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Strategies used by secondary Spanish teachers in heritage language student classrooms

Tracie Korbitz Chandrasekaran
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**Strategies used by secondary Spanish teachers in
heritage language student classrooms**

by

Tracie Korbitz Chandrasekaran

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Education

Program of Study Committee:
Marcia Rosenbusch, Major Professor
Linda Quinn Allen
Leland L'Hote

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2008

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ABSTRACT

Heritage language speakers (HLS) in Iowa have increased annually in recent years due to the growing number of immigrants moving into the state. According to the *English Language Learners Report of 2001*, English language learners of Hispanic descent have increased by 636.3% between the school years of 1985-1986 and 2006-2007 (Iowa State Board of Education, 2007, p. 64).

Although some educators and members of the public might view HLS in public schools as problematic because of their need for English as a second language (ESL) classes, these unique learners can also be viewed as an asset. HLS possess knowledge of more than one language and culture, skills that monolingual students taking a world language work to attain.

The purpose of this study is to explore the strategies secondary Spanish teachers in Iowa currently use to teach the increasing number of HLS who enroll in their classes. This study also explores obstacles that the teachers face in their classrooms. Because there is little research that addresses HLS taking secondary Spanish classes in Iowa, there is a need for such a study.

Four Iowa secondary Spanish teachers teaching HLS in their classrooms were interviewed and observed and the data was analyzed with a basic interpretive qualitative approach. The results of this study indicate that secondary Spanish teachers in Iowa are using strategies recommended by research, but to a varying degree. However, more

research is needed on a larger scale to more fully understand the strategies that secondary Spanish teachers in Iowa are using when teaching HLS.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Heritage language speakers (HLS) in Iowa have increased annually in recent years due to the growing number of immigrants moving into the state. According to the *English Language Learners Report of 2001*, English language learners of Hispanic descent have increased 636.3% between the school years of 1985-1986 and 2006-2007 (Iowa State Board of Education, 2007, p. 64).

Although some educators and members of the public might view HLS in public schools as problematic because of their need for English as a second language (ESL) classes, these unique learners can also be viewed as an asset. HLS possess knowledge of more than one language and culture, a fact that monolingual students studying a world language work to attain.

Statement of the Problem

HLS are uniquely positioned to develop their bilingualism. To do so, HLS in Iowa enroll in Spanish classes. Herein lies a problem—most Iowa teachers are trained to teach Spanish as a foreign language to monolingual students and are not prepared to teach students who already know how to speak the language.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the strategies secondary Spanish teachers in Iowa currently use to teach the increasing number of HLS who enroll in their classes. Because there is little research that addresses HLS taking secondary Spanish classes in Iowa, there is a need for such a study. Learning how Iowa secondary Spanish teachers currently teach HLS and examining the obstacles they face would clarify: (a) what

strategies are being used, (b) whether those strategies are recommended by other research studies, and (c) whether new methodologies need to be shared with Iowa teachers to help them better address the challenge of helping HLS improve their understanding of and skill in using the Spanish language.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed in this study are:

1. What strategies do Iowa secondary Spanish teachers currently use in their classrooms in teaching Spanish to HLS?
2. What obstacles do Iowa secondary Spanish teachers face when they teach HLS in their classrooms?
3. Are the strategies that Iowa secondary Spanish teachers use in their classrooms the strategies that have been recommended by researchers in the field?

Design of the Study

Holloway (1997) summarizes qualitative research by stating, “Qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live” (p. 1). Holloway also states, “Researchers use qualitative approaches to explore the behaviour, perspectives and experiences of the people they study. The basis of qualitative research lies in the interpretive approach to social reality” (p. 1).

The research approach used in this study is basic interpretive qualitative research. Merriam (2002) states, “In conducting basic interpretive qualitative study, you seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives and worldviews of

the people involved” (p. 6). The data are collected through interviews, observations, or document analysis and are inductively analyzed. Patterns or themes are identified, the researcher writes about the data in a richly described narration, and then the findings are discussed (p. 5–6).

An important contribution of interpretive qualitative research is that the researcher can explore the perspectives of the participants and the issues with which they are dealing. Merriam (2002) states, “Finally, the product of a qualitative inquiry is *richly descriptive*. Words and pictures rather than numbers are used to convey what the researcher has learned about a phenomenon” (p. 5). After all, we are dealing with people and not just numbers.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout this study:

1. *Heritage Language Speakers (HLS)*: students enrolled in a Spanish class in a secondary public school who are from homes where Spanish is spoken. HLS have more experience with oral communication.
2. *English Language Learners (ELL)*: students in the United States whose native language is not English and who are learning English.
3. *Native English Speakers (NES)*: students in the United States whose native language is English.
4. *Native Spanish Speakers (NSS)*: students whose native language is Spanish. NSS have experience with both oral and written communication.
5. *TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)*: the profession of teaching English to students who speak other languages.

6. *Culture*: the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products—both tangible and intangible—of a society (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 47).
7. *Teaching Strategy*: “all of the activities and resources that a teacher plans in order to enable students to learn (Toohey, S, 2000, p. 152)” (Peytcheva, 2008).

Summary

The goal of this study is to find out what strategies Iowa secondary Spanish teachers are using in the classrooms in which HLS students participate. It is important to know what strategies Iowa secondary Spanish teachers are currently using in their HLS classrooms because if they are not using strategies that are recommended by the research, there need to be opportunities for teachers to learn about these strategies and encouragement for them to implement these strategies in their HLS classrooms.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of literature pertaining to HLS in the United States. The literature addresses: (a) goals of heritage language programs, (b) factors that affect language learning of HLS, (c) challenges in teaching HLS (d) the definition of teaching strategies, (e) teaching strategies used with HLS, and (f) recommendations for successful heritage language programs.

Goals of Heritage Language Programs

The literature suggests that teachers need to have defined goals for their classes in order to teach HLS. Several goals identified in the literature include: (a) language maintenance, (b) expansion of bilingual range, (c) providing a rigorous academic preparation, and (d) reinforcement of student's own cultural identity.

Language Maintenance

Valdés (1995) acknowledges that language maintenance is the primary goal of many Spanish programs for HLS, but she argues that the classroom experience alone is not enough for Spanish programs to achieve this. Along with Fishman (1991), she notes that it is difficult to maintain bilingualism across generations. Valdés suggests that teachers must answer the following questions in developing a theory of language maintenance:

1. What levels of linguistic development correlate with students' desire to maintain Spanish?
2. What kinds of interactions with other Spanish speakers in the school context promote an increased interest in continuing to participate in such interactions?

3. What kinds of readings promote an understanding of students' awareness of the efforts and a concomitant awareness of the efforts involved in maintaining languages?
4. Which classroom activities contribute to students' positive attitudes about themselves and their Spanish? (Valdés 1995, p. 311).

Valdés, Fishman, Chávez, and Pérez (2008) found in a survey of California schools that only 50.0% of schools with heritage language programs thought that students being able to “comprehend written materials on specialized business or professional topics” was important, and only 41.7% thought it was important that students “study other disciplines using Spanish” (p. 12). Valdés et al. also found that a very small number of schools (6.3%) thought it was important that students “participate in everyday face-to-face interactions using appropriate levels of Spanish,” and even fewer (4.2%) thought it was important that students “demonstrate familiarity with the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries” (p. 12). They write:

The results of the survey of secondary and post-secondary Spanish heritage-language programs in California offer a glimpse of current practices and pedagogies that need to be examined further and suggest that, at both the high school and college and university levels, there is a serious disconnect between what counts as success in the educational context and what those concerned about maintaining and developing heritage languages hypothesize is essential for the continued professional use of those languages in a real-world context. (p. 21)

Expansion of Bilingual Range

Because HLS come from varying backgrounds and varying countries, there are a great variety of Spanish dialects being spoken. This presents challenges in a classroom where these students are all placed together. For example, a student who was born in the U.S. and whose parents who were also born in the U.S. will have a different bilingual range than a student who was born in the U.S., but whose parents were born in Mexico or another Spanish-speaking country. As new generations of a family live in the U.S., they tend to speak more English at home and less of their native language. This is why some of the Spanish programs for HLS focus on expanding the bilingual range.

Valdés (1995, p. 314) includes a model demonstrating the bilingual range of students who either learned Spanish in a monolingual setting or in a bilingual setting:

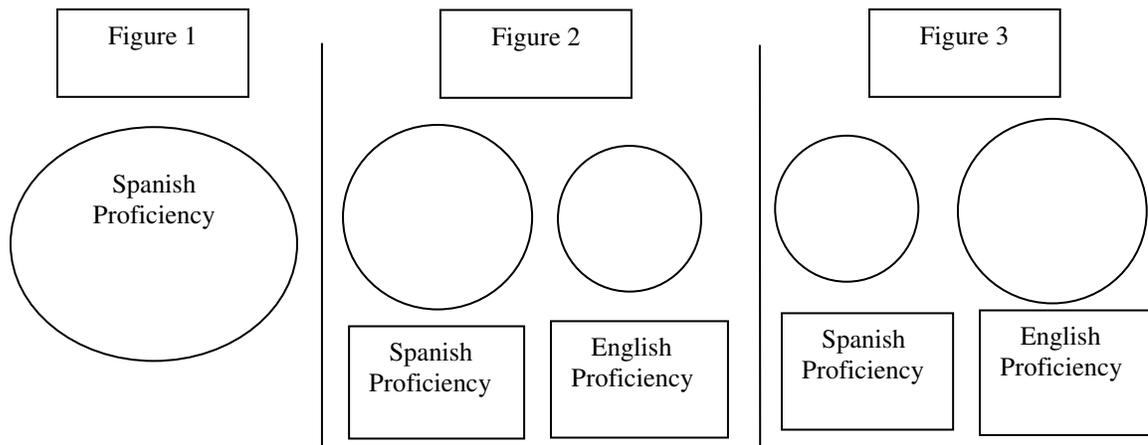


Figure 1 represents a student who acquired Spanish in an environment where only Spanish is spoken. This represents an NSS. In a Spanish classroom, an NSS would have

more skills than the average Spanish language learner. Therefore, these students could work on refining their writing skills just as NES do in their English classes.

Figures 2 and 3 represent speakers who acquired Spanish and English in a bilingual environment. The Spanish proficiency for the students represented in Figures 2 and 3 is not the same as for a student who learned Spanish in a monolingual setting. The difference between the students represented in Figures 2 and 3 is that the student in Figure 2 is Spanish dominant, and the student in Figure 3 is English dominant.

Whether an HLS is Spanish dominant or English dominant, he/she does not have the oral or written skills of an NSS. Because the bilingual range of HLS can vary, Spanish teachers are faced with the difficult task of teaching to many different levels. Valdés (1995) also points out that each person's bilingual range can change depending on the subject being discussed. For example, in Figure 2, the second circle could possibly become larger than the first circle if the person is more comfortable talking about sports in English. Likewise, the second circle could become even smaller if that person is used to only talking about cooking in Spanish.

Although the circles represent a bilingual person's levels, they don't specify which skills are being represented. For example, Figure 1 represents a monolingual Spanish speaker, but does not state whether or not that person can read and write as well as speak in Spanish. Likewise, Figures 2 and 3 may look significantly different if literacy skills were taken into consideration.

A number of researchers (Peyton, Lewelling, & Winke, 2007; Valdés, 1995; Valdés Fallis, 1978) argue that HLS need to be able to express themselves by using the appropriate vocabulary and grammar in both languages. These students often express

themselves partly in one language and partly in the other. Although they live in the U.S. and speak English, many students are from homes and communities where Spanish is spoken, and it would benefit HLS if they were given the tools to express themselves more fully in their heritage language.

The figures presented by Valdés (1995), therefore, show that there is a need for expanding the bilingual range of HLS. Programs that focus on this goal strive to make the students' Spanish proficiency more equal to that of a monolingual Spanish speaker.

Academic Preparation

Along with developing their skills in Spanish, another goal in studying Spanish for HLS is to provide a rigorous academic preparation. For example, Carreira (2007) states that HLS have limited access to content matter instruction that focuses on higher order thinking skills, which she says is necessary for academic success. By focusing on these skills, teachers are giving their HLS what they desperately need in order to succeed beyond high school.

Cultural Identity

Another important area on which HLS programs focus is reinforcing the development of their own cultural identity. Lacorte and Canabal (2003) and Carreira (2007) write about the importance of including the cultural aspect in HLS programs. For example, Lacorte and Canabal write, "Respect and interest in the language and cultural experiences that students bring to the classroom may have a positive effect on the overall levels of motivation and attitudes among participants" (p. 14). Cho (2000) found that people who had a "strong HL [heritage language] competency" had a more positive attitude toward their language and culture. For example, one participant talked about

having a strong emotional bond to her culture because she was able to watch movies and read books in her heritage language. (p. 338)

Students who are mainstreamed (or integrated) into U.S. culture will benefit greatly from programs that include culture identity as one of its goals. Students can be given a chance to reconnect with family members in ways that were not possible before. Carreira (2007) writes,

One place where Latino parents can assert their parental authority and serve as purveyors of cultural information for their children is in the SNS [Spanish for Native Speakers] classroom. Indeed, Latino parents are a crucial component of an SNS curriculum that aims to connect students to their home cultures and to invite reflection on issues of critical importance to Latino youth. (p. 159)

The study conducted by Cho (2000) supports Carreira's (2007) arguments because participants discussed their experiences with their heritage language when traveling to their native country to visit family. One participant talked about visiting Korea and not being able to talk with family members. They would ask her, "Why don't you learn to speak Korean?" (p. 341). Although researchers, such as Cho, have found that involving students' families and communities in the curriculum has a positive effect on their cultural identity, Valdés et al. (2008) found that only 39.6% of the high schools they surveyed reported using "projects involving ethnographic research in communities by students" (p. 13).

Lorenzen (2006) found that ignoring opportunities to involve the students' parents and home cultures does not go unnoticed. He gives an example of this by explaining that in one class the students were each assigned a specific country and asked to investigate

how Carnival is celebrated in that particular country. In an interview, one student talked about how he had videotaped footage of his family celebrating Carnival in Mexico and wanted to talk to the class about this, but he could not because the country that he was assigned was not his home country (p. 206).

Students' Views of Home Language

Having a negative view about the dialect being spoken can create a negative view about one's culture. Lacorte and Canabal (2003) write, "Some may resist enrolling in an academic course on their heritage language after having internalized that their language is defective and needs to be 'corrected' (p. 8). Durán-Cerda (2008) found this to be the case in a survey of heritage language students. She found that students did not feel that they could take a Spanish course for heritage learners because they only knew "bad" Spanish or slang (p. 45). Durán-Cerda found that after the students took the course they realized that the course was exactly what they needed to help them with their Spanish.

Cho (2000) found that the participants in her study wanted to be able to discuss more topics than they actually could. For example, one participant said that he would be fine if he had to order food or talk casually with friends, but he would not be able to engage in a conversation about education or politics because the native speakers would immediately know that he was limited in vocabulary. He says he would not be able to express himself (p. 339). Another participant in the study conducted by Cho (2000) said:

At home, when we have company, I feel left out because my communication skills are limited and I guess the people get fed up with me, too. After a while, they just ignore me since I can't speak Korean that well and they don't really speak English. (p. 340)

Durán-Cerda (2008) also found that HLS did not have confidence when speaking Spanish in an academic or formal setting. She proposes that programs focus more on language exercises to build confidence in the HLS.

Factors That Affect Language Learning

HLS have their own unique set of factors that affect how well they learn in their Spanish classes, and these factors need to be taken into account when a curriculum is developed. These factors include: (a) the different varieties of Spanish being spoken and the cultural connections students have, (b) how learners feel about their language, (c) the level of education of the students, and (d) having nonnative Spanish teachers.

Many Varieties of Spanish

HLS come into the classroom with very different backgrounds such as the number of years they have been in the U.S. and how many generations their families have lived in the U.S. These backgrounds produce a unique variety of Spanish and cultural connection for each student.

Hancock (2002) points out that some Latinos may feel self-conscious about their particular dialect because they might think that it is inferior to other dialects. She states, “The belief that some dialects of Spanish are inferior to a standard or widely accepted form of the language can manifest itself in the attitudes of the teacher, other students, and even the speakers of those dialects” (p. 2). This may affect how students participate in class and also how they learn.

The views of Lacorte and Canabal (2003) parallel those of Hancock. They state, “Some may resist enrolling in an academic course on their heritage language after having internalized that their language is defective and needs to be ‘corrected’” (p. 112).

Teachers need to keep this issue in mind when conducting their classes and make sure that they are not reinforcing this negative viewpoint.

Level of Education

Because HLS come to the classroom with varied backgrounds, they also come into the classroom with varied levels of Spanish. Some students know only basic Spanish words, while others have a broad range of skills in Spanish. Valdés (1995) writes, “Because of their characteristics, these students have language development needs that pose important challenges to teachers” (p. 307).

Another challenge is the fact that some HLS come to the classroom without literacy skills. There is not only a broad range of speaking abilities among HLS, but a vast range of reading abilities. Valdés (1978) notes that books written for NSS and HLS do not address the fact that some of them do not have literacy skills. She goes on to say, “...the lack of functional reading and writing skills in Spanish, is not only possible but unfortunately quite common for those students whose only exposure to Spanish is in a limited normative program” (p. 104).

The lack of literacy skills in some HLS can be a source of frustration or worry for the students themselves. Edstrom (2007) found that students felt that their teachers mistakenly believed that they could read and write as well as they spoke. One student reported that she felt like she was “in second grade” when she was asked to read in front of the class while another student reported that she didn’t feel like she was as good as a native speaker (p. 762).

Merino, Samaniego, Trueba, Vargas Castañeda, and Chaudry (1993) point out that the assessment of literacy skills of HLS has not had a sufficient amount of research

devoted to it. Not having a proper assessment of literacy makes it difficult for teachers to decide what is best for their students when it comes to reading and writing activities.

Zehr (2006) interviewed teachers of HLS and found that teaching to the different levels was the most challenging aspect of teaching the students. One teacher pointed out that part of his class could recognize the alphabet and form sentences in Arabic, while the other part could only understand a little dialogue (p. 5).

Nonnative Speakers as Teachers

One factor that is difficult to avoid is the fact that many Spanish teachers are nonnative speakers. Hancock (2002) writes that we should keep this in mind when trying to teach HLS. Hancock states, “If Latinos cannot relate emotionally to Anglo teachers (or Spanish speaking teachers from a different country or region than the one they associate with), their academic success may be affected” (p. 2). The survey conducted by Valdés et al. (2008) seems to support the idea that most Spanish teachers are nonnative speakers of Spanish. For example, only 28.7% of the high schools that reported having heritage language programs indicated that the teachers grew up and were educated in Spanish speaking countries, whereas 43.3% reported that the teachers grew up in the U.S. with Spanish at home (p. 18). The latter statistic does not specify the degree to which these teachers spoke Spanish at home.

Canessa (2006) argues that nonnative foreign language teachers have anxiety about teaching in a foreign language which “may impact their effectiveness as foreign language educators, and, ultimately, their learners' performance and achievement” (p. 4). Canessa upholds this theory in a study conducted which addresses this issue. She found that indeed nonnative foreign language teachers have anxiety about teaching in the

foreign language and that some of them “experience such detrimental feelings at considerably high levels” (p. 12). Canessa also found that there was a correlation between the number of years teaching and the level of anxiety, finding that the longer the teachers taught the language, the less anxiety they felt (p. 16).

Lorenzen (2006) conducted a qualitative study about the views of HLS in the Spanish classroom. She found that most of the students interviewed had a negative view about having a nonnative Spanish speaker. The students commented on and pointed out mistakes that their teachers were making in the classroom such as saying “un otro” (an another) instead of saying “otro” (another) (p. 203).

Difficulties of Teaching Heritage Language Learners

Researchers have identified several aspects that make it difficult to begin a program for heritage language learners. Certain factors must be considered and obstacles overcome in order to have a successful program. Problems that may occur for some programs are: (a) the small numbers of Spanish speaking students, (b) HLS being grouped in the same class with English speaking students taking Spanish as a foreign language, (c) identification and placement of students, (d) having nonqualified teachers, (e) the lack of appropriate curriculum, and (f) the lack of financial resources for more teachers.

Small Numbers

Winke (2002) and Hancock (2002) argue that a problem in many schools is that they do not have a large enough number of HLS to make a single class. This means that schools will put heritage language speakers and students taking Spanish as a foreign language in the same class. For example, in a survey of Spanish programs in Iowa,

Bratsch-Prince and Rosenbusch (2006) found that only 11.6% of the schools reported having classes designed specifically for HLS (p. 6). A study conducted by Boyd (2000) found that teachers felt that these students should be in separate classes. One teacher states:

It is a nightmare for two reasons. I have a class where I am teaching basic Spanish, teaching them to speak the language, basic grammar, writing, readings, and I have students who more often than not have just come from Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and they come fresh from their schools in those countries so they know how to read and write and speak, what are they doing in my class? (p. 17)

Another problem with grouping HLS in classes with students who are taking Spanish as a foreign language is that these classes focus on grammar. Lacorte and Canabal (2003) state:

These learners may often switch languages in the midst of a conversation; they are probably members of speech communities in which more than one language is typically used and in a classroom context, they often seem unable to understand grammatical explanations about their own heritage language. (p. 8)

Lacorte and Canabal (2003) also note the fact that NES feel intimidated by HLS, who, to them, sound like native speakers, which is another disadvantage of having HLS and NES in the same classroom. Edstrom (2007) found this to be true when she interviewed several students who were classified as NES.

One student described her situation as “extremely intimidating,” and another reported, “I wish there were more nonnative speakers in the program. That way so many people wouldn’t be afraid to speak” (762).

Edstrom (2007) found, however, that having NES and HLS in the same classroom can be beneficial for both groups. The NES participants in her study pointed out specific advantages: “. . .learning about cultural differences, exposure to fluent native speech, access to native models of pronunciation, opportunities to practice Spanish with native speakers, contact with many dialects . . .” (p. 764).

Identification/Assessment/Placement

Identification, assessment, and placement of HLS pose a problem for teachers as well. Those interviewed by Boyd (2000) stated that they have problems with guidance counselors not placing HLS in the appropriate classes. One teachers states, “The counselors don’t listen, what they can do is simply to be a little more concerned in giving these students what they need. Why should they be put in Spanish I and II because they know that already?” (p. 17). Participants in the same study also reported that assessment instrument appropriate for these students did not exist.

After surveying schools in California, Valdés et al. (2008) found that only 33.0% of the schools reported having a special placement test for HLS. Fifty-six percent of the schools that reported using a special placement exam reported that the students participated in an interview and wrote on personal topics, and 56.3% reported that they had the students identify/produce specific grammatical forms (p. 9). Valdés et al. also reported that 93.8% of the schools with heritage language programs had counselors or advisors placing students in classrooms designed for HLS, and 70% of the schools also

had students placed in Spanish classrooms at the recommendation of other teachers in the school.

Lack of Appropriate Curriculum

Boyd (2000) found that teachers reported that there was no curriculum appropriate for the needs of HLS. In the *Heritage Language Research Priorities Conference Report* from the University of California (2000), the UCLA Steering Committee reported:

At the heart of the area of heritage language education is the question of how best to encourage and provide effective and efficient language learning.

Accommodating the needs of heritage speakers, which are clearly different from those of foreign language students, will require changes in secondary and post-secondary language programs. As no methodology currently exists to provide heritage language students with suitable instruction, a number of research questions were suggested in this area. (p. 4)

Valdés (2005) states that materials for teaching HLS have “increased enormously” (p. 413). Valdés makes several suggestions such as the *Professional Development Series Handbooks for Teachers K-16 with Volume I: Spanish for Native Speakers*, AATSP (2000) and *Recursos para la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje de las Culturas Hispanas* (<http://www.nflc.org/REACH/>).

Teacher Qualification

A problem mentioned by many researchers is the fact that some teachers are not qualified to teach HLS. Boyd (2000), Valdés-Fallis (1978), Brecht and Ingold (2002), Valdés (1995), and Zehr (2003) all argue that this problem needs to be addressed. Boyd

states, “Teachers are traditionally prepared to teach Spanish as a foreign language to monolingual English proficient students, therefore, the number of qualified teachers to work in heritage language programs is scarce” (p. 4). Valdés-Fallis (1978) bluntly states, ...the Spanish-teaching profession is not prepared to respond to these needs [of HLS] as quickly as circumstances warrant. Spanish has been taught in this country primarily as a foreign language. It is clear, nevertheless, that the priorities, needs, and methodologies for foreign language teaching are quite different from those of native-language instruction. (p. 102)

The Heritage Language Research Priorities Conference Report (2000) calls for teacher training in teaching heritage languages. It is true that world language methodologies in colleges and universities focus on teaching Spanish and other languages to students learning it as a foreign language.

Valdés et al. (2007) found that 77.0% of the lead Spanish teachers of HLS surveyed in California were prepared by learning “on the job by teaching heritage learners,” while only 33.0% of these teachers “took special courses on teaching heritage students as part of a teaching certificate program” (p. 20). After interviewing teachers of HLS programs in California high schools, Valdés, Fishman, Chávez, and Pérez (2006) found that none of the 15 teachers had received any training in teaching HLS.

This lack of teacher training is not limited to California. For example, Bratsch Prince and Rosenbusch (2006) surveyed Iowa teachers who have HLS in the classroom and found that only 7.5% had received specialized training in teaching HLS and that 94.1% would actually like to have that training available to them (p. 12).

Definition of Teaching Strategy

Before discussing the teaching strategies that have been recommended by researchers, it is important to fully understand what a teaching strategy is. In Chapter I, a teaching strategy is defined as “all of the activities and resources that a teacher plans in order to enable students to learn (Toohey, S, 2000, p. 152)” (Peytcheva, 2008). This means what the teacher decides to use and the activities the students complete are strategies. There are many teaching strategies to use, such as brainstorming, where the students contribute ideas and lecture, where the teacher talks and explains an idea while the students take notes (Teaching Methods/Strategies, 2001).

Donnelly and Fitzmaurice (2005) offer these points for teachers deciding what strategies to use:

- a) Who are your learners?
- b) What kinds of learning are you trying to achieve?
- c) How are you going to deliver the content?
- d) What learning activities can be organized to meet the learning outcome?
- e) What resources are available to you?
- f) Does your teaching strategy support the learner to meet the desired outcome?

(p. 105)

The last point by Donnelly and Fitzmaurice (2005) was also mentioned by Peytcheva (2008). She writes that it is important to find out the way students learn when choosing a teaching strategy because a certain strategy will not work with every group in every situation. Peytcheva states,

The researchers in this area usually make a point that the strategy that works successfully in a particular group of students, on a particular assignment for particular knowledge and skills acquisition in a particular context, is not necessarily as effective in another context, with another group of students, on another assignment fulfillment.

This is where research plays its important role in education. The researchers in the following section have identified what strategies have been identified by research to work best with HLS.

Teaching Strategies

Researchers have identified and recommended strategies or approaches for teachers working with HLS, which will be discussed in this section: (a) the use of thematic units, (b) creating cultural appeal, (c) collaborative learning, (d) working with dialects, and (e) teaching Spanish in the same manner that English is taught to English speaking students. Because they play an important part in teaching Spanish, the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning will also be discussed.

Thematic Units

Kagan and Dillon (2001), Peyton, Ranard, and McGinnis (2001), and Merino and Samaniego (1993) suggest the use of thematic units and content-based instruction as a means for instruction for HLS; to allow students to see a real-world use for the knowledge they are acquiring. Merino and Samaniego suggest that teachers have students fill out job applications and read advertisements. Kagan and Dillon suggests that a heritage language curriculum needs to be made up of three parts: (a) grammar and

vocabulary, (b) interpretive and presentational modes of communication, and (c) literature and history.

Cultural Appeal

Montero-Sieburth and Batt (as cited in Carreira, 2007) report that immigrant students who stay closely connected to their home culture will more likely be successful than students who do not (p. 159). Carreira (2007) states, “Thus, what happens in the SNS [Spanish for Native Speakers] classroom in terms of connecting students to the traditions of their home culture has a direct bearing on the overall well-being of Latino students” (p. 160). Carreira goes on to say that teachers should use activities where students and parents interview each other or write letters to each other explaining their views on cultural issues (i.e., dating, customs, religion, etc.).

Hancock (2002), Lacorte and Canabal (2003), and Rodriguez Pino (1997) suggest that teachers use lessons that have cultural appeal to the students. Rodriguez Pino and Lacorte and Canabal recommend teachers have students interview community members on a variety of topics. Dernerseian (1993) writes about the importance of including Chicano literature in the classroom, and Merino and Samaniego (1993) suggest that teachers use Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Cuban American literature in their lessons.

Ellison (2006) found that teachers with successful programs (as rated by superiors and peers in the field) understand their students’ cultures and make efforts to be involved in their lives. One teacher listed things that he does to be involved with his students: “Attend important events for them and advise/coach. Refer to personal experiences to enable them to make connections during learning activities. I’m very perceptive and pick up cues from their behavior also” (p. 136). Another teacher wrote, “I tell them I’m nosy

and that I will get into their business whether they like it or not. I call home periodically to let them know I'm concerned and I care" (p. 136).

When interviewing students involved in an oral portfolio that included an interview with their parents, Durán-Cerda (2008) found this strategy to be very meaningful to students. One student wrote that this assignment was very interesting and that she learned things about her family that she did not know before. She learned how hard her father worked when he came to the U.S. She also added that she understands why her parents want her to succeed and go to the university to have a good career (p. 48).

Collaborative Learning

Using collaborative learning in the classroom is a strategy that researchers have found to be successful. Carreira (2007) suggests having students discuss a topic in small groups. One example she gave was to have students study vocabulary pertaining to geometry and then discuss a geometry problem in small groups in class the next day (p. 155).

Gorman (1993) suggests teachers use the "four corners" method, where teachers send groups of students to different corners of the room to complete an activity. Gorman gives examples such as students going to a certain corner of the room according to the season when their birthday occurs (p. 145). Collaborative learning allows students who are more proficient to help students who need a little more work.

Work with Dialects

Hancock (2002), Martinez (2003), and Merino and Samaniego (1993) suggest that the various dialects not be ignored, but be included in the curriculum. Hancock writes,

“Highlight vocabulary choices and grammatical structures for different contexts and purposes rather than prescribing specific rules for all occasions” (p. 2). Martinez suggests teachers create an activity on euphemisms, having students record every instance of two words that can mean the same thing. Students are to record who said what word and what the situation was. Martinez writes, “This activity will give the teacher a golden opportunity to explain the functional differentiation of languages in society and the results of violating those well defined functional differences (p. 9).

Spanish for Native Speakers

Another strategy mentioned by Carreira (2007), D’Ambruoso (1993), Merino and Samaniego (1993), Valdés (1995), and Valdés Fallis (1978) is to design the curriculum for HLS the same way that English is taught to native English speakers. Valdés suggests that written composition, documented essays, and reading literature be a part of the curriculum.

Fairclough and Mrak (2003) interviewed three groups of native Spanish speakers: (a) those without formal Spanish instruction, (b) those with one year or less of formal Spanish instruction, and (c) those with more than one year of formal Spanish instruction. Fairclough and Mrak found that there was a minimal difference in oral errors made among the three different groups, leading them to conclude that Spanish programs need to focus more on communication and expanding the vocabulary of the students, rather than working on grammar.

Valdés Fallis (1978) advises teachers to expose HLS to traditional grammar terminology and suggests that students work with spelling, the use of the written accent, and with areas of confusion such as the letters j/g and b/v. D’Ambruoso (1993) outlines a

Spanish program that has goals similar to those for Spanish as a foreign language, but in which the goals are approached in reverse order. For example, the program emphasizes reading and writing first and then listening and speaking. This is because many HLS already have skills in listening and speaking and need help with their reading and writing.

McQuillan (1996) conducted a study that involved the use of free voluntary reading in the HL classroom. In this study, students enrolled in a course were allowed to choose what they read, were given assigned readings (i.e., children's literature, newspaper articles, magazine articles, etc.), and were involved in literature circles with their classmates. McQuillan found that the participants made significant gains in vocabulary and that 90% of the participants continued reading for pleasure after the course was finished.

Valdés et al. (2006) interviewed teachers of heritage language programs in California and found that programs that included extensive reading were very successful. They concluded:

In observing the eagerness with which students in this program borrowed books from the teacher's library, and in examining the extended book reports produced by such students, we conclude that a broader implementation and study of extensive reading as a means of providing heritage students with a quantity of rich language input in both colloquial and academic registers and styles deserves increased attention. (p. 179)

Standards for Foreign Language Teaching

In 1996 the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* was first published to define what students should know and be able to do. The standards are

focused on five goals known as the Five C's of foreign language learning: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. These standards were not intended to be stand-alone concepts, but rather are "interconnected" (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 27). The standards, "which describe the 'what' (content) of world languages learning and form the core of standards-based instruction in the world languages classroom" (Global Teaching Learning, 2007), were not developed only for English-dominant students studying a foreign language. They also apply to students who are HLS. In explaining the Five C's, it is noted that students who are more familiar with the language, hence HLS, may already know the information or may need to focus more on that particular standard: "... students with exposure to the language through home life may be quite advanced in their understanding of the spoken language and less advanced in terms of their ability to read" (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 43).

Communication

"In order to communicate successfully in another language, students must develop facility with the language, familiarity with the cultures that use these languages, and an awareness of how language and culture interact in societies" (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 39). The standards emphasize that learning a foreign language is more than just learning grammar and memorizing vocabulary, and the example of many adults who say they took a foreign language in high school but are unable to communicate with the language is included. The standards further clarify "The study of the language system itself, while useful for some students, does not automatically result in the development of the ability to process language in real

situations and in the ability to respond meaningfully in appropriate ways” (p. 40).

Therefore, the Communication goal is divided into three parts:

Standard 1.1 Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

Example: “Students use Spanish to exchange and support their opinions and individual perspectives with peers and/or other Spanish-speakers on a variety of topics dealing with contemporary and historical issues” (Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 441).

Standard 1.2 Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

Example: “Students demonstrate an understanding of the principal elements of non-fiction articles such as those found in newspapers, magazines, and e-mail, on topics of current and historical importance to Spanish speakers” (Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 442).

Standard 1.3 Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Example: Students tell or retell a story to the class and the class comprehends the story (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 42–45).

Cultures

The standards define culture as, “the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products—both tangible and intangible—of a society” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 47). The standards clarify that culture is not shared by people just because they speak the same language, for example, people living in Spain and people living in Latin America who speak Spanish, share some aspects of their cultures, but also have different aspects to their cultures. The Cultures goal is represented by two standards:

Standard 2.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.

Example: “Students identify, analyze, and discuss various Hispanic patterns of behavior or interaction related to cultural perspectives that are typical of the diversity in Hispanic cultures such as weddings, funerals, personal, personal events, independence day observances, and national and ceremonial events” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 446)

Standard 2.2 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.

Example: “Students identify, analyze, and evaluate themes, ideas, and perspectives related to the products being studied, such as Mexico’s literature and murals of social protest, national symbols and emblems (the eagle and the serpent), and for modern times, the

Mexico City subway system” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 448).

Connections

The goal of Connections refers to connecting the foreign language experience with other disciplines in the school curriculum (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 53). “The conscious effort to connect the foreign language curriculum with other parts of students’ academic lives opens doors to information and experiences which enrich the students’ entire school and life experience” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 53). The Connections goal is represented by two standards:

Standard 3.1 Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Example: “Students discuss topics from other school subjects in Spanish, including political and historical concepts, worldwide social issues, environmental issues, and current events. Examples: global warming and conservation of resources” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 450)

Standard 3.2 Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

Example: “Students use Spanish to access viewpoints on issues available only through Spanish print and non-print media and compare them to print and non-print media coverage of the same

topics written in the United States for an English-speaking audience (e.g., newspaper accounts of an election or of the effects of El Nino in Peru vs. the United States; the media treatment of el Día de la Raza vs. Columbus Day)” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 450-451).

Comparisons

The goal of Comparisons focuses on comparing the target language with the student’s native language and comparing the two cultures. The standards state:

Through the study of a new language system and the way such a system expresses meaning in culturally appropriate ways, students gain insights into the nature of language, linguistic, and grammatical concepts, and the communicative functions of language in society, as well as the complexity of the interaction between language and culture. (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, p. 57)

The Comparisons goal is represented by two standards:

Standard 4.1 Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.
Example: “Students compare the writing systems of English and Spanish. They also examine other writing systems and report about the nature of those writing systems (logographic, syllabic, alphabetic)” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 453).

Standard 4.2 Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Example: “Students analyze crosscultural misunderstanding to discover their bases and suggest remedies (e.g., stereotypes; concept of family; standards of entertainment; standards of dress; concept of friendship; importance of individual rights vs. the interests of the group)” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 454-455).

Communities

The goal of Communities encourages students to use the skills they learn in the foreign language classroom outside of that classroom (i.e., school, the community, in their future job, etc.). The standards state, “They [students] find that their ability to communicate in other languages better prepares them for school and home and abroad, and allows them to pursue their own interests for personal benefit” (p. 63). The Communities goal is represented by two standards:

Standard 5.1 Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

Example: “Students participate in a school-to-work project, such as volunteering at a senior citizen center, that requires proficiency in Spanish and/or an emerging understanding of the Spanish-speaking community” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 456).

Standard 5.2 Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Example: “Students continue to learn more about personal interests by consulting various Spanish references, such as Spanish websites on the Internet, periódicos y revistas [newspapers and magazines], and Spanish-Spanish dictionaries” (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 457).

Since the standards were developed for teachers to use as guidelines in developing curriculum and strategies in the Spanish classroom, the standards can be used as guidelines when curriculum is being developed for HLS as well.

What is Needed for Teaching Heritage Language Learners?

More Research

Brecht and Ingold (2002) have called for more research in the areas of heritage language development, best practices in the design of programs, teaching strategies, assessment, and public policies. The Heritage Language Research Priorities Conference Report (2000) called for more research in areas pertaining to HLS such as the family, the community, a language-specific focus, policies, programs, and assessment (p. 5). Valdés (1995) calls for teachers of languages and linguists to become researchers as well. She writes:

They must begin to see themselves not exclusively as teachers of Spanish, or Chinese, or Ukrainian, but as professionals who can contribute significantly to both practice and theory in an area in which important questions about language

development, language retrieval, and language maintenance can be asked and answered. (p. 321)

Summary

In this chapter research pertaining to teaching HLS was discussed. There are many factors that affect HLS programs in the U.S. which need to be taken into consideration in order to make educating this unique group effective. After reviewing the literature, it is even more evident that there is little research that has been carried out and none that has been published on the state of HLS teaching in Iowa.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The method for this study is qualitative. Using a qualitative approach allows the researcher to see and hear firsthand what strategies Iowa Spanish teachers at the secondary level are using in teaching HLS in their classrooms. According to Key (1997) Qualitative research is:

A generic term for investigative methodologies described as ethnographic, naturalistic, anthropological, field, or participant observer research. It emphasizes the importance of looking at variables in the natural setting in which they are found. Interaction between variables is important. Detailed data is gathered through open ended questions that provide direct quotations. The interviewer is an integral part of the investigation (Jacob, 1988). This differs from quantitative research which attempts to gather data by objective methods to provide information about relations, comparisons, and predictions and attempts to remove the investigator from the investigation (Smith, 1983).

Participants

The only criterion I used in identifying my participants was that the Iowa Spanish teachers at the secondary level have heritage language speakers in their classrooms. One of my participants is a native Spanish speaker, one is a native Portuguese speaker, and two are native English speakers. Although I did not plan to have participants of varied backgrounds, it gave me the opportunity to explore whether there were differences between how secondary school native Spanish and Portuguese speakers and native English speakers teach HLS.

Participants in a previous study were contacted by the researchers for permission to provide their contact information to me for possible participation in this study. I sent an e-mail to the teachers who had given their permission and who had indicated on the previous survey that they had heritage language students in their classrooms. Two teachers from this list (Elena and Susan) replied to my e-mail and indicated that they would be willing to participate in my study. The names of the participants in this study have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

I met my third participant (Julie) through the help of a friend. I asked my friend to identify Spanish teachers at the school where he is a band director, and he responded by sending me the names and e-mail addresses of the two Spanish teachers. Only one of the teachers agreed to participate in my study. My fourth participant (Silvia) teaches at a school that has a large Hispanic population. I found her name on her school's website by searching for Spanish teachers in the district. When I contacted her, she agreed to be a participant in my study.

Data Collection

I used the methods of interview and observation to collect data for my study. During my observations, I took notes on what I saw and what I was thinking while observing the participants. In all of my observation sessions, I was able to sit at the back of the classroom and take hand-written notes. The students paid no attention to me and did not seem to notice that I was in their classroom.

In Susan's class, I was loaned a textbook from which the students were working; in Julie's class I received a handout that was also given to the students. The handout was a rubric (expectations) for a project that the students were assigned. This made it easier

for me to follow the activities in which students participated during the class. The total amount of observation time was nine hours over the course of four days.

I conducted the initial interviews—no longer than half an hour each—by phone and recorded data by taking hand-written notes and using an audio tape recorder. I put my cell phone on speakerphone and placed it by the tape recorder so I could record the conversations. One interview (Silvia) was initially conducted entirely by e-mail at her request. During the site visit, however, I was able to talk with her in person. After transcribing the interviews, I had more questions and conducted follow-up interviews via e-mail with all of the participants.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, I employed the coding method and thematic analysis described by Glesne (2006). Glesne summarizes the process of coding in stating, “Coding is a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of collected data (i.e., observations notes, interview transcripts, memos, documents, and notes from relevant literature) that are applicable to your research purpose” (p. 152). Through reading my transcripts and observation notes and coding my data, I searched for patterns and emerging themes. I went back to the data multiple times and found examples to back up my themes. I then compared the interviews of all of the participants and discovered both similarities and differences among them.

Design

As Glesne (2006) states, “The use of multiple data-collection methods contributes to the trustworthiness of the data” (p. 36). To ensure validity in my study, I wanted to conduct both interviews and observations, which is the use of triangulation. According to

Key (1997) triangulation involves the convergence of data from multiple data collection sources. Although the word “triangulation” implies using three research strategies, Esterberg (2002) defines triangulation as using two or more research strategies (p. 37). The observations were a way for me to see firsthand what the teachers may or may not be telling me. If what they were saying is true, then I should be able to witness this in my observations of their classrooms. To ensure reliability, I have explained my methods and data collection to make it possible for others to enhance the findings from my study by conducting a new study addressing similar questions (transferability).

Limitations of the Study

The goal of this study was to find out what strategies Iowa secondary level Spanish teachers are using in their classrooms for HLS. One of the limitations of this study is the small sample of participants. Since there are only four participants, the study does not represent all Iowa secondary level Spanish teachers, but it does provide an insight on what is occurring in the classrooms studied.

Another limitation of this study is that it only explores the perspective of the secondary Spanish teachers. It may be important in the future to explore the perspectives of the students, families, teachers at other levels of instruction, and administrators, which would require a much larger study. This study also included only nine hours of observation, which may not be enough to gather sufficient evidence of teaching strategies.

Finally, because this is a qualitative study and I am the sole data collector and analyst, it is possible that the study cannot be completely reproduced due to the fact that two people can look at the same data and yet find different themes.

CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

Susan

Profile

Susan has been teaching Spanish for 40 years and she is currently teaching at a suburban public high school with approximately 1,200 students (Iowa Department of Education, 2007). She majored in Spanish and received her bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and her master's degree in Spanish from Drake University in Des Moines.

Susan has a carefree, laidback personality that was evident in the phone interview and during my classroom observation, in which I saw her personality come alive. She has a great rapport with the students and is able to joke with them while still conducting class. For example, at the beginning of class, the students were writing the answers to their assignment (verbs they selected to conjugate) on the board. Susan pointed out that this assignment was more like real life, because "It's not like little pieces of paper fall from heaven with verbs on them."

Program Profile

Susan teaches Spanish classes consisting of a combination of native English speakers (NES) and native Spanish speakers, referred to in this study as heritage language speakers (HLS). She has a total of 13 HLS in her classes who are placed with the advanced placement NES students and she has a total of 37 NES in her classes (See Appendix C).

The class for the HLS is called "Spanish for Hispanics", and the students are placed in the classes according to their grades in school. For example, the freshmen are

placed in the advanced placement Spanish classes, but their class is called Spanish for Hispanics I on their schedule and report cards. Similarly, the sophomores are placed in advanced placement Spanish classes, but their class is called Spanish for Hispanics II on their schedules and report cards. The only criteria used by the school counselors for the students who are placed in Spanish for Hispanics are that they have a Latino last name.

When asked why she does not have her HLS in separate classrooms from her NES, Susan replied that she used to have them that way, but that this year there were not enough students and teachers for that arrangement. She said that she wishes that she could have separate classes, and that she probably will again soon.

Even though her NES and HLS are currently in the same classroom, Susan has them work on different assignments. For example, when I observed her class, the students were beginning a project involving the Aztecs, Mayan, and Incas. The assignment for the NES was to create a Power Point presentation by researching and reporting on a topic (food, clothing, etc.) that was assigned by groups. The assignment for the HLS was to research and make a presentation on the current culture of each of the groups.

Susan incorporates an abundance of culture in her classroom. Many souvenirs from countries that she and/or her students have visited are displayed, including large sombreros on top of cupboards that line one of the walls and a decorated papier-mâché skull displayed on a shelf.

In the interview Susan mentioned what she does to include culture in her class:

I do a lot with culture in my classrooms. I talk about Hispanic attitudes toward family, toward death, you know, things like that. And during that time, those kids learn, too, because I compare and contrast. They learn kind of about American

attitudes, and they participate by answering questions, and occasionally they make little presentations like about their family or something like that to kind of tie in.

Susan also talked about what she does when she has the students read in class.

She said, “I also give them things to read. Like, I buy high interest books for them from Mexico or whatever country they’re from, and let them read those, rather than having them do the regular textbook and literature stuff.”

Susan indicated that she does not teach a lot of grammar with her HLS because she says that she knows that this is not what her students need. In the interview Susan stated:

I never give them regular grammar assignments the same as the other kids because if I did, they couldn’t do it. You know, that’s not what . . . that makes no sense to them, and I think that’s a mistake a lot of schools make. [To teach grammar to HLS].

Establishes a sense of respect

In her interview, Susan talked about the mutual respect that she and her students share. As I observed her class, I could tell that the students respected her by the way that they interacted with her and with each other. Students came into the classroom, sat down, got out their assignments, and were prepared for class. They did not interrupt her or talk excessively. There was learning going on in the classroom, and Susan did not have to spend time disciplining the students.

I asked Susan if she had any problems because she is not a native speaker. She answered that it is not a problem, and that she deals with the issue by talking about it directly with the students. When I asked if she felt self-conscious about speaking Spanish

in front of her students she stated, “The key to working with these students is to establish a relationship of respect with them so that they respect you for what you know, and you respect them for what they know.”

I also asked her directly if she thought that the fact that she was not a native speaker affected the way her students learned and she answered:

I totally respect my students, and I expect them to respect me. When I don't know something I tell them, but when I do know they have to believe me. Not being a native speaker does not really come into play once they go home once or twice and see that I am right. Many times the issue is one of regional vocabulary. I just tell them, that is how they say it in Cuba, but not in Mexico, etc. With new students I tell them there are things they will always be able to do better than I can, and some ways I can help them. I try to ask them “¿Cómo se dice...?” (How do you say...?) when they are new so they know I respect them.

Susan clearly does not think that being a native English speaker affects her teaching or her students' learning in any way. She believes that a mutual respect is the answer to any problems in this area.

Julie

Profile

Julie teaches at a school with 580 students in a town of about 7,600 people (Iowa Department of Education, 2007). Julie majored in Spanish and received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Iowa. She has traveled to Spain and Mexico and has been teaching for 22 years.

Program Profile

Julie has a total of sixteen HLS in her classes, which are combined with NES (See Appendix C). Fifteen are in her Spanish IV class and one student is in Spanish II. The Latino students are considered HLS by the school counselors if they have a Latino last name. Most of the time the students are all doing the same work, but occasionally they complete different tasks. One example that Julie gave of different work given to the two groups is when the class works on *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes. She has the NES read a simplified version of the work, while the HLS read an unabridged version.

Even though Julie is not a native Spanish speaker, she indicated that she does not feel self-conscious speaking Spanish to her NSS or her HLS. During my observations, however, Julie did not use Spanish as the language of instruction. She only spoke Spanish when reading the sentences that were examples of the subjunctive.

Julie makes use of video in her classroom by having the students create “movies.” On the day that I visited, the students were working with the subjunctive form. She played a humorous video that some former students had made. The former students’ assignment was to create sentences using the subjunctive form and then act it out. For example, if the sentence was “Sarah espera que Ben baile” (Sarah hopes that Ben dances) the video would show the sentence written out in Spanish and also show Ben dancing.

While visiting Julie’s classroom, I noticed that the students did not show Julie as much respect as Susan’s students showed Susan. For example, both of the Spanish sections (taught by Julie) that I observed were unruly with students (NES) sitting on the desks and putting their feet up on the chairs. Students were walking in and out of the classroom. One student (NES) left for the restroom saying in English, “I’m going to the

bathroom” without getting permission first. He came back 20 minutes later, and Julie told him in English that he was not going to leave the classroom ever again. The student replied in English, “You said that last time.”

When the students broke into the groups in which they were going to be working for the video project, the students segregated themselves according to their level of Spanish. For example, the NES were in groups together and the HLS were in groups together. I also noticed that the HLS who spoke Spanish to each other separated themselves from the HLS who spoke English to each other. I did not hear anyone planning or talking about what they were going to do for the project.

Unsure About What Strategies to Use

During Julie’s interview and also after transcribing the interview, I perceived that Julie was not sure about what strategies to use with her HLS. For example, when I asked Julie if she uses a placement exam in her classes she replied, “We would like to use something like that, but we just don’t know what to use.” I also asked Julie about the obstacles that she is facing in her classroom, and she replied:

Yeah, I think that it’s hard enough to have two different, you know, sets of kids [NES and NSS] in one class in terms of trying to differentiate, and then bring in a third set [HLS] and not really know anything about it, except that they exist and really having no idea how to categorize or figure out.

This statement, coupled with her tone of voice, indicates that Julie is frustrated and unsure of what to do for the HLS in her classes. Towards the end of the interview, Julie made a series of statements that clarified further that she is not sure about what to do with the HLS in her classroom:

TRACIE: Is there anything else that I might have missed or anything else that you want to tell me about your program that might be helpful to me?

JULIE: The only thing I can tell you is that I have far more questions than answers with both my native speakers and my heritage speakers.

TRACIE: I guess it would help me to know what kinds of things you need.

JULIE: I think the biggest thing would be if there's something I could read that would help me understand, because it seems to me that it's sort of a continuum. You can't really put them in a neat category, because each person has had a different experience with the language. So if there's something I could read from people who are also going through this.

I offered Julie the name of a book that I thought would be helpful, and she replied:

That would be great because it's somewhere to start cause the heritage thing, honestly, I think I just started hearing about it in the last year, two years. And then I think this is the first year that I've noticed that I have three or four [HLS] that really stand out that have not quite, you know, they're not native speakers, but they've been treated as though they are.

Elena

Profile

Elena is a native Portuguese speaker from Brazil. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa in teaching English and Portuguese for grades 9–12, an M.A. in TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages), and an endorsement in teaching Spanish to grades 9-12. Elena also has a degree in teaching elementary and middle school in Brazil, but this degree is not recognized in the U.S. Elena explained that

she came to the U.S. because her daughter got married here, and she wanted to be closer to her.

Although Elena told me that she only learned Spanish seven years ago, it is not evident, as she is extremely fluent and sounds to me like a native speaker. When I visited her classroom, she was able to teach her classes and interact with her students entirely in Spanish. She is also very modest; when I told her that she sounded like a native speaker, she told me that her accent was terrible.

Elena has an upbeat personality in the classroom, and it was fun to watch her interact with her students. For example, during one of her lessons, she would periodically check for understanding by reviewing the terms associated with drama. She asked one of her students what a certain term meant, and he was unable to answer. After asking another student, she said in Spanish, “Someone save me! Save me!”. She got down on the floor and pretended like she was going to die if someone did not tell her the answer quickly. Of course, someone “saved” her, and the lesson continued.

Program Profile

The high school where Elena teaches has approximately 650 students (Iowa Department of Education, 2007), and she has a total of 68 HLS in her classes (See Appendix C). The Spanish classes are separated by HLS and NES. The HLS students are placed in their classes by the school counselors based on their Latino last names. Elena indicated that the HLS and NES Spanish classes work on the same types of things, except that the NES class works more on vocabulary and the HLS classes work more on reading, interpretation, and composition.

Elena speaks to her students entirely in Spanish, and she requires her students to do the same when they are in her classroom. When I was observing her classroom, several students were talking in English; I heard her interrupt them and tell them to speak in Spanish. They, of course, complied.

While observing Elena's classroom, I was able to see first-hand how the classes are designed. For example, one class was working on literature—drama—to be more specific. On the day I visited, Elena was introducing them to terms associated with drama. They began the class by reading a short play consisting of two characters; then they reviewed drama terms and defined them. Observing the class reminded me of my high school literature class, except this time it was conducted in Spanish.

In another class studying the Dominican Republic, Elena reviewed how the people lived and worked by showing photos. She also talked about a famous singer from the country, Juan Guerra, and played one of his songs. This could have easily been a social studies class, only it was conducted in Spanish.

Knows What Students Need

Elena made several comments to me during the interview that clarified that she is very attuned to what her students need. For example, when I asked Elena about what she uses for resources, she said:

When I started there was no curriculum. Nothing at all. Just a book that was very old fashioned so I started with a book by [Guadalupe Valdés] and I was kind of happy with that, but the population was changing because now we have more second generation of Hispanics, and the needs are kind of different; so I started working in a different way, because I was not happy with that.

This statement demonstrates that Elena is able to look at her situation, evaluate how things are going, and determine what her students need. She also had this to say about not being able to find resources,

What I can find is grammar exercises and then from English to Spanish. So that doesn't help them. That's not helping me. That's not their needs. Their needs are in Spanish-specific words. Their needs are, for example, how to express themselves without using English in the middle of the conversation.

After talking about how she changed some of her strategies, she stated, "I see them getting involved. I see them interested in reading, and you know, doing stuff in Spanish. So finally, I think I'm on the right track."

Knowing what her students need is not limited to the classroom. Elena also told me about a time when she noticed that several of her students seemed detached, so she called the parents to "see what was going on."

Committed to Finding Best Practices

When I asked Elena about where she received training in teaching HLS, she responded as follows:

At the beginning, I had no training or mentoring to teach these classes. The previous instructor was not a certified teacher, and she gave me an old book out of print with a grammar approach. Next year I got in touch with the work of Guadalupe Valdés (she is the pioneer in the field [of HLS]), and I adopted the book *Español Escrito: Curso Para Hispanohablantes Bilingües*, fifth edition, by Guadalupe Valdés and Richard V. Teschner [1984]. Book and workbook. I used

them for three years, but as it was addressed to college students I needed to make many changes.

Elena knew that she needed to find better ways to teach her HLS classes and sought out more resources.

Elena is aware of current research and has attended conferences. In an e-mail she wrote:

I have read a lot of research—INTERNET and books as well[.] I have been to [three] conferences dealing with native speakers. One was in Washington D.C. last March: Spanish in Contact with [O]ther [L]anguages. I also took a short course via Internet on managing a Heritage Language Speakers class. As a member of AATSP [American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese] I receive their newsletter, and in the last [four] years lots of research in the area has been published as well as teaching strategies and successful practices.

Elena also mentioned that her students were using English while they were speaking Spanish, which she considered to be problematic. She came up with a plan to help them using an idea from a university professor. I later asked her about her plan in an e-mail, and she was able to tell me more about it. She wrote:

About working with Spanglish, I got the idea from Dr. Kim Potowski, professor of Spanish at the University of Illinois, Chicago. I brought her for a seminar during our Language Conference last October and naturally, Spanglish was brought up. She works with the College kids to understand the language and social process of “Spanglish.” I decided to incorporate it into my freshmen and

sophomore curriculum, and the response was phenomenal. Besides the interest, they could relate to it, and [by] analyzing “Spanglish” terms we compared [them] with the corresponding formal Spanish. I noticed afterwards that their awareness of the appropriate usage of the language increased a lot.

These statements show that Elena is committed to her profession and that she strives to find the best ways to teach her HLS.

Silvia

Profile

Silvia is from a city in Spain, and is on a teacher exchange program through the U.S. Embassy and the Spanish Embassy. She has been teaching for a total of 14 years but has been in Iowa just two of those years. Before she came to the U.S. on the exchange program, Silvia taught in a private academy. Silvia’s husband and two daughters came with her and they have not been back to Spain since she started teaching in Iowa. Silvia does not seem to mind being in the U.S. since her family is with her here.

Silvia is very interested in her students’ lives outside of the classroom. This was evident when I observed her class. She has a bulletin board by the door of her classroom featuring newspaper clippings of her students in their extracurricular activities. She also mentioned that her students were involved in the school play which was to take place that night, and she noted how excited, nervous, and tired they were because of this.

I was able to observe Silvia talking in Spanish with a student after class. She was frustrated because this student did not pay much attention in class. She told him that he should pay as much attention to his studies as he does to soccer. This conversation led me to believe that Silvia knows what her students are interested in and she also cares

about what happens to them academically. She seemed very concerned that he was not working up to his potential.

Program Profile

Silvia teaches Spanish in a high school with approximately 380 students (Iowa Department of Education, 2007), and she has a total of 41 HLS in her classroom (See Appendix C). The students are considered HLS by the school counselors if they have Latino last names. Silvia has separate classes for her NES and HLS, although another Spanish teacher in the school has a class mixed with HLS and NES. When I asked Silvia about the differences between the two classes, she stated that the HLS do readings, work on writing, study history, and work on speaking with a different vocabulary than they would at home. The NES learn grammar and verb conjugation as well as practicing their speaking.

Culture

Silvia mentioned culture several times throughout the e-mail interviews. This led me to believe that culture is very important to her. For example, when I asked Silvia about how she thought her Spanish program was working for her students, she replied, “We try to help them realize that a better job depends on the languages that they know, to value their culture and understand different ones.”

Silvia also incorporates culture into the lessons that she plans. She mentioned that a typical class would include culture, food, and music, noting that, “The study of a language involves a lot of things, not only a language.” When I asked Silvia about what resources she uses, she wrote that she uses movies and songs. I also asked Silvia about what resources she did not have that she really wanted. I expected her to say something

about needing different books. Instead, she wrote, “To be able to go to field trips to the Mexican Art Museum in Chicago, for example. To the theater in Spanish.”

Silvia is also having her students work on a projects that explore many aspects of a Spanish-speaking country including religion, food, dances, music, and people. After they research these topics, they will present their projects to the rest of the class.

Culture was also evident in Silvia’s classroom as well. She has artwork by famous Spanish-speaking artists on the walls. For example, on one wall she has a poster featuring one of Salvador Dali’s paintings. On the back wall there is evidence of the students’ projects on Spanish-speaking countries in the display of maps and flags made by the students.

Language Use

It is very important to Silvia that her students use the Spanish language in class. This is evident in the e-mails that she wrote to me when she was explaining her teaching situation. For both her NES and HLS classes, she “forces” students to speak in Spanish. When referring to her HLS, she writes, “I force them to speak in Spanish with different vocabulary than the one they use at home. They need to know that there is not only Spanish from Mexico or from Spain.” She also wrote this about her NES class, “I force them to speak and listen to the foreign language all the time.” With her Spanish-speaking country project, Silvia incorporates using the language as well. When the students have completed the investigation of their particular country, they then make an oral presentation to the rest of the class.

When I asked Silvia about whether or not she thought it was a good idea to have HLS in a classroom all by themselves instead of being mixed with NES, she wrote, “Of

course. They have the same level and problems. Their challenge is different. They need to build vocabulary, express themselves, and speak in Spanish. They have to realize the English inferences [interferes with what] they do in the Spanish language.”

Silvia’s emphasis on language use was clearly noted in the observation of the HLS class. She talked with the students only in Spanish and expected them to speak in Spanish when talking to her. For example, Silvia asked a student about what time of the year hurricanes occur. The girl answered, “from July to November” in English. When Silvia heard this she responded by pretending to not understand. The student knew what Silvia wanted to hear and corrected herself and responded in Spanish.

Another example of Silvia’s emphasis on speaking Spanish happened when Silvia asked another HLS student a question. He responded by saying in English, “I don’t know what that means”. Silvia responded to him by explaining the question in Spanish in a different way and the student was able to respond to her question in Spanish.

CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

The discussion will answer the research questions:

1. What strategies do Iowa secondary Spanish teachers currently use in their classrooms in teaching Spanish to HLS?
2. What obstacles do Iowa secondary Spanish teachers face when they teach HLS in their classrooms?
3. Are the strategies that Iowa secondary Spanish teachers use in their classrooms the strategies that have been recommended by researchers in the field?

National Standards

The strategies that the participants are using will be organized by the goals of the National Student Standards (National Foreign Language Teaching National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). The standards are comprised of five goals known as the Five C's: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. I will also relate the teachers' strategies to the relevant expert recommended strategies.

Communication

Standard 1.1

The Communication goal is divided into three standards. The first standard (1.1) involves students communicating with each other in the target language (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006).

Strategy: Spanish for Native Speakers

Silvia's goal of getting her students to expand their vocabulary by speaking Spanish while in her classroom is also a recommendation by Fairclough and Mrak (2003) who found that programs needed to focus more on communication and expanding the vocabulary of students.

The HLS in Susan's classroom were observed speaking to each other in Spanish, but the NES communicated to each other in English. Susan was not observed encouraging the students to speak in Spanish, although she would speak to the HLS in Spanish and to the NES in English.

The students in Julie's classroom were observed behaving similarly. Julie did not encourage the students to speak in Spanish, and the only Spanish that Julie spoke was giving examples of the subjunctive in Spanish. The students, however, were beginning a video project where they would have to speak Spanish and videotape themselves acting out the phrases.

Elena and Silvia's classrooms were the opposite of Susan and Julie's classrooms in which the class was conducted entirely in Spanish and the students were encouraged to use Spanish in the classroom when talking to each other and with their teachers. Examples of this can be found in the teacher profiles in Chapter Four.

Standard 1.2

The second standard (1.2) for Communication involves the interpretive mode (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). The interpretive mode is defined by as "Receptive communication of oral or written messages" (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 37).

Strategy: Spanish for Native Speakers

Susan selects high interest books for her students to read, and Julie has her students read a simplified version of *Don Quixote* by Cervantes. Susan's use of high interest books in her classroom is a strategy recommended by McQuillan (1996) who found that students made significant gains in vocabulary when they were able to select the books that they were reading.

An example of Standard 1.2 observed in Elena's classroom was the short play that was read by two students for the lesson on drama. Elena also incorporates newspaper articles and interviews with famous artists, musicians, and writers for students to read, analyze, and discuss.

Strategy: Spanish for Native Speakers

Elena teaching a drama lesson entirely in Spanish is an example of the strategy "Spanish for Native Speakers" that is recommended by researchers (Carreira, 2007, D'Ambruso, 1993, Merino and Samaniego, 1993, Valdés, 1995, and Valdés Fallis, 1978). This strategy is teaching Spanish to HLS in the manner in which English is taught to NES. Many English classrooms in the U.S. include a unit on drama.

Although Silvia did not mention them in her interview, she has Spanish reading books on a bookshelf in her classroom. Her students were observed reading in Spanish from a textbook for a lesson about hurricanes. Included in this lesson was a video about hurricanes in Spanish. Students were interpreting information in the text and the video in order to have a discussion about it in class.

D'Ambruso (1993) recommended that teachers with HLS have their students focus on reading and writing first and then focus on oral skills. The teachers in this

study, however, did not mention specifically that they follow this recommendation, but they do seem to focus more on reading and writing and less on the oral skills that is typical for Spanish as a foreign language with NES. The teachers in this study did not talk about activities specifically made to help the students refine their oral skills, but they mentioned plenty of activities that focus on reading and writing.

Standard 1.3

Strategy: Collaborative Learning

Standard 1.3 (the presentational mode) was recommended by Kagan and Dillon (2001). All four teachers in this study incorporate student presentations in their classrooms. Susan and Julie also incorporate collaborative learning, which is recommended by Carreira (2007) and Gorman (1993) in their presentational projects. Both teachers have their students work in groups when collecting their information. In Susan's classroom the students were assigned a particular aspect of the Mayan, Aztec, or Incan civilization (i.e., clothes, food, etc.) and were to research and make a Power Point presentation to the rest of the class in Spanish.

Julie's videotaped project is an example of the presentational communication mode. The students were to videotape themselves using the subjunctive form. She also talked about using the videotaped presentation for other projects as well. Although the students are creating presentations, this project seems superficial in that the students do not speak very much Spanish at all. They are only speaking one sentence at a time and they are disconnected from the other sentences in the video, not making it meaningful to the students or the audience. A better example would be for the students to still use the subjunctive, but to act out a play that they have written for the video camera.

Elena has her students recite poems and perform plays in her class, whereas Silvia has her students give Power Point presentations containing information about the countries they researched such as the food, clothing, and religion.

Cultures

Standard 2.1

The four participants in this study all use culture as part of their curriculum. In Silvia's class, her students were investigating the way people live in different Spanish speaking countries around the world, using the computer as a primary source of information. The students investigated not only what the weather is like, the food they eat, and the music they listen to, but also how the government is set up and what the economy is like.

During the observation of Elena's class, the students talked in Spanish about the way people from the Dominican Republic live. Elena showed them pictures using an LCD projector and the students described them in Spanish.

In Susan's classroom the students discuss the Latino views about and practices involving death. This is an example of Standard 2.1 (practices and perspectives).

Standard 2.2

Strategy: Work with Dialects

Elena has her students recognize different words that are used in different countries or situations, which is recommended by Hancock (2002), Martinez (2003), and Merino and Samaniego (1993). For example, in her lesson about the Dominican Republic, she highlighted words that the students might not recognize and discussed them with the students about the usage. Elena also has her students point out the use of

different words that mean the same thing when they come up in her classroom. She has a section on the wall that reads, “También se dice....” (They also say) and the words that students use.

Strategy: Cultural Appeal

Another important part of the cultural standard, according to Ellison (2006), is that successful teachers understand their students’ cultures and get involved in their lives. In Silvia’s classroom is a bulletin board of newspaper clippings featuring her students. Silvia is also aware of the extracurricular activities in which her students are involved, mentioning that many of her students were going to be performing in the school play.

Silvia, Elena, and Susan also communicate with the students’ parents on a regular basis, while Julie only communicates with them at parent/teacher conferences. Elena stated that when she sees changes in a student’s behavior or senses that something is wrong she will call the parents to see what is happening. She added that she sees her students’ families at the market and at church and stops to say hello to them.

The participants work with standard 2.2 (products and perspectives) in other ways as well. For example, Susan’s Mayan, Incan, and Aztec project is an example of this standard because the students research clothing, food, and other products of the civilizations. On the site visit, Elena was observed playing Latino music from a CD player (a product) as the students walked into the classroom. The playing of music while students enter class, however, may not be meaningful to them if it is not incorporated into the focus of the class. They may not even pay attention to it as they are getting ready for class.

Elena, however, also played a song popular in the Dominican Republic as a part of the lesson. For the lesson that I observed, Elena gave the class a lyric sheet and explained some of the words that they might not be familiar with, such as “batata”. She explained in Spanish that it was a type of potato, and drew a sweet potato on the board for them and explained to the class that sweet potatoes are very important to the Dominican Republic economy. She also explained that the musician sang about wishing it would rain coffee because coffee is also important to the economy. Elena clearly addressed products and perspectives in her class.

Silvia also stated that she uses music as part of her lessons and has her students watch movies from Spanish speaking countries as well.

Connections

Standard 3.1

The Connections standard 3.1 involves students reinforcing their knowledge of other disciplines through the target language. In the lessons observed, Elena taught a literature lesson discussing terms and aspects of drama in Spanish. This method is recommended by Carreira (2007), D’Ambruso (1993), Merino (1993), Valdés (1995), and Valdés Fallis (1978). Julie stated that she also reinforces literature when she teaches the unit on *Don Quixote*.

Elena taught a social studies lesson about the Dominican Republic in Spanish, discussing how people live, where they work, what they do for fun. Furthermore, this lesson was appropriate for the age-level of the students. During this lesson, Elena also reinforced music by having her students listen to a song from an artist popular in the Dominican Republic.

Silvia uses the Connections strategy by reinforcing science concepts. During a visit to her classroom, she was observed teaching a lesson about hurricanes. The students read about where hurricanes are most likely to occur and when they occur. They also learned about how people prepare for hurricanes and saw footage of the damage that hurricanes can cause. Silvia and Susan also reinforce social studies, music, art, and technology during their country investigation project and the Aztec, Mayan, and Incan project, respectively.

Standard 3.2

The Connections standard 3.2 involves the students acquiring knowledge and recognizing the distinctive viewpoints of the target culture (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 54). By having her students listen to music from the Dominican Republic and other Spanish speaking countries, Elena is fulfilling standard 3.2. Silvia employs this strategy by having her students watch movies and listen to music intended for a Spanish speaking audience. Susan and Julie both have their students read *Don Quixote*, which was written for speakers of Spanish.

Comparisons

Standard 4.1

Standard 4.1 addresses the comparison of the language studied to the first language of the students. Elena was observed comparing the “nosotros” and “we” forms of verbs in Spanish and English saying that the “nosotros” forms of verbs in Spanish basically have the same endings, but in English the endings of the verbs are different.

When Susan teaches lessons on the subjunctive, she compares English and Spanish “quite a lot.” She mentioned talking with her students about words and phrases

that exist in one language and not the other. She used the phrase, “I hope he got there on time,” which she says is impossible to say in Spanish. Instead people have to say, “I hope he has arrived on time.”

Standard 4.2

Comparisons Standard 4.2 compares the cultures studied and the students’ other cultures. The students in Silvia’s classroom use the country investigation project to compare and contrast the various Spanish speaking countries around the world such as the type of music they listen to or the religions that they practice. They also compare and contrast these countries to the U.S. In the lesson on hurricanes which was observed during the site visit, Silvia compared the weather in Puerto Rico to the weather in Iowa, explaining that Puerto Rico has hurricanes, but Iowa has tornadoes.

Susan has a unit called “la familia” (the family) in which the students compare and contrast rural and urban Hispanic families and also compare them to Hispanic families in the U.S. The students compare and contrast the families that they study to their own families, make presentations, and then discuss them as a class.

Communities

Standard 5.1

Communities Standard 5.1 involves students using the target language both within and beyond the school setting. For her “Spanglish” unit, Elena has her students research among their families and friends vocabulary that is considered Spanglish (a mixture of English and Spanish).

Strategy: Cultural Appeal

Elena and Susan both use interviews as a project involving the Communities

standard. Having HLS interview community members is a strategy recommended by Cho (2000), Durán-Cerda (2008), Lacorte and Canabal (2003), and Rodriguez Pino (1997). Susan has her students interview community members as part of an individual project, while Elena has her students work together as a group, interviewing a community member in Spanish and then presenting what they have learned to the rest of the class.

Standard 5.2

Strategy: Thematic Units

One of the characteristics of thematic units is that it is possible for them to contain all five of the standards because it allows the teachers and students to delve into the subject further than just vocabulary. Thematic units are recommended by Kagan (2001), Peyton, Ranard, and McGinnis (2001), and Merino and Samaniego (1993). For example, Susan's unit, "la familia" does not just teach family vocabulary, but makes it possible for the students to use their higher order thinking skills. They compare and contrast families in different countries with their own (Comparisons, Cultures), read articles and books (Communication, Connections), look at and discuss art (Connections), and make presentations (Communication).

The Communities standard 5.2 involves students becoming life-long learners by using Spanish for enjoyment and enrichment (National Standards for Foreign Language Education Project, 2006, p. 457). Carreira (2007) recommends that teachers encourage students to be involved in the community because it is good for their well-being. Silvia mentioned that her students are involved in the Spanish speaking community by participating in cultural activities such as dance and by being involved in the Spanish services at the Catholic Church in town.

Susan requires her students to spend two hours a semester involved with the Spanish language and culture outside the classroom. Projects to fulfill the requirement would be attending community events such as the Day of the Dead celebration at the Des Moines Art Center and the International Food Fair in October. Students can take salsa lessons at the Hotel Ft. Des Moines. Students can also go on actual trips to Spanish speaking countries. After the students have completed their two hours, they write detailed descriptions of what they experienced.

Difficulties of Teaching HLS in Iowa

My last research question deals with the difficulties that Iowa Spanish teachers face when teaching HLS in their classrooms. The participants in my study talked about the difficulties of: (a) having HLS and NES in the same classroom, (b) not having enough resources, (c) having different levels of students, (d) encountering diverse dialects among the NES and HLS, and (e) their own qualifications as teachers.

Same Classroom

Three of the four teachers mentioned the difficulties of having HLS and NES in the same classroom, supporting the observations of Winke (2003) and Hancock (2002). The fourth teacher, Elena, has only one NES in a classroom full of HLS.

Susan and Julie both have a mixed group and stated that it is difficult to give both groups of students what they need. They would like to have separate classrooms, but they do not have enough staff to do so. The teachers' comments support the argument by Lacorte and Canabal (2003) who said HLS need to focus on aspects other than grammar, which is often the focus of Spanish as a foreign language classes, and thus are best taught in separate classrooms.

Silvia currently has only HLS in her classroom, but has had a mixed class in the past. She reports that from her experience it is much better to have the HLS and NES in separate classes. Boyd (2000) came to the same conclusion when he interviewed teachers facing the same issue.

Resources

Three of the four participants talked about not having enough resources in order to teach their HLS, thus supporting Boyd's (2000) findings. Julie, for example, was not even sure where to look for help in designing lesson plans for her HLS. Elena knew where to look—reading research articles and books and going to conferences—but stated that she thought that, even though there are more resources pertaining to HLS now than when she first began teaching HLS, there still needs to be more.

When asked about what resources she needed, Silvia answered that she considered necessary resources in terms of field trips and related activities instead of textbooks or teacher resources. She stated that she would love to have her students be able to go to the theater in Spanish or go to the Mexican Art Museum in Chicago.

Different Levels

Julie, Elena, and Susan all talked about how it is difficult to teach HLS because the students are all at different levels, with some students having a good knowledge of Spanish, while others knew only a small amount. The students in all of the participants' classes are grouped according to grade level, regardless of their level of Spanish. The participants' views on teaching the different levels supports the study conducted by Zehr (2006), who found that teachers thought that addressing the needs of students with varying Spanish abilities was the most difficult aspect of teaching HLS.

Dialects

The participants all agree that dialects constitute a challenging aspect of teaching HLS, but they disagree on the degree to which they consider it a problem. Julie, for example, is aware that dialects exist but says that she is not “overly aware” of them and does not do any explicit work with them.

Silvia, on the other hand, is aware of the various dialects and is able to point them out to her students for comparison purposes. Silvia has the advantage of being a native Spanish speaker from Spain while having students who speak Spanish from Mexico. This situation lends itself to discussions about dialects. For example, while teaching the hurricane lesson, Silvia explained to her students why people fill up gas tanks of their cars with gas when a hurricane threatens. She used the word “coche” for car and then corrected herself and used “carro” because “coche” is used primarily in Spain and “carro” is used more in Latin America. In this case, however, Silvia did not point out her use of “coche”.

The only problem that Silvia has when working with dialects is that she believes some of her students think that Mexican Spanish is the only Spanish. She did mention, however, that other students wanted to know what other dialects of Spanish exist.

Elena approaches dialect issues she encounters in a direct way. She mentioned that she has students from many Spanish speaking countries, and different terms for the same object or concept come up constantly. She made a sign that says, “También se dice . . .” (They also say . . .) where she places words that students use that mean the same as other words. This approach is recommended by Hancock (2002), Martinez (2003), and Merino (1993).

Like Elena, Susan approaches dialect issues in a positive way. She has students from many different Spanish speaking countries as well and views this situation as one where her students can learn from each other. She states:

I have one section right now where I have a kid from Colombia, a kid from Cuba, a kid from Costa Rica, a girl from Honduras, and some Mexican kids, and they all sound completely different. And I think that's the part of the power of having them in that room for the other kids to hear them and for them to hear each other.

Teacher Qualification

None of the participants talked about their own qualifications to teach HLS. By speaking with the participants, however, I found that none of the teachers had taken a class in working with HLS as part of their course work. These teachers have only had “on the job” training; this supports what Valdés et al. (2007) found from their survey of California teachers.

Julie is not very positive about her abilities to teach HLS as discussed in Chapter Four. Some of the teachers, however, have taken steps to learn how to better teach HLS. Elena has attended multiple conferences and has read books and articles by experts in the field. Susan indicated that she reads research pertaining to HLS.

Conclusion

Qualifications

The qualifications of the teachers do not seem to be related to how long the participants have been teaching. For example, the teacher who seems to be the most qualified is Elena, who has only been teaching for seven years. Julie, who seems to be the least qualified, has been teaching for 22 years. The qualifications of the participants also

do not seem related to whether or not they are native speakers or nonnative speakers.

Again, Elena is not a native speaker and has been speaking Spanish for only seven years.

The qualifications do, however, seem to be related to the teachers' understanding and implementation of the national student standards for foreign language teaching (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). Elena follows the standards and plans her lessons around them as do Susan and Silvia. Julie, the least qualified teacher, does not use the standards as extensively as the other three. This suggests that although there are not a lot of resources available for HLS, teachers have the tools to create their own curricula using the standards.

Recommendations

Iowa Communications Network (ICN)

Because the participants in this study discussed the fact that they have NES and HLS in combined classes, it is recommended that schools might consider using the Iowa Communications network (ICN) to combine classes within a district or among several districts in order to better meet their needs. The ICN allows users "to communicate via high quality, full-motion video; high-speed Internet connections; and telephones" (ICN, 2008). Classes, designed specifically for HLS for example, could be conducted using this system.

The ICN is not only a way to combine classes within a school, but it also allows school districts to share teachers. One teacher could teach to as many sites as needed. The students in the classroom that does not have a teacher available will need a supervisor in the room, however. Teachers with expertise and experience teaching NES or HLS could address a larger number of students using the ICN.

Similar to using the ICN, schools or school districts could share an HLS program. This recommendation would require the busing of students to the school hosting the class, therefore, this solution would only work within a district or with districts that are close together. This concept is already being used for students involved in sports or extracurricular activities in small schools.

Teacher In-service

Another recommendation is for teachers of HLS to participate in teacher in-services and workshops for the purpose of exploring better ways to teach HLS. This could be as simple as having someone with expertise in working with HLS from the Area Education Agency (AEA) (<http://www.iowaaea.org/>) come to the school and make a presentation about teaching HLS. The AEA is an agency designed to provide services to schools around Iowa, including sharing resources and conducting in-services for teachers and schools. This recommendation will only work, however, if there is someone in the AEA who has this expertise.

Teacher in-services can also be used for teacher networking and collaboration, allowing teachers to discuss which strategies are working or not working in their classrooms. For example, Julie, who is not sure what to do for her HLS, could possibly meet and work with Elena or Silvia to discuss strategies that they found worked well with their students.

The collaboration of teachers does not stop with Spanish teachers working together and exchanging ideas. It would benefit HLS if their Spanish teachers worked closely with the ELL teachers, since they often have the same students. ELL teachers

have special training in order to work with HLS and can give Spanish teachers some valuable information and answer questions that they might have.

What is Available

Teachers need to be made aware of what resources are available to them. For example, *The Heritage Language Journal* (<http://www.heritagelanguages.org/>) is available without a subscription and contains articles pertaining to teaching HLS.

The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) (<http://www.aatsp.org/scriptcontent/index.cfm>) has online resources pertaining to HLS, and teachers can receive the journal *Hispania* with an AATSP membership. The initial membership fee is only \$30, and the renewal fee is \$65. The website has a newsletter, instructional aides, and scholarships available to members. *Intercambios* is the official newsletter of the Iowa chapter of AATSP and can be accessed from the Iowa World Language Association (IWLA) Web site at <http://www.iwla.net/res/index.html>. The IWLA has its own membership fee of \$20 for teachers.

Conferences

Conferences can be a great resource for teachers as well. One suggestion would be asking the IWLA to sponsor a speaker who is considered to be an expert in the field of HLS. This speaker could also be used in a question and answer session for teachers. The IWLA Web site could also call for teachers who have had successful lessons with HLS and who want to share their ideas. Teachers of HLS and NSS need to let the board of IWLA know what is important to them, and that conversations regarding HLS are needed. The e-mail addresses of the board are located on the IWLA web site.

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is also a resource that teachers can use.

It has a Web site located at <http://www.cal.org/> with resources for teachers needing information on teaching foreign languages and specifically teaching heritage languages. One of these resources is a list of profiles of heritage language programs in the U.S. with information about the schools and their goals for heritage language learning. Other resources include available journals, books, and digests/videos.

Summary

The Iowa Spanish teachers who served as participants for this study do use strategies that are recommended by researchers and for the most part are following the national student foreign language standards for teaching (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). However, the teachers expressed the need for more resources in order to better teach their students.

The following is a list of steps to take in order to better help secondary Spanish teachers in their HLS classrooms:

- a) Universities need to add a section for HLS in their foreign language methods courses or add a class specifically for HLS methods.
- b) Schools need to allow time for Spanish teachers to collaborate with ELL teachers in the school because they often work with the same students.
- c) Schools also need to allow time for Spanish teachers to collaborate with other Spanish teachers to compare notes and strategies either in the same school, district, or between districts.
- d) Schools need to have separate classes for their HLS students and their NES students.
- e) If not possible to have a single class of HLS in one school, districts need to

collaborate and take advantage of the ICN to create a class for HLS made up of two or more schools.

- f) The Iowa Department of Education should hire an expert in HLS to be available to schools for in-service days.
- g) The Iowa World Language Association and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese should produce a bulletin for Spanish teachers letting them know what resources are available to them for teaching HLS.
- h) The Iowa World Language Association should invite an expert in the HLS field to speak about identifying HLS, testing them, and strategies to use with them at the annual conference.
- i) The Iowa Department of Education should conduct a statewide survey asking schools and teachers about the numbers of HLS and the needs of these students.
- j) The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese and the Iowa World Language Association should collaborate and share resources to better help teachers with HLS.
- k) Teachers should collaborate with the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese and the Iowa World Language Association in order to develop a test in order to place HLS in the proper level of Spanish class.

The teaching of HLS is important because preserving students' heritage languages is practical and useful for them beyond high school and college. Joshua Fishman eloquently states:

The goal of promoting HL [heritage language] proficiency will revitalize our entire approach to non-English-language instruction. It will not only give us more individuals proficient in these languages, it will also dignify our country's HL communities and the cultural and religious values that their languages represent. It will help language instruction to connect with cultural and intellectual creativity, which it has often been speciously distant from. (2006, p. 21)

This study demonstrates that the participants in this study are on the right track when it comes to teaching HLS, but it has also shown that these teachers still need help. The help that the participants need, along with other secondary Spanish teachers working with HLS, can begin with the recommendations listed in this chapter.

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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Approved Date:	26 October 2007
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Initial by:	jlc

1. How long have you been teaching Spanish?
2. How long have you been teaching Spanish to native Spanish speakers?
3. How many native Spanish speakers do you have in your classroom?
4. What is your background with Spanish?
5. When did you decide to develop methods or lesson plans to work with native Spanish speakers?
6. Was there a time when you had your native Spanish speakers do the same work as your native English speaking students?
7. If you have native Spanish speakers and native English speakers in the same class, how do you manage them together?
8. What types of things do your native Spanish speakers work on in class?
9. Is this different from what your native English speakers work on?
10. How is your Spanish program working for your native Spanish speakers?
11. What is a typical Spanish class like?
12. What are some obstacles you face with having native Spanish speakers in your Spanish class?
13. What kind of contact do you have with their parents?

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

Interview with Susan

SUSAN: That's hilarious. Well, I can talk to you if you don't mind a little background noise.

TRACIE: Oh, sure, that's fine.

SUSAN: Ha ha ha ha. How funny. Of course I just got this bonus on the machine so it's making all kinds of noise. So, now I know who you are, I'm ready to answer your questions.

TRACIE: Okay. Sorry. Thank you.

SUSAN: No, don't be sorry. I'm sorry. I totally spaced it off.

TRACIE: Okay. I guess I'm going to start by asking about your background in Spanish.

SUSAN: Okay. Umm.. I have my bachelors from Iowa State with a major in Spanish and my Masters in Spanish from Drake.

TRACIE: And did you study abroad?

SUSAN: Umm.. yes I studied one summer while I was in college in Peru. Peru, South America. But it was a long time ago.

TRACIE: And how long have you been teaching Spanish?

SUSAN: Forty years.

TRACIE: Oh, okay. And you said that you have native Spanish class?

SUSAN: Yes.

TRACIE: How many do you have?

SUSAN: This year I have. I have only two sections of Spanish this and in those two sections I have thirteen. And the other teacher who teaches the rest of them has eight.

TRACIE: Okay. Are they in the same classes as your English speaking Spanish students?

SUSAN: Yes, what we do is, we put them in the umm.. the same classroom as the advanced placement Spanish students. But they're actually in a different course. We have four levels of Spanish for Hispanics. So the ninth graders go into Spanish for Hispanics I, 10th graders in Spanish for Hispanics II, etc. So they're actually graded differently and their transcripts are different things than the kids that are in the regular class.

TRACIE: Okay, do they work on the same types of things or do they have separate things to do?

SUSAN: What? Well, yes and no. They're not. Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. It kind of depends on umm.. Ha ha ha. I'm sorry this is so ridiculous. Can you call me back in fifteen minutes? And I'll go to a quiet place and talk to you?

TRACIE: Yeah, sure.

SUSAN: I just won the Jackpot. So all hell's breaking loose here.

TRACIE: Oh, ok

SUSAN: Thank you. Call me back in fifteen.

[Fifteen minutes elapsed and a new conversation begins.]

SUSAN: And once in a while I give them an assignment that no one else has, you know that the other kids don't have.

TRACIE: Okay, so when you have them in the classroom, do you give directions to part of the class and then you give directions to the rest of the class?

SUSAN: Uh huh. Exactly. I tell them usually, I usually tell the Hispanic kids real fast in Spanish, you know, what they're supposed to do. And then the rest of the kids, you know. But the kids are used to that. They understand and it happens all the time, so.. It's no big deal to anybody.

TRACIE: Okay. Do you umm.. I guess you've been teaching for forty years, so probably not, but do you ever feel self-conscious when you're speaking Spanish in front your native Spanish speakers?

SUSAN: No. Umm.. I talk to them when they're new and I explain to them that there are things that I know better than they do and things they know better than I do and uh, you know, and then that seems to calm them down, you know. No, I don't, really. I have a class where I'm very comfortable, nobody knows everything.

TRACIE: Okay.

SUSAN: The key to working with those kids is to establish a relationship of respect with them so that umm, they respect you for what you know and you respect them for what they know and as time goes on it takes me at least half a year with those kids to umm.. get to the point where they realize that I do know what I'm talking about when it comes to some things...you know that don't sound right to them, but maybe they're not saying it right. And then eventually they catch on, usually they go home and check with their parents and find out in fact that I was right. So that kind of builds up over time and then they start listening more. (laughing)

TRACIE: Umm... so what sort of things do the native Spanish speakers work on for your class?

SUSAN: What?

TRACIE: What do they work on? Do they work on grammar or do they do some reading?

SUSAN: Well, if they do grammar, it's oral. They do a lot of presentations because research says that one of the best things you can do for those kids is get them practice speaking Spanish in more formal settings than what they usually do. So I have kind of systematic presentations such as my favorite music, a movie I like. My room. You know, where everyone is giving the same presentation. And they do it right along with everybody else. So they do the same ones. And my final, the kids have to talk for three minutes. And they have to do that too.

TRACIE: Uh huh.

SUSAN: I never give them regular grammar assignments the same as the other kids because if I did, they couldn't do it. You know, that's not what... that makes no sense to them. And I think that's a mistake a lot of schools make. They put a kid who's practically a native speaker in a second year Spanish class and fail. They can't spell, they don't accent marks. And it makes no sense to me. So when you put Spanish IV on the transcript, everybody knows what that means. And if it means they're improving, but they are not being held accountable for the same kinds of things as the other kids are. So...It's quite a bit different, in my opinion. I do spelling lists with them, ummm... It varies from year to year. Every student from that category is a completely independent case. You know, you get kids who have gone all the way through junior and high school

in South America walking in your door and you get kids that went to third grade in Mexico and haven't been in school for 8 years and you get kids that have lived in the states their whole lives who have never studied Spanish in school. So you get every possible kid. See all of those have a individualized curriculum, depending on what you have and what they know. Huh... what they're willing to do too.

TRACIE: Okay, do you run into any problems with dialects?

SUSAN: Problems with dialects?

TRACIE: Yeah.

SUSAN: Well, they have dialects and they use them of course and they don't all use the same ones so they sometimes can't understand each other, but I don't know if I would call that a problem.

TRACIE: Okay

SUSAN: You know, to me, it's no more a problem when let's say a student who comes from Louisiana moves in you know. (laughing) Kids speak differently, but I think that's part of the strength of having them in the classroom. Like I have one section right now where I have a kid from Colombia, a kid from Cuba, a kid from Costa Rica, a girl from Honduras and some Mexican kids and they all sound completely different. And I think that's part of the power of having them in that room for the other kids to hear them and for them to hear each other.

TRACIE: Yeah.

SUSAN: That's huge.

TRACIE: Uh huh. Okay. And do they take any kind of test before they're placed in the classroom or is it just by how old they are?

SUSAN: Exactly by how old they are. I don't believe in that kind of bull because if they have put down in their survey that Spanish is the main language at home then I consider them to be Spanish for Hispanic students. Suppose they come in as a ninth grader and they test at the top. I'm still going to make them take four years, so what's the point?

TRACIE: Uh huh.

SUSAN: So, on the other hand, if a 17 year old walks in the door, I'm not going to going to put him in a class and call him a first year student either, so.

TRACIE: Yeah.

SUSAN: It's worked really well for us that way. That way they can take it as long as they are in high school and never run out of courses and, uh, it kind of... What we do right now is separate the first and second year Hispanic kids from the third and fourth just because we have two different teachers, but in the past I've taught all of them. All mixed together. And now I would say to you that in addition to your linguistic issues, having the Hispanic kids meet each other in an academic setting like that I think has helped avoid any kind of conflict between them in our school. They know each other well. They are introduced formally in class. And it also has a No Child Left Behind plan because as freshman, a ninth grade Hispanic kid is in a classroom with seniors, gets to know the most popular and coolest kids in the school right away. And I think that it has helped and reduce drop-out rates. And it has helped those kids assimilate really quickly.

TRACIE: Okay. Well, I just lost my train of thought here. Pause. Oh, what school do you teach at?

SUSAN: Suburban High School [Name changed].

TRACIE: Do you have any kind of contact with the parents?

SUSAN: Quite often. It varies from year to year, but umm.. almost always it's important to have personal contact with the parents. And mostly for support issues, not attendance and things like that. More than it is for reporting anything bad. I try to be those kids' advocate out there. Other teachers will contact us and to have us contact the parents sometimes. That's a whole different role.

TRACIE: Yeah.

SUSAN: The biggest challenge is convincing the staff that those kids should take Spanish, so I always say to them "Well, is anyone else taking English who has ever spoken it before?" They get that then (laughs). The regular kids take English, these kids should take Spanish.

TRACIE: Uh huh

SUSAN: And we're getting good support from the counselors now. It took quite a few years though to convince them that these kids should be in Spanish. We get really good support now. When they walk in the door they offer it up right away.

TRACIE: Okay. What kind of resources do you use for your lesson plans?

SUSAN: I use Encuentros Maravillosas, it's a textbook, but um, basically I teach from anything available.

TRACIE: Okay

SUSAN: I use kind of a systematic approach.

TRACIE: Oh, okay. Is there anything else that maybe I haven't asked that you would like me know about your program?

SUSAN: Well, what is the purpose of your paper? That might help me know what to...

TRACIE: I'm working about what teachers in Iowa are doing with their native Spanish speakers in their classrooms.

SUSAN: Well, for us this has worked extremely well and I think it's been a tremendous asset for both the Hispanic kids and for everyone else. I have received kids from other programs who would come in with like a "C" in Spanish and they end up with an "A" or a "B" and you know, I have kids that fail too because they just don't do anything, but generally speaking, I think that this particular approach provides a lot more success for them.

TRACIE: Okay. How long have you had native Spanish speakers in your classrooms?

SUSAN: I have had this thing going on for; let me think here, I think 12 years.

TRACIE: Okay.

SUSAN: Of course it's growing like crazy. So you know, I started out, the first time I had a class, a separate class, for a awhile I taught them separately and I'll probably do that again very soon. What I did was I took the first and second year kids and I taught them in a class of their own, built up their skill level a little and then I put them in with the seniors their last two years, but because of the staffing issues, you know, I couldn't afford to have that separate section anymore, so I just mixed them all in. But I'll probably do that again.

TRACIE: Okay.

SUSAN: I think that worked out nicely too. I also give them things to read. Like I buy high interest books for them, from Mexico or whatever country they're from and let them read those, rather than having them do the regular textbook and literature stuff. Then after I've them for a few years, I usually give them some version of Quixote and, you

know, a few other things to work on, but, it has to be really high interest low level reading.

TRACIE: Do you work with any cultural things?

SUSAN: I do a lot with culture in my classrooms. I talk about Hispanic attitudes toward family, toward death, you know things like that. And during that time, those kids learn too because I compare and contrast. Uh, they learn kind of about American attitudes and they participate by answering questions and occasionally they make little presentations like about their family or something like that to kind of tie in. I'm not a big proponent of having them write reports about their country and stuff, though. I don't find them to be very motivated by that kind of thing, so...

TRACIE: Okay.

SUSAN: I try to focus mostly on the language part of it. To get them practice speaking Spanish in front of people and that motivates them to improve their vocabulary because a lot of the kids say "Hey how are you doing". And after that, they're pretty lost (laughs). And so I try to give them a reason to focus in on some of that vocabulary.

TRACIE: Okay. Alright. I think that's all I have for now.

SUSAN: Alright. I'm sure more things will occur to you and if they do just e-mail them to me and give me another call, okay?

TRACIE: Thanks a lot for talking.

SUSAN: Alright. You're very welcome.

E-mail correspondence with Susan

TRACIE: Can you give an example of lessons that covers the Five C's of the Foreign Language Standards?

SUSAN: Regarding the Standards. When we were ready for curriculum review we studied the National Standards and used them as the basis of our curriculum. I belong to professional organizations, and keep up with what is happening in the profession at conferences, on-line discussion groups, and through reading. As department chair it is one of my responsibilities to know what is going on in this area. Each district also has a curriculum director who is responsible for making sure the standards are followed in all areas. A lesson that targets comparisons: We do a unit called "La familia" which compares and contrasts rural and urban Hispanic families and also compares them to Hispanic families in the U.S. We read Carmen Lomas Garza's book Cuadros de familia, read several good articles, and watch the movie "My Family". Students write an essay about their own family and make a presentation about a celebration they participate in as a family. During this unit students learn not only about different types of Hispanic families, but compare and contrast these to their own. The Hispanic students make presentations about their families which we then discuss.

Communities: We have students spend two hours a semester involved with the language and culture outside the classroom. They do a wide variety of things. If you want to know more let me know!

TRACIE: Could you give an example of what the students might do in the community involving language and culture? Do you ever compare the English and Spanish languages?

SUSAN: Students attend any community events such as the Day of the Dead Celebration at the Des Moines Art Center, International Food Fair in October, etc. They go to salsa lessons at the Hotel Ft. Des Moines. Some go on actual trips places. They go

to church services in Spanish, interview native speakers, watch culture films. There are about as many possibilities as there are students. Students must write detailed descriptions of what they experience. We do quite a bit of comparison of languages during the unit on the subjunctive. Also anytime there are words that exist in one language and not the other I point it out. Example: I hope he got here on time. Impossible to say in Spanish. You have to say, "I hope he has arrived on time." Drives the kids crazy! Ha! Keep the questions coming. I find them interesting!

TRACIE: In your interview you mentioned that you have high interest reading books in Spanish. Can you expand on this? Do the students check out the books when they want or do they read them as a class?

SUSAN: These are books they read individually and give me weekly summaries.

TRACIE: Can you tell me how many native English speakers (Anglos) you have in your classes?

SUSAN: Do you mean in my own classes? The first group is 21anglos and 4 Hispanos.

Interview with Julie

TRACIE: I'm just going to ask you some questions about umm, what you do in your classroom and your background in Spanish.

JULIE: Ok

TRACIE: How long have you been teaching Spanish?

JULIE: At the high school level or everything?

TRACIE: Umm... everything total.

JULIE: Ok. Umm. 22 years.

TRACIE: Ok and then how long have you been teaching at the high school level.

JULIE: At the high school level. I have to think for a minute because I took a break in there. Umm... five and then... 12 years.

TRACIE: Alright. And what is your background in Spanish?

JULIE: Umm... I got my bachelors and masters from the University of Iowa.

TRACIE: And is your masters in education or umm...

JULIE: It's in Spanish.

TRACIE: Spanish? Okay. And did you study abroad?

JULIE: Yeah, I did two summers in Spain and one in Mexico.

TRACIE: Awesome, okay. How many native Spanish speakers do you currently have in your classroom?

JULIE: Umm...I'm gonna have to count here. I grabbed my grade book just in case. Do you want native and heritage together?

TRACIE: Yeah.

JULIE: One, two, three... four (pause) sixteen.

TRACIE: Okay. How long have you had... Do you have them in a separate classroom or are they with your regular...

JULIE: They are with my Spanish IV. I have one boy who is in my Spanish II class, um... but he... I don't know what category he falls into. He's Hispanic, but... he knows a lot of vocabulary, but he speaks English better than he speaks Spanish. I mean, I guess, the heritage ones do, but he's lower in terms of Spanish than most of them.

TRACIE: Okay, and so when you have them in same class, do they work on the same things as your Spanish IV kids or do you have them do separate things?

JULIE: Sometimes they are doing the same thing and sometimes they are doing something different.

TRACIE: Okay, umm... and what kind of things do they work on?

JULIE: Umm... Like right now we're doing... we're just finishing commands.

TRACIE: Okay.

JULIE: And they all did that together. And then we're going to do a unit on written accents, which I didn't used to teach, but because I have so many Spanish speakers I figured that's something I can actually help them with. So they'll all do that. And then we'll do subjunctive, which they'll all do. Then we'll do a reading unit, which my student teacher is going to do. Umm... when I've had them read in the past I have them do umm... simplified versions of Don Quixote and the Spanish do a more complicated version of it.

TRACIE: Okay.

JULIE: So sometimes, they're doing similar stuff, but, you know, doing stuff that's more appropriate for them. And then sometimes it's all together depending on what we're doing.

TRACIE: Okay. And do your heritage speakers, uh, take any kind of a placement exam?

JULIE: No. We would like to use something like that, but we just don't know what to use.

TRACIE: Okay, and so do you find that you have your heritage language speakers, are they at different levels just by working with them?

JULIE: Yeah, each one is in a different place.

TRACIE: And do you have different dialects also with them?

JULIE: Probably. I can't tell you that I am overly aware of the differences.

TRACIE: Okay. How do you think that having them in the classroom, how you have been working with them, do you think that's working well for them, or would you like to do something different? Like if you could, would you like to have them in a separate classroom?

JULIE: Native speakers or everybody?

TRACIE: The heritage speakers.

JULIE: The heritage speakers... yeah in an ideal world we would have a class just for heritage speakers and a class just for native speakers so that we could concentrate on their individual needs.

TRACIE: Yeah, okay. And are you facing any problems or obstacles with teaching them.

JULIE: Yeah, I think that it's hard enough to have two different, you know, sets of kids in one class in terms of trying to differentiate and then bring in a third set and not really know anything about it, except that they exist and really having no idea how to categorize or figure out. You know how I wrote to you about the command thing and I appreciate you asking somebody about that. I just don't know what to do for him.

TRACIE: Yeah.

JULIE: I looked at his quiz and he is actually, he actually did better than a lot of my native speakers. So I think that's good. But it's frustrating when you can't explain something to someone.

TRACIE: Yeah. And do you have the other teachers in the school... do they come to you with any problems that they might be having in their classrooms? Are you like a go-between for your students?

JULIE: Usually, if it's something like that it's the ESL that they ask, that's who they go to if they're having trouble with communication.

TRACIE: Uh huh.

JULIE: It used to be me, but then when we got so many Spanish speakers, then we got ESL teachers and they have taken over that.

TRACIE: Okay. And do you umm... ever work with the ESL teachers in helping your students in Spanish.

JULIE: Um... I don't think... See, I teach Spanish IV and by the time they come to me, they've already been through Spanish III. So we don't usually have issues with English. And I don't know if Lisa, my colleague, she does Spanish III. I don't know if she runs into situations where they are having trouble with English as well because I think the counselors probably don't place them in Spanish unless they are out of ESL classes. I'm guessing there.

TRACIE: Okay. And what kind of contact do you have with their parents? Are you just talking with them at conferences or do you...

JULIE: Right. I almost never have any kind of contact except at conferences.

TRACIE: Okay. All right. And what resources do you use? Do you make up your own curriculum or do you have a book?

JULIE: In Spanish IV I make up my own.

TRACIE: Okay and how long have you been doing that?

JULIE: Spanish IV or...

TRACIE: Making up your own.

JULIE: Um, well in Spanish IV that's pretty much since the beginning. I have never used a textbook in that class so that would be all twelve years.

TRACIE: Would you rather have your own curriculum or would it be easier if you had a book.

JULIE: Most of the time I'd rather make up my own. But for my Spanish speakers, I would like... I think that they could probably use some other help with writing.

TRACIE: Uh huh. Okay. Do you ever feel self-conscious about speaking Spanish with your native Spanish speakers?

JULIE: Oh, not really? I'm pretty comfortable with them.

TRACIE: Yeah, okay. And do you ever have any students that come into your classroom and think that it might be an easy "A" for them?

JULIE: Oh yes! That's a big thing.

TRACIE: Okay. Umm... is there anything else that I might have missed or anything else that you want to tell me about your program that might be helpful to me?

JULIE: The only thing that I can tell you is that I have far more questions than answers with both my native speakers and my heritage speakers.

TRACIE: Okay. All right. I guess... Can you think of any questions right now that I might be able to...?

JULIE: Umm...

TRACIE: I guess it will help me to know what kind of things you need.

JULIE: I think the biggest thing would be if there's something I could read that would help me understand because it seems to me that it's sort of a continuum, you know. You

can't really put them in a neat category because each person has had a different experience with the language.

TRACIE: Uh huh.

JULIE: So if there's something that I could read from people who are also going through this.

TRACIE: Yeah. I have a book that I can't think of right now and it's downstairs, but I'll send you the name of the book.

JULIE: That would be great because it's somewhere to start cause the heritage thing, honestly I think I just started hearing about it in the last year, two years. Umm. And then this year I think is the first year that I've noticed that I have three or four that really stand out that have not quite, you know, they're not native speakers, but they've been treated as though they are.

TRACIE: Yeah.

JULIE: In Spanish III. You know, and Lisa [name changed] is aware of it too. She'll... you know, the one, they put him in Spanish III and then she put him in Spanish I because she knew that he needed it. So I guess this try to figure it all out. Figure out, you know, how to assess them. Figure out where they start and then what to do with them after that.

TRACIE: Alright, yeah. I'll send you that book and there's another article by a teacher who has heritage language speakers in her classroom too that was really helpful.

JULIE: Ok, that would be great.

TRACIE: And I think that's it for now with the questions and I'll probably e-mail you with probably some other questions that I'll think of later.

JULIE: Okay, that sounds good.

TRACIE: Alright. Thank you for doing this for me.

JULIE: No problem. Definitely interesting. Okay. Thanks.

TRACIE: Bye.

E-mail correspondence with Julie

JULIE: Since we're going to be talking about heritage learners, I'll just go ahead and ask this - do you have any ideas or information on how to help them with commands? I have one in Spanish IV who is having a lot of trouble. I have always had my "Spanish Learners" (English is their 1st language) use the "Yo"-form-opposite-ending model to figure them out. For "Spanish Speakers" (Span. is their 1st language), I tell them that these will come naturally, but that they need to use the word Ud or tú after the command to make sure it "matches".

I have one heritage speaker, Juan [Name changed to protect privacy], who has told me that neither of these methods works for him, and I can tell he's very confused, and yesterday I actually had to say, "I don't know how to help you, but I'll try to find out." Do you have any suggestions? I have 2 girls in Spanish IV - one I know falls into the heritage speaker category and one I suspect (she did not turn in an autobiography, so I don't know for sure yet), so I'm going to look at their practice sheets today.

TRACIE: Here is what I got back from the teacher about commands:

"Well, usually my students use the command form- tú y Ud. without attention to the rest of the sentence. Using command Tu when talking to a strange for example. I show the two forms and how I get them (from presente del subjuntivo para Ud.)

and Presente Indicativo dropping S for the TU form. After that, the tests they do them correctly but in the future the mistake still occurs. I hope it helps. Anyhow, tell the teacher that ACTFL has a Native Speaker special group with forum for questions".

Here is the book I told you about: "Language and Culture in Learning: Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers of Spanish", edited by Barbara J. Merino. I had to get it from interlibrary loan from U of I. I also found some good articles at <http://www.heritagelanguages.org/>. There's one in particular that I found helpful. It is one by Maria Carreira in Volume 5.

TRACIE: How do your native Spanish speakers, your heritage language speakers, and your native English speakers interact during class?

JULIE: In general, they all interact pretty well together, because they went through Spanish III together the year before. My NESs feel comfortable asking them questions and the others feel comfortable either answering or admitting they don't know the answer. At times in the past, I have had a problem when they are working in groups, with NESs relying on NSSs to translate everything to Spanish for them, instead of trying to do some of it themselves. When this happens, I change the groups for the next project and have my Spanish speakers work together. In terms of getting along, if I have problems with that, it is usually Spanish speakers not getting along with other SS, or English speakers not getting along with other ES.

TRACIE: Can you give me more examples of what your heritage language students might do in class that is different from the native Spanish speakers?

JULIE: The main thing I have observed is heritage speakers making mistakes with conjugating verbs (in speaking). In general, the heritage speakers have less confidence

than the NSSs, although this depends on their personalities – I have one girl whose mistakes do not bother her at all and a boy who is extremely self-conscious about his.

TRACIE: What are some things that you have noticed that your heritage language speakers need to work on in Spanish?

JULIE: They need to study more, especially verb tenses and commands.

TRACIE: Is there any specific reason that your only contact with the parents is at conferences? For example, do they not have any problems in class?

JULIE: Right – I haven't seen any problems that parents would be able to help solve, or any other issues that would require parent involvement. Having a bunch of seniors in the room tends to bring out the best (as far as maturity) in the younger NSSs and HLSs.

TRACIE: Do you feel that the fact that you are a non-native speaker affects how the heritage language students and native Spanish speakers view the class?

JULIE: I let them know right away that the only thing I can help them with is grammar and writing, because I have had more hours of formal education with Spanish than they have. I also stress that they are the real experts in the language, because they know what sounds right, so they kind of understand what to expect right from the beginning. I think they feel valued because I frequently ask their opinion on which word or phrase sounds better to them, and I also think it helps that Lisa [Name changed], who has them for Spanish III, also has a similar attitude. I hope this answers your questions – let me know if you have any more!

TRACIE: How many native English speakers do you have in your classes?

JULIE: I have 57 native English speakers in Spanish II and 27 in Spanish IV.

TRACIE: I was wondering if you could give me an example of a lesson that is

Part of the Comparisons Standard and one that is part of the Communities Standard?

JULIE: An example of a lesson that is part of the Comparisons standard: With grammar, we make a "Book of Knowledge" in Spanish IV that helps the students analyze grammar (focusing on verb tenses) in both English and Spanish.

For comparisons of culture, one example is a lesson on Urban Legends, where we talk about examples in both cultures and read about some Urban Legends in Spanish.

An example of an assignment that is part of the Communities standard:

I give an assignment in both Spanish II and IV called "Talk to a Spanish Speaker." Students ask questions outside of class based on a topic I assign. They are only allowed to talk to the same person a maximum of 4 times and are encouraged to talk to a variety of people, including children, neighbors, etc.

TRACIE: Also, were the foreign language standards part of your teacher education program or were you already teaching when they came out? Did you learn about them at a conference or at a district meeting?

JULIE: I think the standards came out after I had been teaching, because I don't remember seeing them until then. :) I can't remember where I first learned about them, but finally got an actual copy of them from a colleague a few years ago.

Interview with Elena

TRACIE: How long have you been teaching?

ELENA: Seven years.

TRACIE: Okay and how long have you had uh, native Spanish speaking students?

ELENA: Umm.. Five years.

TRACIE: Okay.

ELENA: Oh, in fact, six years

TRACIE: Okay. And how many, uh native Spanish speakers do you currently have in your classroom?

ELENA: 68.

TRACIE: Wow! That's a lot.

ELENA: Yeah, but last year, last semester I had 105, so...

TRACIE: Wow! Okay. So do you have them in the same classroom as uh, your...

ELENA: No.

TRACIE: Okay

ELENA: I have two groups of what we call Spanish Grammar I for the freshman. Two groups for what we call Spanish Grammar II. And one group is basically all Hispanics. That is in regular Spanish four.

TRACIE: Okay, So your regular Spanish IV, does that include native Spanish speakers and Native English speakers?

ELENA: Yeah, but I have only one Anglo American in that group.

TRACIE: Oh, Okay. Umm, so do they uh, work on the same things?

ELENA: Yes. Yes they do. Although I have another group of only Anglo-Americans. So the difference I do is with my Anglos I work more on the vocab. Building. Vocabulary building. And go over and reviewing the vocab. And with my Spanish

speakers in the last level I work more on reading, interpretation and writing.

Composition and those sort of things. But basically the material is the same.

TRACIE: Okay. So when you're reading, what sort of things do you read?

ELENA: Okay. It's uh dual credit class. So it is established by the community college.

So there are short stories. There are text taken from newspapers. Uh, what else...

Interviews with famous artists or writers. Ummm... interviews with musicians. This is with the Spanish IV.

TRACIE: Okay, alright. How do you think that your program is working for the native Spanish speakers?

ELENA: Ummm...the specific for Spanish native speakers is Spanish Grammar I and Spanish Grammar II. It's been happening for I think ten years maybe or eleven. Okay? And umm... when I started there was no curriculum nothing. Nothing at all. Just a book that was very old fashioned so I started with a book by, um, oh my goodness it just slipped my mind. Umm... the author. Okay, but anyway, I started with that book with uh, and I was kind of happy with that, but the population was changing because now we have more second generation of Hispanics. And the needs are kind of different so I started working in a different way because I was not happy with that. And umm. What I'm doing now is I sit down with the English department and now since the majority of these kids are going through ESL classes, they will never have the literature terminology that the English students have, so what I'm doing is part of the program of the first year is terminology in literature. So we read basically short stories and we work on what is the clause the same point of view. All these elements that are in narrative. And then we work a lot on fir and with spelling, accent marks. In the second year we read the novel. And

we read Garcia Marcus. We read the Grant. The Holme. We make discussions. We work on vocab. And by the end the year they have to present. I give them chances to present five different projects based on the novel. Kind of a TV program or a letter to the editor. Changing the title, changing the book author. Things like that. So I'm now I'm getting much more satisfied with the results. I see them getting involved. I see them interested in reading and uh, you know doing stuff in Spanish. So finally I think I'm on the right track.

TRACIE: Okay. That's good. It sounds like it's a, an English class, but it's in Spanish.

ELENA: Yeah. Because that's what they need because they are [unintelligible] and just giving grammar by grammar doesn't help them. Because they already know. I know that some schools teach all the verb tenses etcetera. But I found out that they know them.

They know the uses of tenses. What we need to teach them are the tenses that they were not exposed to because they are away from the native country where they speak the native language. So they are not able use many cases the subjunctive, the conditional.

What else have I noticed? Some forms the future is not very common among them.

Umm, any linking words to start nice paragraphs. You know academic paragraphs such as therefore, so then. These sorts of things. As they have the same problems in English.

So basically, the same problem in English students. Know Americans speak English since they were born, but they need this kind of education in order to get better their writing as well as their ability to communicate, right?

TRACIE: Uh huh. Umm... do you ever, do you come across any problems with any dialects that might be different among the students?

ELENA: Well, yes. I do have because they are from El Santadore or Guatemala or Honduras. And some of them would say. Umm. We don't use this or we use that so what or how can I solve that. I put a big board on the back of the room which says "También se dice" so when it comes up one word "oh no, I don't know the word like this. We say this. "Okay. We get in the chart so that everybody can see that there are other ways of saying. I also have a student from Guatemala that arrived using [unintelligible] and... but something very interesting happened. The second week she was dropping the use of. Because everyone else was not using. She had accommodated her linguistics, abilities to linguistic that she was living with, so very interesting.

TRACIE: Okay. And how about any problems with any different levels among your students.

ELENA: This is a big issue because we don't have any placement test. They are basically placed in Spanish Grammar I because they have a last name that is a Spanish name. So what happens when they arrive in my class first day I give a pre-test and usually. Let's say 10% drop because if they are very much into the English or don't have parents that speak any Spanish at home anymore or if they have any learning disability so they really cannot do anything in Spanish either. So they drop. Umm... but also I see other problems. The counselors go figure that is a safe haven for the ones who do not speak English. So I have kids that just arrive from Mexico with high school diploma but that they graduate earlier. They are able to get into our high school. They put in the Spanish Grammar I, but of course their levels are above anybody else in the room. Also the students that never wrote or read anything in Spanish. So what do I try to do is to working in cooperative learning. Are you familiar with that?

TRACIE: Yeah.

ELENA: Where they help each other and I put these kids who are more fluent in the language with the students that have more difficulties but it is a challenge. It really is a challenge.

TRACIE: Okay. And uh, what kind of contact do you have with your students' parents?

ELENA: Well, parent conferences they usually come. And umm... and I call them.

Every time they make something exceptional. For example, we made umm... ABC book project. They wrote a book using the ABC in Spanish. You know it was really, really a great result. So the ones that did a great job, I called them, talked to the parents. And of course the ones that are behind, I call them again. Or when they are failing or they need extra help I call, or for example at the beginning of the semester when I saw a couple of students really detached I called the parents to see what was going on. So this is the sort of contact that I have. I don't visit them at home, but I meet them in the market, in the church. Sometimes I am in the choir, the church choir. One of the mothers is part of the choir as well. So I have this kind of contact.

TRACIE: Okay. And do you ever run into students who take your classes because they think it'll be easy for them? Like an easy "A".

ELENA: Oh, yeah. That's the first thought. "I speak Spanish, I'm going to get an 'A'" These are the first ones to drop. Second semester they don't come back. Because it's really hard. It's like taking an English for a native speaker. So they think they are going to learn the colors or the numbers or something like this and it's nothing like that. So it really takes a lot of effort. Umm... but we don't have that much of students thinking like that because now with 10 years of doing this course usually they come to the classroom

knowing that this is Spanish for Spanish speakers. Not going to be the same as in the other groups. So I think the last three year I didn't have any problems with that.

TRACIE: Do you use any online, from the internet any resources from there?

ELENA: Not especially. I mean, once in awhile I use a kind of a web quest that is called "Track Star". It's a website that's developed a kind of a web quest I use with them. Or they use Power Point to present a specific thing. A Power Point project to present a specific, usually cultural material like, uh, Carnaval in different countries, or whatever. But all online exercise are so far I can't get anything. What I can find is grammar exercises like, so, I mean and then from English to Spanish. So that doesn't help them. That's not helping me. That's not their needs. Their needs are in Spanish specific words. Their needs are for example, how to express themselves without using the English in the middle of the conversation, without using Spanglish. So I couldn't find anything. One I found out in a conference I went is Doctor Potowski. She has lots of experience in University of Illinois, Chicago. She gave me the idea of working with Spanglish and that's what I did. I made a big, huge unit on Spanglish. The kids got engaged because it's what they are using. And they could see that it's a phenomena that happens all over the world, it's not just what happens with them with Spanish and English. And then I could and see what would be the corresponding Spanish word. And they really got, you know, really, very interested in it and I could feel the vocabulary because they use Spanglish when they don't know the word in Spanish, but they know in English because of so many years living among Americans speaking English. So it's really helped to open their minds to open the way to get more vocab. and be more fluent. But online, I couldn't find anything. You know, Spanish for Spanish Speakers is something new.

Umm... Hay what's the name of this lady? Come on, it's on the top of my mind. And she is the one in '87 started to appear stuff about it. A book. I only received books, you know, different books to use with them in 2004, maybe. Yeah, 2004 – 2005. Now I've been receiving samples. Before that, there was nothing, nothing at all. It's just what they have for regular Spanish and then one little section here for the native speakers. But, nuh uh, it does not solve the problem. Absolutely not.

TRACIE: Okay. I think that's all for the questions I have for now. If I have any other questions I will contact you in an e-mail.

E-mail correspondence with Elena

TRACIE: I have another teacher whom I am interviewing who has heritage speakers in her classroom. She has a question about commands. I'm going to paste her question here. Do you have any suggestions?

"Since we're going to be talking about heritage learners, I'll just go ahead and ask this - do you have any ideas or information on how to help them with commands? I have one in Spanish IV who is having a lot of trouble. I have always had my "Spanish Learners" (English is their 1st language) use the "Yo"-form-opposite-ending model to figure them out. For "Spanish Speakers" (Span. is their 1st language), I tell them that these will come naturally, but that they need to use the word Ud or tú after the command to make sure it "matches".

> I have one heritage speaker, Juan [named changed to protect privacy], who has told me that neither of these methods works for him, and I can tell he's very confused, and yesterday I actually had to say, "I don't know how to help you, but I'll try to find out."

Do you have any suggestions? I have 2 girls in Spanish IV - one I know falls into the heritage speaker category and one I suspect (she did not turn in an autobiography, so I don't know for sure yet), so I'm going to look at their practice sheets today.

ELENA: Well, usually my students use the command form- tú y Ud. without attention to the rest of the sentence. Using command Tu when talking to a strange for example.

I show the two forms and how I get them (from presente del subjuntivo para Ud.) and Presente Indicativo dropping S for the TU form.

After that, the tests they do them correctly but in the future the mistake still occurs.

I hope it helps.

Anyhow, tell the teacher that ACTFL has a Native Speaker special group with forum for questions.

TRACIE: What is your educational background?

Do you feel like the fact that you're a native speaker makes a difference in teaching native Spanish speakers or heritage language speakers?

Have you read very much research about how to teach heritage language speakers or is it basically trial and error?

Would you like to use your own curriculum or would you prefer to work from a book tailored to your needs and your students' needs?

In the interview you mentioned a book that you worked out of when you started teaching your classes. Can you remember the name of the book?

You also mentioned a lady who gave you the idea of working with Spanglish, but you couldn't remember her name. Can you remember her name now as well?

ELENA: I have a bachelor degree in Teaching English and Portuguese for 9-12 grades

M.A. in TESOL _ Teaching English to Speakers of other languages

Endorsement in Spanish - 9-12 grades

I also have a degree in Teaching elementary and Middle school in Brasil (it is not accepted in USA)

I am not a Spanish native speaker. I learned Spanish here in the USA - taking college courses. What makes my teaching different is that as I had been a Portuguese speaker and TEACHER - and Portuguese is a romance language as Spanish- gives me an insight into the strengths and weakness of my students.

I have read a lot of research- INTERNET and books as well I have been to 3 conferences dealing with native speakers. One was in Washington D.C. last March: Spanish in Contact with other languages. I also took a short course via Internet on managing a Heritage Language Speakers class. As a member of AATSP I receive their newsletter and in the last 4 years lots of research in the area has been published as well as teaching strategies and successful practices.

At the beginning, I had no training or mentoring to teach these classes. The previous instructor was not a certified teacher and she gave me an old book out of print with a grammar approach. Next year I got in touch with the work of Guadalupe Valdés (she is the pioneer in the field) and I adopted the book: Español Escrito Curso para hispanohablantes bilingues. 5th edition by Guadalupe Valdés and Richard V. Teschner. Book and workbook. I used them for 3 years but as it was addressed to college students I needed to make many changes.

Then, as our school is trying to connect different disciplines to enhance learning, I decided to work with the English department. My students usually don't go through English I and English II because they are taking classes to have them ready for academic English not exactly ESL (a little more advanced courses). So, I decided to work with them in Spanish the concepts (literature, for example) as well as Research paper to help them go through the high school and then to College.

With this my students got more engaged because they can see the relevance- we are not studying Spanish for the sake of Spanish but studying Spanish through literature, etc.

About working with Spanglish, I got the idea from Dr. Kim Potowski, professor of Spanish at the University of Illinois, Chicago. I brought her for a seminar during our Language Conference last October and naturally Spanglish was brought up. She works with the College kids to understand the language and social process of Spanglish. I decided to incorporate into my freshmen and sophomore curriculum and the response was phenomenal. Besides the interest, they could relate to it and analyzing

Spanglish terms we compared with the corresponding formal Spanish. I noticed afterwards that their awareness of the appropriate usage of the language increased a lot.

I have been using *Literatura moderna Hispanica*, an anthology, edited by J.R. González and also *Encuentros, curso de introduccion*, by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. And I still used "Español Escrito" by Valdéz when we work with grammar aspects.

I could not use a book as it is because they don't address the curriculum and the needs of my students. By the way those needs have change in the last 3 years because now there are more 2nd generation students and so their command of the language is different. I hope these notes answer all your questions

TRACIE: I had a great time visiting your classroom on Friday. I am so impressed at your Spanish and teaching abilities! There are wonderful things happening at [name omitted] High School. Just a few more questions:

Did you teach in Brazil? How long?

What brought you to the U.S.?

Where did you get your bachelor degree?

Where did you get your endorsement in Spanish?

ELENA: I got my bachelor degree in Brazil in Languages.

I taught English and Portuguese in Brazil for Middle school classes and High Schools as well as College from 1976 to 2000

I got my endorsement through University of Iowa.

I came to USA because my daughter got married here. I wanted to be close to her. It was a pleasure to have you in my classes. Adios

TRACIE: I'm just checking in with you because I haven't heard from you. I hope I haven't overwhelmed you with too many questions. If it helps, I already have found four of the five standards in the lessons that you talked about or that I observed. The only one I still need is the communities standard. How do you incorporate this one into your lessons?

ELENA: Communities standard: They research among their families and friends vocabulary that are Spanglish when we study Spanglish. I also bring members of the Community for interviews. Spanish Grammar II makes a proyecto: Orgullo latino- where the groups interview and present one member of the community that somehow is outstanding.(using the Orgullo latino idea from tv Univision)

TRACIE: It's me again. I was wondering if you make available any high interest reading books for your students to read. Can they check out books from the library or do you read anything as a class?

ELENA: Well, we read lots of short stories by Carlos Fuentes, Cortazar, Garcia Marquez. For the novel unit, my class has a set of Cronica de una muerte anunciada. So everybody reads the same book. Most of the books our library has in Spanish is by women authors living in the US so I tried to bring some male point of view as I have many boys in my classes. They enjoy the reading as long as we read in class with lots of questions and discussions about details such the Arab community, their food, the clothing in Colombia, funeral rituals etc. As long as lots of new vocab.

Interview with Silvia by e-mail

TRACIE: How long have you been teaching Spanish?

SILVIA: In US, this is my second year.

TRACIE: How long have you been teaching Spanish to native Spanish speakers?

SILVIA: This is my first year in US

TRACIE: How many heritage language speakers do you have in your classroom?

SILVIA: During my two periods for Spanish Speakers all are natives. Total: 23 + 18

TRACIE: What is your background with Spanish?

SILVIA: I am a Spanish Speaker. I am from Spain in an exchange program between both Embassies.

TRACIE: When did you decide to develop methods or lesson plans to work with heritage

Language speakers?

SILVIA: This is my first time, but I have changed the plan of working during this semester.

TRACIE: Was there a time when you had your heritage language speakers do the same work as your native English speaking students?

SILVIA: Yes. Last year I taught Spanish 2 and there were Spanish Speakers. And it is occurring the same during this year with my peers in regular Spanish.

TRACIE: If you have native Spanish speakers and native English speakers in the same class, how do you manage them together?

SILVIA: Ooops!! It is pretty difficult. The Spanish they learn they know. So they get bored. But, sometimes they need it because they make mistakes. With the books that we use we have the chance to ask and do Spanish for Heritage Students. There are ideas to work with them.

TRACIE: What types of things do your native Spanish speakers work on in class?

SILVIA: We do readings, writings about different accents, origins, history...and trying to teach them to write "la tilde" but I try to work with them the learn of all the Spanish Culture from all the countries. I force them to speak in Spanish with different vocabulary that the one they use at home. They need to know that there is not only Spanish from Mexico or Spain. Actually, they are doing an investigation project about each Spanish Speaking culture.

TRACIE: Is this different from what your native English speakers work on?

SILVIA: Yes, of course. The English speakers need to learn grammar and to understand the mistakes as part of the learning process. I force them to speak and listen to the foreign

language all the time. With them we work more on conjugation, projects of communicative situations...

TRACIE: How is your Spanish program working for your native Spanish speakers?

SILVIA: We try to help them realize that a better job depend on the languages that they know. To value their culture, and understand different ones

TRACIE: What is a typical Spanish class like?

SILVIA: Learn to communicate, culture, food, music, history.... The study of a language involves a lot of things, not only a language.

TRACIE: What are some obstacles you face with having heritage language speakers in your Spanish class?

SILVIA: They get bored, disturb their peers and they do not challenge themselves.

TRACIE: What kind of contact do you have with their parents?

SILVIA: They do not come very often to the PC and when you call them there are these responses:

- a. there is nobody
- b. If someone gets the message, never get it back
- c. Some are very conscious and help you

TRACIE: What are some of the resources that you use?

SILVIA: Internet, movies, songs...

TRACIE: What are some resources that you wish were available that currently are not?

SILVIA: To be able to go to field trips to the Mexican Art Museum in Chicago, for example. To the theater in Spanish...

2nd Interview with Silvia

TRACIE: Did you teach in Spain before you came here? What is your experience there?

SILVIA: Yes. I have started teaching in 1994 in a private academy, and the following year I started in a School. During my High School and University I did loads of Private Classes

TRACIE: What city in Spain are you from?

SILVIA: [City in Spain].

TRACIE: Do you run into any problems because the students are from Mexico and you are from Spain?

SILVIA: It depends on the student. A few students they think that Mexico is the only Speaking country, but most of the students want and discover all the differences and similitude between the Spanish Speaking countries.

On the other hand, we work with “grammar” focusing on the main mistakes that they do as bilingual students: doubling consonants, strong parts of the words, capitalizations, tildes....

TRACIE: Can you give me more details on a typical lesson that you use with your students?

Now they are doing an investigation project. They have been investigating different Spanish Speaking countries. It has been a group work. They had to read and get information about where it is, the limits, costumes, language, mountains, rivers, animals, plants, politic, independence, weather, country economy, typical food, dance, religion... They had to do a Power Point, draw a map and do the oral presentation in class. I am focusing on make them speak in Spanish with different vocabulary that the one they use at home. So, they enrich

their language.

TRACIE: Do you think that having the native speakers in a classroom by themselves works better? Why?

SILVIA: Of course. They have the same level and problems. Their challenge is different. They need to build vocabulary, express themselves and speak in Spanish.. They have to realize the English inferences they do in the Spanish language.

TRACIE: Can you give an example of lessons that include the 5 C's of the foreign language standards?

SILVIA: Sorry for answering late, but with the spring break... and the finals.. I am pretty busy.

The perfect example that covers the five C's is the one that I am doing with Spanish Speakers 2. They have been divided in groups of two trying to look for information about one Spanish American Country. It involved: situation in the map, language they speak, population, capital, religion, actual government, food, typical dances, instruments, music, popular people, independence... They had to elaborate a Power Point with each information, draw a map and do an oral presentation. Everything in Spanish.

Then, when the groups do the Oral presentations while the rest of the class take notes about it. They will need this information for collecting it in a folder as a summary. In this folder they will do an economy graph, which one is the country with more population and differences and similarities between these countries. I hope I have answered your question. Let me know if not. Another one will be to cook the typical food from a country. They can see the five C's too.

APPENDIX C. TEACHER CLASS CHARTS**Susan**

Class	Number of Students
AP Spanish/ Spanish for Hispanics	21 NES / 5 HLS
AP Spanish/ Spanish for Hispanics	16 NES / 8 HLS
Cultural Issues	N/A

Julie

Class	Number of Students
Spanish II	17 NES
Spanish II	17 NES
Spanish II	23 NES / 1 HLS
Spanish IV	1 NES / 7 HLS
Spanish IV	10 NES / 5 HLS
Spanish IV	16 NES / 3 HLS

Elena

Class	Number of Students
Spanish Grammar I	15 HLS
Spanish Grammar I	15 HLS
Spanish Grammar II	16 HLS
Spanish Grammar II	15 HLS
Spanish IV	1 Lao Born / 3 NES / 2 HLS
Spanish IV	1 NES / 9 HLS

Silvia

Class	Number of Students
Spanish Speakers II	22 HLS
Spanish IV	12 NES
English Language Learning	N/A
English Language Learning	N/A

RESOURCES

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