settings (e.g., local schools) and with local Spanish speakers in an interview project. These assignments enriched students' experience with their HL by taking it beyond the classroom walls and using it in the "real world." Thus, research question two was answered as some participants had the opportunity to use Spanish in a professional setting, which aligned with their desire to use Spanish in new domains. Every student did not receive the affordances of this experience as not all the SHL classes included experiential learning in the course requirements.

Outcome Space 3: Breaking Down and Building Up Spanish as a HL

In the third and final outcome space, an analysis of students' experiences highlighted *Reinforcing deficit perspectives*, *Debunking deficit views*, and *Caring for the student, caring for the HL* as the three categories of description that defined the outcome space characterized by breaking down and building up Spanish in the HL classroom. First, participants emphasized their "missing" metalinguistic knowledge and "imperfect" Spanish, which represented internalized deficit views of their HL. Furthermore, according to students' self-reflections, some instructors also labeled students' Spanish as deficient in some way. Students' perceived internal and external framing of their Spanish as "less than" helped answer research question one by

providing insight into how students experienced the SHL classroom. External and reproduced deficit perspectives detracted from students' overall positive experiences in their SHL courses.

The second category of description also addressed research question one as it revealed the role debunking deficit perspectives played in students' experiences in their SHL classes. Specifically, participants explained how the topic of language variety and the framing of bilingualism as an asset in the SHL classes helped debunk deficit perspectives on Spanish as a HL. Exploring language variety allowed students to better see the validity of all varieties of Spanish and undo some misconceptions they held about their HL. Furthermore, positioning bilingualism as an asset for both personal and professional uses assisted participants in reevaluating some of the negative messages that have targeted their HL. Studying Spanish in a HL class also motivated some students to continue taking Spanish classes (for intrinsic and extrinsic reasons). Enrollment in a SHL course increased students' confidence in their Spanish and encouraged them to continue taking Spanish classes.

Finally, care was the theme of the last category of description. Students perceived the manifestation of care in both the curriculum and the ways in which instructors talked about Spanish as a HL. Hence, care influenced students' experiences in their SHL classes and contributed to answering research questions one and two. Some students reported that their professors seemed personally invested in students' success and that they had created a classroom that was welcoming of students' diverse levels of experience using Spanish. Furthermore, participants characterized content that responded to students' interests as a form of caring in their SHL classes. When lessons built on what students could already do with their HL, participants felt that their professors cared for them and their HL.

Implications for Instructors and Program Directors

Due to the lack of research that takes students' perspectives into account, SHL researchers (Alarcón, 2010; Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2008; Valdés, 2001; Valdés et al., 2008) have called for an increase in qualitative student-centered HL scholarship. This study sought to include students' voices in SHL research. Moreover, this study expanded knowledge of Spanish as a HL in classroom settings in the Midwest, which is one of the under-researched and underrepresented regions in SHL research (Beaudrie, 2012; Potowski, 2016). The findings summarized in the previous section have implications for SHL pedagogy and curriculum.

A Holistic Approach to SHL Education

When viewed as a whole, the findings call for a more holistic approach to SHL instruction. Holistic approaches can help move HL education away from dichotomizing perspectives on teaching and learning and, instead, highlight the interconnectedness that exists in HL education. Grauerholz (2001) defined holistic teaching as:

> pedagogical approaches that consciously attempt to (a) promote student learning and growth on levels beyond the cognitive, (b) incorporate diverse methods that engage students in personal exploration and help them connect course material to their own lives, and (c) help students clarify their own values and their sense of responsibility to others and to society (p. 44).

These pedagogical approaches align with and respond to the study's findings. Furthermore, Grauerholz (2001) argued that a holistic pedagogy increases opportunities for deep learning to occur. The author provided five reasons that justify holistic approaches, and they were:

> [1] holistic teaching consciously attempts to acknowledge and address students' emotional, moral, spiritual, and intellectual concerns and struggles. [2] Holistic teachers

view students as multifaceted people who have very active lives, rich backgrounds, and multiple intelligences that are all integral to the learning and teaching process. [3] Holistic teaching attempts to eliminate such barriers to lasting learning as extreme power differences. [4] Holistic teaching seeks to provide a safe environment for students to express their ideas and feelings openly. [5] Research suggests that students engaged in critical thinking or flow need to be interested in a question, perceive that a problem exists, and believe that they have the skills to resolve it (p. 45).

Based on this study's findings and due to the expected heterogeneity in these new and recently established SHL programs (Beaudrie, 2012), a more holistic approach to SHL education entails the use of differentiated instruction to plan instruction, the use of Integrated Performance Assessments, a service-learning requirement, and specific activities and assignments that aim to systematically debunk deficit views of Spanish and build students' confidence in their HL. Grauerholz (2001), in her article, proposed a series of strategies for teaching holistically, which were: "structuring the course, developing assignments, implementing classroom activities and teaching strategies, and taking advantage of out-of-class activities" (p. 46). The abovementioned holistic framework for SHL instruction integrates these strategies into SHL curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Differentiated Instruction. I first recommend a greater incorporation of differentiated instruction (DI) into the SHL classroom to meet the diverse needs of a diverse population of students. Carreira has advocated for the implementation of DI into mixed HL-L2 classes and HL classes for more than a decade (see Carreira, 2007, 2012a, 2016, 2018; Carreira & Hitchins Chik, 2018; Carreira & Kagan, 2011). DI in the HL classroom centers "on expanding HL learners' functional skills and linguistic repertories, attending to their aspirations and relational needs"

(Carreira, 2018, p. 6). As such, DI is of particular relevance for the linguistically diverse SHL classes in which participants were enrolled. Carreira and Kagan (2011) suggested that HL educators incorporate practices that are common in multilevel English as a Second Language and elementary classrooms such as "grouping students to promote engagement, using portfolios to assess learning" (p. 58).

The use of DI in the SHL classroom also responds to Grauerholz's (2001) classroom activities strategy that includes the formation of "collaborative learning groups" (p. 47) that regularly meet to complete a project by the end of the semester. These students should be grouped by interests so that they have "personal connections to the material" (Grauerholz, 2001, p. 47). This idea aligns with Carreira's use of project-based learning in SHL classes that prioritize a focus on function to address students; strengths and weaknesses (Carreira et al., 2020). For HL students in similar contexts, DI could provide greater exposure to the ways in which Spanish is used in professional settings. Students had notions of the benefits of expanding their linguistic repertories in Spanish for career-oriented goals. The HL classroom, that uses DI to guide curriculum design, could help further foster students' appreciation for their HL and deepen their understanding of its importance in familiar and formal settings.

Integrated Performance Assessments. Next, to reconcile some of the concerns expressed by participants, I suggest that SHL education extend the use of Integrated Performance Assessments (IPAs) in the curriculum. IPAs (Adair-Hauck, Glisan, & Troyan, 2013) have the potential to address students' concerns about the presentation of the four language domains in their SHL classes. IPAs are inter-related tasks designed to assess the three modes of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational) in authentic contexts (Shrum & Glisan, 2010) that encourage a more balanced approach to language teaching and evaluation.

Leeman, Rabin, and Román-Mendoza (2011) documented that "the best educational programs recognize and value students' home identities, building on their existing linguistic and cultural knowledge" (p. 484). In a HL class, IPAs could be situated in both informal (e.g., with family and friends) and formal contexts (e.g., in the workplace) that allow HLLs to practice different registers. IPAs that focus on both informal and formal contexts could allow students to "make personal connections between their own lives and the course materials" (Grauerholz, 2001, p. 46). This feature of IPAs, especially when writing is involved, corresponds to Grauerholz's (2001) strategy for developing course assignments. Using alternative forms of assessment is one of the tenets for structuring a holistic course (Grauerholz, 2001), and IPAs respond to this goal. Furthermore, grammar in the SHL classroom should link IPAs and language functions together, as opposed to teaching and learning decontextualized language forms.

Another advantage of IPAs is their ability to offer focused and frequent practice in the four skill areas. Carreira (2012b) described intensive SHL classes that "were originally conceived to prepare HL learners for enrollment in upper-division content courses;" (p. 108) however, students with varied majors tend to enroll in the classes – especially the lower-level general education SHL class. In this context and similar ones in which the SHL sequence is limited to one or two classes, not all students enrolled in the SHL class/es major or minor in Spanish. As such, if the curriculum overemphasizes writing in the HL, then these students will have not been afforded the opportunity to expand their linguistic repertoires more holistically. IPAs have the capacity to impact in-class activities in a way that is beneficial and relevant for HLLs and their self-reported needs by fostering a balanced approach to the treatment of the four language domains in the SHL classroom.

Spanish in the Community. Experiences using Spanish that link community and classroom are advantageous for HLLs (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) as they can tap into and build on students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). Recent studies (Lowther Pereira, 2016; Pak, 2018; Pascual y Cabo et al., 2017) have established the value in linking the SHL classroom to local Spanish-speaking communities. For example, some students were able to better understand the ways in which certain education programs impact language minorities in their local community. Various forms of experiential learning such as job shadowing, service-learning assignments, etc. provide students with opportunities to use their HLs in new contexts. Another important element of experiential learning, which is especially true for service-learning projects, is that students can learn *with* local Spanish-speaking communities instead of just learning *about* them (Plann, 2002). Service learning aligns with a holistic approach to SHL education as community-based interactions are often some of the "most meaningful experiences a college student can have" (Grauerholz, 2001, p. 46).

In settings in which HLLs have limited opportunities to use Spanish on campus beyond their SHL classes, experiential learning becomes even more important as it provides authentic interactions in Spanish in the local community. SHL courses should include community-based experiential learning as it gets students involved with local Spanish speakers, it combats feelings of not belonging (Pak, 2018), and it also supports the instrumental motivations (Gardner, 1985) (e.g., using Spanish in formal/professional contexts) that encourage some students to study their HL. Experiential learning also fulfills the course structure and out-of-class holistic teaching strategies proposed by Grauerholz (2001).

Relevant Topics and Caring in the Curriculum. Finally, in response to students' reflections, I want to draw attention to a few topics and assignments they mentioned that

contribute to a holistic approach to teaching and learning Spanish as a HL. Bilingualism must be framed as an asset in order to combat students' linguistic insecurities and debunk deficit views of Spanish. It is important that HLLs understand the cognitive, social, personal, and professional advantages of bilingualism Also, SHL classes should examine language variety in the Spanish-speaking world. Increasing students' awareness of the diversity that exists in Spanish – both inside and outside of the U.S. – can help validate the legitimacy of students' different HL backgrounds. Reading in the HL must have a bigger role in SHL curriculum. This documented area of concern (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) should not be ignored. Literary and ethnographic accounts of the experiences of U.S. Spanish speakers on themes such as language loss/maintenance, bi/multiculturalism, immigration, education, etc. can connect with HLLs in meaningful ways.

In a critical essay on the shift in paradigms in SHL education, MacGregor-Mendoza (2020) stated that teaching a language is not "apolitical, devoid of prejudice, pretentiousness, or injustice." Based on this argument, I would add that teaching languages, especially HLs, cannot be objective either. HL educators and researchers must consider the affective dimension involved in HL education as HLLs have a familial, personal tie to their HL. Therefore, students' home varieties of Spanish cannot be labeled as something that needs to be "fixed" in the SHL classroom. This kind of deficit model of education can be demoralizing and offensive to students.

A more holistic approach to SHL education should not discount the importance of care, as expressed by this study's participants, and its role in the SHL classroom. Specifically, SHL educators need to adopt an "ethic of *critical care*… [and use] the practice of *hard* caring – a form of caring characterized by supportive instrumental relationships and high academic expectations"

(Antrop-González & De Jesús, 2006, p. 413). Critical care in curriculum design values students' cultural capital and ensures that "curriculum and pedagogy is relevant to their lives" (Antrop-González & De Jesús, 2006, p. 417). Furthermore, applying the concept of bilanguaging love (see Mignolo, 2012), which is a deep appreciation for existing between languages, to the SHL classroom can "serve counterhegemonic ends by elevating the epistemologies and knowledges [of students] suppressed by Western modern/colonial projects" (Pacheco & Hamilton, in press). An application of bilanguaging love would remind SHL educators that their students "do not fit neatly into dominant constructions of language proficiency" (Pacheco & Hamilton, in press) – this point underscores why HL courses were first created. Thus, to best meet the social, affective, and linguistic needs of HLLs, we cannot ignore students' prior experiences with their HL. A caring curriculum considers and responds to these unique needs of students.

Ultimately, a student-centered holistic approach to SHL instruction should begin by getting to know the learners (Burgo, 2015; Carreira et al., 2020), their needs, and their interests. Identifying and understanding the sociolinguistic needs and general interests of HLLs will help lead to a positive SHL classroom experience that supports language maintenance and development. When thinking back on my teaching experiences, I learned from participants that finding a model for HL instruction that works best for students cannot be based solely in HL research and pedagogical best practices for teaching HLLs. Sound approaches to HL instruction must also respond to the unique local needs of students in SHL programs throughout the U.S. Holistic education is flexible and it can be adapted to meet the diverse needs of learners in various HL instructional settings.

Suggestions for Future Research

This phenomenography was an investigation of Spanish-speaking bilinguals' experiences in new and recently established SHL classes in the Midwest. The primary source of data was one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the five participants. The limitations of this study suggest the need for further qualitative studies in Spanish HL education that actively include students' perspectives. For example, in a future phenomenographic study, I could recruit participants who are enrolled in the same SHL class. Carreira et al. (2020) discussed the importance of understanding and meeting the local needs of HLLs. The perception of care in the HL classroom and its potential impact of students' experiences in a SHL class has not been thoroughly researched. Hence, a study that concentrates on the classroom-based experiences of students taking the same SHL class could provide a snapshot of the local sociolinguistic and affective needs of students.

Furthermore, future research that examines the experiences of students in under-researched regions could use focus groups as a data collection tool. The current study used semi-structured interviews that were a "conversational partnership" (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000, p. 302) between the researcher and the interviewees. A more nuanced understanding of the experiences of students in new and recently established SHL programs could be achieved through focus groups as participants would be able to share their perceptions with one another. A goal of phenomenography is to discover new understandings (Marton, 1988); the collection of video recordings that use a sociocritical frame could add an extra dimension of analysis (Tochon, 1999) to data obtained during focus group meetings. Video study groups with a sociocritical lens can assist participants in critically reflecting on their experiences by engaging them in dialogues

that raise awareness of pertinent issues and these mutually-constructed analyses can inspire change (Tochon, 1999).

Another line of research could examine HLLs' trajectories from K-12 education to enrollment in post-secondary institutions. Nuñez has investigated Latinx students' transition to college by examining their sense of connectedness to campus (2009a) and the ways in which intercultural capital can contribute to educational success and "counterbalance the negative impact of marginalizing experiences" (2009b, p. 42) on college campuses. Additionally, Hamilton (2018) highlighted the ways in which bilingual youth "transformed their schooling trajectories into self-designed paths to college" (p. 154) by enacting mestiza consciousness, which means that their bilingualism was utilized as a resource to foster educational success. Future studies could address the role of SHL classes in Latinx students' transition to college. In-depth investigations into this area could provide further support for the positive characteristics of SHL courses revealed by participants in this dissertation, as well as negative characteristics. A better understanding of students' academic trajectories could also inform holistic approaches to SHL education across the K-16 pipeline.

Finally, I am also interested in expanding research that investigates HLLs' experiences in K-12 dual language immersion (DLI) programs. In certain DLI program models, culturally and linguistically diverse students have the program's partner language as their home language while the other students are L2 learners of the partner language (Hancock, Davin, Williams, & Lewis, 2020). Research in a DLI program would be precluded by volunteering (see Pacheco, 2010) in the classroom(s) to become familiar with the research site and students. Like Goulette's (2020) study of a mixed eighth grade Spanish class (HL and L2 learners), I could audio/video record students' in-class interactions. Additionally, I would ask students to participate in interviews so

that I could triangulate the findings based on what I, as researcher, interpreted and reported (Duff, 2002). Further triangulation could be achieved through member checks (Canagarajah, 2011) with colleagues. The number of DLI programs has increased as some states have launched initiatives to better prepare students for multilingual and multicultural experiences at home and abroad (Hancock et al., 2020). Accordingly, research into the ways in which DLI programs meet the language and academic needs of HLLs is warranted.

Final Remarks

As supported by the findings, there is much to be learned from students enrolled in SHL classes. This study's participants, in particular, were enrolled in new and recently established SHL courses in the Midwest. Consulting students demonstrated some ways in which students' self-reported (sociolinguistic) needs were (not) being met in their SHL classes. Therefore, future studies should continue to highlight how students can contribute to building knowledge about SHL classrooms. There is a need for more qualitative studies that use data collection tools such as interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, etc. that allow researchers to learn directly from students enrolled in classes that serve HLLs. The interests and sociolinguistic needs of students are not universal. For this reason, I am advocating for SHL research that takes a more regional or local (see Carreira et al., 2020) to understanding students' needs and interests so that they can be identified, and then met through a holistic approach to SHL education.

As SHL course offerings continue to expand in the Midwest and other parts of the country, it is important that educators include students' voices when making decisions about curriculum for HL classes. Students, in particular adolescents and adults, are capable of expressing insecurities they have about Spanish and the ways in which the HL classroom could address some of their concerns. Moreover, a greater understanding of the ways in which HLLs

use/want to use Spanish could shape the curriculum of the varied classes (e.g., HL, L2, DLI, etc.) in which these students enroll.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

1. Age.
2. Gender.
3. Racial/Ethnic group.
4. Place of birth.
5. Where were you raised?
6. Class: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior?
7. Major and minor?
8. Name of Spanish course?
9. Course resources: Textbook, supplementary materials?
10. Please describe the role language played in your childhood. For example, which languages were spoken at home? Which language(s) did you use with relatives, friends? Please explain why you used a particular language/languages with these people.
11. Do you use Spanish outside of the classroom? If so, with whom and how? For example, do you speak/write to family, friends, coworkers? Read books, websites? Watch TV, movies? Listen to music?
12. What has been your experience with languages in classroom settings? For example, have you taken other language classes? In Kindergarten–12th grade? In college?
13. Why did you enroll in this Spanish class?
14. On a scale of 1 to 5, do you like being in a class studying Spanish with other bilingual students? 1 = Strongly dislike, 5 = Strongly like. Please explain your response.
15. On a scale of 1 to 5, do you feel that the curriculum in your Spanish class addresses your needs? 1 = Does not meet at all, 5 = Fully meets. Please explain why or why not?

16. Please describe the teaching and learning of the following modes of communication in your Spanish class:
    a. Speaking:
    b. Reading:
    c. Writing:
    d. Listening:
17. In this study, in-class experiences that can positively or negatively impact language learning are called academic language experiences. Please describe 2-3 academic language experiences from your Spanish language class that have influenced you and your language learning process.
18. How would you describe language variety in your class? For example, do your classmates come from homes in which the same or a similar variety of Spanish is spoken? Please explain.
19. Please use this space to express any other feelings you may have about your academic language experiences in your Spanish class.
20. If you are willing to participate in an interview, please enter your contact information:

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Themes that will be explored:

Reasons for taking a Spanish heritage language class.

Course expectations.

Classroom environment.

Studying with other bilingual students.

Alignment of student needs with course curriculum.

Teaching and learning of Speaking, Writing, Listening and Reading skills.

Student's academic language experiences in Spanish heritage language class.

Begin by providing my definition of this term.

Positive and negative examples.

Language variety presented in class.

Best and worst aspects of course.

Things you would do differently.

Things you would keep the same.

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