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Editors

Multiliteracies Pedagogy and Language Learning

Teaching Spanish to Heritage
Speakers

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To the loves of my life: Pat, Seany, Evie, and my parents, and to all the wonderful Hispanic students at California State University, Monterey Bay, who inspired the idea for this volume. Their life histories, and those of their immigrant, hard-working parents, will continue to inspire me for the rest of my life.

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Designing a Comprehensive Curriculum for Advanced Spanish Heritage Learners: Contributions from the Multiliteracies Framework

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Introduction

In the last two decades, work from different theoretical perspectives has contributed to the strengthening of pedagogical practices for Spanish heritage language learners (SHLLs). For example, they have provided us with information that has allowed us: (a) to differentiate SHLLs' instruction from that offered to second language (L2) students; (b) to understand the possible benefits and the necessary scope of explicit instruction for SHLLs; and (c) to design curricula for Spanish as a heritage language (SHL) from an interdisciplinary perspective. Despite these important contributions, results on what comprises "best practices" for SHLLs are not conclusive (Torres and Pascual y Cabo 2017). More research and

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empirical studies are needed (Lynch 2014) to identify and define the pedagogical interventions for Spanish heritage learners that work best at different points of the bilingual continuum.

This chapter aims to contribute to and expand the body of empirical research done around best instructional practices for SHLLs by describing the curriculum design and results of an advanced college-level course for SHLLs, “Spanish 35: Spanish for Latino Students” (Sp35), emphasizing the key support that the multiliteracies framework *Learning by Design* (Cope and Kalantzis 2009; Kalantzis et al. 2010) offered to its development. This chapter has four main parts. In the first part, we outline the theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings at the base of the Sp35 design. In the second part, we describe the course components in detail and present some examples of the ways in which we integrated the *Learning by Design* principles with practical activities, a variety of materials, and assessment in the classroom. In the third section, we present some oral and written outcomes of the first cohort of eight Latin@ students who took this class. We also include vignettes of the students’ final reflections on their deep relationship with the Spanish language and sense of Latin@ identity. We end the chapter referring to the limitations of the study and providing suggestions for further research and final remarks on the contributions of *Learning by Design* to the advancement of the teaching of SHL.

Sp35: Theoretical and Pedagogical Underpinnings

Sp35 was the first course for Spanish heritage students created in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. Several decisions had to be made regarding level, content, and pedagogy since there was no precedent for such a course at the university. As a first step, the course head and the future instructor decided to organize a focus group with Latin@ students to explore their language interests and needs, as well as the levels at which the course could be offered. After gathering information from prospective students, the course head

envisioned a new course at the intermediate-advanced level and organized it around topics suggested by the students, such as immigration, languages in contact, identity, Latin@ cultures in the United States, and US–Latin America relations. Although students had clearly voiced their interest in learning “español académico,” the course head decided to also include the analysis of a range of other text genres (see later in this chapter for details on course content and work with language).

Moreover, drawing from a previous successful experience designing an intermediate class for a mixed population of second language (L2) and heritage students (Parra 2013), and the most current pedagogical proposals for heritage learners, the course head organized the pedagogy of Sp35 based on the following frameworks: (a) a sociolinguistic and functional approach to language (Achugar and Colombi 2008; Colombi 2003, 2012, 2015); (b) differentiated instruction (Potowski and Carreira 2004); (c) critical pedagogy (Freire 2005; Giroux 1991; Leeman 2005; Leeman and Rabin 2007; Leeman and Serafini 2016; Parra 2016a); and (d) the *Learning by Design* pedagogy (Kalantzis et al. 2010, 2016). In particular, *Learning by Design* provided key contributions to the design of the Sp35 in connection to: (a) class dynamics; (b) the definition of “literacy”; (c) the “new learning” processes, which guided the design of lesson plans; and (d) notions of assessment. In what follows, we elaborate on such contributions.

Classroom Dynamics in Sp35: A Collaborative Community of Practice

Central to the *Learning by Design* pedagogy (see Chap. 1 in this volume for a detailed presentation of its tenets) is a classroom dynamic that redefines the student–teacher relation. It changes the direction of the flow of information (Kalantzis and Cope 2012) by placing students’ voices in the forefront so that they become a source of knowledge and contribution to the learning process (Kalantzis et al. 2016). That is, in this framework, teachers “are responsible for constructing an environment more in tune to the process of learning rather than to their being authority figures who transmit non-negotiable learning content” (Ibid.,

139). Aligned with this perspective, the Sp35 classroom was conceived as a collaborative space where shared life experiences, interests, and interactions between students and the teacher formed what Lave and Wenger (1991) call a “community of practice.” In Healy’s (2008, xiii) words, the teacher worked “cooperatively” with the students “as co-designer of a critically framed curriculum [and] learn[ed] alongside the students and in co-decision making with them.” We believe that it is within these kinds of instructional environments that SHLLs can blossom and grow, both linguistically and personally, fueled by the integration of language, cognition, and affect—what we consider the three main gears of any learning process.

This idea of classroom also relates to proposals coming from the field of heritage languages that urge teachers to turn traditional classes into safe spaces where students are treated with respect, can voice the feelings of stigmatization they might have experienced, develop a critical consciousness (Freire 2005), and can also express their hopes for their future (Parra 2016a). Students’ overall development, sense of well-being, and ethnolinguistic identity are at the center of this teaching philosophy (Carreira 2012; He 2016, 2014; Martínez 2016; Parra 2013). Similarly, *Learning by Design* proposes that our pedagogical practices—at any educational level—be geared toward “affirming and nurturing the whole person” (Kalantzis et al. 2016, 139) while guiding students toward becoming flexible learners, collaborative problem solvers, and creative critical thinkers, capable of reflecting upon the complexity of our twenty-first-century world (Kalantzis and Cope 2012; Kalantzis et al. 2016). This perspective was the point of departure for Sp35.

Conceptualization of Language and Literacy in Sp35

Learning by Design (Kalantzis et al. 2016), as well as the most recent proposals for the teaching of SHL, embraces a functional perspective on language and literacy based on the seminal works of Halliday (1994; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). Within this perspective, language is considered “a resource for making meaning” that is intrinsically functional and that operates in context (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014,

30). This conception of language has proven to be one of the most effective pedagogical frameworks for the teaching of literacy to SHLLs (e.g., Achugar and Colombi 2008; Colombi 1994, 2003, 2015). That is, heritage programs are leaving behind exclusive normative perspectives which focus on “correcting errors” to embrace approaches that conceive writing as a “process” that needs continuous feedback and work to craft the different versions of a text at its different stages. Guided focus on textual forms is therefore important to facilitate learners’ writing development (Bhatia 1999; for proposals for SHLLs, see Colombi 2015; Martínez 2005). The emphasis is then on providing students with guidance and the appropriate knowledge on how to write different genres, for specific communicative and social contexts and purposes.

Because SHLLs do not usually learn Spanish in a formal setting (i.e., in school) (see Chap. 1 for more information), students—including those in Sp35—tend to emphasize their interest in learning the so-called academic genres and academic language (Achugar and Colombi 2008; Colombi 1994, 2003, 2015). Therefore, heritage programs tend to be structured around this need. New proposals, however, have underscored the importance of expanding the teaching of writing to other genres, moving beyond the monolingual and monocultural academic models. The most recent suggestions call for teachers to explore and support students’ creativity (Valdés 2001) and experiment with the expression of their “border” experiences (Martínez 2005), beyond expectations of correctness or “appropriateness” (Leeman and Serafini 2016).

The *Learning by Design* pedagogy facilitates this possibility as it promotes instruction that relies on the inclusion of multimodal (printed text, video, pictures, etc.) sources of meaning as instructional tools. More importantly, both the SHL field and *Learning by Design* see the valuing and validation of differing dialects, accents, and registers found in multimodal products from diverse communities as a central goal of our work (Kalantzis et al. 2010). Mirroring these methodological and pedagogical mandates, Sp35 was committed to precisely become a space where each student could bring in their own dialects and would feel valued for their unique linguistic and cultural contributions to the class, and would also

have the opportunity to be exposed to and work with a variety of multi-modal “texts.”

Learning by Design Knowledge Processes in Sp35

Working with a variety of texts and genres requires new pedagogical principles to expand on and enrich our possibilities and experiences both as teachers and as students. These new principles are the core of the *Learning by Design* pedagogy and can be defined as the “epistemic moves” (Kalantzis et al. 2016, 80) behind the process of building new knowledge. That is, they are what learners “do to know” (Ibid., 6), and they involve eight different “pedagogical moves: a) experiencing the known; b) experiencing the new; c) conceptualizing by naming; d) conceptualizing with theory; e) analyzing functionally; f) analyzing critically; g) applying appropriately; and h) applying creatively” (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 4–5). The activities and content in Sp35 were a reflection of these *Learning by Design* knowledge processes.

For example, the curricular content included topics such as stereotypes, which were first articulated under *experiencing the known*, as learners had to reflect on their previous knowledge and experiences on this matter. Learners were then guided through activities designed for further exposure to *new*, related knowledge—such as where those stereotypes come from, how they relate to race and social class, and how they affirm social hierarchies—resulting in new ways of conceptualizing past experiences with stereotypes and a growth on critical awareness around issues of ethnicity or race *vis-à-vis* the ideology of the mainstream culture in the United States and in the students’ countries of origin.

The instructional guidance was also present in the incorporation of tasks for the *conceptualization* and *analysis* of rhetorical and linguistic features of each of the genres with which students were expected to work. This kind of instruction also allowed students to build a metalanguage to “identify, talk about, and learn the various elements that contribute to particular meanings in communication” (Kern 2004, 4), which also resulted in their ability to embark on a process of critical analysis of notions such as those of “correctness” and “appropriateness” that surround their own language use (Leeman and Serafini 2016; Samaniego

and Warner 2016). Finally, Sp35 activities gave students plenty of opportunities to *apply* their new knowledge both *appropriately* and *creatively*, with tasks ranging from the development of rich descriptions and short stories to the review of academic essays and a final art project.

The critical thinking component advocated by the *Learning by Design* pedagogy is particularly important for the SHL classroom (Parra 2016a). SHLLs grow up in communities—some of them bilingual and bicultural—that provide them with a variety of language, socio-economic, and race experiences that impact and shape their lives in powerful ways, and that are different from those of monolingual and monocultural students in heritage students’ countries of origin, both in the United States and internationally. Given the fact that SHLLs are perceived by mainstream society as “minorities,” many of these experiences undermine their linguistic and cultural heritage identities. Educators in the SHL field have then highlighted the importance of making critical pedagogy approaches (Freire 1970, 2005; Freire and Macedo 1995; Giroux 1991) an essential part of SHL classes’ content and dynamics. The goal is to guide students through a process of what Aparicio (1997, 225) calls “decolonization,” by means of which they can disentangle the language and cultural ideologies that they might have experienced, and unmask the power relations that are established through linguistic exchanges in the different communities in which they participate (Bordieu 1991; Zentella 1997). This kind of pedagogical approach strengthens students’ sense of ethnolinguistic identity and empowers them to build pathways to become active citizens in their communities and promote social change (Parra 2016a).

Notions of Assessment in Sp35

In the *Learning by Design* framework, assessment is seen as comprehensive and inclusive. Kalantzis and Cope (2012, 87) believe that assessment tools should test for both learning and accountability, and should go beyond “punitive/reward end-of-program measures.” That is, this type of pedagogy is interested in incorporating assessment tasks that take into account the diverse needs and abilities that learners bring to the classroom. Mirroring some of these concerns, scholars in the field of SHL such as Fairclough (2012, 262) advocate a “multifaceted approach that

measures multiple abilities and types of tasks.” Moreover, Beaudrie (2012, 2016) suggests paying particular attention to some of SHLLs’ “idiosyncrasies” when designing assessment tools. For example, because SHLLs have acquired Spanish mostly in natural environments and use the language in meaningful and authentic contexts (see Chap. 1 in this volume), they should be evaluated by means of authentic assessment tasks through which they can show what they can do with the language. Assessment should also be based on and should respect learners’ language levels, linguistic varieties, and registers (Beaudrie et al. 2014). On the other hand, it is also important to recognize the specific forms that students should acquire as part of their learning process. Therefore, educators in the SHL field have proposed a combination of summative and formative assessment instruments (Fairclough), where the latter are crucial for gathering feedback from students about their performance and achievements (Carreira 2012), which can then be incorporated into the learning cycle to better answer learners’ specific needs.

Drawing from these proposals, a range of assessment tasks were designed for Sp35. The design of these tasks also aimed to reflect the knowledge processes proposed by *Learning by Design*. Examples of the assessment tools included “mini quizzes” with no more than five questions to test students on concrete information generated in classroom discussions. For instance, the quizzes would include questions about specific vocabulary, grammar points, and/or sociolinguistic terminology that had been introduced in the class before. Also, some mini quizzes were designed to probe into students’ knowledge of issues and content connected to their reading tasks. Other forms of assessment required students to complete open-ended tasks such as essays and creative writing assignments with the objective of providing learners with the opportunity to apply, and sometimes, experiment with what they had learned and had reflected on. An oral presentation on an academic topic was included, as well as the conclusion of the online reading program *Lectura Inteligente Herencia Latina* (LIHL) (see later in this chapter for a detailed description). Overall, the weight of the grading process was distributed across different tasks, as we will see in the course description section. By having several assessment tools, the

Sp35 course head was able to assess individual student progress, and find a balance between what Beaudrie (2016) considers two major course goals: assessing students’ linguistic learning while nurturing their self-esteem.

Curricular Aspects of Sp35

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Sp35 was the first course for Latin@ students offered at our institution. As such, the course was not part of the regular Spanish language program, but was equivalent to third year language courses. Once implemented, it also became part of the courses Latin@ students could choose to fulfill secondary field or concentration requirements. The class was 53 minutes long and was offered four times a week for 14 weeks.

Student Application Process and Placement

The course head designed an online application form (Appendix) that aimed to gather information on their language history, personal and professional interests, expectations for the course, and specific issues or topics they wanted to learn about. The form also included a questionnaire to probe into students’ self-assessment of their oral and written skills in the following areas: communication with family and friends, oral presentations at school, reading of simple and academic texts, writing e-mails and letters to family and friends, and writing academic texts.

In fall 2013, seven students (one male and six females, none of whom had participated in the focus group) filled out this application. Considering the importance of having students with similar language proficiency for the success of the learning experience (Beaudrie 2016), the course head also interviewed the learners to assess their oral proficiency, and to make sure they had a similar language level. All students that were interviewed for that first course had an advanced level of language proficiency: All of them were able to use Spanish complex structures, such as verbs in the present, past—with an ability to distinguish aspectual differences, for example, in the use of preterite versus imperfect—future, and the sub-

junctive in at least the present tense. Only one student (S7) had a linguistic profile closer to that of intermediate L2 students. For example, she tended to inconsistently use verbal tenses, mainly when referring to the past. Nonetheless, she was accepted because her father was half Puerto Rican; she had been exposed to some Spanish at home up to the age of four; she often visited relatives in Puerto Rico; and she was highly motivated to take the course in search of her Latino identity.

The students' families were originally from Mexico (S1, S2, and S3), Chile (S4), and El Salvador (S5). Another student had parents from Argentina and Brazil (S6), and the remaining student's father was from Puerto Rico (S7). All the students had spoken Spanish at home growing up, but they had had different experiences with the study of Spanish, as well as with the study of other languages. Most of them had received very little or no Spanish instruction at school. For example, S1 had had three years of bilingual education (K, 1st and 2nd grades); S4 had arrived from Chile at the age of six. Most participants had taken language classes in high school (e.g., S1 had taken some Italian; S4 and S6 had each taken several French courses), but they did not report any particular progress regarding their Spanish skills. S2 had studied German in Germany for one semester and taken four years of Spanish at high school, but he said that the classes had not been good, and he did not feel confident with his Spanish.

Once it was determined what kind of students the course would serve, and in order to address students' needs and interests in the most comprehensive possible way, we put together an interdisciplinary team of researchers (the authors of this chapter)¹ to develop its curriculum. All four members shared a background in psychology, but with different areas of expertise (e.g., linguistics, SHL pedagogy, reading and youth psychology, intercultural studies, and social psychology). The team work included the selection of topics and texts to be discussed in class; the design of activities for the classroom; and the development of the prototype for an online reading program (LIHL—see later in this chapter for a detailed description). Once the course development project was complete, the team members also worked directly with students in the classroom in order to get their feedback on the reading program and the course overall.

Course Design

Course Goals and Content

After a thorough literature review on the field of SHL, the consideration of the information gathered from the student focus group, and the examination of the linguistic and biographical characteristics of the course applicants, including the results of their oral interviews, the final objectives and goals for the course were defined. These objectives included the need:

- 1) to expand and to strengthen their oral and written interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communicative skills (ACTFL 2012);
- 2) to provide students with a safe space to reflect upon the meaning of the Spanish language in their present and future lives;
- 3) to develop students' critical socio-cultural and linguistic awareness (Leeman and Rabin 2007; Leeman and Serafini 2016); and
- 4) to empower students' sense of ethnolinguistic identity (Carreira 2012; Parra 2016b).

Considering the need to develop a curriculum that would develop a sense of *belonging* (Kalantzis et al. 2016) and thus would answer learners' specific linguistic and cultural needs, the interdisciplinary team organized Sp35 around meaningful and relevant topics for the students it would serve. These included themes such as family relations in the context of immigration; students' linguistic history; diversity in Latin America; selected topics on Latin America–US relations; Spanish in the United States (and its contact with the English language); language and identity; and Latin@s and food, music, and visual arts. Students had also expressed their interest in improving their academic Spanish, developing their reading skills, and learning specific literacy and linguistics aspects such as accent rules, spelling and vocabulary, grammar rules for the use of subjunctive, preterite and imperfect, and, therefore, all of these became part of the curriculum.

The materials developed to expose Sp35 students to the range of topics discussed above relied on a variety of multimodal resources that allowed

for a broad range of meaning making models and designs, and served as a window to explore what Juan Flores (2000) has called the “Latino imaginary.” These materials included films, music, and literary works by Latino and Latin American authors such as narratives, novel excerpts, poetry, and essays. Also, following the team’s previous success with the integration of visual art into language classes (Parra 2013; Parra and Di Fabio 2016), art had a prominent place in Sp35. Paintings and print and digital images by Latino and Latin American artists² illustrated some of the course’s central themes and enriched students’ learning experience by exposing them to the various national and cultural narratives depicted in this art. Academic and formal readings were also part of the instructional resources, and these included expository and argumentative essays, op-eds, and book and movie reviews.

Sp35 Reading Program: *Lectura Inteligente Herencia Latina*

Considering the importance and benefits of differentiated instruction for SHLLs (Potowski and Carreira 2004) and the *Learning by Design* call for the development of students’ “ability to work across literacies open paths” to promote social participation (Kalantzis et al. 2016, 7), we complemented Sp35 course materials with the software *Lectura Inteligente* developed at the School of Psychology at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Flores et al. 2010). A customized version of this program, LIHL, was developed for Sp35 with the objective of providing SHLLs with ample reading and writing opportunities to expand and reinforce their Spanish literacy skills.

LIHL considers the characteristics of the students toward whom it is geared, and it encourages students to have initiative and become autonomous learners (Flores and Otero 2013). The program is organized around several lessons. The first two, *Educación los ojos* (educating our eyes) and *Combatir malos hábitos* (fighting bad habits), were informative and provided students with important information about the best strategies to improve fluency and comprehension, as well as practices they should avoid while reading.

The following lessons focused on different themes that matched those included in Sp35. At the beginning of each lesson, the program stated clear expectations and goals for the learner. At the end of each exercise, it provided feedback, giving students the option of repeating the exercise if they wanted to improve their performance. The feedback was related to speed (based on the number of words read per minute), comprehension, and reading efficiency. Comprehension was measured by the percentage of right answers to questions related to the reading. Such answers imply remembering specific information and the elaboration of inferences. Efficient reading was scored as a result of the relation between reading speed and comprehension, and the program had five identified levels of efficiency. At the end of each reading, students clicked on a specific button, and the program gave them their scores in these three categories. Students took these scores into account to evaluate their own performance as they moved through the program.

The interdisciplinary team designed the content and tasks included in LIHL to: (a) be in alignment with the work done in class in terms of topics, genres, and objectives and (b) address the most vulnerable areas identified in readers with low performance (Flores et al. 2015), among them lexical recognition and syntactic knowledge particularly related to word order and grammar rules. LIHL exercises provided students with several strategies to infer the meaning of unknown words and to recognize important syntactic structures with which students were not familiar. Fluency in reading was directly related to these two language aspects. The final version of LIHL consisted of: (a) an initial assessment, (b) six lessons with exercises and specific strategies to improve reading speed and comprehension, and (c) a final evaluation.

As a result of the initial assessment, students got a reading profile and a series of options to improve their individual needs with specific strategies offered by the program. In this way, each student benefited from the automatization of feedback and assessment, and worked to further their own reading profile. Each lesson included three types of activities:

- 1) “before reading,” which comprised the activation of previous knowledge, revision of vocabulary and complex syntactic structures, and frames of reference for the interpretation of each text;

- 2) “reading activities,” which involved monitoring the students’ comprehension; and
- 3) “after reading activities,” which gave a summary of what had been learned and an overall review of text comprehension and interpretation.

Exercises that focused on lexical and syntactic knowledge allowed students to learn how to exclude irrelevant textual information, identify the relevant parts, or main ideas, of the texts, and reach an appropriate coordination of linguistic knowledge and working memory processes.

Another advantage of LIHL was that every lesson included several questions that required students to write answers of different length. These written responses, along with the in-class written assignments, provided invaluable information to the teacher, who was able to determine individual areas of vulnerability in each student’s writing, and, based on this knowledge, designed activities to address specific needs. Table 2.1 shows the overall organization of Sp35 in units that integrated themes, linguistic and literacy topics, and LIHL lessons.

Table 2.1 Spanish 35’s overall organization: integrated themes, linguistic and literacy topics, and LIHL lessons

In class	Written assignments (handouts and rubrics)	Reading program: <i>Lectura Inteligente</i> <i>Herencia Latina</i>
Introducción	Language family tree	Initial assessment
Conversación: <i>¡Cuéntame!</i>	Informal e-mails and letters Formal letter	Lesson 1 <i>Educación los ojos</i>
La descripción: <i>Cierro los ojos y dime cómo es..</i>	Description of a family feature Book/movie review	Lesson 2 <i>Combatir malos hábitos</i>
La narración: <i>Cuéntame qué pasó...</i>	Short story	Lesson 3 <i>Diferentes tipos de textos narrativos</i>
La exposición I: <i>¡Explicame!</i>	Oral presentation	Lesson 4 <i>Exposición</i>
La exposición I	Expository essay	Lesson 5 <i>Argumentación</i>
La argumentación: <i>¿En pro o en contra? ¡Convénceme!</i>	Argumentative essay	Lesson 6 <i>Argumentación</i> Final evaluation

Example of Integration of Theory and Practice

For the proponents of the *Learning by Design* pedagogy, the key question at the center of any educational process is, “How do we enable all learners to make and participate in meanings that will develop their capacities?” (Kalantzis et al. 2016, 3). The answer to this question lies in a “pedagogy [that chooses] a suitable mix of ways of knowing and purposeful [weaves] between [the] different kinds of knowing,” which entails choosing a variety of materials and developing the most appropriate “activity types, sequencing activities, transitioning from one activity type to another, and determining the outcomes of these activities” (Ibid., 80).

An example of this pedagogy and integration of materials and activities is the work done around the theme of family relations in the context of immigration. This work included the following multimodal instructional materials: (1) the movie *A Better Life*, (2) one of the songs from the movie soundtrack (“California”), (3) a movie review (taken from the Internet), and (4) the murals in East L.A. showed in the movie. These different instructional resources illustrated the hardships that relations between parents and children can undergo in the context of immigration—a topic that resonated with some of the students’ personal stories; the differences in values that develop between generations; the struggles to stay in an educational system that does not support Latin@ youth, including the perils brought about by gangs as powerful social groups which can sell the illusion of a place of belonging to many Latin@ youngsters. The analysis of the murals allowed conversations about the use of public spaces for social causes, and the music led to awareness of the representation of the Latin@ community and female bodies in communities such as East L.A. through music and videos. As part of this unit, students also read a review of the movie taken from the Internet.

In order to reflect the tenets of *Learning by Design* pedagogy, each theme in Sp35 therefore involved: (1) the six knowledge processes (*experiencing the known and the new, conceptualizing by naming and with theory, and analyzing functionally and critically*); (2) a variety of texts related to the topic, such as a work of literature, music, or art; and (3) handouts to scaffold the close reading and interpretation of the texts and to provide

students with a deep analysis of the linguistic forms characteristic of the specific genre in question. Such work included the analysis of the context of the crafting of the text: who had written the text, when it had been written or created, with what purpose, and directed to what audience. Handouts and class discussions triggered new perspectives and possibilities of interpretation; critical awareness was raised by “address[ing] texts as social and historical constructions” where students could become aware of “how cultural texts are regulated by various... discursive codes, but also how such texts express and represent different ideological interests” (Giroux 1991, 248).

In the next step of their learning cycle, learners were able to *apply* their new knowledge *appropriately* when they were required to write their own adaptation of the different genres studied in class. Through the semester, students wrote a formal letter to introduce themselves to a personality, a professor, or a potential donor; a detailed metaphorical description of the members of their family through one physical feature; a short story; and for the topic on family relations in the context of immigration, based on previous work with the *Better life* film review, students wrote their own review of a book or film of their choice. In addition, students made a formal oral presentation and developed expository and argumentative essays. The final project allowed for learners’ *creative application* of their new knowledge, as they were expected to create a hybrid project that consisted of a four-page essay accompanied by an art project. Detailed rubrics were also developed for each one of these assignments.

It is important to highlight that, throughout students’ completion of the activities in each knowledge process, the Sp35 teacher provided continuous oral or written scaffolding (Bruner 1983; Wood et al. 1976) that contributed information to expand on students’ interventions and gave alternative models to communicate the same idea. This scaffolding was part of the mechanism that enabled the process of “weaving different kinds of knowledge,” from descriptive to critical knowledge and with appropriate and creative applications (Cope and Kalantzis 2009), along with what is known in the field of education as “instructional conversations” (ICs) (Goldenberg 1991). During ICs, the teacher draws from students’ background and previous knowledge; encourages different ideas; builds on the information provided by students; and establishes a foundation for common understanding. As mentioned before, in Sp35,

the validation and recognition of each student’s own Spanish variety was also central to this process (Carreira 2000).

Results

In this section, we present some of the most significant results of the assessment completed to evaluate the effectiveness of the methodology used in Sp35. These are based on the work of the seven SHLLs enrolled in the class.

Oral Development

In order to investigate whether the Sp35 methodology had had an impact on students’ oral narrative skills, a related study was developed where recordings of a first narrative at the beginning of the semester were compared with a second one at the end of it. The results of the comparison suggest that the course methodology contributed to students’ language development in important ways. For example, all the students, with one exception, produced longer and more complex narratives, with an increase in coordinate and subordinate clauses. In addition, the narratives exhibited a broader range of discourse connectors and subordinating conjunctions to express not only different relations between clauses, but also the same relation in different ways. Also, in the second narrative, students used more elaborate openings, orientations, and endings that included the use of canonical phrases and greetings to acknowledge the supposed presence of an addressee, signaling awareness of the speaker–listener relationship, a fundamental first step toward the appropriate crafting and choice of the language to be used in any oral or written text.

Reading Progress

The online program LIHL appeared to have been of major help in boosting students’ reading skills. For example, at the beginning of the semester,

students' average reading speed was 137 words per minute, and at end the semester, this number had increased to approximately 343 words per minute. In addition, students' comprehension increased from 74% at the initial evaluation to 82% in the first lesson, and to a steady 84–87% for the rest of the semester. The measurement for efficient reading also experienced an increase from 2 to 4 (out of a possible maximum score of 5) from the initial evaluation to the end of the semester. These results show overall improvement in learners' reading performance. However, reading speed was the area that appears to have benefited the most. Figure 2.1 shows the integrated development that the group experienced throughout the semester.

The improvement was also evident when considering individual students. Figure 2.2 presents the reading profile of the student (S5) with the lowest reading score of the group at the beginning of the course. This student was extremely shy and insecure, doubted her Spanish skills, and her skills were at the lowest end: 129 words per minute with 50% comprehension and a composite score of "efficient reading" of 1. However, as Fig. 2.2 shows, she improved in an impressive way through the semester, reaching a maximum speed of 415 words per minute by the end of the semester, with 90% comprehension and a composite score of 5 for "efficient reading."

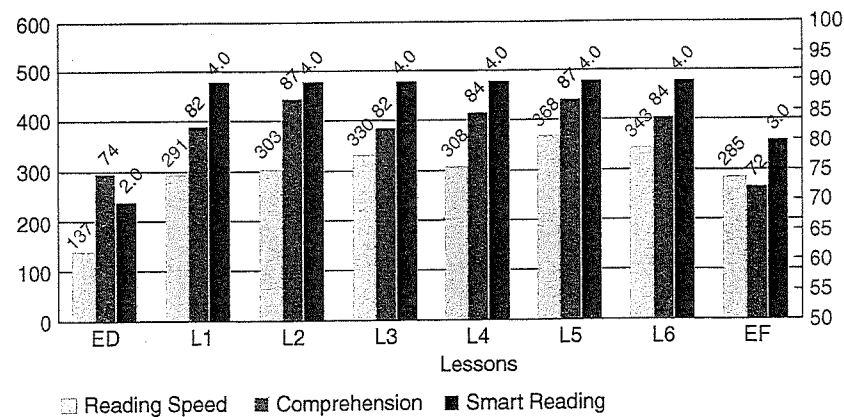


Fig. 2.1 Integrated group progress in speed, comprehension, and "smart reading"

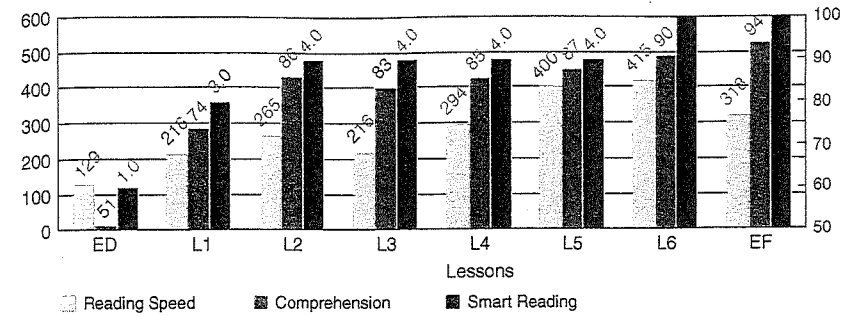


Fig. 2.2 Individual reading profile of student S5

cient reading." These results suggest that the LIHL reading and writing exercises, in combination with classwork, effectively addressed and strengthened the student's linguistically vulnerable areas.

Writing Skills

At the beginning of the semester, some of the vulnerable areas in the learners' writing included the omission of some articles; selection of prepositions; use of *ser/estar* and the passive *se*; preference for gerund in place of standard infinitive; use of some lexical combinations that could be considered marked; and problems with register and spelling. In addition, the products resulting from students' writing at the beginning of the semester lacked sophistication, and were characterized by the repetition of structures and ideas, and transfer from English. The following text, produced in one of the LIHL exercises at the beginning of the course, is a clear example of these characteristics (the problematic areas are italicized):

Creo que *es importante* excavar las ruinas para ver lo que las sociedades antiguas *dejaron para encontrar*. También *es importante* aprender de la sociedad del pasado. Sin embargo, también *es importante* notar que los artefactos pertenecen al país *que están siendo sacados*.

(I believe *it is important* to excavate the ruins to see what ancient societies left to be found. *It is also important* to learn from societies of the past. However, *it is also important* to note that the artifacts belong to the country that *are being taken away*.)

At the end of the semester, however, the same student was able to express more complete and sophisticated ideas in her final art project, devoid of some of the transfer and problem areas that had been observed at the beginning of the semester:

Como *representación* de todo lo que yo he recibido de la clase magnificente [sic] de Español 35, decidí construir un árbol. *Quiero empezar* con la razón *por cual* yo escogí un árbol. En este caso, *mi árbol simbólico* es específico a todo lo que yo he aprendido de mi misma como Latina y del español y la cultura Latina *en general*.

(As a representation of all what I have learned in the magnificent class Spanish 35, I decided to build a tree. I want to start with the reason why I chose a tree. In this case, my symbolic tree represents all of that I have learned about myself as Latina, about the Spanish language and Latino culture in general.)

Even in such a brief paragraph we can identify sophisticated vocabulary such as the words “representación” (representation), the phrase “árbol simbólico” (symbolic tree), discourse connectors like “en general,” and complex syntactic structures such as the relative pronoun “por [lo] cual.” It is important to note that this was the first time the teacher had noticed the student’s use of such a complex structure.

Final Self-Evaluation

At the end of the semester, the students in Sp35 completed a final self-evaluation that required them to (a) self-assess their oral and written skills applying the same categories they had resorted to in their initial course application (see question 4 in Appendix) and (b) provide comments on

Table 2.2 Comparison between students’ pre- and post-course self-assessment about their confidence with respect to their Spanish use (“How do I feel”)

Categories	Pre-self-assessment				Post-self-assessment			
	M	Mdn	SD	SE	M	Mdn	SD	SE
Communicating family/ friends	3.75	4	1.03	0.36	4.7	5	0.46	0.16
Making school presentations	2.75	2.50	0.88	0.31	4.37	4	0.51	0.18
Reading simple texts	3.5	3.5	0.92	0.32	5	5	0.00	0.00
Reading academic texts	2.25	2	0.70	0.25	4.25	4	0.70	0.25
Social writing	3.25	3	0.46	0.16	4.87	5	0.35	0.12
Academic writing	2.12	2	1.12	0.39	4.37	4	0.51	0.18

the three most important aspects about *their* Spanish that they had learned in the course. The changes between students’ pre- and post-class self-assessments in each of the categories on the “How I feel” scale are shown in Table 2.2. In addition, through a paired samples t-test, it was determined that some of the changes reported by the students with respect to their confidence using Spanish in different categories were statistically significant. For example, “Social writing” was the category with the highest statistical significance ($p = 0.0001$), which suggests that the class work in this area was effective in improving students’ self-perception when considering their writing skills. It also speaks to the central place that written communication in Spanish for social purposes had for this particular group of students. “Reading academic texts” was the next significant category ($p = 0.001$), suggesting the positive effects of students’ work with the in-class readings and those in the online program LIHL. Lastly, the variation in the scores between the students in each category decreased between the pre- and post-self-assessment as shown by the smaller SD numbers in the post-self-assessment scores. This suggests that, by the end of the semester, the group became more homogenous in their self-perception in a positive way.

When asked to name the three most important aspects they had learned about their Spanish, learners exhibited positive attitudes toward their learning and provided in-depth reflections about their relationship with

the Spanish language and the role it plays in their lives. Students noticed how much they had expanded their knowledge of the Spanish language, as well as their understanding of the fact that there is “no right way to speak Spanish.” A student reported a sense of liberation for not needing to “punish” herself anymore for not knowing a specific word in the language, an example of the pernicious messages that Latin@ students continuously internalize about their Spanish throughout their lives. Learners also reached new understandings around the linguistic and cultural meanings of the so-called Spanglish, not as a “bad thing” they did but as a phenomenon characteristic of languages and cultures coming into contact. They also acknowledged the profound meaning of the Spanish language in their sense of identity, and commented on a new sense of responsibility and commitment to speak more Spanish with their family members, reflecting a revived and affective relationship with their first language.

Final Art Project

The final art project and essay constituted a wonderful opportunity and space for students to express and apply creatively what they had learned in Sp35. The project enhanced the voicing of their reflections on the different topics discussed in class. Learners developed a variety of art projects (e.g., objects, drawings, masks, collages, paintings), and wrote about important themes in their essays, such as the complexity of Latin@ identities, the importance of staying connected with their Spanish roots, their motivation to use Spanish in professional settings, and their desire to speak it with family members and their future children. Below, we present four examples of these projects accompanied by vignettes of the respective students’ essays that show how their reflections were directly connected to key curricular themes such as: Spanish dialectal variety, the students’ sense of responsibility toward the maintenance of the language, the power of language in students’ lives, and the integration of hybrid identities.

Example 1: *Las torres castellanas de Babel* (The Castilian Towers of Babel): Spanish Language Richness

As mentioned in the second section of this work, one of the main topics of Sp35 was the linguistic richness and complexity of the Spanish

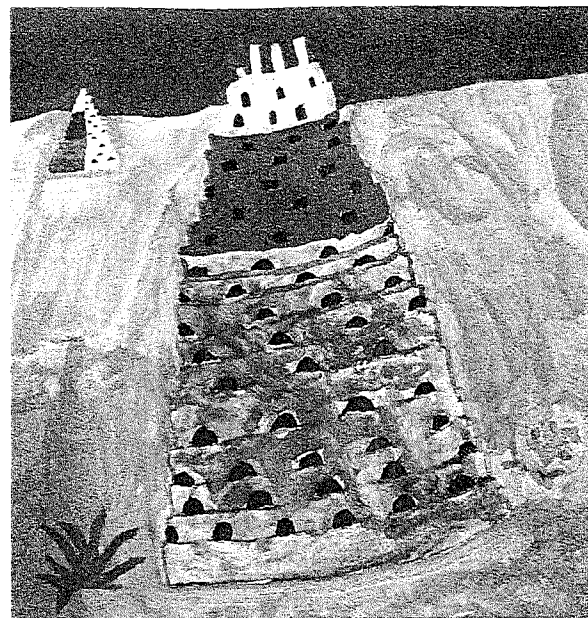


Fig. 2.3 *Las torres castellanas de Babel*

language within our societies. One of the students chose this theme for his final project, depicting in a painting several Babel towers, of different sizes and with levels of different colors—brown, silver, and golden (Fig. 2.3). The different colors represented the different social strata. The brown at the base, represented the lower social classes and their language, and at the bottom of our societies; the silver level represented the middle class, and the golden level, at the very top, the highest social class, with the most prestigious linguistic variety, and also with the highest degree of freedom to move along the different levels of the linguistic tower. The student wanted to highlight the importance of being aware of the power dimensions that are connected to each one of Spanish varieties and the groups that speak them.

The student essay, accompanying the art piece, provided more information about the origin of and rationale for his work: a clear new understanding of the richness of the Spanish language and its relationship with society:

Mi pintura fue inspirado [sic] por la diversidad del idioma de español. No sólo es el español diferente entre los países hispanohablantes sino también domésticamente. Esta idea está representada en mi pintura por las múltiples torres. El español no es una lengua estática. Cada región contribuye su propio matiz y ayuda crear un español diverso que representa todas las culturas hispanas.

(My painting was inspired by the diversity of the Spanish language. Spanish is not only different among the Spanish-speaking countries, but also domestically. This idea is represented in my painting by the various towers. Spanish is not a static tongue. Each region contributes with its own nuances and helps to create a Spanish that is diverse and that represents all the Hispanic cultures.)

Example 2: *El español* (The Spanish Language): A Sense of Responsibility

The student who developed the project in this example (Fig. 2.4) voiced his concern about the loss of Spanish among younger Latin@ generations, and reflected on his own role as a Spanish speaker in maintaining the language in the United States and the responsibility it entails. He illustrated this idea by drawing his hand holding a torch in the shape of

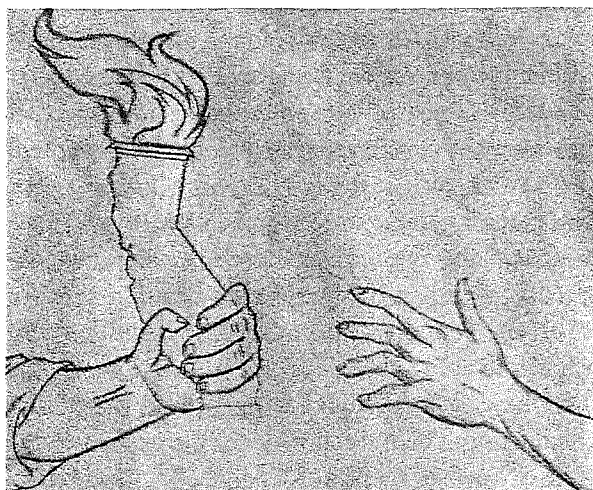


Fig. 2.4 *El español*

California, the state where he was born, with a big flame representing the Spanish language. The learner is actually depicted as passing the torch to another hand that is reaching out to his, and is ready to take it. For this student, the passing of his torch conveyed a sense of responsibility in the transmission and maintenance of the Spanish “fire.”

This idea was also expressed in his writing:

La idea de pasar una antorcha lleva consigo un sentido de responsabilidad para el portador de la llama, en la transición de ella, así como una responsabilidad de la participante de utilizar esa llama apropiadamente.

(The idea of passing a torch conveys a sense of responsibility for the one who is carrying the flame, in its transition towards [another person], as well as a responsibility of the participant to use the flame appropriately.)

The idea behind this student’s art and writing is the responsibility he feels to strengthen his Spanish as part of his personal and professional identities. For this student, Latin@s have to engage with, and commit to, meaningful and responsible uses of the language (i.e., beyond entertainment and mass media) as well as the need to pass the language on to others.

Example 3: *Tormentas* (Storms): Discovering the Power of Language

The focus of this example was the role of Spanish as a power and healing tool. The student in question represented this idea as a storm (Fig. 2.5). In her essay, she wrote about the many “storms” that she felt inside herself throughout the course: her insecurities as a Spanish speaker, her fear of being undocumented, and the sorrow and concern she felt when seeing her mother limited by a lack of English fluency.

Both her art and writing reflected the deep emotions she felt, and her new discoveries regarding the power of language and the power that comes with having access to that knowledge:

No entendía antes el poder de la lengua. No solamente es poderosa en términos de las palabras que produce y los efectos que tienen en los que las



Fig. 2.5 Tormentas

escuchan, si no el poder de acceso que viene con el poder entender varias lenguas.

(I didn't understand the power of language before. It is powerful in terms of not only the words it produces and the effects that it has on those who listen to them, but also the access that comes with the ability to understand many languages.)

She expanded this idea by stating,

Ahora entiendo que mis habilidades lingüísticas son poderosas, y por extensión, yo también lo soy...y lo más importante es que ahora puedo apreciar ambos a mis compañeros y las contribuciones que hacen al igual que a mi misma [sic].

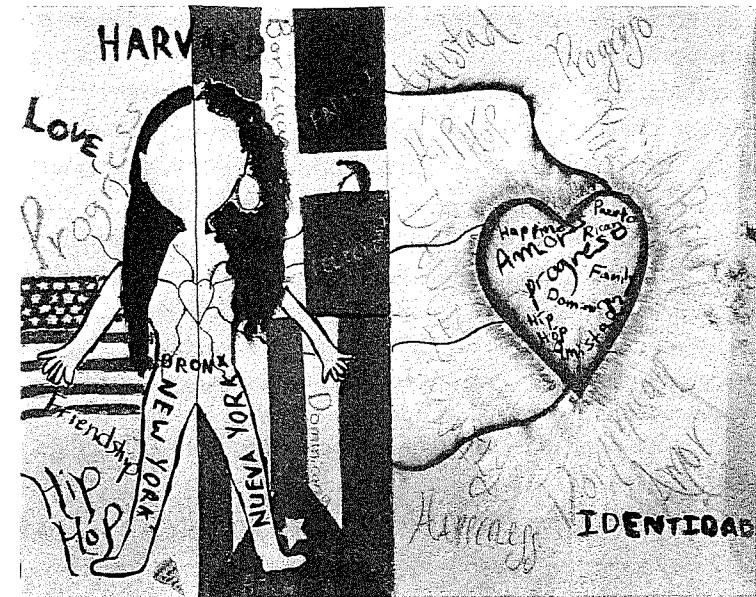


Fig. 2.6 El antes y el después: Una transformación en autopercepción

(Now I understand that my linguistic abilities are powerful and, by extension, I am too...and the most important thing is that now I can appreciate both my classmates and their contributions as well as mine.)

Without a doubt, this student ended the course with a renewed self-confidence in her abilities as a Spanish speaker, and an awareness of the "sanación," the healing process that she underwent through the possibility of sharing time and space with other Latin@ classmates, all united in their curiosity for the language and for their histories, cultures, and identities.

Example 4: *El antes y el después: Una transformación en autopercepción* (The Before and After: A Transformation in Self-Perception): Integrating Identities

This student's art piece (Fig. 2.6) depicted herself as a female figure divided in the middle. Each side represented one part of her mixed identity as American and Latina (as well as a mix of Dominican and Puerto Rican). On each side, the student drew specific objects and words that

were connected to each aspect of her identities. For example, on the left side, she drew herself with straight hair and she also included words like “hip hop” and “friendship.” On the right side, she made reference to her Caribbean identities, drawing curly hair and writing “boricua” and “bachata.” The key aspect of her visual representation was an empty heart, divided into two pieces.

In her essay, the student praised her Spanish class for the way in which it had helped her to find a connection between her two identities:

Spanish 35 desempeñó un papel importante en ayudarme reconciliar los dos aspectos de mi identidad que yo percibía como sumamente distintas. Cuando reflexiono sobre mi identidad hoy en día, ya no siento una necesidad de estar constantemente moviéndome entre dos versiones de mí misma... tengo un mejor entendimiento de la complejidad inherente en ser latina, hispanohablante y bicultural en los Estados Unidos.

(Spanish 35 played an important role in helping me reconcile the two aspects of my identity that I had perceived as extremely different. When I reflect on my identity today, I don't feel the need, anymore, to be constantly moving between the two versions of myself...I have a better understanding of the complexity inherent to be being a Latina, a Spanish speaker, and a bicultural [woman] in the United States.)

To represent the better understanding of herself that Sp35 had helped this student achieve, next to her original divided body and heart, she drew several lines coming out of both sides of the original figure and connecting with a new big heart. This heart was not divided and contained all the words that were floating around and outside the original human figure in both languages, Spanish and English.

Discussion

The work presented in this chapter illustrates the effectiveness and power of the *Learning by Design* pedagogy. Combined with other frameworks such as Freire's (2005) and Giroux's (1991) critical pedagogies, it provides

teachers with a productive framework to guide Latin@ students through an epistemological journey that expands their linguistic repertoire at the same time as it develops new and critical knowledge of important topics around language, culture, and history. It is also important to highlight that in the particular case of Sp35, the key aspect for the success of this pedagogical experience was the design of a creative and safe space that took into account students' interests, motivations and, more importantly, helped them voice their insecurities, contained them, and provided them with new tools for a better linguistic and cultural self-understanding. All the materials developed in class and in the LIHL program were designed with a main goal in mind: to bring out students' strengths. In this regard, the interdisciplinary team had a “disposition,” a cluster of “habits of the mind, heart, and hand” characteristic of what Parra (2014), following Schulman's term, has proposed as “signature pedagogy” (Schulman 2005) for heritage Spanish that enhanced the class dynamics at the academic and existential levels.

Students' reflections, illustrated in the vignettes and art pieces presented above, speak of the positive and nurturing impact our classes seemed to have had in their lives. This suggests that a positive learning experience in the classroom can motivate learners to cultivate their language usage and can indirectly impact students' families and communities where they become promoters of language use.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The work presented in this chapter related to students attending a very prestigious Ivy League college, who had two very important characteristics: (a) they were highly motivated to learn and (b) they had excellent academic skills. At several forums where this work has been presented, questions have been raised about the success of this methodology with larger groups and with students that are taking Spanish classes as a requirement, and thus may not be highly motivated and may lack good academic habits. Classrooms with high numbers of students with differ-

ent academic skills and degrees of motivation definitively pose an immense challenge for Spanish classes, as for classes on any other subject. However, it is our firm belief that, when working with any student, children, youth, or even adults, in urban schools, community colleges, or Ivy Leagues, a curriculum based on topics disconnected from learner's worlds and interests, grammar rules with no connection to social meaningful purposes, and a rigid set of pedagogical techniques within the "one model fits all" philosophy can only get us stuck in a classroom with unmotivated students and the discipline issues that come with it. Any Latin@ student has important stories to tell and share, and most of them can relate to experiences of discrimination and stigmatization because of their race and language. They also have powerful stories of resilience that can be models to others (Carreira and Beeman 2014). The question is how to design the classroom experiences where these stories can be brought up to light, how to incorporate students' "funds of knowledge" (González et al. 2005) as resources for the class, and how to relate them with linguistic and academic topics. One of the main principles of *Learning by Design* is, precisely, to engage with, motivate, and value individual students. Sp35 hopes to provide an initial model for this kind of work, and for the integration of this pedagogy to the teaching of SHL.

On the other hand, we are aware of the fact that freedom to design our own syllabus is not always available and teachers need to cover specific curricular expectations, and reviewing and grading assignments of a large group of students is almost impossible to do with the degree of detail done in Sp35 with seven students. In this regard, future research should involve work with larger groups in more challenging educational settings, where the *Learning by Design* model can be further tested, even if in one unit of a given course and in conjunction with models such as project-based learning. This should also be accompanied by teacher training sessions where *Learning by Design's* conceptual and practical tools are presented and incorporated into practice. Specific information about the limits and benefits of explicit instruction should also be available for teachers in broader educational settings. Partnerships between college and high school teachers could be a first step in exploring new ways to make available novel pedagogical frameworks to work with Latin@ students in larger groups.

Some Practical Recommendations

Given the results presented and the course evaluations for Sp35, the course head considered this experience successful. However, the design of Sp35 also came with some important challenges. Teachers aiming to start a heritage course need to put intensive and long hours of work to deal with the various components involved, from getting approval from the language program director, chair of the department, and dean to finding a suitable textbook and/or designing the materials. Getting enough students to enroll with the similar level of language proficiency might also be a major challenge. For this reason, the Sp35 course head decided to do the focus group months ahead, and she organized the course's website with the application form several weeks before with the hope to get a sense of what kind of students would enroll in it. Even though some students sent their applications in advance, this is not the most common case. Therefore, every semester, the course head needs to interview students and make sure they have the language proficiency needed to benefit from the class.

After the first offering, Sp35 changed. Without a doubt, embracing and being open to the results of formative assessment and students' feedback was a productive strategy for reorganizing and changing those components that did not work, and for including new ones on the basis of students' needs (Carreira 2012). For example, LIHL turned out to be too long to be covered in 14 weeks. A shorter version with only four lessons was therefore designed. Having six writing assignments with two versions for each was also a hard work load for students and teachers. The current version only works with five, giving students the option to choose between writing an expository essay or an argumentative one. Another change referred to the course number as a result of the renumbering of the whole Spanish language sequence: currently, it is Spanish 49h. The last change refers to schedule and enrollment. Specifically, because enrollments were going down (from seven to five and four), the course head decided to change the schedule and offer it two times a week, instead of four times a week. This change appealed to many students, and in the fall 2016 semester, 17 students enrolled in the class.

Conclusion

This chapter described the design and methodology of Sp35, an advanced Spanish course for Latin@ students at Harvard University. The positive results of Sp35 were tied to three very specific instructional aspects: (a) the incorporation of students' voices in its design; (b) the work of an interdisciplinary team to support students' overall development; and (c) the incorporation of two established theoretical and instructional frameworks, *Learning by Design* and critical pedagogy, which provided invaluable principles and tools, most of them aligned with current pedagogical proposals for working with SHLLs.

To answer the question of what constitutes "best pedagogical practices" for heritage students (Lynch 2014; Torres and Pascual y Cabo 2017), we have provided evidence that designing pedagogical activities with a broad range of materials and "weaving" them together through critical and engaging discussions effectively moves SHLLs through the four epistemic stages at the core of the *Learning by Design* pedagogy. This pedagogical approach has key benefits for SHLLs' linguistic growth and for building a strong sense of ethnolinguistic identity. It is also necessary for SHL teachers to promote a positive atmosphere in the classroom, and organize a rich language and cultural environment with a system of support, scaffolding, and instructional conversations. Through the guidelines offered by these practices, students will be able to acknowledge and value their own background, and benefit from new models and ways of conceptualizing their experiences. Furthermore, they can gain new perspectives and apply them in creative ways that can eventually improve their interactions with family members and their future professional and personal hopes.

As educators look to understand the contextual factors (Lacorte 2016) that affect the linguistic development of our students, and impact our teaching practices, it is imperative that we keep turning to interdisciplinary collaborations and comprehensive pedagogical resources such as the ones presented in the chapter to enrich our work and to open up innovative learning experiences for our students. More than ever, Latin@ heritage students need safe spaces and innovative learning methods within our educational institutions where their creative minds can flourish and grow amid the hardships that many of them endure in their personal lives.

Notes

1. Funding for this international and interdisciplinary collaborative research project was granted by the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Harvard University. The project started in May 2013 and ended in December of the same year, and it included three meetings: two in Mexico City and one in Cambridge, Mass. The overall objective of this collaborative project was to consolidate a Harvard University-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) team that would contribute to the development of resources for supporting Spanish literacy skills in Latino students through the design of the online reading program LIHL. Since its first implementation in 2013, students taking this course have had free access to the software LIHL thanks to the generous support of LI authors.
2. Some of the artists included in the course were José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Fernando Botero, Santa Barraza, Esther Hernandez, Alma Lopez, and George Yepes, among others.

Appendix

Solicitud para el curso

Por favor completa, lo más que puedas en español, el siguiente formulario y envíalo a (NOMBRE) (FECHA).

Nombre: _____

Correo electrónico: _____

Año que cursas: _____

Concentración: _____

¿De dónde es el español que sabes? (Escribe el país o estado)

1. ¿Has tomado los cursos de primer año de español en el Departamento de Romance Languages and Literatures? Sí No

¿Cuáles? _____

2. ¿Cuál es tu motivación para tomar este curso? ¿Qué esperas aprender en él?
3. **Biografía lingüística.** Describe tu historia con el español y el inglés: ¿Cómo los aprendiste? ¿Dónde y con quién hablas estos idiomas ahora? ¿Para qué usas el español y para qué usas el inglés? ¿Cómo te sientes hablando en español y cómo te sientes hablando en inglés? ¿Sabes otros idiomas?
4. **Autoevaluación.** Háblanos de tus habilidades para hablar, leer y escribir en español. Marca el número que mejor represente cómo te sientes tú:

Habilidad	1 Mal	2	3 Regular	4	5 Muy bien
Comunicarme con familia y amigos					
Hacer presentaciones en la escuela					
Leer textos sencillos (revistas, cuentos o novelas sencillas)					
Leer textos de literatura y académicos					
Escribir correos electrónicos y cartas a familiares y amigos					
Escribir ensayos académicos					

5. Escribe 3 cosas específicas o puntos gramaticales que quieras aprender en el curso (por ejemplo, reglas de acentuación, ortografía, los usos de pretérito/imperfecto, subjuntivo, otros)
6. ¿Qué temas te interesan más o son tus favoritos sobre la cultura de la comunidad Latina? (por ejemplo, la historia y la relación de Latinoamérica con Estados Unidos, las tradiciones, la comida, la música, los Latinos en los medios de comunicación, el bilingüismo, otros)
7. ¿Cuáles son tus intereses personales? (deportes, familia, comunidad, la historia, el medio ambiente...)
8. ¿Tienes alguna habilidad especial? (pintar, dibujar, escribir, fotografía)
9. ¿Cuáles son tus intereses profesionales?
10. ¿Qué papel crees que tendrá el español en tu vida futura? ¿Algo más que quieras compartir?

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3

The Role of Digital, Learning by Design Instructional Materials in the Development of Spanish Heritage Learners' Literacy Skills

Gabriela C. Zapata

Introduction

The Hispanic population in the United States constitutes the largest growing minority in the country (United States Census Bureau 2011), and the presence of Spanish heritage language learners (SHLLs) can be seen more and more in second language (L2) Spanish university classes across the country (Montrul 2010). Instructors in charge of these classes are often faced with two important challenges. The first one is the need to provide heritage students with instruction that can address their needs, which are often different from those of L2 students. The second one involves the often limited financial resources available to heritage students to defray their university education (Lukes 2015). In places such as Northern California, where much of the Hispanic population comes from rural, low-income communities, access to pedagogical resources becomes a key factor in student success, and limited

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