

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS  
FOR BETTER SERVING NEBRASKA'S SPANISH HERITAGE LANGUAGE  
LEARNERS

By

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In Nebraska and across the United States a growing number of heritage language speakers of Spanish are enrolling in Spanish language courses during secondary school. Current scholarship has suggested that these heritage language learners (HLLs) have very different instructional needs than learners of second or foreign languages. Because Spanish language instruction in Nebraska secondary schools has been traditionally conceptualized only as foreign language instruction, classroom teachers and the World Language departments may not be adequately prepared to meet the needs of HLLs. This dissertation examined the experiences of Nebraska secondary Spanish teachers who worked with HLLs in order to inform the creation of relevant professional learning experiences for pre- and in-service teachers. Specifically, data were collected from a statewide survey of Nebraska Spanish teachers (n=92) and follow-up semi-structured interviews of nine of the survey participants representing three sub-groups.

Findings from this design study indicated that while most teachers recognized significant differences between HLLs and L2 learners enrolled in their courses and had very positive attitudes towards HL maintenance, few were engaged in significant instructional differentiation practices in mixed-enrollment courses. There were few reported instances of HLL specific courses offerings such as Spanish for Spanish

speakers (SSS), though interviews revealed a growing interest in developing such courses across the state. Respondents reported, on average, receiving very little pre- or in-service professional development related to HLLs but indicated strong interest in learning more about serving HLLs. These data informed the design and delivery of a practitioner-led professional development workshop focused on one of the most significant practitioner-articulated learning needs: instructional differentiation for HLLs in mixed courses. Additional professional development areas identified by study included sociolinguistic characteristics of HLL affect and motivation, models of curriculum design and development for SSS courses, models of course articulation sequences and placement procedures for HLLs in World Language departments, and frank collegial discourse on the subject of teacher qualifications for HL instruction. This dissertation illuminated the importance of practitioner-led inquiry into “problems of practice,” and suggested several foci for future efforts in better preparing Spanish teachers to work with HLLs.

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My students, past, present and future: as always, my work is for you.

The many wonderful teachers I have had the pleasure to learn with and from,

most especially my husband and my parents.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*A glance around the spacious classroom, filled with the hum of many conversations and rustling papers, provides an image of busy, active students. Their desks are askew so that they might face the partner with whom they're speaking. Each is holding a different map of the same city center; one student gives directions to another so that she might trace a path to indicated locations. The students negotiate meaning with gestures, halting phrases, signals in the air... Because this is an intermediate Spanish course, there is a great deal of miscommunication and labored expression.*

*"Vamos, no.. vayan? Um... vaya a la derecho," Emma says to her partner, who gazes at her quizzically.*

*"Derecho, o a la derecha?" Noah asks for clarification, pointing first straight ahead for "derecho" and to his right for "a la derecha."*

*"Derecha," she confirms, with added emphasis, and he makes the appropriate move on his map.*

*These negotiations are taking place around the room, arms are waved, questions are posed, dictionaries are consulted and lines are drawn on maps. Some pairs seem to have a rhythm to their communication; they've established a system for asking and answering one another's simple queries and they're moving swiftly through the task, drawing lines on their maps and checking off targets with growing confidence in the effectiveness of their communication.*

*A few other pairs are not working so efficiently, some confusion and general frustration is apparent. One of those pairs is Valentina and Emily.*

*Emily has a look of frustration that borders on teary, looking down at her map, so full of erasures that the paper is beginning to tear in some parts. Emily is a good student and takes even small academic struggles very seriously. Her partner, Valentina, is the one tasked with giving the directions in this activity and she seems exasperated.*

*Valentina comes from a family of Salvadorian immigrants and even though she's spent most her life in the U.S., she speaks Spanish at home with her family and with some of her friends at school. Valentina's rapid colloquial speech and Salvadorean pronunciation, with its aspirated final /s/, are different from the language of the textbook and the teacher. Emily is understandably frustrated by Valentina's directions; they're perfectly comprehensible to a Spanish speaker, but not to an intermediate Spanish learner. At the same time, Valentina does not seem to know how to adjust her speech in a way that would make her more comprehensible to Emily. At an impasse, Valentina turns Emily's map toward her and marks the next target herself, giving up on making herself understood.*

*Besides Valentina, there are two other students in this intermediate Spanish class of 25 who come from Spanish speaking families, Lucía and Joaquín. Lucía is a relatively recent Mexican immigrant for whom Spanish is by far her dominant language; she is taking all mainstream courses this year for the first time having just "graduated" from the ELL program. Joaquín's family is also of Mexican origin, but he was born in the U.S. and though he certainly feels more comfortable speaking English than Spanish, he*

*has several times vocally proclaimed that he has no need for this course because he “already speak(s) Spanish.”*

*Lucía and her partner, Olivia, appear to be successfully completing the task. Lucía’s role is to receive directions from Olivia, but a closer examination reveals that Lucía does most of the talking. When Olivia begins a phrase, Lucía finishes it then repeats it back to Olivia for confirmation.*

*“Vaya...um...dos...” Olivia begins.*

*“Voy dos cuadras, ok.. para el este o el oeste? ¿Para el este? Dos cuadras para el este,” Lucía finishes, gleefully checking-off a target, guided by Olivia’s nods. Olivia seems grateful to occupy the role of adjudicator. Lucía’s guesses, she needs only to nod yes or no and the work gets done.*

*The work is not getting done, however, on the other side of the room where Joaquín and Ethan are sitting, their desks pushed far enough away from one another to impede any attempt at collaboration. Their maps are lying face up on the desks, in plain view of one another – a violation of the rules of the activity. It’s an “information gap” exchange that depends on one partner’s ignorance of the information the other partner can provide him; the gap in information provides the context for meaningful communication and negotiation of meaning.*

*Joaquín and Ethan are not negotiating meaning. Joaquín is doodling ever-smaller circles in his notebook and Ethan is repeatedly folding and un-folding a corner of his map; they avoid eye contact with each other and with the teacher as she address them.*

*When redirected by the teacher, as she has noticed their lack of activity and come by to prompt them back to the task, the young men scoot their desks halfheartedly closer and pick up their maps.*

*“This is stupid,” Joaquín mutters under his breath, “Tonto.”*

*“Let’s just get it done,” Ethan implores. “Just tell me where to make the marks...”*

*Satisfied that they have taken up their tools the teacher moves away, responding to a raised hand at the front of the room. Meanwhile, Joaquín pushes his map closer to the edge of his desk, so that Ethan can see. When Joaquín sees that the teacher has moved to other side of the room he says, “Here, just copy it down.” Not a word of Spanish is exchanged between the two.*

*Later that week, the same 25 intermediate Spanish students sit quietly in rows, intently writing, erasing, or looking around the room in hopes of finding an answer hidden in a poster or forgotten on the whiteboard. They are taking a short test, the content of which mirrors the information gap map activity they completed earlier in the week. The assessment asks students to look at a map and give written directions for several imaginary characters to a variety of locations on the map. It is presumed that students will demonstrate their knowledge of the imperative mood to give commands, use prepositions of location and that they will show sensitivity to register, using the more formal Ud. and informal tú as they direct these different individuals.*

*Most students seem to be working diligently and confidently, including the three Spanish speakers. The three Spanish speakers, Valentina, Lucía and Joaquín are the first to finish and hand in their papers. It seems natural that they work more quickly; their production is less labored and far more fluent than the other students. Gradually the other students hand in their papers as well and the class adjourns for the day.*

*Despite the ease with which they complete the assessment, none of the three Spanish speakers receive the highest scores. In fact, while all three succeed in producing communicatively effective instructions - that is, instructions that would be understood by a native speaker - only one of the three passes the test. Joaquín's alarmingly frequent misspellings cost him valuable points, while Valentina fails to distinguish between formal and informal registers, treating all of her interlocutors as the familiar Salvadorian "vos." Lucía produces orthographically correct and appropriate indications, but does not use a single instance of the imperative mood that the assessment demands. Instead of providing directions in the form of "Go three blocks east, turn right," she simply describes the location of the destination "It's across from the pharmacy on the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> street and Libertador." While the latter is a perfectly acceptable direction in a practical communicative sense, it does not produce the imperative mood the instructor hoped to assess and that the assessment instructions specify.*

These three students, Valentina, Joaquín and Lucía, present a dilemma: they presumably speak Spanish and yet they perform poorly on classroom tasks that seem simple and straightforward. Their communicative proficiency exceeds what even the most able learners in this Intermediate Spanish course could hope to attain with years of



study. The course should be “easy” for them, but it’s not. Grammatical explanations befuddle Valentina, Joaquín and Lucía, yet they produce grammatically sophisticated speech and text. In class they are alternately bored, frustrated, unchallenged, and when they are engaged, their exuberance and skill intimidates their less proficient peers.

The teacher wonders: What are they learning from this course? Anything? Do the other students benefit from their presence? How? Why are they here? Isn’t there more appropriate instruction for them? Should they work separately from the other students? Shouldn’t they be engaged with more complex content? Isn’t some of this instruction irrelevant to them? What should I do?

I first asked these questions as a student teacher more than 10 years ago in a classroom much like the one described in this vignette, and they describe a dilemma that has shaped my professional practice and scholarly inquiry ever since. While the students and experiences in this vignette are fictional<sup>1</sup>, they are inspired by composites of real students and real classroom experiences from my teaching career. Even as I write, I continue to work as a full-time classroom teacher working with students like Valentina, Joaquín and Lucía, but I have also begun to consider these dilemmas from a scholarly standpoint as well. This dissertation documents the results of iterative attempts to investigate and address this problem of practice, the results of which I hope will inform the work of other teachers and scholars invested in the education of Spanish-speaking students in U.S. schools. For the last four years I have been pursuing my Ed.D. at the

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<sup>1</sup> Psuedonyms were chosen from lists of most popular baby names in English and Spanish in 2014 at [www.babycenter.com](http://www.babycenter.com). No connection to any particular current or former student was intended. None of the fictional characters in this vignette are meant to depict a particular individual.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, as well as working full-time as a high school Spanish teacher. From my position as a practitioner and scholar, I also hope that this study illuminates, even in a small way, something of the nature of educator expertise and the development of a scholar of educational practice in the context of the Carnegie Project for Education Doctorate (CPED) initiative.

### **Context of the Problem**

Classrooms like the one described in the opening vignette are increasingly the norm across the United States. In 2012 the Pew Hispanic Center reported that Latinos now represented 25% of U.S. K-12 public school children. Latinos are the now the largest minority group in the United States and account for at least 50% of all population growth (Census Bureau, 2011). While not all Latinos are Spanish speakers, Spanish is overwhelming the home language of most English Language Learners in public schools and 82% of U.S. adult Latinos surveyed reported that they spoke Spanish “very well” (Taylor, et al., 2012). This means that a growing number of students with homegrown Spanish language proficiency are attending U.S. public schools.

Much of the aforementioned demographic change is taking place outside traditional immigrant destinations or centers of historic Latino presence such as Southwestern states along the U.S.-Mexico border (Hamann & Harklau, 2010). The site of this study, Nebraska, is part of what has been termed the United States’ “new Latino diaspora.” The so-called *new* Latino diaspora consists of communities across the Midwest, East and South, often smaller than 25,000 inhabitants and generally more rural than urban (Gouveia, Carranza, & Cogua, 2004), that have been experiencing

demographic change since 1990 (Murillo & Villenas, 1997, as cited in Hamann, Wortham & Murillo, 2002).

In Nebraska, as in the rest of the nation, the notable growth in Spanish-speaking school enrollments has impacted instructional programming in many areas, including Spanish language instruction. As a result of the current demographic reality, students with varying levels of proficiency in Spanish reach secondary school and inevitably either enroll in Spanish language courses or are barred from doing so by explicit or implicit policy. Secondary Spanish language study is a part of the instructional programming of most U.S. high schools, yet the pervasive model of instruction in schools imagines Spanish as a truly foreign language, one that is new to the student. The vast majority of courses, like the Intermediate Spanish course described in the vignette, are designed for students who are novice learners and first language speakers of English, not for students who speak or hear Spanish at home.

Spanish-English bilinguals who are schooled primarily in the U.S. are known by the field of linguistics and increasingly, by educators, as heritage speakers of Spanish. While the extant literature addresses several definitions of “heritage languages (HLs)” and “heritage language learners (HLLs)” that will be examined in Chapter 2, this study uses the term HLLs in the narrow sense, as proposed by Valdés (2001a), to refer to those who were raised in a home where the HL was used, who have receptive or productive HL skills, and are to some degree bilingual. In accordance with this definition HLs are distinguished from both “native” speakers and second language (L2) learners in patterns of language acquisition, language use and communicative range. In addition to these

linguistic differences, the sociolinguistic characteristics of HLLs including motivation, attitude and identity construction further differentiate them from L2 learners and “native” speakers in pedagogically relevant ways.

On the one hand, because many HL speakers are schooled primarily in English, they often lack exposure to academic registers, vocabulary, and literacy experiences. This lack of HL schooling in many cases marks the linguistic production of HL speakers as decidedly different from the proficient speech and writing of “native” peers. At the same time, the early exposure and acquisition of the HL in the home or community environment often leads to advanced phonological and lexical proficiency that may never be attained by second language learners (L2Ls). The following table, adapted from Kagan and Dillon (2009) summarizes the primary differences between HLLs and L2Ls.

**Table 1.1: Characteristics of HLLs and L2Ls**

	HERITAGE LEARNERS (HLLs)	SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS (L2Ls)
PHONOLOGY	Pronunciation, stress and intonation are close to native speaker level; may be dialectal rather than standard	Typically acquire <i>most</i> of the sound system of a standard dialect; pronunciation is usually accented
GRAMMAR	Use most elements of the grammatical system appropriately, not familiar with the rules.	Familiar with grammatical rules, but cannot use them fluently, nor comprehend them fully in real-life communications.
VOCABULARY	Extensive vocabulary in the contexts of home and community. May include a large number of “borrowings”	Vocabulary is very limited, but consistent with the standard dialect.

	from English.	
<b>SOCIO-LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE</b>	Control registers relating to verbal interactions with family and community members; competence is limited by range of social interactions.	Have very limited knowledge and control of sociolinguistic rules, except those appropriate to the classroom.
<b>LITERACY SKILLS</b>	Have often not developed literacy skills beyond elementary levels but can develop such skills very quickly.	Have a good to very good foundation for the development of literacy skills in the target language.

As the reader likely suspects, the instruction appropriate for adolescent L2s of Spanish is in most cases not the instruction appropriate for adolescent HLLs. The HL learners' learning context results in intuitive knowledge of a language, while L2 learners' contexts are metalinguistic and explicit. In this sense L2Ls need explicit instruction in pronunciation, overt presentation and practice of even the most common lexical items, and grammar instruction that compares and contrasts English and Spanish. On the other hand, HLLs need little phonological instruction, very different vocabulary lessons and will likely find L2 grammatical explanations confusing. This is not because HLLs are not inherently "bad at" learning grammar; the same L2Ls who benefit from Spanish grammar instruction would likely struggle to provide metalinguistic explanations of their stronger first language. Due to the markedly different linguistic and sociolinguistic characteristics of these groups it is now widely recognized in the literature that the instructional needs of HLLs are vastly different from those of L2Ls (see Montrul, 2010;

2012). The next table, again adapted from Kagan and Dillon (2009), presents instructionally significant differences between L2Ls and HLLs.

**Table 1.2: Instructional Characteristics of HLLs and L2Ls**

	HERITAGE LEARNERS (HLLs)	SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS (L2Ls)
PRONUNCIATION AND INTONATION	Little or no need for instruction - learners usually possess native-like capabilities in this domain.	Learners will need instruction throughout the course of study and may not ever acquire native-like competence.
GRAMMAR	Instruction takes a macro-approach (by concept - Tense, adverbs vs. adjectives)	Instruction takes a micro-approach (case-by-case - Irregular participles, demonstrative pronouns)
VOCABULARY	Learners will need instruction of age appropriate, literary, academic and formal terms.	Learners will need instruction in the full range of early, middle and late acquired terms.
WRITING	Macro-approach to instruction: Expansive writing takes place even at early stages of instruction.	Micro-approach to instruction begins at sentence level, gradually advancing to paragraph.
READING	Fairly long and somewhat complex texts are accessible early in instruction.	Small texts, slowly and gradually increasing in length and complexity.
SPEAKING	Macro-approach: Emphasis on monologue (presentation) and discussion	Micro-approach: Initially restricted to dialogue, gradually progressing to monologue and discussion

LISTENING	Full range of native language input is suitable for instruction, movies, lectures, news reports.	Instruction begins with short, simple selections, gradually increasing in length and complexity.
CULTURE	Macro-approach: Full range of native language input sources, insider knowledge and comparison	Micro-approach: Initially isolated items, outsider knowledge and comparison

Different instructional programs for HLLs and L2Ls have been implemented in some secondary schools in attempts to better meet the needs of HLLs and L2Ls. In some cases courses designed specifically for heritage language learners of Spanish have been created in middle and high schools and in other cases teachers have differentiated instruction in mixed courses. Courses designed specifically for Spanish-speaking HLLs are sometimes called “Spanish for Native Speakers” (SNS), “Spanish for Heritage Speakers” (SHS), or “Spanish for Spanish Speakers” (SSS). This study refers to these courses by this third term, unless in quotation of another source.

Secondary schools have a tradition of elective coursework that has often permitted the existence of a wide variety of specialized courses such as “Pop-Culture study,” “History of Sports,” “Literature of the Holocaust,” (to name a few that are offered at the school where I teach). Elective courses like these may be single-section offerings serving small and focused student populations. This elective tradition, particularly in larger schools, and the long history of foreign language instruction in secondary schools, has meant that SSS courses have been offered more easily and frequently at the

secondary level. In fact, Spanish teachers, administrators, counselors, and curriculum specialists at the secondary level may push for SSS courses when faced with the obviously inappropriate placement of “native” Spanish speakers in courses designed for monolingual English speakers and when enrollment profiles make such courses viable. Schools and instructors who have not created such courses continue to grapple with how to best serve HLLs within existing programs.

Given the growing number of Latino students in U.S. schools, meeting the educational needs of Latino students is an issue of national importance. Patricia Gándara and Frances Contreras (2009) have called attention to the “Latino education crisis” facing the nation, citing the K-12 achievement gap, low high-school-graduation rates and post-secondary education enrollment and graduation figures among U.S. Latino students. Gándara and Contreras are not alone in identifying features of school policies, practices, and cultures that contribute to the alienation and disengagement of Latino students and families from schools. See, for example, Valenzuela (1999), Valdés (1996; 2001b), and Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Todorova (2010). These authors have also named the persistent and problematic tendency of schools to see Latino students’ language and culture as an impediment to their school success and a deficit to be remediated or overcome. Considered in this context, SSS instruction for Latino HLLs becomes an issue of significance in the greater project of improving educational access, engagement, and achievement for Latinos.

In new Latino diaspora communities like those in Nebraska, policies and practices surrounding the provision of Spanish language instruction are of particular



importance as they help to shape a community's response to newcomers and thus the educational experiences of Latino school children. The relocation of the meatpacking industry from cities to small towns during the 1980's and 1990's was the largest contributing factor to the growth of the rural Latino population in Nebraska and other Midwestern states (Stull, Broadway, & Griffeth, 1995). Meatpacking towns can be a home to Latino populations that include foreign-born immigrants alongside second and even third generation Latinos, all while continuing to receive new arrivals. Gouviea, et al. (2005) comment on the process of assimilation and incorporation of Latinos in these communities:

It is the second generation that will shape the character of these communities. The children of immigrants will, at least in part, reflect the current socioeconomic successes and immigrant experiences of their parents as well as their surrounding co-ethnic network. Local labor market structures do not appear to offer significant upward mobility for immigrants. It remains to be seen whether other factors, such as institutional adaptation and host-community attitudes can make up for these failings or are more likely to reinforce segmented incorporation. (p. 32)

In the second half of the twentieth century, progressive restrictions in the number legal immigrants granted visas inevitably led to an increase in illegal immigration to the United States, (Massey, 2013). Now, proposals concerning immigration and immigrants in state legislatures are becoming increasingly common as political organizations and the public react to the federal government's perceived inaction on the issue of illegal

immigration. From 2010 to 2011 at least 164 laws were passed in 43 states that limit immigrants' access to public services or otherwise restricted their presence in the state or empower state and local officials to enforce federal immigration laws (Gordon & Raja, *Mother Jones*, March/April, 2012). These laws and practices have often been accompanied by xenophobic public discourse surrounding their adoption and implementation. This public discourse, as Suárez-Orozco (2014) noted, has negative impacts on mental health and development of immigrant children.

After examining the relationship between immigrants' experiences in the United States and their attitudes towards self-identification as “Americans” and/or something else, Massey and Sánchez (2009) concluded that “the greatest threat to the successful assimilation of immigrants comes not from foreign involvements or transnational loyalties, but from the rejection, exclusion, and discrimination that immigrants experience in the United States,” (p. 16). If these conclusions are correct, communities facing the task of incorporating new immigrants in new Latino diaspora communities must be especially pro-active in countering the national tendency to vilify Latino immigrants.

There is clear evidence that the response of state education officials, local district and even school-level policy makers in the new Latino diaspora have the power to shape the nature of community response and the Latino experience in these communities (Brunn, 2002; Hamann, 2003; Hamann, Eckerson & Gray, 2012; Martinez, 2002). Of the educational policies created in response to demographic change, language policies have particular power:

Policies that regulate or otherwise control the other languages we speak, where we may speak them, and the status given or ascribed to them, have the ability among other things, to either affirm us as valuable members of our communities, or marginalize our participation within the mainstream of the greater social milieu – i.e., they may define one as not part of a certain community, or at least not a welcome part. (Brunn, 2002, p. 195)

National attitudes and policies towards minority language instruction have become increasingly restrictive in recent years. With the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002 the federal government created “a high-stakes testing system that promoted the adoption and implementation of English-only instruction,” (Nieto, 2009, p. 64) which has led to the disappearance of and dwindling support for bilingual programs (Wright, 2007) despite ample evidence supporting the cognitive and social benefits of additive bilingualism and the substantial research base articulating characteristics of successful bilingual education programs (See: Education Alliance [1999]).

Demographic change profoundly impacts schooling, far beyond the need to provide English language instruction to a growing number of new immigrants. It extends, rather, to a changing understanding of the challenges in education as Berliner and Biddle (1995) explained: “these population groups have different needs: (...) curriculum that honors their cultural heritage (...) teachers that can serve as role models for their students, (...) different methods for teaching and evaluation,” among others (p. 226). This, the authors suggest, is one of the real and urgent concerns facing schools: to

meet the educational needs of students like Valentina, Lucía and Joaquín. Appropriate secondary Spanish language instruction may prove an important component of the educational response of communities in the new Latino diaspora and across the nation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Teachers in Nebraska and other new Latino diaspora communities are more isolated from conversations about meeting the instructional needs of Latino students than are teachers in longstanding Latino communities where professional organizations, teacher conferences, professional development offerings and even collegial conversations have long focused on Latino students. Particularly in the provision of Spanish language instruction, Nebraska communities working with large numbers of HL speakers are likely to be rural, making their Spanish teachers thus even less likely to have access to expert colleagues and professional development for working with HLLs. In their examination of Latino diaspora communities in Georgia, Harkalu and Colomer (2015) found that classes specifically for heritage language speakers of Spanish remain relatively rare in the new diaspora communities of their studies. Instead “heritage speakers are integrated into instruction that has traditionally served a clientele of academically elite, predominantly White, monolingual speakers of English,” (p. 156). This is very much the case in Nebraska as well.

Anyone who can recognize the egregious inappropriateness of teenage English speakers placed in courses designed for immigrant students learning English for the first time can understand the problems presented for student and teacher alike by placing proficient Spanish speakers in traditional foreign language courses (Valdés, 1981). Some

students will be bored while others are intimidated, what is engaging for one is irrelevant for another, and so on.

Despite the clear differences between HLLs and L2Ls, there are few resources for teachers who wish to provide specialized or differentiated instruction for HLLs. Even the language of the world language teaching profession, the language of the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the language of the national standards are incongruent with heritage language education. As Bateman and Wilkinson (2010) noted, the standards position instructors and students to compare and contrast the “target” (i.e., foreign) culture with “U.S. culture,” with the latter primarily conceptualized as the culture of America’s monolingual English speakers. This distinction permeates the profession and the textbook market. It is even seen in the latest revision of the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish Language and Culture course and examination. One task in the AP examination asks students to perform a cultural comparison between their own community and an area of the Spanish-speaking world with which they are familiar. While the task does not preclude including one’s local HL community, it arguably appears to overlook the fact that “for Spanish HL students, culture is not a question of a ‘U.S. culture’ versus the ‘target culture,’ but rather a question of moving between two coexisting cultural frames of reference in different contexts” (Bateman & Wilkinson, 2010, p. 326).

So, despite a growing national interest in HL pedagogy and HLLs, on-the-ground resources for teachers working in the field are limited. The National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC), itself is in the process of developing broad curricular

guidelines for HL instruction, noted on its webpage, “Few curricular models are available to heritage language instructors and administrators” (NHLRC, 2011).

Textbooks, curriculum guides, media and other materials intended for teacher and student consumption are few and far from widely available. This dearth of curricular materials is particularly noteworthy at the secondary level. Instructors like me, particularly in stand-alone secondary World Language departments that are not connected with bilingual or immersion programs, are very familiar with this frustrating lack of resources.

The paucity of curricular resources for secondary SSS courses, coupled with the frequent lack of state standards or district level guidelines for HL instruction, puts many teachers of SSS and their respective departments in the position of independent curriculum creators (AATSP, 2000). Exacerbating that challenge locally, there are predictably few pre-service teacher preparation programs and in-service professional development activities that prepare Spanish teachers extensively to work with Spanish speaking students in Nebraska. Worse than the general paucity of a still fledgling field, little is known about how Spanish teachers and programs outside major urban centers and the U.S. Southwest are working with the growing number of Spanish speakers enrolling in their courses.

Meanwhile enrollment demographics continue to change and practitioners in the field, like me, are grappling with perplexing pedagogical questions: What are the aims of instruction for these students? Which curricular models are most appropriate? How can their learning be most accurately assessed? Are there pedagogical practices that are more or less successful with HLLs? Are the pedagogical practices developed for HLLs

in high-vitality contexts such as New York or Southern California relevant for students in the new Latino diaspora? How different are HLLs from first and second language learners? How homogeneous are they as a group? What do I need to know and to be able to do to serve these students?

While relevant scholarship is becoming more common, little makes its way into the hands of practitioners, for there are few vehicles for its delivery. Moreover, even armed with knowledge from current research, some questions of heritage language pedagogy must be answered by local actors and communities (Wang & Green, 2001). The nature of appropriate instructional programming must be determined in part as a response to local conditions. Without a community of fellow practitioners, how can teachers develop and articulate expertise? Many teachers of SSS work in relative isolation, without colleagues who share interest or expertise and without professional organizations dedicated to their practice. For eight years, I was my district's only SSS teacher and that only changed when I moved to a different and larger district. There are few vehicles or networks for the provision of professional learning opportunities related to HLLs or HL pedagogy in Nebraska.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the experiences of a group of Nebraska secondary Spanish teachers in their work with Spanish-speaking students. First, I administered a survey to more than 90 teachers across the state. Then I conducted semi-scripted follow-up interviews with nine teachers who participated in the survey. Both the survey and interviews addressed what Spanish teachers in Nebraska know, do, and believe in their work with Spanish-speaking students as well as their experiences and perspectives related

to professional development. Finally, I collaboratively designed and delivered a prototype professional development workshop informed by the data I had collected.

This study aimed to describe the educational programs and practices employed by Spanish teachers in Nebraska, and it also leveraged those data to advocate for and create opportunities for professional learning that could allow teachers to better serve their Spanish-speaking students. A practitioner myself, I maintain that classroom teachers are rich sources of both practical and theoretical knowledge rooted in their experience and that identifying and sharing that knowledge is essential to improving education. Practitioners in their daily work instructing students are also formulating theory and enacting it in their practice. Useful knowledge is built in the daily practice of teachers working with HLLs – knowledge that could be useful to both practitioners and researchers. Teachers with useful knowledge, experience, and ideas need to be identified and connected with one another; but they also need to be connected with the work of researchers posing the same questions.

Therefore, this study has sought to uncover the relevant expertise, knowledge, and experience related to HLLs that Nebraska teachers could share, both with one another and with the wider community of both scholars and practitioners. Understanding the contexts in which Nebraska Spanish educators work with Spanish-speaking students can help those charged with providing teacher education and teacher learning experiences to better respond to the needs and realities of classroom teachers and inform those who are investigating HLs and instruction. As a practitioner from and in Nebraska, I am framing this as a Nebraska issue, but I am fully cognizant that Nebraska is like much of the rest of



the new Latino diaspora and maybe even the whole country in just starting to attend to teachers' prospects and needs with HLLs.

### **Research Questions**

Like Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009), I firmly believe that inquiry in education must be imbued with action and directed towards contextually relevant problems; this is particularly true for the practitioner-scholar. Similarly, I insist that my research be intimately connected with making the *practice* of education better, rather than simply advancing the understanding of a phenomenon. For this reason, this inquiry took the form of a design study.

The impetus for the design researcher and the practitioner alike is the “progressive refinement” (Collins, 1999) of interventions and continual improvement of the learning experience. Practitioners, as naturalistic design researchers, are concerned with “interventions as enacted through the interactions between materials, teachers, and learners,” (The Design Research Collective, 2003, p. 5)—i.e., interventions that are products of their contexts. More formal design research provides a theoretical and methodological foundation for exploring contexts, through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Foundational educational design studies like the work of Brown et al. (1992) aimed to create “example spaces” or “working environments” that allowed researchers to examine teaching and learning in real contexts, and inform both theories of teaching and learning as well as instructional practices with their findings (Shoenfeld, 2006). In this thesis I began the iterative process of creating an “example space” related to teacher communities and professional development for working with HLLs in

Nebraska. The first step in this design process was to ask questions that characterized the “audience” or the community imagined for this “example space.” Thus informed by this design, this study examined the contexts in which a group of Nebraska Spanish teachers worked with heritage speakers of Spanish in public secondary schools, and what they say that they know, believe and do. Ultimately, this information served to create a prototype professional learning opportunity, an “example space,” that responded to what these teachers said that they knew, believed, did *and* wanted.

The research questions changed slightly over the course of the study when, as practitioner subjects began to supply answers; I realized that my understandings of the problems of practice they faced were imperfect in some cases. This led subsequently to better-honed questions. These research questions form the foundation of the data collection and analysis in this study:

Research questions:

How do teachers describe HLL placement in Spanish language courses in Nebraska secondary schools?

What instructional aims do SSS teachers in Nebraska propose for HL instruction?

How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe differentiated instruction in mixed courses with HLLs?

What do Nebraska Spanish teachers say that they believe about HLLs?

How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe learning what they know about HLLs?

What do Nebraska Spanish teachers suggest they want to know about HLLs?

How do Nebraska Spanish teachers desire to grow and learn professionally?

These research questions drove the design of the survey instrument and interview protocols and guided the initial analysis presented in Chapter 4. In this way, I collected descriptive data that could inform the design of professional learning experiences. Then, in Chapter 5, these data were utilized within a design framework to create one prototype professional learning experience and consider others, guided by the design questions below:

Design questions:

What do these data say about how relevant professional development could be provided for Nebraska Spanish teachers for working with heritage learners of Spanish?

What do these data say about which topics would this professional development address?

What do these data say about the format in which could it be delivered?

What do these data say about how professional development related to HLLs could change what practitioners do?

**Role of the Researcher**

Because researcher beliefs undoubtedly affect both the design and interpretation of findings in any study (and certainly this one), it is important to acknowledge the contributions of my personal and professional biography to this study. As a practicing educator and a researcher within the same community of practice, the aims and tools of my inquiry as scholar cannot be separated from those of my work as a practitioner.

Chapter 3 addresses these issues, and positions me as a researcher, and in a sense, helps me to “posture” (Wolcott, 1992) within what Guba and Lincoln (2005) call the “participatory paradigm” in qualitative research.

I came to be interested in the teaching of Spanish to Spanish speakers in 2004 during my initial student teaching placement. At the same time that I worked for the first time in a classroom with HLLs, my husband, college-educated in Argentina, was working as the editor of a weekly Spanish-language newspaper in Lincoln, Nebraska. While I struggled to meet the instructional needs of the HLLs in my classroom, my husband struggled to find writers and translators to employ whose Spanish language literacy skills were sufficient to write for publication. I was awakened to the realization that an inability to support HL maintenance in schools and communities leads to a sad economic reality: the need to import language speakers educated abroad to fill positions requiring advanced language proficiency.

My first year as a full-time classroom teacher was spent at a charter school in Florida where I first taught a specialized SSS course. I subsequently returned to Nebraska to work at Crete High School, where I was employed from 2006-2014. There I worked with a large number of Spanish speaking students, in a district with relatively progressive attitudes toward serving the diverse population (Reinkordt & Meier, 2010), where I expanded an existing program of Spanish for Spanish speakers courses. I appreciated many of the conditions of my employment in Crete, including the curricular freedom I was allowed and the administration's willingness to support and encourage faculty projects and initiatives. Early in my tenure in Crete, I also completed my Masters

degree; so studying language education and concurrently being a language educator has been a hallmark of most of my professional career.

In 2011 I began doctoral studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln as a member of the second Carnegie Project for the Education Doctorate (CPED) cohort. My decision to pursue a doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) degree in this program, rather than a traditional Ph.D. in Education, was a result of ideological considerations. The CPED initiative seeks to strengthen the Ed.D. as a doctorate of professional practice. I felt and continue to feel compelled to conduct research that includes teachers as participants, rather than simply the objects of research, and to ensure that my work too advances the project of affirming the value of ‘knowledge from practice’ as equal to ‘knowledge from theory’. As a high school educator, I am not better than or more insightful than a university-based researcher, but I am also not worse; there is value to my posture. The CPED Ed.D. affirms to right of the practitioner to create scholarship, but also invites scholarship to expressly and immediately impact practice. If we can assert the right to study other people and to find some of what they currently do wanting, then we have an obligation for our analysis to ameliorate, however modestly, the identified limitations.

My experiences in CPED and in the classrooms where I have taught have affirmed several important beliefs relevant to this study:

First, schools should support the maintenance of Spanish and other heritage languages. Local communities and their actors must ultimately be responsible for determining their own responses to the question of *why* teach Spanish to Spanish speakers, as they must negotiate the social, personal, and economic motives for

bilingualism in their own communities, but if we value the premise that education should serve all learners, HLLs merit our attention. Regardless of community motives, in order to support HL maintenance, HLLs need different instruction than second language learners.

Second, classroom teachers can and should be at the forefront of reform efforts to improve instruction in public schools. It is widely acknowledged that a great deal of educational research is perceived by practitioners, and even policy makers, to be largely irrelevant to educational practice and the concerns of practitioners in the field. At the same time, knowledge of practice held by practitioners is often dismissed by the academy as too “parochial” to be “generalizable” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 95). This breach between researchers and practitioners, according to Latta and Wunder (2012) “emboldens policy developers, as the perspectives of researchers and practitioners can be mined selectively to legislate and purportedly control what happens in classrooms, schools, school districts, governments and more” (p. 4). Subject area teacher collaboratives can work against this trend by serving as conduits for the exchange of information from theory-into-practice and practice-into-theory.

Communities of Spanish teachers in the new Latino diaspora might help to disseminate among practitioners some of the much needed theoretical and empirical knowledge emerging from linguistic, sociolinguistic, and educational anthropology regarding heritage languages and HLLs (Kagan & Dillon, 2009). Developing a community of practice surrounding Spanish as a heritage language instructor in Nebraska is work in the spirit of CPED. With this project I have worked to leverage my experience

as an organizer and nexus to research for other practitioners grappling with similar problems. In service of a degree that is by definition “of practice,” this study aims not merely to study practice, but to BE practice, with a bow to Jeff Wilhelm (2008) for the full capitalization of ‘be.’

### **Scope of the Study**

The design work described in this dissertation began with my own increasing ruminating about HLLs, but it became formal and purposeful through asking teachers about their work with HLLs. My inquiry with them has been intended to define professional learning needs by learning from the experiences of practitioners. In the Freirian (1970) spirit of learners as both teachers and students concurrently, the project ultimately imagines how practitioners who have knowledge to share (and to learn) could be connected to others, in taking the first steps to build the community of practice necessary to create sustained improvement in programming, instruction, and teacher preparations.

As expansive as it is, this manuscript represents only a portion of a larger design project. The data collected and reported here and the design artifacts described together constitute a preliminary investigation that can inform future design of professional learning experiences for Nebraska Spanish teachers. Consequently, it does not document the outcome of such learning experiences, nor does it prescribe their exact nature.

Additionally, because the data presented here are derived from participant surveys and interviews, it is important to remember that participant perceptions are not the same as observation of the phenomena. When teachers identify the number of HLLs enrolled

in their classes, this cannot be taken as an empirical measure. In the same way, teachers may report beliefs and practices that are incongruent with the instruction one would observe in their classrooms. Although sincerely offered, what teachers in this study have said that they do in their classrooms has not been confirmed by classroom observation. This study measures participant perception of practice, not necessarily actual practice.

Even a measure of participant perceptions via survey and interview is not objective in any empirical sense. Respondents may have perceived that there were “right” answers to some questions, or have felt compelled to describe classroom practices or beliefs of which they thought the researcher would approve. Particularly in the participant interviews, my identity as both researcher and practitioner may have influenced respondents. As we are colleagues in the same profession, we are also likely to meet again, at conferences, workshops, or even work together in the same school district. So participants could omit certain rationales and/or articulate others beyond those that were actually operational in their classroom. Also, while individual teacher identities in this and other reports of both survey and interview data are anonymous or obscured, these identities are not anonymous to the researcher. That, too, might have shaped what I was told.

Other limitations of this study include those shared by others employing the same inquiry methods. Both surveys and interviews are potentially subject to both sampling and measurement error (Visser, Krosnick & Lavrakass, 2000). Respondents who chose to participate in the survey or interview might share characteristics, beliefs, or practices



that are not shared by those who chose not to participate in the study. Likewise, some questions may have been confusing, misleading or unclear to some respondents, thus influencing their responses. Also, because specific groups were targeted for sampling convenience, results cannot be considered generalizable to all Spanish teachers. A detailed discussion of sampling methods is provided in Chapter 3.

## CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The locus of this study was the intersection of action-oriented practitioner research, teacher professional learning and heritage language (HL) pedagogy; the existing literature that could address such an intersection precisely was somewhat limited. However, this study was informed by scholarship in several areas. In this chapter I first examine the field of HL scholarship that establishes the need for targeted instruction and programming to meet the needs of heritage language learners (HLLs). Subsequently, I turn to the literature that informs our understanding of teacher competencies, preparation, and development for working with Spanish HLLs. Finally, I look to the scholarship of communities of practice in education that advises the design orientation of this project in regards to teacher learning and the provision of professional development.

### **Heritage Language Learners**

While teaching minority languages to speakers of those language has been a practical concern for some time in the United States, the first major research interest in teaching Spanish to U.S. Spanish speakers is evidenced by the work of Guadalupe Valdés in the 1970's. An extraordinarily prolific scholar, Valdés' scholarship (e.g, Valdés, 1981; 1997; Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998) has provided much of the foundation for current studies in the field of heritage language acquisition and pedagogy.

The conversation Valdés started continues in the literature in regards to the nature and definition of the term “heritage language learner.” Proposed definitions range from the broad and inclusive to the more narrow and proficiency-centered. Fishman’s (2001) definition emphasized the role of ethnolinguistic identity, including both functional

speakers of a minority language and non-speakers who feel a personal or family connection to the heritage language. Under this broad definition, for example, a fourth-generation, Mexican-American, monolingual English speaker who chooses to study Spanish motivated by her identification with her family's ethnolinguistic heritage would be considered an HLL. Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) proposed a different characterization for those learners who have no functional proficiency in the HL: "language learners with a heritage motivation" (p. 222), as opposed to "heritage language learner," reserving this latter term for learners with measurable linguistic skills in the heritage language. This use of the term is more in line with narrower linguistic definitions such as Valdés' (2001) acquisition-oriented definition. Valdés' definition includes three important tenets: HLs are individuals who, 1) "were raised in a home where a non-English target language was spoken, 2) "speak or at least understand the (heritage) language," and 3) are "to some degree bilingual in the heritage language and in English" (p. 38). This definition clearly differentiates heritage speakers from both second language speakers and "native speakers" of the target language. The first tenet identifies HL acquisition as occurring early, in childhood, like typical first language acquisition, and in the informal context of the home as opposed to through academic study, but it also identifies the heritage language as a minority language, rather than a dominant societal language. This first tenet also alludes to the ethnolinguistic identity component of Fishman's definition by placing the HL loci in the home and family. The second tenet includes individuals with any productive or receptive skills in the heritage language, but excludes those with no real proficiency, like Van Deusen-Scholl's "learners with a heritage motivation." The final tenet differentiates the HLs from the monolingual "native speaker" by emphasizing

the HLs' bilingualism, that is, their knowledge of the majority language (English) in addition to the heritage language (Spanish). It is this more narrow definition proposed by Valdés that is most useful to studies like this one, which focus on HL education (Montrul, Davidson, De La Fuente & Foote, 2014). For educators, instructional decisions about language instruction must be based on learners' knowledge, skills and use of the language; for this reason this study uses the term "heritage language learner (HLL)" implying the narrower proficiency-driven definition proposed by Valdés (2001).

Recently, research into linguistic, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic characteristics of narrowly defined heritage language speakers has illuminated our understanding of how HL speakers differ from first (L1) and second (L2) language speakers (Montrul, 2012a). Taken broadly, it is currently understood that heritage language speakers are distinct in terms of patterns of acquisition, lexical, grammatical and communicative competencies, evidence of language contact and change, and opportunities for language use compared to both L1 and L2 speakers.

In evaluating the state of the field's knowledge of HL acquisition, Montrul (2010) contrasted typical HL acquisition with features of L1 and L2 acquisition/learning. She observed that heritage learners share characteristics with L1 such as early exposure and control of early-acquired aspects of a language such as phonology, as well as some lexical and structural features. This is because HLLs are typically exposed to abundant naturalistic aural input, just like L1 learners, except that this input is then dramatically reduced around the time the learner begins formal schooling in the majority language, age 5 for U.S. born HLLs. For this reason, HLLs often possess "native-like" phonological

production and may have well-developed aural comprehension skills, in contrast with L2 learners (L2Ls) who may never achieve native-like pronunciation or comprehension. However, Montrul also noted that HL acquisition shares some features of L2 acquisition, such as the presence of linguistic transfer errors and fossilization. Unlike L1 acquisition, both L2 and HL acquisition may end in varying levels of proficiency, incomplete acquisition of native-like competences and that learner motivation and affect play a significant role in acquisition. As Montrul (2010) explained, because L2 acquisition occurs in a classroom, “if instructed, L2 learners are very literate in the L2 and have highly developed metalinguistic awareness of the language, while heritage language learners can be illiterate or have less developed literacy in the heritage language than in the majority language” (p. 12). These differences have pedagogical implications for the instruction of HLLs and L2Ls.

Montrul’s (2012b) analysis of recent formal linguistic and psycholinguistic research addressed the issue of HL and L2 competence and response to explicit instruction. Experimental design studies have generally demonstrated that HLLs perform more like native speakers than L2Ls on tasks which require phonetic/phonological competence and on grammaticality judgments featuring syntactic features which are early-acquired in the HL; in fact, “syntax and morphology seem to be the most resilient areas of grammar in heritage speakers, whereas syntax-discourse, semantics and inflectional morphology are quite vulnerable,” (Montrul, 2012b, p. 20). HLs and L2s also diverge on lexical knowledge, where HLs demonstrated greater speed and accuracy with vocabulary which is acquired early in the L1 but late in the L2 (such as “rocking horse” or “shoelaces”) while L2Ls had greater success with words acquired late in the L1

but early in the L2 (such as “flight attendant” or “global warming”) (Montrul & Foote, 2012). Similarly, modality and task have also drawn attention to differences between L2 and HL competencies. Montrul, Foote & Perpiñan (2008) found that HLLs exhibit greater grammatical accuracy in oral tasks and L2Ls greater accuracy in written tasks. At the same time, L2Ls out-perform HLLs on tasks that require metalinguistic knowledge and benefit more clearly from explicit, form-focused instruction (Potowski, Jegerski & Morgan Short, 2009).

A salient and often discussed characteristic of HLLs’ competence is their limited familiarity with more formal or academic registers of the language. Due to their typically limited schooling and reduced exposure to academic discourse in the HL, HLLs tend to lack exposure to the features of “high” registers, including elevated lexical selections, elaborate grammatical constructions, frequent clause-embedding and context-specific styles (Hudson, 1994 as cited in Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998). Valdés and Geoffrion-Vinci (1998) compared oral classroom presentations given by Chicano heritage speakers of Spanish in the U.S. to similar presentations given by monolingual Spanish speakers in Mexico. As predicted, they found that the Mexican students used richer, more contextually appropriate vocabulary and discourse strategies while the speeches of the Chicano students were “less rich” because they lacked “strategies for managing academic interactions, characterizing one’s own and others’ contributions to the discussion, disguising one’s inability to make a suitable contribution to the discussion, and presenting oneself as a competent, sophisticated academic” (p. 494). Conversely, HLLs tend to be most competent with the “low” registers of intimate interpersonal communication. These “low” registers are the same ones that often stymie

second language learners who may read elevated literature in the L2 but struggle to sustain conversations on quotidian topics with native speakers. Again, the competencies and instructional needs of HLLs and L2Ls are in many ways distinct.

Unlike both L1 and L2 learners, the linguistic production of HLLs, who are by definition bilinguals, may also exhibit many characteristics of language contact, including loanwords, calques, code-switching, and transfer from the majority language (Klee & Lynch, 2009). While aspects of this bilingual linguistic production may be viewed suspiciously (or dismissively) as “Spanglish,” many scholars have challenged this construction/characterization at several levels (e.g., Lipski, 2008, Otheguy, 1999, Zentella, 1997). On the one hand, so-called “Spanglish” is defended as valid dialectal variance that reflects the realities and identities of its speakers, as does any other. For example, Otheguy (1999) argued that while the use English loanwords by Spanish speakers is often perceived as pernicious Anglicization of the language, this borrowing is actually a reflection of the Americanization of the speaker’s culture (p. 21). Other scholars, such as Klee & Lynch (2009) noted that while “Spanglish” practices are often derided as nonsensical to monolingual speakers, bilingual code-switching often demonstrates respect for the grammatical and syntactic norms of the two languages, serves a variety of sophisticated linguistic functions and remains highly comprehensible and communicatively effective for bilinguals.

Regardless of the ideological position of various scholars, this feature of heritage language production is relevant to HL pedagogy. Evidence of language contact is not the only way that the language of HLLs may deviate from the “standard” or prestige variety

of the target language as it is typically presented in formal language study. HLLs in the U.S. come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds stemming from diverse national origins, socioeconomic statuses, levels of educational attainment, and the myriad other factors which impact the idiolects of individual speakers. Unlike foreign language learners, HLLs belong to a real rather than hypothetical speech community with established sociolinguistic rules, lexical preferences and syntactic norms, all of which may or may not correspond to those presented in traditional textbooks and materials for language study. In this sense, HLLs require instruction that is sensitive to their language variety and its use by their community. On this point, the results of Ducar's (2008) survey of HLL university students enrolled in Spanish for Heritage Learners courses are informative. When HLLs were asked which language variety they would like to acquire as a result of their study, less than one-third indicated that they wished to acquire an "academic variety" (pg. 425). Instead, the respondents expressed preferences for language varieties that represented ethnolinguistic identities such as "Mexican" or "Mexican-American," that is, the varieties that were present in their families and communities. This led Ducar to suggest that, "as pedagogues and researchers, perhaps we need to broaden our teaching focus to include instruction in a more *personally relevant* variety of Spanish" (2008, pg. 422).

Personal relevance has been found to be central to HLLs' motivation to study their heritage language, again differentiating HLLs from L2Ls. Gahallager-Brett (2004) found that among 700 reasons for studying foreign languages named by British language learners, the three most common were 1) communicating with non-English speakers, 2) facilitating travel and 3) improving economic opportunities for themselves. A nationwide



survey of American university students studying their heritage language conducted by the National Heritage Language Resource Center found the most common reasons HLLs expressed for enrolling in HL courses were "(1) to learn about their roots, (2) to communicate better with friends and family in the U.S., and (3) to fulfill a language requirement, in that order" (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 43). Excepting the third response, it seems that heritage learners do not mainly choose to study their language for the same reasons as second language learners.

Though I have only cursorily addressed the rapidly growing body of literature regarding HLs, the present evidence lends support to the conclusion that speakers of Spanish as a heritage language in the United States are quite different from monolingual English speakers studying Spanish as a second language. So the premise of my dissertation then follows—that Spanish-speaking HLLs may need different Spanish language instruction. The question of what this different instruction might entail and what instructors need to know to provide it is the focus of the next section.

### **Teaching Heritage Language Learners**

**Goals of Instruction.** Spanish language instruction for HLLs beginning as early as the 1930's was initially conceptualized as "remedial" instruction (Valdés, 1997), or what Carreira (2012) called "normalizing" instruction that was intended to eradicate the non-standard dialectal features of HLLs language (p. 224). However, in the 1970's national conversations in U.S. turned to minority language rights, bilingual education and equitable educational access for minority students and since then, the premise that HL instruction is 'remedial' has been vigorously contested (Roca, 1997). Now widely cited

by scholars across throughout the field, Valdés (1997) articulated four primary goals of HL instruction: 1) Language maintenance, or the successful transmission of the language across generations, 2) acquisition of the prestige variety of Spanish, necessary for advanced academic study, 3) expansion of the bilingual range, the ability to use Spanish in a variety of contexts and registers and 4) transfer of literacy skills from English to Spanish and Spanish to English.

Language maintenance is defined by the intergenerational transmission of the language, in other words, from adults to children in a community; if a language is not transmitted to younger generations, the result is language shift (Bills, 2005). In the United States Spanish is typically lost within families by the third generation after immigration (Bills, 2005, Silva-Corvalán, 1994; Veltman, 1988).

While there is a notable dearth of studies examining the effects of HL instruction on Spanish language maintenance, there are theoretical foundations for instruction that would promote maintenance. On the one hand, intergenerational transmission of a minority language requires both intention and confidence on the part of the transmitters; members of the transmitting generation must believe themselves competent enough speakers of the language and must assert the value of the language by choosing to use the minority language with younger generations. As Lanza (2007) pointed out “parental language ideologies are vital in that they are linked to language use patterns in the home” and thus determine the amount and type of input children receive and their opportunities for production during acquisition (p. 53). On the other hand, language vitality in the community, membership in speech communities and opportunities to use the language in

a variety of domains is essential to creating both the relevance and competence necessary for maintenance (Rivera-Mills, 2014). HL instruction that could promote language maintenance would strengthen HLLs' relationships to existing speech communities, perhaps through service learning or community-based learning (Leeman, 2005), and employ curricula that connect students to issues, ideas and opportunities for language use in their communities (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Roca & Alonso, 2005). At the same time, HL instruction should combat language insecurity, by building confidence in HLLs' own competence and home language variety (Carreira, 2012).

On the subject of acquiring the “prestige” variety of Spanish as a HL, current scholarship acknowledges that the teaching of Spanish to Spanish speakers inevitably seeks to balance competing concerns. The first is the need to show respect for what students know, the language variety spoken in their home and community - often times different than the 'standard,' or 'academic' dialect (Carriera, 2007; Correa, 2011; Leeman, 2005; Leeman, Rabin & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Potowski, 2001). The second is a need to equip students with the vocabulary and conventions of formal registers and with the features of those language varieties encountered in academic, literary, and professional environments that are often considered the tokens of educated speakers (AATSP, 2000; Angelelli, Enright, & Valdés, 2002; Callahan, 2010; Carreira, 2007; Chevalier, 2004; Valdés & Gioffrion-Vinci, 1998;).

The critical pedagogy approach typified by Leeman (2005) advocates “dialogic examination and questioning of dominant sociopolitical hierarchies and, in particular, the role of language in those hierarchies, the promotion of student voice and agency, and the

commitment to democratic social change” (p. 36). Instruction for HLLs within this approach would focus on curricular topics of interest to students and of relevance to their community and would seek to initially strengthen the language variety spoken by students rather than promote acquisition of a “standard” variety. Critical pedagogy would also engage students in study of the relationships between language and identity and language and power, potentially through engaging students in service learning, ethnographic interviews, or other sociolinguistic research (Leeman, 2005).

Leeman, Rabin, and Román-Mendoza (2011) described a project that used university students of Spanish as a Heritage Language as after school Spanish teachers for elementary HLLs. The authors found that the university participants developed “new consciousness on critical language issues, including the benefits of early bilingual education for everyone, non-native and HLL alike, the civic role of multilingualism, and their own agency as multilingual individuals who are shaping the world in which they live” (p. 17).

At the same time, advocates for instruction promoting acquisition of formal, academic or “prestige” registers, such as Achugar (2003), Valdés (1997) and Valdés and Gioffrion-Vinci (1998) point out that language registers permit or restrict access to membership in discursive communities where “power relations are expressed in language through difference” (Achugar, 2003, pg. 228). Certain features of linguistic production mark speakers as expert or novice, while others indicate socioeconomic status or level of educational attainment; for this reason “academic” or “prestige” registers permit speakers to posture differently in academic and professional contexts. Instruction aimed at

acquisition of formal registers in the HL may focus on transfer of academic discourse strategies that students know and use in English (Schleppegrell & Colombi, 1997), or explicit instruction in the language of specific professional domains, such as interpretation and translation (Angelelli, Enright, & Valdés, 2002). The results of the Achugar's (2003) study of the oral academic register of university HLLs led her to conclude that "pedagogies that engage learners as partners in the analytic discourse are necessary" (p. 22) and proposed involving students explicitly in linguistic analysis of the features of different registers.

Expansion of the bilingual range, or a broadening of the skills and competencies for HL use in contexts outside the familiar and interpersonal was another goal of HL instruction initially proposed by Valdés that continues to receive scholarly attention. Valdés, Fishman, Chávez, and Pérez (2006) identified some characteristics of instruction that might support this expansion in their study of secondary Spanish for Spanish Speakers (SSS) programs in California; they noted the use of direct vocabulary instruction, web research in the HL, listening comprehension activities of extended length, and discussion of the style and linguistic features of different types of text (p. 148).

Hornberger (1989) offered a theoretical framework for understanding the development of biliteracy that frames a consideration of instruction in support of expansion. Of particular interest here are the three continua which might be understood as similar to the bilingual range and that Hornberger suggested are salient in the development of the individual's biliteracy: 1) the reception-production continuum,

(listening/reading-speaking/writing), 2) the oral language-written communication continuum, and 3) the L1-L2 transfer continuum. She posited that development along one continuum affects development along the others and she hypothesized that “the more the contexts of their learning allow [the learners] to draw on *all* points of the continua, the greater are the chances for their full biliterate development” (p. 289).

Applying this theory of biliteracy development to two elementary classrooms, Hornberger (1990) examined the ways that two teachers in widely different settings created contexts for biliterate development. These classrooms, which Hornberger identifies as successfully educating for biliteracy, exemplify the use of many points on the continua. The teachers “build their students' exposure to a wide variety of texts,” encourage the use of both languages, facilitate linguistic transfer and allow “the opportunity for oral and written, receptive and productive interaction with a wide variety of genres” (p. 227).

By means of a sociolinguistic examination of register and domain for immigrant HLLs, Chevalier (2004) proposed a curriculum framework for HLLs based on increasingly complex language tasks which progress from informal/oral to written/academic. That model promises to expand the bilingual range by producing texts in a variety of registers and attending overtly to textual features, grammatical constructions and orthographic considerations relevant to the task.

Additionally, linguistic transfer between HLLs' two languages—particularly literacy skills transfer, as Valdés (1997) explained—allows HLLs to build competency in the weaker language more quickly by relying on academic skills they have already

developed in the dominant language. Explicit instruction in the transfer of literacy skills, including the similarities and differences between features of the two languages, can support language development in both languages. Instructional strategies related to this goal might include translation and interpretation (Angelelli, Enright, & Valdés, 2002; Borreo, 2011; Kenner, et al. 2008), reading and writing a wide variety of academic texts (Valdés, et al., 2006) and explicit instruction in grammar and “how different grammatical choices help students produce the type of texts that are expected in academic contexts” (Colombi & Harrington, 2012, p. 251).

In addition to the aforementioned four goals of HL instruction articulated by Valdés (1997), Spanish language instruction for HLLs is often linked to general academic engagement and achievement of Latino students. While there is little empirical evidence that participation in SSS courses leads to academic achievement (though there is some such research on bilingual programs—e.g., Alanís, 2000), teachers of SSS courses have anecdotally mentioned school success as a goal or rationale for their courses. In their survey of Utah Spanish teachers, Bateman and Wilkinson (2010) described at least one respondent who perceived that administrative support for the course was related to their potential to support English language development for Spanish speaking students (p. 337). Teachers in the study conducted by Valdés et al. (2006) in California cited “improving student self-esteem” and facilitating access to Advanced Placement college-readiness courses were among the goals of their programs (p. 172). Carreira (2007) made a strong argument for the role SSS courses can play in promoting the general school success of Latino students, especially students who are still acquiring academic English. She suggested that the goals of SSS programs overlap with measures likely to increase

Latino school success, “(teachers of these courses) are in a position to reinforce literacy skills, instill cultural pride, and invite reflection on cultural differences between the U.S. and the Spanish-speaking world” (Carreira, 2007, p. 151). In this sense, other goals of SSS courses could be to promote access to rigorous content knowledge, socialize students to the American educational system, and promote the value of HLLs cultural and linguistic heritage.

**Challenges in Heritage Language Instruction.** Teachers working with HLLs face numerous challenges including access to curricular resources, knowledge of relevant instructional skills, opportunity to engage with colleagues in professional learning and information necessary to advocate for HLLs and HL instruction. As mentioned in Chapter 1, despite recent growth in the field of HL scholarship and even in the number of SSS courses offered across the nation, resources to support classroom teachers are limited. Textbooks, curriculum guides, media and other materials intended for teacher and student consumption are few, though they are one of the fastest growing segments of the world language textbook market (Leeman & Martinez, 2007). Tools and materials for the assessment of heritage learners are equally scarce and the quality of existing assessment and placement materials was called into question by the evaluation of MacGregor-Mendoza (2012).

The paucity of curricular resources for Spanish as a heritage language instruction at the secondary level is particularly noteworthy. Coupled with the frequent lack of state standards or district level guidelines for HL instruction (notable exceptions include North Carolina, Georgia and Texas), many teachers working with HLLs and their respective



departments are independent curriculum creators (AATSP, 2000). In marked contrast to other academic disciplines who find their ability to make curricular decisions is increasingly curtailed by pressure to comply with state testing requirements or conform to district mandated curriculum, Spanish departments often have a great deal of freedom and control over the content of their courses and offerings. Whether this freedom is understood as a challenge or an opportunity may depend on local actors and factors, including the availability of pre-service and in-service learning opportunities.

Many Spanish language teachers, like other secondary content area instructors, work with a “one-size-fits-all” curriculum: sequential, fixed, uniform, and lockstep. In a “one-size-fits-all” curriculum the content is determined by the course series, rather than the students in the course, and each of the students is expected to master the same skills to roughly the same mastery standards within the same amount of time (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 58). In other words, it is assumed that Intermediate Spanish students know most of what they were taught last year in Beginning Spanish and not much more; it is expected that all students will learn what is taught at roughly the same speed and they will demonstrate their mastery via the same assessment tool.

Decidedly, Spanish HLLs vary much more widely in their initial proficiency than monolingual second language learners. All monolingual students in an introductory Spanish course likely know very little Spanish, while students in a SSS course may include individuals with almost no Spanish language literacy skills alongside those who had extensive schooling in a Spanish speaking country, and tremendous variety in between (Valdés, 1997, identifies eight such varieties of Spanish-English bilinguals). The

need for curriculum to meet the needs of diverse students requires that curriculum be developed, or at least adapted, locally.

Not only do HLLs differ as a large group, they can differ even more radically for the classroom teacher who receives a new group of students each year. During a given year a course of twenty may be composed of mostly second-generation learners with limited literacy skills; the same course a year later may now contain a majority of students with well-developed reading and writing abilities. While a lack of appropriate existing curricular materials may characterize many HL educators' contexts, even when teachers have materials they will inevitably be adapted, for "curriculum materials do not teach themselves" (Darling-Hammond, et al., p. 189). As Schwartz (2001) affirmed "teachers of all heritage languages must develop skills in designing and adapting materials for different age groups and proficiency levels (...) adapting textbooks and material published in the home country to make them more relevant to the U.S. heritage language population, or even adapting the heritage language materials used in a class or program to better fit the proficiency levels within a particular class" (p. 243).

Another issue facing teachers working with HLLs is the need to provide differentiated instruction when HLLs are co-enrolled with L2Ls, an unavoidable reality in many schools. While it is not known how many U.S. secondary schools offer specialized SSS courses, an NHLRC survey of post-secondary institutions found that even in California, the state with the largest Spanish speaking population in the nation, only 60% of colleges and universities offered SSS courses (Carreira, 2011). This means that most HLLs are likely co-enrolled with L2 learners in traditional Spanish courses. In these

courses Spanish teachers have traditionally delivered “one-size-fits-all” curriculum, consequently, they are not typically prepared to deliver significant differentiated instruction. Instructors in a mixed course for L2Ls and HLLs “are in need of a toolbox of classroom management techniques that allow students to progress at their own pace towards high levels of proficiency” (Kagan & Dillon, 2009, pg. 168). Managing a classroom in which students are simultaneously engaged in different tasks, working towards different instructional goals is difficult, and becomes more so as the number of groups grows. Because differentiated instruction is not common practice in traditional Spanish language classrooms, expert colleagues, professional development and adequate pre-service preparation are predictably scarce.

**Teacher Preparation in Heritage Language Instruction.** The scholarship addressing the professional development of teachers of HLs and more specifically Spanish as a heritage language is relatively limited and focused on the following areas: 1) theoretical works on nature of the need for professional preparation for HL instructors, 2) descriptions of professional development efforts and 3) a limited number of professional development guides.

Potowski and Carreira (2004) argued that teachers of HLs require professional preparation beyond that typically provided to instructors of second languages because both HL learners and HL pedagogies are very different. Their argument positions foreign language (FL) and HL pedagogies as analogous to ESL and English Language Arts (ELA) pedagogies: “It is not assumed that ESL teachers will be successful native language arts teachers, nor vice versa. In fact, state requirements demand separate

coursework and award different endorsements and certifications in these two fields,” (Potowski & Carreira, 2004, p. 431). The authors go on to suggest that ELA curricular standards may more appropriately address the instructional needs of HLLs than Foreign Language curricular standards, further underscoring the need for specialized professional development and HL methods courses in teacher preparation programs. Similarly, Kagan and Dillon (2009) advocated specialized training for HL instructors focused on developing the following areas: 1) knowledge of the HL learner, 2) knowledge of the HL community, 3) assessing HLLs’ initial proficiency, 4) building on HLLs’ interests and proficiencies, and 5) macro-approaches to instruction, such as content based instruction or experiential learning. The authors also cited a need for teachers to learn differentiation strategies for teaching in mixed HL/L2 courses (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 168). The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) also made recommendations regarding the teacher preparation for teachers of SSS. The AASTP “necessary competencies” include:

- 1) Minimum of advanced language proficiency, 2) knowledge of appropriate pedagogical principles in language expansion and enrichment, 3) theories of cognitive processing that underline bilingualism, 4) theories of social and linguistic processes that underlie bilingualism and languages in contact, 5) knowledge of the sociolinguistic dynamics of Spanish as a world language and as a viable system of communication in the United States, and 6) knowledge and understanding of the interdependence of the students’ home culture with Hispanic cultures in general. (AATSP, 2000, pg. 88)

González Pino and Pino (2000) reported that approximately one-third of post-secondary institutions in the U.S. offered at least one course in Spanish for HLLs compared to 9% of secondary schools. More contemporary data on post-secondary offerings suggests that prevalence has increased to around 40% nationwide and much higher, approaching 90% across institutions with large Hispanic/Latino enrollments (Beaudrie, 2012). Unfortunately, no such current data are available for secondary SSS offerings. That said, it is assumed that most of the instructors in the SSS courses offered across the country had received little to no professional preparation focused specifically on SSS instruction; in other words, they have to “find their own way” (Potowski, 2003). While interest in and prevalence of HL instruction have grown since 2000, to date there is no report on the nature and prevalence of professional development of SSS instructors nationwide. Nationally, sources of professional development for teachers of SSS can be found through listservs and special interest groups of organization such as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) or the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), or via annual conferences and summer institutes such as those sponsored by the National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC) at UCLA or the University of New Mexico at Las Cruces. However, secondary educators typically obtain most pre- and in-service professional development via the offerings of their own school districts or from local colleges and universities. There is little research examining the availability and nature of, nor outcomes associated with HL professional development of this variety.

A notable exception to this dearth in the literature is the reports of collaborative secondary teacher training projects between Hunter College and ACTFL (Webb &

Miller, 2000) and the University of Illinois-Chicago and Chicago Public Schools (Potowski, 2003). The Hunter College/ACTFL collaboration brought together eight experienced New York City teachers of heritage languages with faculty from Hunter College to design a teacher education program for HL teachers. The group sponsored a colloquium of 100 heritage language teachers in order to “find out what THEY thought teachers should know and be able to do when working with this population” (Webb & Miller, 2000, p. 11), as well as consulted with experts in assessment, linguistics and language arts instruction, conducted classroom observations, and interviewed students and teachers. The result of the project was a teacher-training graduate course entitled “Academy on Working with Heritage Language Learners” at Hunter College and the publication of “Teaching Heritage Language Learners: Voices from the Classroom” in the ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series. While the volume did not describe the structure or content of the training academy, it does present a summary of issues and ideas the group considered essential to HL education. The following tables are paraphrased from the volume’s “Statement of Shared Goals and Fundamental Beliefs” (pgs. 83-85):

**Table 2.1: Goals and Beliefs of the Voices from the Classroom Project**

Teachers of heritage languages should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand heritage language complexity</li> <li>• Have high standards and expectations for their students</li> <li>• Have a high level of proficiency in the language</li> <li>• Understand sociolinguistic foundations of HL</li> <li>• Understand affective concerns of HLs</li> <li>• Be aware of student motivation</li> </ul>

- Use student culture
- Teach uses and purposes of the HL
- Teach a variety of registers
- Explore and foster appreciation culture heritage
- Use a variety of approaches/differentiate
- Incorporate personal voice
- Nurture self-esteem
- Be an advocate for HLs and the HL program

Students of heritage languages should:

- Develop sociolinguistic competence for a wide variety of situations and audiences
- Learn the role of their HL in the world
- Learn the role of HLs and HL countries in the future
- Know how their history and traditions developed
- Know reasons for studying and using the HL
- Understand that use of HL will result in growth
- Be able to self-monitor language features
- Teach others about their HL
- Become independent learners

A successful heritage language learning environment is one in which:

- Differences are respected
- Multiple perspectives from students' lives are validated
- There are family, community and school connections
- Teachers and students respect each other
- Students participate as equals in discussions
- Student communication is valued and errors viewed as part of learning
- Different learning styles are addressed
- Learning is student-centered and interactive

An effective heritage language curriculum:

- Is based on foreign-language and language arts standards
- Has clearly stated goals understood by all stakeholders
- Includes students' countries of heritage

- Uses current technology
- Includes real-life situations that involve students in the community
- Uses language across the disciplines
- Combines language skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing
- Reflects an understand of language learning as progressive
- Uses a variety of assessment methods to measure all language skills
- Assesses at regular intervals

Two central concepts feature very prominently in the Hunter College/ACTFL project. The first is that HL curriculum and pedagogy are analogous to ELA curriculum and pedagogy, a belief echoed later by Potowski and Carreira (2004) and others. The second is the importance of teacher beliefs, attitude and expectations in building effective instruction and instructional environments; two of the practitioner authors in the volume write “the role of the teacher in determining the success or failure of students in heritage language classrooms cannot be understated,” (Draper & Hicks, 2000, pg. 21) because teacher beliefs ultimately impact decisions on both what and how to teach in HL courses (Schwartz, 2001, pg. 234).

The Chicago “Heritage Language Teacher Corps” project, described by Potowski (2003) built on the work of Hunter College and ACTFL in offering a three course professional development series for 100 Chicago teachers of SSS aimed at creating 100 “specialists” who then facilitated workshops for other Chicago teachers of SSS. In the first of the three courses, Teaching Literature and Culture, participants learned reading instruction strategies, read and discussed film and literature and created original classroom activities. In the second course, Sociolinguistics, teachers learned about U.S. varieties of Spanish, linguistic and sociolinguistic features of language contact, conducted



two research projects analyzing student language production and again created classroom activities with addressed sociolinguistic issues. The final course, *Methods in Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers*, explored teachers' beliefs about HL education and the characteristics of their students, then examined Language Arts' influenced teaching methods, examined curricular scope and sequence documents and designed relevant classroom activities. Longitudinal outcome data on the effects of this teacher training are not available, however Potowski (2003) reported that 25 of the teachers who participated in the first year of the program found it "very useful" (pg. 307).

A limited number of texts are available that might support teacher professional development efforts. The aforementioned AATSP publication, "Spanish for Native Speakers" addresses "frequently asked questions" about Spanish as a heritage language, including placement procedures, instruction and student motivation and supplies teacher-authored "lesson ideas." Notably, the manuscript identifies SSS "concepts/issues" that could inform professional development and curriculum design. These "concepts/issues" are reproduced on the following page from AATSP, 2000, pg. 8.

**Table 2.2: SSS Concepts and Issues from AATSP**

1. Motivation and self-esteem
2. Dealing with errors
3. Standard vs. non-standard language
4. Linguistic diversity
5. Cultural diversity
6. Mixed classes
7. Spelling
8. Language expansion
9. Metalinguistic skills
10. Contextual grammar

Additionally, part two of the Hunter College/ACTFL volume edited by Web and Miller (2000) entitled “Voices from the classroom” addressed curricular standards in HL instruction, assessment, and instructional practices, as well as including teacher-authored chapters describing classroom experiences, curricular units and student stories. In the afterword to the volume, Guadalupe Valdés suggested the utility of the text lies in illustrating actual classroom practice and guiding conversation about how to provide teacher professional development. The success of this project, according to Valdés, was that it “rejected top-down, banking approaches to in-service education and established instead a context in which talented teachers who were engaged in the practice of heritage

language teaching could come together to explore, discuss and grapple with the many issues that touched upon their practice” (2000, p. 246).

Finally, the only work that might be considered a brief primer on SSS methodology written specifically for classroom teachers is Potowski’s (2005) *Fundamentos de la enseñanza del español para hispanohablantes en los EE.UU* (Fundamentals of the teaching of Spanish for Spanish speakers in the U.S.A). The brief text addresses broadly reading, writing, grammar, error correction, oral language and characteristics of HLLs and Spanish in the United States. Central ideas in the text are global and tempered approaches to error correction in student language production, including sensitivity to and acceptance of local language varieties and a focus on language instruction related to students’ lives and communities. The “se debe” and “no se debe” (one should, one should not) section of the text offer prescriptions for classroom teachers in regards to attitudes “mostrarse abierto a aprender de los estudiantes,” (be open to learning from the students) and practices “no abuse de la tinta roja ni del trabajo basado en verbos,” (don’t abuse {overuse} the red pen or the verb worksheets) (Potowski, 2005, pgs. 70-71).

### **Teacher Professional Development and Communities of Practice**

Teacher learning and professional development has been widely examined and deliberated by many; here I have considered scholarship that has particular utility for elucidating the learning challenges and opportunities for Spanish teachers of HLLs in Nebraska and other new Latino diaspora regions. Professional learning for teachers of HLLs is perhaps slightly different than professional learning for teachers of established

disciplines like mathematics or reading because the field of heritage language education is new, changing and highly theoretical. While other areas of K-12 education have been inundated with “research-based best practices,” derived from experimental design studies and meta-studies of classroom practices, the field of HL education continues investigate how HLs are learned and propose models for instruction. The lack of formal studies of practice and the newness of empirical study of HLs means that many of goals of SSS teacher learning may still be unclear. My experience as a SSS practitioner informed my treatment of the literature as I sought to connect theories of teacher learning with my knowledge of practice in this nascent area. Two central ideas in teacher learning and professional development emerged from my review; first, the role of social, community and collegial association to professional learning and second, the notion of “bottom-up” or teacher-responsive, teacher-driven learning.

**Learning Communities.** Wenger’s (1998) theory of communities of practice offers a global framework for articulating the primary learning needs of teachers of HLLS. Particularly in the new Latino diaspora many secondary teachers working with heritage speakers of Spanish do not have access to communities of practice in their professional lives. A teacher may be the only instructor of SSS in a school or only one of several in a school district and this limits their opportunity to develop and define competence. According to Wenger all learning is fundamentally social, and knowledge and competence is acquired and affirmed within communities of practice. Members of communities of practice define competence in three ways:

First, members are bound together by their collectively developed understanding of what their community is about and they hold each other accountable to this sense of *joint enterprise*. (...) Second, members build their community through mutual engagement. They interact with one another, establishing norms and relationships of *mutuality* that reflect these interactions. (...) Third, communities of practice have produced a *shared repertoire* of communal resources – language, routines, sensibilities, artifacts, tools, stories, styles, etc. To be competent is to have access to this repertoire and be able to use it appropriately. (Wenger, 2000, p. 229)

In order to learn, Wenger (2000) posited, communities must negotiate the meaning of their enterprise “reconciling conflicting interpretations of what the enterprise is about,” develop forms of engagement with one another and build a cache of resources by “producing or adopting tools, artifacts, representations” (pg. 95). Especially in the new Latino diaspora, there are few secondary Spanish instructors with extensive experience teaching HLLs and there are minimal relevant pre- and in-service professional development opportunities. Teachers who are unprepared to teach HLLs or seeking knowledge to improve their practice have few venues to do so. Where and how can teachers of Spanish HLLs negotiate the meaning of teaching HLLs or develop shared tools and understandings?

Wenger (2000) himself pointed out that communities of practice are not necessarily always productive or constructive learning communities, indeed, he claimed, “communities of practice cannot be romanticized. They are born of learning, but can also

learn not to learn” (p. 230). In their application of communities of practice theory to policy implementation Coburn and Stein (2006) similarly identified the capacity of strong communities of practice to both accept and reject policies and also to shape their implementation in accordance with the norms of the communities.

How can members of community of practice ensure that it continues to learn? Teacher learning implies an “inquiry as stance” orientation (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) to the challenges and opportunities of practice. The characteristics of Lord’s (1994) critical collegueship serve as a helpful framework for considering the nature of communities of practice. In this conceptualization, critical collegueship requires:

1. Creating and sustaining positive disequilibrium through self-reflection, collegial dialogue and on-going critique.
2. Embracing fundamental intellectual virtues (...) openness to new ideas (...) greater reliance on organized or deliberate investigation (...)
3. Increasing the capacity for empathetic understanding (...)
4. Developing and honing the skills and attributes associated with negotiation, improved communication and the resolution of competing interests.
5. Increasing teachers’ comfort with high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty (...)
6. Achieving collective generativity. (Lord, 1994, p. 193)

Independent of collaborative communities teachers are left to learn independently. Lord (1994) called attention to the haphazard nature of this teacher learning, “veteran teachers often hear of new ideas, methods and strategies from a colleague next door (...) a resource teacher (...) an eclectic army of materials that sift down through the central

office (...) These new influences are seldom the result of a concerted or sustained program of investigation undertaken by the teacher or his or her colleagues” (p. 194). Indeed, for teachers of HLLs in places like Nebraska, learning about HLs is likely “haphazard.” The “critical collegueship” that Lord advocated instead requires the development of communities of practice within which teachers can inquire into their practice. Features of “critical collegueship” such as productive and critical dialogues with fellow teachers and systematic inquiry into questions of practice posed by teachers have the potential to bear fruit in the field of HL pedagogy.

Currently, in the absence of professional communities or professional development opportunities, teachers who work with HLLs work as independent curriculum creators and are likely generating useful knowledge from practice and from the particular disciplines from which they borrow expertise. All this could be of value to other practitioners, as well as scholars and policy-makers, if there were a means by which to communicate that knowledge. There is a notable dearth of scholarship on HL pedagogy and practice, particularly in secondary schools, and teachers could contribute significantly to filling that void

Access to colleagues in a way that would support the development of a community of practice and critical collegueship seems a promising source of learning for teachers of HLLs. There is now a long history of scholarship on the work of teachers in collaborative learning communities. For example, Clark (2001) documented the work of a dozen diverse teacher conversation groups. When a group of teachers engaged in a teacher-driven, reflective reform process reviewed the literature on images of teachers in

the educational enterprise; they noted, “particular veins of the curriculum, reform and organizational literature assert that teachers who assume the curriculum maker role, involve themselves in classroom inquiry, and take a reflective stance toward their work are ‘good’ teachers” (Kelley, et al., 2010, p. 276). These activities, curriculum-making, inquiry and reflection are implicit in the work of building a community of practice. If teacher knowledge and teacher learning is to be taken seriously, both by teachers themselves and by wider audiences, we must form communities of practice in which to share, test, strengthen and articulate our inquiries.

**Teacher-driven Professional Development.** Richardson (2003) described a fundamental dilemma in professional development that pits the individualism inherent in American society against the efforts of professional development initiatives that seek collective action and implementation. Because teachers desire and require professional autonomy, Richardson suggested that inquiry-based professional development models which are both voluntary and teacher-driven are more likely to succeed given their respect for individual autonomy and a character of free association which supports collective work for a common goal.

Similarly, Easton (2008) suggested a shift from the notion of professional development, to one of professional *learning*; where development implies growth in a known direction and learning embraces change. “Educators often find that more and better are not enough. They find they often need to change what they do,” (Easton, 2008, p. 755). Professional learning, she argued, acknowledges dilemmas, fosters change and represents a cultural change in the environment of schools rather than an independent



“development” exercise. Particularly in the case of HL pedagogy, where content standards and disciplinary norms remain in flux (Roca & Colombi, 2003), Easton’s argument seems very relevant. The likelihood that teachers of HLLs could be simply “trained” or “developed” seems slim, given that research has yet to identify (and may never identify) “best practices” or “what works.”

On the question of how to prepare teachers to meet complex and challenging professional demands, Warren Little (1993) argued that traditional training and skill-based models of top-down professional development are incompatible with contemporary educational reform efforts; in her words, “the training paradigm, no matter how well executed, will not enable us to realize the reform agendas; and resource allocations for professional development represent a relatively poor fit with the intellectual, organizational, and social requirements of the most ambitious reforms” (p. 133).

Many efforts aimed to prepare teachers are characterized by deficit orientations that presume that teachers need simply be “trained” to remediate their faults or have transmitted to them the skills they lack (Easton, 2008). This simplistic understanding of teacher professional learning implies only a need to improve, expand, refine, “develop,” existing skills and does not acknowledge the complexities of teaching and learning. Professional learning, Easton (2008) argues, acknowledges dilemmas, fosters change and represents a cultural shift in the environment of schools, rather than an independent “development” exercise. The current “audit culture” in public education focuses professional development energy on teacher credentialing and improving student performance on standardized measures of achievement used for external accountability

purposes (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009). If teachers are to engage in the sort of transformative learning experiences that challenge deficit views of Latino students, for example, the literature suggests that attention must be paid to more than skills and knowledge.

Research suggests that teachers must have some agency in determining their own learning needs; Zeichner (2003) examined the outcomes of several teacher action research programs and found that teacher-driven professional development efforts are more likely to result in teacher learning that impacts practice than top-down development efforts. In this review in particular, prescriptive professional development was significantly less successful than teacher-driven inquiries, “when teachers lack the ability to determine their research focus, as appears to have been the case for some of the teacher researchers in the Ames, Iowa program, they reacted negatively to what they perceive as an administrative attempt to increase controls over them” (Zeichner, 2003, p. 319). Day (2004) proposed that true professional learning is “set within the contexts of personal and institutional needs and these will not always coincide (... and) teachers’ hearts (passions, enthusiasms, personal identities, commitment, emotions) are as important a focus as their head and hands” (p. 132).

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

As a classroom teacher and participant in the Carnegie Project for the Education Doctorate (CPED), my work as a researcher has been explicitly informed by a practice and practitioner-oriented epistemology (Shulman et al., 2006). This study addresses a perceived problem in my own practice as a high school teacher of Spanish to Spanish speakers: the absence of a community of practice of fellow educators in my field who could support my professional learning and thus improve instruction for my students. Methodological decisions made in the design and execution of this study were expressly connected to my work as a practitioner. After 10 years in the classroom and empowered by my work in the CPED program, I asked: How can *I* help facilitate the creation of a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998) related to heritage learner pedagogy in Nebraska? There was prospective gain for me and my students in that question, and presumably for colleagues and students in other schools. Through CPED I have come to see myself as a source of relevant theoretical and practical knowledge that bears on the questions, challenges, and opportunities faced by teachers of Spanish to heritage learners in Nebraska.

In this chapter I begin by situating this study in terms of its epistemological positions and illustrating how these perspectives influenced the selection of a design study framework and delineated my role as a researcher. Then I provide an overview of the timeline of the entire design project of which this inquiry forms a part. Subsequently, I describe the survey and interview methods used in data collection, including

recruitment information and instrument details. Lastly, I address the process of data analysis and reporting.

## **Epistemology**

**Postures.** In order to situate this inquiry within the principles of the CPED project, I assert the power of practitioners to participate in knowledge creation and research. CPED aims to “reclaim” the doctorate of educational practice as an entity distinct from but not of lesser quality than the doctorate of research (Shulman et al., 2006). I also position this inquiry at the intersection of theory, policy and practice (Latta & Wunder, 2012), and within what Guba and Lincoln (2005) call the “participatory paradigm” in qualitative research and discuss the role *action* must play in my practitioner inquiry.

The idea of "working the dialectic" is at the heart of the CPED effort and this research project. Practitioner inquiry is rooted in Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) dialectic of inquiry and practice; it is a perspective that is “capitalizing on the tensions between inquiry and practice, researcher and practitioner, conceptual and empirical research, local and public knowledge” (p. 94). Practitioner inquiry aims not only to improve instructional practice, but also to improve educational theory and push back against the divisions between theory and practice. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) described how practitioner inquiry challenges traditional power structures that locate research and theory exclusively at universities and practice exclusively in schools. In the field of heritage language pedagogy, the need for scholarship relevant to practitioners is as urgent as is the need of practitioners for relevant theory. Therefore, this study

explicitly aimed to seek, identify, and cultivate practitioner knowledge and experience from practice. I maintain that what teachers know and do and what teachers want to learn should explicitly inform professional learning efforts.

CPED aims to develop doctors of educational practice with expertise at the nexus of theory and practice, conducting research as practitioners that addresses the problems of practice that matter to practitioners (Latta & Wunder, 2012; Schulman et al, 2006). However, CPED Ed.D.s are also to serve as a nexus between practitioners and researchers, between schools and universities. This kind of practitioner research brings theory closer to practice, but also practitioners closer to theory. Thus, the hope in my study was to generate data and conclusions that could be presented to stakeholders in all three arenas: practice, policy and theory.

Practitioner research necessarily implies particular orientations and positions vis-à-vis methodology; certain postures are possible and others are not (Wolcott, 1992). To act as both architect and participant in the research setting, and to act respecting the obligations of a practitioner are all methodological considerations. In this study I surveyed and interviewed my peers and colleagues in Nebraska, I shared my results with and took action alongside them; I cannot treat them or their experiences with removed objectivity, as their experiences are woven into the larger narrative of my locally situated profession.

While my participants are anonymous for you, the reader, they are not anonymous to me as a practitioner. As I continue to work as a Spanish teacher in Nebraska (both to HLLs and those without previous familiarity with Spanish) and as I expand my

professional role into the realm of teacher-education and professional development, I am likewise known. For these reasons, in this study I strove to treat the knowledge of my participants and collaborators with both respect and humility, as it is in large part thanks to their expertise that I construct my own expertise. To echo Wolcott (1992), my posture is that they and I both can grow and hone our practice by sharing ideas, experiences, and insights with each other.

It is important to acknowledge that within the larger national milieu of educational policy and practice at the time this study was conducted, the knowledge and expertise of practitioners were not always respected. The educational climate of accountability at the start of the twenty-first century is defined by high-stakes testing, a 'what works' agenda for professional development, and a top-down "audit culture" that corrupts relationships between policy-makers and schools, and between administrators and teachers (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 4). This climate further marginalizes the knowledge of practitioners, dismissing it as too local, or too subjective. Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2009) explained, "The prevailing 'common-sense' approach to education holds at its centre the equation of objective measures with 'accountability' and the 'fuzzy' measures represented in the application of teacher professional judgment with the much less desirable and indeed indefensible 'subjectivity'" (p. 9).

Erickson and Gutierrez (2002) have added, "A logically and empirically prior question to 'Did it work?' is 'What was the it?' – 'What was the treatment as actually delivered?'" Rephrasing and supplementing their point according to my and my subjects'

professional responsibilities as teachers, 'What do we do and how/why do we do it'?

'What are both the premises and accomplishments of our efforts?'

The separation of teachers from research separates research from practice and "emboldens policy developers, as the perspectives of researchers and practitioners can be mined selectively to legislate and purportedly control what happens in classrooms, schools, school districts, state governments and more" (Latta & Wunder, 2012, p. 4). The traditional discrete "triumvirate" of theory-policy-practice is flawed; in reality the intertwining of these three is much richer, more-multi-directional, and complex than is often assumed. Teachers' communities of practice can influence the ways that policy is understood and enacted in practice (Coburn & Stein, 2006) and educational theory must allow for a consideration of local context if local actors are to take up its calls (Hamann & Reeves, 2012). For this reason, it was important for me in this study to remain grounded in Nebraska (a single policy jurisdiction that I too am part of), so that local actors could take action locally.

Practitioner research generally and programs like CPED more specifically can push back against the separation of practice from theory and from policy. CPED and practitioner research more generally are meant to "challenge to the top-down ways in which policy implementation has often been imposed and predetermined" (Honig, 2004, p. 554). Instead we should be, "conceptualizing educators as prospective participants in bottom-up reform" (Honig, 2004, p. 554) for "bottom-up policy creation" (Latta & Wunder, 2012, p. 11). Through survey and interview I sought out the ideas, expertise and

opinions of Nebraska teachers so that they might also be called to participate in professional learning opportunities informed by their experiences.

This study can be construed as “teacher research” or “action research,” though the term “teacher research” seems often to be used interchangeably with “action research,” as if teachers doing research could only do “action research,” and that one must be a teacher to do research called “action research.” However, Guba and Lincoln (2005) broadened the notion of action in research paradigms, “for some theorists, the shift toward action came in response to widespread non-utilization of evaluation findings and the desire to create forms of evaluation that would attract champions who might follow through on recommendations with meaningful action plans” (p. 201). To think about action in research as research that overtly intends to prompt action is a helpful reconfiguration of the notion. Moreover, it points towards design research, a category I return to momentarily.

Which questions are worth asking and which methods are desirable for gathering and representing information are inevitably intertwined with values; Guba and Lincoln (2005) considered axiology a central paradigmatic principle. Which questions are worth asking for practitioner researchers? “Practical knowing about how to flourish with a balance of autonomy, cooperation and hierarchy in a culture is an end in itself, is intrinsically valuable” (p. 199). Research has a responsibility to suggest feasible action and contribute knowledge of how to take such action. Feasibility and action play up the importance of context, for what is good and feasible action in one context may be nearly impossible in another. Sensitivity to context plays up the value of context-embedded



practitioner research.

As a classroom teacher and a member of the CPED endeavor, not only do I believe that research must be democratic and action-oriented, but it must be democratically and actionably distributed. As I have already suggested this necessitates involving teachers as more than subjects in research, affirming the value of knowledge from and of practice, and ensuring that research improves the practice of education.

**Design Research Paradigm.** Guba and Lincoln (2005) described “confluences” emerging in qualitative social science research where critical theory, constructivism, and participatory paradigms cross-pollinate through “borrowing, or bricolage, where borrowing seems useful, richness-enhancing, or theoretically heuristic” (p. 197). Practitioner inquiry, implicitly value-laden, imbued with action and meaning making is an example of just such paradigmatic confluence (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Design research in education is another example of “confluence” in educational research methods, bringing together pedagogy, engineering, curriculum, and careful analysis.

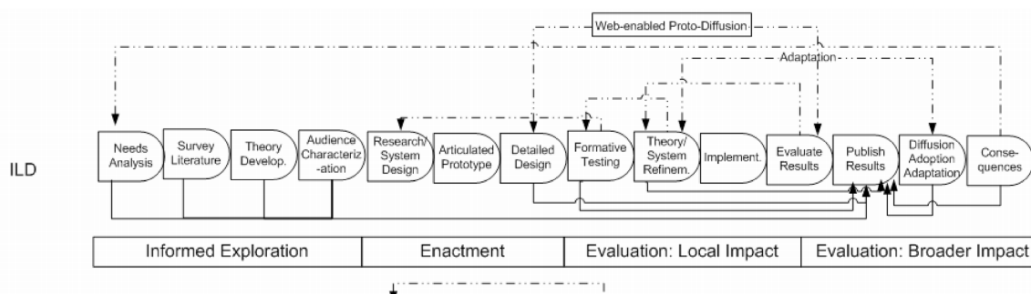
Design research was the design orientation for this inquiry; it is an action- and practitioner-friendly methodological construct. As mentioned in the preceding section, the study was guided by the belief that inquiry in education must be imbued with action and directed towards contextually relevant problems. Design research as described by (Collins, 1999) seeks to improve practice by developing, implementing, and evaluating treatments then iteratively repeating the process. Classroom teachers, like design researchers, are concerned with context “interventions as enacted through the interactions between materials, teachers and learners,” (The Design Research Collective,

2003, p. 5). In this sense, Design research provided a theoretical and methodological foundation for exploring local contexts in teaching and learning and acting based on local understandings.

In this study, the aim was to examine the experiences of Nebraska teachers of Spanish in order to identify sources of knowledge and expertise, articulate teacher-identified learning needs and characterize what teachers want from professional learning experiences. An “example space,” model, or prototype intervention was then created. The model as well as the data collected will continue to be iteratively used to design and facilitate learning experiences for Nebraska teachers. While much design research has focused on classroom experiments or one-to-one teacher-to-small-group interventions, there is a growing body of design work in teacher pre-service and in-service development (Cobb et al., 2003) and implementation research (Penuel et al., 2011). This study focused on what Penuel and colleagues called “improving social capital, that is the resources and expertise that individuals can access to accomplish purposive action” (2011, p. 334).

Bannan-Ritland (2003) described four broad phases of a design research process: (1) Informed Exploration, (2) Enactment, (3) Evaluation: Local Impact, and (4) Evaluation: Broader Impact. Figure 1 (next page) illustrates this process, collectively termed the “Integrative Learning Design Framework” (pg. 22). This project comprised the Informed Exploration phase of this model as well as preliminary elements of Enactment and Evaluation.

**Figure 3.1: Integrative Learning Design Framework (Bannan-Ritland, 2003)**



The next section describes how the actions taken in the process of this inquiry corresponded to these design research phases.

### Overview of the Project

As many research endeavors do, this project grew from a tentative initial exploration to an articulated plan of action over the course of many months. The table below (and continued on the next page) illustrates the timeline of exploration and enactment activities associated with this project.

**Table 5: Project Timeline**

Activity	Time Frame	Phase
Spanish for Spanish Speakers conversation group pilot meetings	June - December, 2012	<u>Informed exploration</u> : Needs analysis, theory develop
Statewide focus survey of Nebraska Spanish teachers	April - May, 2013	<u>Informed exploration</u> : Needs analysis, survey literature, theory develop, audience characterization

Interviews of nine survey respondents representing three sub-groups	September - October, 2013	<u>Informed exploration:</u> Needs analysis, survey literature, theory develop, audience characterization
Initial survey responses presented at the Nebraska International Language Association conference	October, 2013	<u>Informed exploration:</u> theory develop, audience characterization  <u>Enactment:</u> Research system design, articulated prototype
Workshop on differentiation for HLLs presented at Educational Service Unit 6 (ESU 6) in collaboration with the Nebraska Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (NATSP)	March, 2014	<u>Enactment:</u> Research system design, articulated prototype, detailed design  <u>Evaluation:</u> Formative testing

As I have explained, this project emerged from my need as a practitioner to find and engage with other practitioners who could support my professional learning. In an exploratory first step in June of 2012, I reached out to a handful of other teachers in Southeast Nebraska who I knew were teaching SSS courses and asked them to meet in a voluntary conversation group to discuss our work and share ideas. Four teachers of SSS, myself included, from four different school districts attended the first monthly meeting. A fifth teacher attended the second meeting. The group met a total of three times, though attendance had dwindled to myself and one other attendee by the final meeting in December, 2012. From my participation in these meetings, my field notes and correspondence with participants, my initial hunch was confirmed; other teachers of SSS

were grappling with many of the same dilemmas encountered in my practice and, like me, they were seeking ideas and expertise.

From a design perspective, those meetings revealed an important reality that gave form to this inquiry. It is widely known that public school teachers work many unremunerated hours planning lessons, grading papers, attending meetings or events and fulfilling other professional obligations. My attempt to organize voluntary, monthly evening meetings across school districts and geographic space was simply an unrealistic demand on teachers' time considering that this work was neither formally recognized nor compensated. From this fledgling attempt to create a community of HL instructors I concluded that professional learning opportunities for in-service Spanish teachers in Nebraska would need support from an external entity capable of recognizing, validating, and likely remunerating the educators' own investment of time.

Who or what could this external entity be? An individual school district? An Educational Service Unit (ESU)? The Nebraska Department of Education? The Nebraska International Language Association? A college or university? How would I approach one of these organizations? How would I convince them to support professional development experiences for teachers of HLLs? What would these experiences even look like? I realized then that I knew very little about the need or demand for HL professional development in Nebraska beyond my own professional experience and the limited first conversations with a few similarly situated peers. Here the design research process illuminated my next steps. In order to explore the need and

characterize the audience for professional learning opportunities, systematic inquiry was necessary.

I knew that I would need to initially collect data from a large sample population of Nebraska teachers. I determined that a cross-sectional survey of Nebraska Spanish teachers would provide a descriptive portrait of programs, teacher practices, attitudes and professional development experiences related to HLLs. Survey methods provide the best opportunity to systematically describe the characteristics of a large population because they allow the researcher to collect data much more efficiently from a much larger sample than would be feasible through interviews or observation models (Berends, 2009). This makes surveys much less costly for researchers and much more convenient for participants who may choose to respond when and where they are most comfortable. Surveys are also versatile in that they can facilitate the collection of data about a wide variety of topics with a single instrument, something very important to this study. While survey methods do have significant drawbacks, including their inflexibility and their inherently general and context-reduced probes, in this study no other research method could have as effectively and efficiently provided as much information from as many participants. I was also aware that in the age of “scientific” research in education quantitative data are revered as the “gold standard” by some stakeholders (Whitehurst, 2003) and the sort of data provided by a survey could be especially useful in conversations with policymakers. Additionally, in casting a wide net across the state, the survey allowed for broader identification of practitioners engaged in promising practices than my personal familiarity availed on its own.

My inquiry into the global state of teacher knowledge of HLLs in Nebraska is the portion of this project that is analyzed and reported in this dissertation. I chose a design in which complementary data would be collected via survey and interviews about teacher experiences, practices, and beliefs in working with HLLs. Collecting both quantitative and qualitative data brings together the strengths of both types of data to corroborate and enrich the understanding of each. The decision to conduct interviews in addition to the survey was prompted by several considerations. First, interviews aligned with the survey questions allowed for some triangulation of data, to both confirm and/or disconfirm the data obtained from either source. Perhaps more importantly, however, was the need to explore the meaning of survey responses to the respondents via interview. As Erickson (1989) pointed out “surface similarities in behaviors are sometimes misleading in educational research....[E]vents that seem ostensibly the same may have distinctly different local meanings” (pp. 121-122). For example, survey respondents may differ in how they understand what it means to “make modifications to instruction for HLLs” but a survey alone would not adequately reveal those differing meanings. Moreover, in terms of the larger design project, the survey and follow up interviews both served to characterize the potential audience for and inform the design of professional learning opportunities.

In March 2013 I obtained IRB approval for a statewide survey of Spanish teachers about their experiences working with HLLs and their professional development (if any) related to HLLs. This approval letter is found in Appendix A. Surveys were distributed electronically in April and May 2013. The complete survey is included as Appendix B. An IRB addendum was approved in August of 2013 Appendix C and follow-up telephone

interviews exploring survey responses were then conducted with nine respondents during September and October, protocols for these interviews are found in Appendix D. The next section describes the process of data collection and analysis with these two instruments in much greater detail.

Initial findings from the survey were presented at the Nebraska International Language Association (NILA) conference in October 2013 and discussed with session attendees. Likewise, at the business meeting of the NATSP during the NILA conference, I shared the results of the survey and proposed a NATSP-sponsored action in response. Informed by the results of both the survey and interviews a professional development workshop was planned and executed in March of 2014 through collaboration between Nebraska ESU 6 and the NATSP. This same workshop was then again presented at the 2015 meeting of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Details of this portion of the enactment phase of this study will be addressed in Chapter 5.

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected between April and October of 2013 via electronic survey and telephone interview.

**Survey Instrument Design.** The survey was designed and delivered electronically using Qualtrics software licensed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Rea and Parker (2005) noted that electronic surveys offer the advantage of convenience for both researcher and respondent, neither of whom must deliver a paper document. Electronic surveys can also be adaptive, shortening the response time needed for some



respondents, which is an advantage for sampling public school teachers who balance many competing demands for their time. In this case, an adaptive survey allowed me to ask additional questions of participants who worked in schools with SSS courses, or had taught SSS courses themselves; these questions were not presented to other respondents. Disadvantages inherent to electronic surveys include limited participation of respondents without access to the Internet or email, or who do not feel comfortable with electronic survey technology (Rea & Parker, 2005). In this case, because teachers in Nebraska now universally enjoy access to email provided through their school districts (NDE, 2014) it is unlikely that this particular sample was significantly affected by electronic survey self-selection bias.

The research questions delineated in Chapter 1 guided the design of the survey instrument:

Q1: How do teachers describe HLL placement in Spanish language courses in Nebraska secondary schools?

Q2: What instructional aims do SSS teachers in Nebraska propose for HL instruction?

Q3: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe differentiated instruction in mixed courses with HLLs?

Q4: What do Nebraska Spanish teachers say that they believe about HLLs?

Q5: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe learning what they know about HLLs?

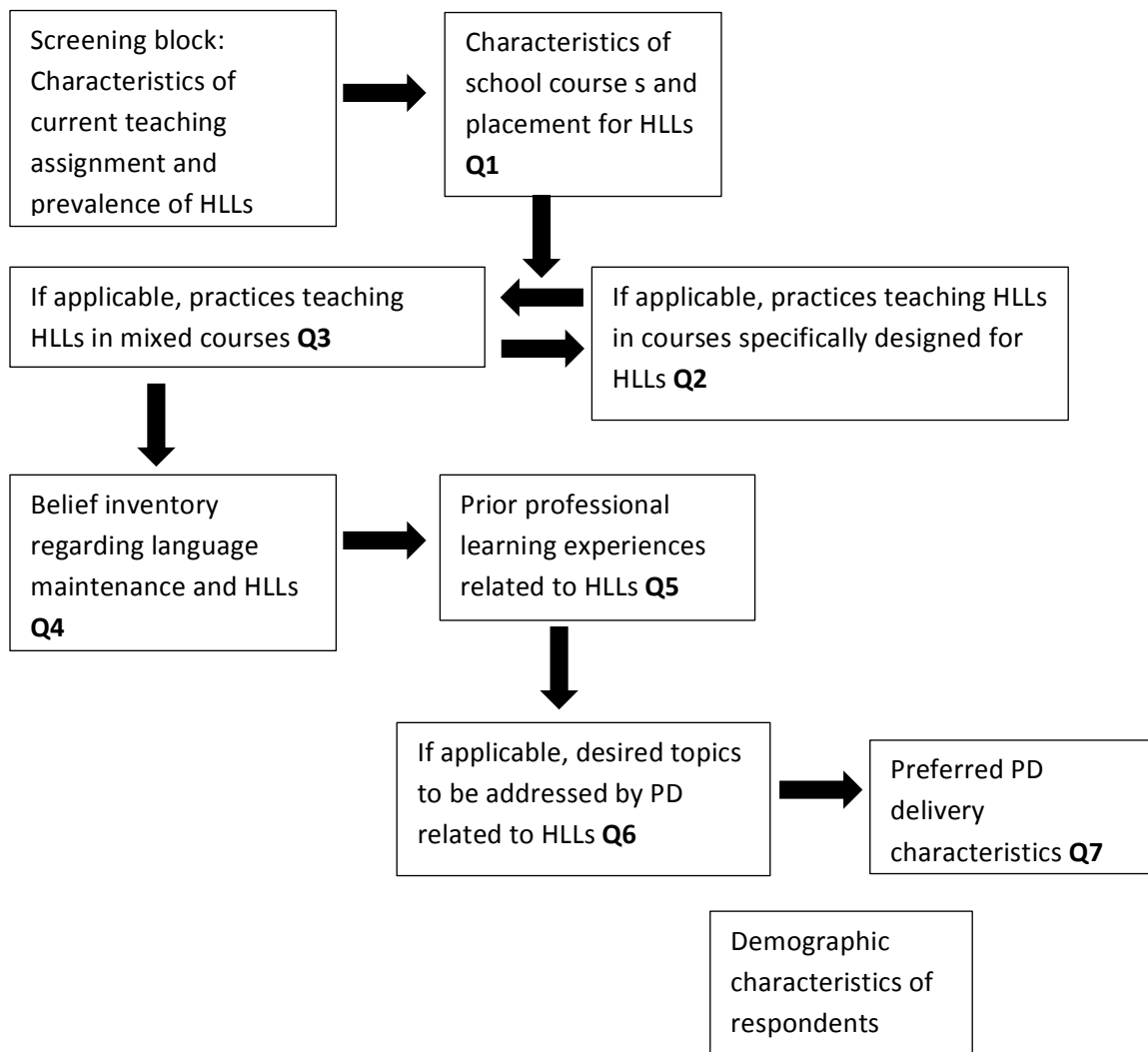
Q6: What do Nebraska Spanish teachers suggest they want to know about HLLs?

Q7: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers desire to grow and learn professionally?

The survey consisted of nine question blocks, though not all respondents were presented with all questions due to the adaptive nature of the survey. The first and last questions blocks did not address specifically the research questions of the study, but rather served to screen and characterize participants. The items in blocks two through eight were each connected to one of the research questions.

Figure 2 on the next page presents the general nature of question blocks presented to respondents and the research questions addressed by each block.

**Figure 3.2: Survey Instrument Design**



The first block of questions did not address the study's research questions, but rather characterized respondents within the study's target population: Nebraska Secondary Spanish teachers who work with HLLs. Respondents who did not identify themselves as current Spanish teachers, or who did not report working with HLLs were thanked for their participation and directed to the conclusion of the survey.

The second block of questions was crafted from the first research question, asking the remaining respondents questions about the courses offered to HLLs and the process used to place HLLs in Spanish courses at their school. If a respondent indicated that their school offered SSS courses for HLLs, he or she was asked specifically about the articulation and placement practices for those courses.

The third block of questions, connected to the second research question, was presented only to respondents who indicated that they had taught, or currently teach, a SSS course. This block asked respondents to indicate who had been responsible for creating curriculum for the SSS course they taught and to select from a list of aims of SSS courses those that they felt described the course/s they had taught. These aims were drawn from scholarly work treated in the “Goals of Instruction” section of the literature review (pp. 39-46).

Next, a block of questions was presented to all respondents who indicated that they taught “mixed” courses (traditional L2 Spanish courses in which HLs enrolled), this included both participants who had responded to block three and those who had not. Respondent were asked how much they modified instruction due to HLLs and how often they engaged in activities with HLLs from a list of classroom practices. These data related to the third research question.

The fifth block of questions consisted of a belief inventory presented to all respondents. Respondents were asked to indicate levels of agreement with statements about HLLs, bilingualism and language maintenance. The items in this question block

were modeled on a similar instrument described by Ribeiro (2011) and addressed the fourth research question.

Block six asked all respondents about their past experience with pre- and in-service professional development related to HLLs, collecting data relevant to research question five. Then respondents were asked if they were interested in learning more about HLLs. All respondents who indicated “Yes” or “Indifferent” were prompted with items from question blocks seven and eight. Respondents who indicated “No” were directed to the final survey block to provide demographic information. From a design perspective, it was less logical to include those unlikely to participate as members of the potential audience for professional learning that the study attempts to characterize.

In block seven respondents were presented with a variety a possible topics for professional learning related to HLLs and asked to evaluate the relevance or usefulness of those topics to their practice. In block eight participants provided information about their preferred mode of professional learning by responding to questions about how likely they would be to participate in professional learning experiences presented in varied formats and contexts.

The final questions block asked all respondents to provide demographic information including years of experience teaching, education, gender, ethnicity and language acquisition characteristics. The survey concluded asking if participants would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview. Table 3.2, on the following pages, presents specific survey questions aligned with each research question.

**Table 3.2: Survey Items by Research Question**

<p><b>Research Q1: How do teachers describe HLL placement in Spanish language courses in Nebraska secondary schools?</b></p>
<p><i>Does your school offer any Spanish language courses that are specifically intended for heritage/native speakers of Spanish, such as "Spanish for Native Speakers" or "Spanish for Spanish Speakers" or any other course that is designed exclusively for the bilingual student?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes</li> <li>▪ No</li> </ul>
<p><i>Which option best describes the way your school places heritage speakers of Spanish in Spanish classes?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage speakers typically follow the same course sequence (Spanish 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.) as other students of the same age and grade.</li> <li>▪ Heritage speakers typically follow a different course sequence than other students, such as skipping lower level courses (Spanish 1 or 2), or taking more advanced courses without meeting prerequisites.</li> <li>▪ Heritage speakers take a placement test that determines the course they will take.</li> <li>▪ Teachers or counselors determine placement on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>▪ Students select the course they want to take.</li> <li>▪ I don't know.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Which option best describes how courses for heritage speakers of Spanish relate to the scope and sequence of other Spanish courses at your school?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage speaker courses replace other lower level prerequisite courses. For example, heritage speakers might take Spanish for Spanish speakers instead of Spanish 1 before proceeding to higher-level courses.</li> <li>▪ Heritage speaker courses are advanced level courses that require prerequisite study. For example, heritage speakers might take Spanish for Spanish speakers after successfully completing Spanish 2.</li> <li>▪ Heritage speaker courses are totally independent from other Spanish course sequence articulations. They have no prerequisites and do not serve as prerequisites for other courses.</li> <li>▪ Other, please explain. _____</li> <li>▪ I don't know</li> </ul>

*Which option best describes how heritage speakers of Spanish are placed in courses designed for heritage language learners?*

- Students self-select courses
- Teachers or counselors recommend students for courses
- Students take a locally developed placement test, i.e. a test created by your school or district
- Students take an externally developed placement test, i.e. a test purchased for this purpose, or one provided with a textbook

**Research Q2: What instructional aims do SSS teachers in Nebraska propose for HL instruction?**

*How was the majority of the curricular content determined in the heritage speaker course/s you teach or taught? Select all that apply.*

- A commercially developed textbook guides the curriculum
- A locally developed framework guides the curriculum, i.e. a district or building-level committee created the curriculum
- Another teacher or group of teachers in my building or district created the curriculum
- I independently create/created the curriculum

*In the heritage speaker course or courses you recently taught, how important were the following elements in the curriculum of the course?*

*Not a part of the course*

*A minor part of the course*

*A somewhat important part of the course*

*A very important part of the course*

- Addressing errors in oral language
- Discussing purposes for studying Spanish
- Examining attitudes towards different dialects
- Learning about characteristics of Spanish spoken in different parts of the world
- Learning about cultural diversity in the Spanish speaking world
- Addressing spelling errors
- Learning about characteristics of formal and informal registers
- Expanding vocabulary
- Self and peer editing
- Learning grammatical terms
- Addressing errors in written language
- Teaching academic and study skills
- Learning about Latino culture(s) in the United States
- Addressing the use of the written accent
- Improving interpersonal communication
- Providing grammar instruction for problematic areas

- Reading works of literature
- Learning about the relationship between linguistic diversity and social class
- Improving presentational communication
- Engaging in community-based or service-learning projects
- Comparing and contrasting features of English and Spanish
- Motivating students to succeed in school
- Discussing equity and discrimination
- Improving interpretative communication

*Are there any other somewhat or very important elements of the heritage speaker course you taught that were not described in the previous question?*

- No
- Yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**Research Q3: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe differentiated instruction in mixed courses with HLLs?**

*You indicated that you teach traditional Spanish as a second language courses in which heritage speakers of Spanish may enroll. Did you modify aspects of the course or your instruction due to the presence of heritage speakers?*

- Yes, many modifications
- Yes, a few modifications
- Not really, only very minor modifications
- Never

*Thinking about your most recent experience teaching a Spanish as a second language class in which at least one student was a heritage speaker; how often did you engage in the following instructional practices?*

*Never      Rarely      Sometimes      Often*

- Grouping heritage students together based on language proficiency (i.e. homogeneously)
- Assigning longer tasks to heritage speakers (i.e. presentations, readings or writing tasks)
- Grouping heritage speakers with struggling students to serve as tutors
- Assigning more difficult tasks to heritage speakers
- Preparing lessons with different curricular content for heritage learners and L2s
- Asking heritage learners to share aspects of their culture with the rest of the class
- Modifying assessments: tests, rubrics, etc. for heritage speakers
- Using different materials, readings, textbooks, games, etc. for heritage speakers
- Assigning special roles in class projects to heritage speakers because of their language proficiency



- Presenting, explaining or practicing grammar concepts differently for heritage speakers
- Exempting heritage speakers from activities or assignments irrelevant for them
- Preparing different vocabulary lessons of heritage speakers

**Research Q4: What do Nebraska Spanish teachers say that they believe about HLs?**

*In this section, indicate your level of agreement with each statement.*

*Strongly disagree      Somewhat disagree      Somewhat agree      Strongly agree*

- Heritage speakers' bilingualism is a valuable skill
- Improving skills in a heritage language can improve English proficiency
- Schools should support heritage language maintenance
- Students who speak Spanish fluently at home do not need to take Spanish classes in school
- Heritage languages are an important part of students' identities
- Heritage speakers should study Spanish because they need to acquire standard Spanish
- The maintenance of the heritage language is valuable for strong family ties
- Maintaining a heritage language prevents students from fully assimilating into this society
- Heritage speakers should study Spanish to learn about their cultural and linguistic roots
- Heritage speakers need different beginning level Spanish classes than second language learners
- Bilingualism should be supported at school
- Heritage speakers should study Spanish so they can better communicate with friends and relatives
- Heritage speakers should study Spanish because they often do not know the correct grammar
- Studying Spanish can help heritage speakers succeed in school
- Students who are still learning English should not take Spanish classes
- Heritage speakers need different advanced level Spanish courses than second language learners
- It is always preferable to have heritage speakers and second language learners in different classes.

**Research Q5: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe learning what they know about HLLs?**

*In your pre-service teacher preparation program did you receive any instruction regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy?*

- Yes
- No

*(If no) Would you like to have received instruction regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy in your pre-service teacher preparation program?*

- Yes
- No
- Indifferent

*What sort of instruction did you receive regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy in your pre-service teacher education program? Select all that apply.*

- A semester-long course dedicated to heritage language education
- At least one class session dedicated to discussing heritage language education
- Assigned book, article, speaker, website or other resource to review
- Examples of lessons and materials appropriate for heritage language education
- Information about the differences between second language and heritage language education
- Information about the socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of heritage language learners in the U.S.
- Information about curricular models or instructional practices for heritage language education
- I don't know or can't remember

*Have you ever participated in any in-service professional development regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy?*

- Yes
- No

*What sort of in-service professional development have you participated in about heritage language education? Select all that apply.*

- For-credit college course
- Non-credit college course
- Locally presented workshop or training (i.e. delivered by members of your district or school)
- Externally presented workshop or training (i.e. delivered by an organization, ESU or company)
- On-line seminar (webinar)
- Presentation I attended at a conference
- Work within a PLC or other school-based professional development group
- Other, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Research Q6: What do Nebraska Spanish teachers suggest they want to know about HLLs?**

*If you were to receive additional professional development about heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy, how relevant or useful would you consider the following potential topics:*

*Irrelevant, useless*

*Not very relevant or useful*

*Somewhat relevant and useful*

*Very relevant, extremely useful*

- How heritage language acquisition differs from second or first language acquisition
- Characteristics of heritage speakers' language proficiencies
- Heritage speakers' motivations for studying Spanish
- Cultural characteristics of heritage speakers
- Using resources from the heritage language community in the classroom
- Characteristics of the dialects spoken by heritage speakers
- Assessing heritage speakers' linguistic knowledge
- Identifying instructional needs of heritage learners
- Teaching vocabulary to heritage learners
- Teaching literature to heritage learners
- Selecting materials to use with heritage learners
- Creating instructional units to use with heritage learners
- Differentiating in mixed (heritage and non-heritage) courses
- Assessing and tracking heritage learners' growth
- Curriculum planning and course design for heritage speakers
- Creating classroom activities that engage heritage speakers
- Integrating cross-curricular themes into heritage language curriculum
- Differentiation for heritage language learners of different proficiencies
- Using technology with heritage learners
- Meeting and sharing with other teachers of heritage learners
- Advocating for heritage language courses, programs and students

**Research Q7: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers desire to grow and learn professionally?**

*How likely would you be to participate in these forms of professional development opportunities for learning about heritage language education?*

*Very Unlikely    Somewhat Unlikely    Undecided    Somewhat Likely    Very Likely*

- Take a for-credit in-person graduate course
- Take a for-credit online graduate course
- A non-credit in-person course
- A non-credit online course
- Attend a national or regional conference
- Attend a state level conference
- Attend a weekend or summer retreat in state
- Attend a local presentation
- Join a local (building, district or ESU) professional learning community
- Join an online local or state professional learning community

The above table does not include the questions presented to respondents for the purposes of selecting the target population, identifying respondents for adaptive question blocks or collecting demographic information; these items can be viewed in the complete survey found in Appendix B.

Because the survey was intended to offer a descriptive portrait of Nebraska Spanish teachers working with HLLs, the instrument probed on broad range of topics. In order to keep the survey to a manageable length for respondents, questions did not seek to explore topics in great depth. This is certainly a disadvantage of this instrument. Another obvious disadvantage of selected-response items in electronic survey instrument like this one is the potential for the options presented not to include the best or most desirable answer for any particular respondent. It is likely, then, that the data collected do not include all possible answers to all questions. Additionally, because the survey was

delivered electronically, respondents had no opportunity to seek clarification on items or terms that may have been unfamiliar to them. I did attempt to mitigate this situation somewhat by including clarification, rephrasing or examples within questions when I anticipated misunderstanding. The survey also included a definition of “heritage speaker” when the term was first employed in a question: “In your current position, do you work with students who would be considered heritage speakers of Spanish? Use this definition of heritage speakers of Spanish: ‘A student who is/was raised in home where Spanish is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in Spanish and English’ (Valdés, 2000).”

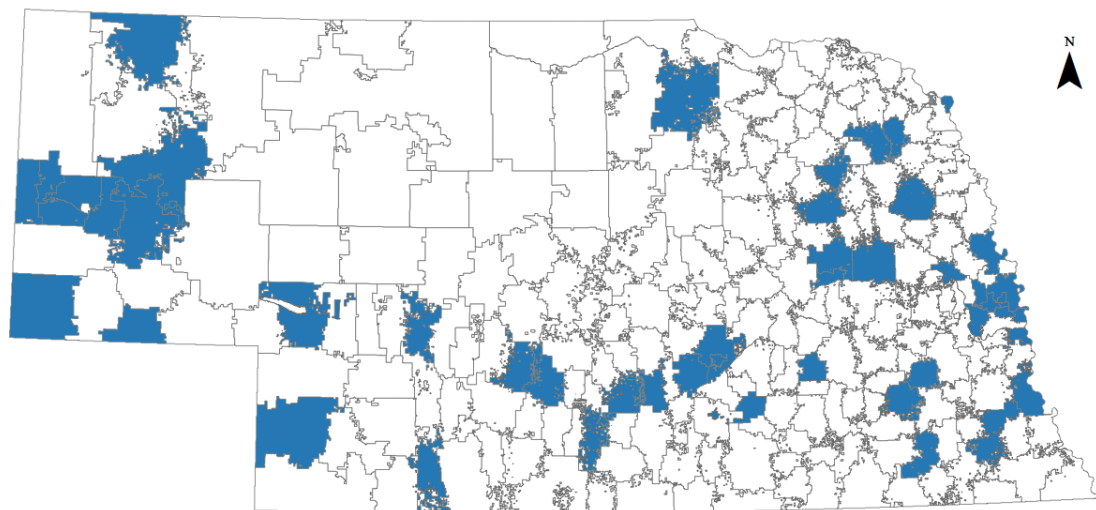
In order to test survey items and the adaptive flow of question in to correct blocks, I piloted the survey administration with five colleagues two weeks before distribution. The pilot group was asked to alert me to difficulties understanding the wording of questions or the flow of survey delivery. Through the pilot one error in the adaptive flow was corrected and two questions were slightly rephrased. Because no significant changes were made to the survey after the pilot the responses of this pilot group were included in the final sample.

**Survey Sampling.** A list of Nebraska school districts was obtained the National Center for Education Statistics website; this list counted 254 Nebraska school districts based on data from the 2010 U.S. Census. The Nebraska Department of Education indicated that in 2012-2013 Nebraska school districts operated 267 secondary schools, including both middle and high schools and that there were 516 secondary Spanish teachers employed in public school districts in Nebraska. The majority of Nebraska’s

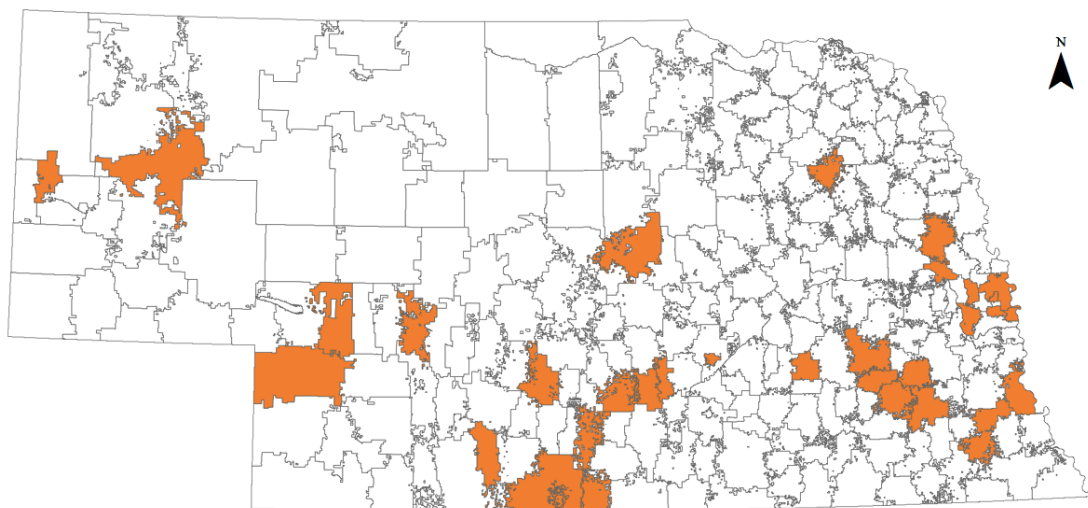
public school districts are rural, though the vast majority of Nebraska's K-12 students are served by the three largest urban school districts located in Nebraska's two largest cities Lincoln and Omaha. Only nine public school districts in Nebraska serve more than 5,000 students K-12 while more than 150 districts serve fewer than 500 students.

The survey aimed to examine the experiences of Spanish teachers who work with HLLs, but not all Spanish teachers in Nebraska teach HLLs. Thus, the target sample population was not "all Nebraska Spanish teachers in secondary schools," but rather "Nebraska Spanish teachers in secondary schools who work with Spanish HLLs." This population would be the target audience for any design project. For this reason, I determined that it would be most efficient to distribute the survey within districts with significant numbers of students who would identify as Hispanic/Latino, increasing the likelihood that any Spanish teachers in the district would work with HLLs. I decided to sample from the 50 districts with the largest Hispanic/Latino communities as indicated by the Bureau of Education Statistics. These 50 districts list included all of the 25 largest school districts in Nebraska (which together serve more than 80% of Nebraska students) as well as several districts with fewer than 1,000 students K-12, but that, because of local meatpacking employment or other rural industry have become part of the "new Latino diaspora" (Hamann & Harklau, 2010). Figures 3 and 4 on the following page indicate the location of the school districts within the targeted distribution as well as the location of the districts represented by survey respondents.

**Figure 3: Location of Nebraska Districts in Targeted Distribution**



**Figure 4: Location of Nebraska Districts in Survey Responses**



Email addresses for Spanish teachers at schools in the targeted distribution districts were obtained through school and district webpages and by telephoning district and school offices when addresses were not available on-line. In one case, a school district was unwilling to release staff email addresses, but allowed a department chair at a high school to distribute the survey internally on my behalf. I was unable to obtain email addresses for teachers at 3 of the 50 proposed sample districts.

A few additional teachers may have received the invitation to participate from redistribution of the survey by colleagues. In order to represent in some way the experiences of teachers in districts with fewer Hispanic/Latino students (those in districts outside the first 50), the invitation to participate along with the survey link was also distributed via the Nebraska Department of Education World Language Listserv and reached an unknown number of voluntary subscribers around the state. While this method of redistribution meant that respondents outside the targeted districts were invited to participate in the survey, the first question block ensured that only respondents who indicated that they were members of the target sample “Nebraska secondary Spanish teachers who work with HLLs” proceeded to complete the survey in its entirety. Table 3.3 on the following page illustrates the number Nebraska districts included in the targeted distribution and final survey sample.



**Table 3.3: Nebraska School District Representation in Sample Population**

Number of Students Served K-12	School districts in Nebraska	Districts targeted	Districts represented in survey responses	Target districts represented in survey response	Percent of target districts in survey response	Percent of all NE districts in survey response
>10,000	3	3	3	3	100%	100%
10,000 - 5,000	6	6	6	6	100%	100%
5,000 – 2,500	12	12	5	5	41.67%	41.67%
2,500 – 1,000	20	13	7	5	38.46%	35%
1,000 – 500	45	13	5	3	23.08%	11.11%
< 500	168	3	7	0	0%	4.17%
TOTALS	254	50	33	22	40%	12.99%

**Survey Data Collection.** Data were collected via email distribution of an invitation to participate. A hyperlink to the adaptive Qualtrics survey was embedded in the email sent on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 to 226 Spanish teachers from 47 districts.

A second reminder email was sent on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 to all original recipients who had not yet opened the survey link. The invitation and survey link were also distributed via the Nebraska Department of Education World Language Listserv on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

The invitation to participate in the survey included an incentive for teachers to participate: a chance of winning one of ten gift certificates for \$10.00 to Amazon.com was offered to respondents who completed the survey. After the survey was closed in

May of 2013 an online random number generator<sup>2</sup> was used to select 10 numbers. The respondents corresponding to these response numbers were electronically delivered a \$10.00 gift certificate along with additional thanks for their participation.

A total 105 respondents opened the survey link, 97 of which agreed to participate after reading the IRB consent form, however three respondents did not answer additional questions after consenting to participate and two did not identify as practicing Spanish teachers and were thus excluded. This left 92 respondents in the original survey sample (n=92). Respondents in the sample came from 33 different school districts, including 15 of the 25 largest districts and 15 of the 25 districts with the largest Latino populations. While the overall response rate to distribution was estimated at around 40%, a precise rate cannot be known due to the uncontrolled distribution via the World Language listserv. However, 43.8% of Nebraska Spanish teachers were specifically targeted for distribution and 17.83% of Nebraska Spanish teachers responded to the survey.

On the next page Table 3 depicts the survey response rate as a percentage of the total targeted distribution as well as of the whole population of Nebraska secondary Spanish teachers.

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<sup>2</sup> The website [www.random.org](http://www.random.org) purports to generate random numbers based on atmospheric static, making results even more authentically random than those generated by computer algorithms.

**Table 3.4: Survey response rate**

	Total	Percent of target distribution	Percent of all Nebraska Spanish teachers
Invitations sent	226	100%	43.8%
Link opened	105	46.5%*	20.35%
Consent to participate	97	42.92%*	18.8%
Completed survey	92	40.71% *	17.83%

\* Precise response rate cannot be known due to uncontrolled distribution.

**Interview Selection.** The survey results allowed me to conduct purposeful sampling in three sub-groups for the subsequent interviews. At the conclusion of the electronic survey 56 respondents indicated their willingness to be contacted in order to participate in a follow-up telephone interview. From this pool, nine semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted in early October, 2013. Three sub-groups of survey respondents were purposefully selected for follow-up interviews: Group 1, Teachers who had previously taught courses specifically designed for HLLs; Group 2, Teachers who indicated that they made “a few” or “many” modifications to instruction for HLLs in mixed classes; and Group 3, Teachers who indicated that they made “very few” modifications for HLLs in mixed classes but also indicated interest in further professional development related to HLLs.

These three subgroups were chosen in order to 1) inform about practices in HL instruction in Nebraska, 2) characterize teachers likely to participate in in-service

professional learning experiences related to HL instruction. Email invitations to schedule a telephone interview were sent to each subgroup along with an additional informed consent form in September 2013.

**Table 3.5: Interview Invitation Response Rates**

	Interview invitations sent	Affirmative responses
Group 1	12	3
Group 2	30	8
Group 3	14	6

From the affirmative responses in each sub-group, three respondents were selected for interview, except in the case of Group 1 in which only 3 respondents were willing to be interviewed. Reselection occurred only once to ensure that two teachers from the same school were not interviewed in the same sub-group, in order to ensure better geographical representation and diversity in the interview participants. The nine interviewees represented seven different school districts and nine different school buildings. All interview participants were awarded a \$10.00 Amazon.com gift certificate for their participation.

The nine interviews conducted represented only 9.8% of total survey respondents and a mere 1.9% of Nebraska Spanish teachers; results from these interviews cannot be generalized to the entire survey sample or to the population of Nebraska Spanish teachers. However, in terms of the sub-groups targeted, interview representation is better

in groups 1 and 3. Table 7 illustrates the percentage of survey sample respondents represented by each interview group.

**Table 3.6: Interview Sample Representation by Sub-group**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Number in survey sample</b>	<b>Interviews as percent of survey sample</b>
Sub-Group 1: Teachers who teach or who have taught SSS courses	12	25.00%
Sub-group 2: Teachers who said they make “many” or “a few” adjustments for HLLS in mixed courses	43	6.98%
Sub-group 3: Teachers who said they “never” or “only very minor” adjustment AND expressed interest in HLL professional development	27	11.11%

The justification for generalizations based in interview data is weak, given the limited number of interviews conducted, and this is certainly a caution to any conclusions drawn from these data. However, generalization or “transferability” is not the only aim of qualitative inquiry. In fact, as Merriam (2009) noted, “(a) purposeful sample is selected precisely because the research wishes to understand the particular in depth, not to find out what is generally true of the many” (p. 224). The nine interviews served both to interrogate and illustrate the survey data; they were intended to raise issues or ideas that the survey itself might have missed or could not have accounted for. While the survey data sought to generalize, the interview data sought to particularize so that some survey responses might be considered in more robust contexts. The interviews in this study may not improve the generalizability of findings, but contribute significantly to the usability of findings, both in terms of directions for further inquiry and in their use in my

practice. In this study, I did not expressly intend to describe the entire population of Nebraska Spanish teachers, rather I purposefully sampled teachers working in contexts that marked them as potential participants in a community of practice related to HLLs in Nebraska.

**Interview protocols.** A semi-structured interview format was chosen in order to provide a balance of structure and freedom, ensuring that all research questions were addressed in the interaction, but also allowing the interviewer “to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic” (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). A structured interview would have too closely approximated the survey, potentially replicating responses via telephone questionnaire, and thus might have failed to generate significant new data. On the other hand, a totally open-ended interview structure lends itself to potentially meandering conversations that may or may not lead to data expressly connected to the study’s research questions (Brenner, 2009). In this design study the semi-structured interview allowed for the collection of data framed expressly by the research questions, but also allowed participants room to shape the study outside those questions. It was important that the researcher be able to control to a modest degree the interview in order to collect the data most relevant to the audience characterization and needs analysis phases of the study (Banann-Ritland, 2003).

Semi-structured interview protocols were developed to address all seven research questions for each of three subgroups; these protocols are found in Appendix D. The protocols consisted of open-ended questions followed by potential probes that could be used to encourage elaboration of responses. This “funnel-shape” format intended to

begin with broad questions and move toward greater detail with each topic (Brenner, 2009). The initial questions varied according to sub-group. Group 1 was asked about the HL courses they taught, the design of HL curriculum and their instructional practices. Group 2 was asked about differentiation practices in mixed HL and L2 courses. All three groups were asked about their past learning experiences related to HLLs and about their preferences regarding future professional learning. Every effort was made to keep the interview to 30 minutes for the convenience of the respondent. During at least three of the interviews from Groups 1 and 2 I did feel somewhat constrained by this time limit, however in most cases 15 to 30 minutes was sufficient to address the questions within the protocol.

The invitation to participate in the interview was distributed via email in September 2013. When respondents indicated their willingness to participate, they were asked to choose three convenient interview times and dates and provide a contact phone number. Three interviewees from each subgroup were then selected using the online random number generator, random.org. As I mentioned previously, reselection occurred twice in order to avoid repeating interviews from the same school and to improve geographic representation. I then contacted selected interviewees via email to confirm one of the provided dates and times for the interview. Respondents who were not to be interviewed received an email thanking them for their willingness to participate and declining their interviews.

At the appointed times, I called each participant and recorded the interviews using the smartphone application “Record My Call.” When the interview concluded the audio

file was transferred to my password protected laptop, converted to MP3 format and subsequently deleted from the phone. I then transcribed each interview using the free transcription software. I then replaced participants' names and identifying details with pseudonyms in the transcripts. The following table identifies the interview respondents in each sub-group by pseudonym:

**Table 3.7: Interview Subgroups with Pseudonyms**

<b>Subgroup 1</b>	<b>Subgroup 2</b>	<b>Subgroup 3</b>
Christine	Lucas	Ann
Julie	Nancy	Daniel
Teresa	Steve	Joan

I refrained from including demographic data from individual interview respondents such as their ethnicity, age or place of employment in my data reporting and analysis, in order to protect their anonymity, these protections were outlined in the interview IRB addendum. While such protections may seem unnecessary in research of this nature, the study was designed with every intention of distributing the data to the very local audience that participated in creating them. For this reason, the likelihood that a participant might be identified was somewhat greater here than in a study that does not consider its participants members of its eventual audience. The choice of primarily Anglo names as pseudonyms simply reflects the reality that most public school teachers in Nebraska are Anglo. While conducting the interviews I made no attempt to separate my identity as a practitioner from my identity as a researcher. I openly acknowledged



and shared details of my practice as a teacher of Spanish to HLLs. I did not feign objectivity and responded genuinely with affirmations and accounts of analogous experiences. I attempted, when possible, to approximate a conversation between colleagues rather than a formal interview. After all, these interactions were at their heart, a conversation between colleagues and I hypothesized that sharing my practitioner posture made me a more credible colleague with whom to share perspectives. The participatory and design-oriented nature of this work acknowledged my contextual reality. The participants in these interviews were fellow practitioners and may be collaborators and participants in the real professional decisions and activities that result from this study.

### **Data Analysis and Reporting**

The study design intended for the survey and interview data to illuminate one another, for this reason, data from both sources were examined and reported jointly rather than sequentially. In other words, I analyzed data from the survey and interview at the same time and presented results in relation to each of the seven research questions. The results of analysis are presented in order by question (Q1-7) in Chapter 4.

First, I examined the survey data and determined an approach for incomplete survey responses. I decided to include the responses of all respondents, whether or not they completed the rest of the survey, only with regards to the initial screening questions. This allowed me to establish the percentage of willing participants who said they worked with HLLs in their job as Nebraska Spanish teachers using the largest sample possible. I

then excluded the responses of the five respondents who did not complete the rest of the survey in their entirety from the rest of the data.

I then compiled the data that provided the demographic characteristics of the respondent population from both the survey and interviews in order to describe the participants and compare the samples; these data and comparisons are reported in section 4.1 of Chapter 4.

Next, I generated an initial descriptive report of the survey data in Qualtrics, the software used to design, distribute and collect data from the survey, which included all responses in the form of numerical tables. The numerical tables are reproduced throughout Chapter 4. These response data were then organized by research question, collecting all survey questions and responses related to each research question.

Interview transcripts were then examined and color-coded by research question (Q1-7). I coded by hand, with a highlighting marker, and began by reviewing all interview transcripts for segments that addressed the first research question. Then, using a different color highlighter on each occasion, I repeated the procedure for each of the six remaining questions. In other words, my first data-sorting step was to identify the areas of the nine interview transcripts that addressed each research question.

Next, I collected and examined all of the interview data pertaining to each research question by copying and pasting the segments that had been highlighted from each interview into new documents. Interview data, thus organized by research question, were again color-coded with highlighters according to emergent themes or from the topics expressly addressed by the survey. For example, one theme that emerged from the

interviews was that of teacher qualifications to teach HLLs; several of the interviewees expressed ideas about the language proficiency, cultural competency or teaching skill necessary to work with HLLs; this was not a topic expressly addressed in the survey. At the same time, other themes identified in the interview data related directly to survey items. One example was the code “standardizing practices” where I noted references to spelling instruction, accent placement, error correction and other practices referred to in survey items.

After coding of interview data was complete, I brought together data from both the survey and interviews for each research question. I then sought to perform a comparative analysis guided by the following questions: (1) In what ways do the qualitative and quantitative data confirm or disconfirm one another?, (2) In what ways does one data source deepen the understanding of the other?, (3) In what ways does one data source challenge or complicate the understanding of the other?, (4) What are the limitations of these data in responding to a given question?, and finally, (5) How does this data square with my knowledge and experiences as a practitioner?

I performed this comparative analysis by examining survey data and coded interview transcripts for each research question side by side, taking handwritten notes in response to each of the questions above. Then, using those handwritten notes as a guide, I typed analytic memos, attempting to first present data descriptively and then elaborate interpretively. These memos eventually became the analyses presented in Chapter 4. I repeated this process for each of the research questions.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter presents a characterization of the research participants and reports the results of a comparative analysis of both the survey and interview data. The data from both the survey and interview are presented in relation to the research question they addressed.

### **Participants**

Ninety-two respondents who agreed to participate in the survey identified themselves as current secondary teachers of Spanish; 82.6% or 76 of those respondents reported working with HLLs in their current position. This significant proportion points to the statewide prevalence of Spanish HLLs enrolled in Spanish language courses in secondary schools. Only the 76 respondents who reported working with HLLs were asked to proceed to the rest of the survey, four of those did not complete the rest of the survey; demographic data is reported from only those respondents that subsequently completed the rest of the survey in its entirety (n=71).

Some characteristics of the survey respondents alongside those of interview participants are illustrated in Tables 12-14 on pages 108 and 109. More than three quarters of survey respondents taught students in high school grades (9-12). In Nebraska high schools typically offer Spanish courses of greater variety and number than do middle level institutions, thus it was to be expected that a majority of respondents would teach these grades. The vast majority of respondents reported holding a teaching certificate with an endorsement in Spanish education (67/71), and reported a wide variety of years of experience in teaching; approximately one-half of respondents had taught for

less than 10 years and the other half more than 10 years. More than one half of respondents held an advanced degree and only 18% held only a Bachelor's degree, the minimum qualification for teaching licensure in Nebraska. Nine respondents identified as male, 62 as female. 15.49% of respondents (11 of 71) identified as Hispanic/Latino, eight as "native speakers: born and educated mostly abroad" and six as "heritage speakers: learned Spanish at home but educated mostly in English." Most respondents (80.28%) reported learning Spanish as adult second language learners.

The subset of the survey population who were also interview participants (n=9) were also predominately high school educators and held teaching certificates with endorsements in Spanish. They included three males and six females, a slightly higher ratio of male to female than the survey sample. More than half of interview subjects held Master's degrees while the remaining held only Bachelor's degrees, a slightly higher proportion of Bachelor's only than in the survey sample. Allowing a bifurcation of interviewee types, more than half of interview subjects reported fewer than 10 years teaching experience while the remaining reported more than 20 years of experience; the interview sample did not include any respondents with 10-19 years of teaching experience. On the next two pages Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 all show how interview subjects, pulled from the sample, compared to the overall sample; take note that because interview subjects were drawn from the pool of survey respondents, their answers are effectively represented twice in these tables. In order to protect anonymity, I do not represent the ethnic identification or language acquisition profiles of interview respondents in a table, however the interview participants were generally comparable to survey respondents in both these areas.

**Table 4.1: Grades Taught by Participants**

	Survey (n=71)		Interview (n=9)	
6th grade	6	8.45%	1	11.11%
7th grade	9	12.68%	0	22.22%
8th grade	15	21.13%	2	22.22%
9th grade	55	77.46%	7	77.78%
10th grade	61	85.91%	8	88.89%
11th grade	58	81.69%	7	77.78%
12th grade	56	78.87%	7	77.78%

**Table 4.2: Participants' Years of Teaching Experience**

	Survey (n=71)		Interview (n=9)	
0-4	16	22.54%	3	33.33%
5-9	24	33.8%	2	22.22%
10-14	8	11.27%	0	0%
15-19	7	9.86%	0	0%
20 or more	16	22.54%	4	44.44%

**Table 4.3: Participants' Educational Attainment**

	Survey (n=71)		Interview (n= 9)	
Bachelor's degree (or 4-year equivalent)	13	18.31%	4	44.44%
Some graduate study beyond a bachelor's degree	19	26.76%	0	0%
Master's degree	38	53.52%	5	55.56%
Doctoral degree	1	1.41%	0	0%

## Results

While conventionally the data analysis chapter would start with the largest data set (i.e., the survey) that was not the explicit strategy used here as the interview data occasionally attended more immediately to my core research questions. Here I present concurrently relevant survey and interview data insofar as they address each research question.

### **Question 1: How do teachers describe HLL placement in Spanish language courses in Nebraska secondary schools?**

**Spanish for Spanish Speakers (SSS) courses.** In order to understand the programmatic features, curricular offerings and placement practices for HLs in Nebraska schools survey respondents were asked a series of questions about their current school. Twelve of 71 or 16.9% of respondents indicated that their school offered one or more courses intended specifically for heritage speakers of Spanish; these 12 respondents represented 7 different school buildings and 5 different school districts. (I am not aware

of an HL course for any other language group in any Nebraska schools.) This suggests a small but significant number of SSS courses being taught throughout the state. Anecdotally, at the time of writing, I was aware of at least 9 school districts statewide that offered courses for SHLs, 4 of those among the 10 largest districts in the state and all 9 in the largest 40 of Nebraska's nearly 250 districts. There are no recent data available that estimate the prevalence of SSS instruction nationally for purpose of comparison, though in 2000 Gonzalez Pino & Pino estimated that 9% of U.S. secondary schools offered SSS courses. Given that Nebraska's Spanish HLL population is not evenly spread across the state, even if all schools with significant Spanish HLL populations offered such an instructional pathway, it would likely amount to not much more than 20% of Nebraska secondary schools.

While the survey data suggest that the incidence of SSS courses is relatively low across the state, interview respondents painted a rather different picture. Seven of the nine subjects reported that their school had either 1) previously offered one or more SSS courses in the past but no longer do so, or 2) were currently considering the possibility of starting an SSS course at their school or in their district. This was both a surprising and unsurprising discovery; I knew from my professional experience that there was some history of SSS courses in several Nebraska districts and also that others were interested in offering such courses, however I did not expect to discover such widespread experience and interest. These revelations raised additional questions I pursued with interviewees: Why were SSS courses no longer offered? What conditions would promote for the creation of new SSS courses?



Bateman and Wilkinson (2010) conducted a survey of Utah Spanish teachers and posed questions about HL course offerings. In their study they found that teachers said that teachers greatest impediments to the successful creation and maintenance of HL courses were budgetary (58%), lack of student interest (49%), and difficulty finding materials (27%). Though my survey did not address the perceived reasons that SSS courses were or were not offered, this issue came up often in interviews. The responses of the teachers I interviewed were somewhat different from their findings.

Several themes emerged from the interviews that shed some light on the conditions teachers perceive as necessary for the creation and maintenance of SSS programs in Nebraska. These perceptions may directly impact the prevalence of HL instruction in the state. I divided these themes heuristically into classroom-level factors and system-level factors; classroom-level factors relate to teachers and students, while system-level factors relate to institutional or departmental practices. Prominent classroom-level factors perceived by the interview respondents to influence the past or potential success of SSS courses were promoting student engagement, managing student behavior and ensuring teacher credibility. System-level factors mentioned related to administrative support and program articulation.

***Classroom-level factors affecting SSS course availability.*** Two of the teachers I interviewed had previously taught HL courses and identified student behavior and disengagement as the primary reason that the SSS course did not continue to be offered at their schools. In fact, when asked what the biggest challenge facing teachers of HLLs was, Christine, another former instructor of an SSS course replied, “Behavior, one-

hundred percent behavior.” However, when Teresa and Christine elaborated on what they perceived as the causes of student misbehavior and disengagement, they revealed very different understandings. Christine suggested that SSS courses brought together Latino students who were typically not enrolled in courses together at her school, thus generating so much enthusiasm and socializing that behavior was difficult to manage. Christine spoke with obvious affection for her students when she explained, “They get in there (the SSS course) and they’re like - “Whoa! This is awesome, we can be ourselves, we can have fun, party,” (...) of course they want to talk to each other and have fun and be happy where they’re at... and they don’t have this push – like I’m only one of two Hispanic kids in class, I can’t talk to nobody (sic), I might as well listen.” Christine seemed to suggest that the homogeneous ethnic grouping in SSS courses encouraged students to socialize and in her words, “act crazy.” She also attributed some of this “crazy” behavior to her own inexperience at the time, as she taught SSS courses in her very first years as a teacher. It is also possible that by this time Latino students have come to distance themselves from school because school has not been welcoming or validating of their Latino identities.

On the other hand, Teresa attributed the student disengagement she observed to resistance, defiance and disinterest in the content of the course, “(the students were) not expecting any rigor, or any improvement of Spanish. We found they came in so solidly enamored with their own Spanish speaking skills, that they were almost offended that instruction was going to be given.” Teresa’s view was that students expected a “fluff course” or an easy ‘A’ and were resistant to the challenge the course presented. But Teresa also raised the issue of teacher credibility, suggesting that student disengagement

was due to her status as a “non-native-speaker” teacher of the course, “we (the department) also wondered, perhaps if we had a native speaker of Spanish that was able to conduct the course, maybe we could have had more credibility?” The issue of teacher “credibility” – referring to a non-Latino/a, “native” Spanish speaker as the teacher of an SSS course - was raised by several other informants.

Steve was one of the teachers that mentioned his school was considering starting an SSS course, one that he would theoretically teach. He seemed to anticipate the same issues that Teresa described when he explained, “I don’t want any behavior problems because I am in a very compromised situation. I’m not a native speaker, and I want students that are adult enough, mature enough to understand that I’m going to make mistakes and they’re going to be mature enough to handle the correction that I give them (...) It is a concern of mine, that’s my main concern.” Steve’s concern appeared to be that students would challenge his language proficiency, or even his cultural identity and whether that qualified him to teach the course. This same concern was voiced by Ann, a teacher in another district considering offering SSS courses, “I think there’s an issue with, especially as a non-native speaker, and a non-Latino, to teach it. I worry about credibility.” Both Teresa and Steve invoked correction as a source of student threat to teacher “credibility.”

The underlying “credibility” question for Teresa, Steve and Ann seemed to be: “Can a white teacher who learned Spanish as a second language maintain authority and command respect for their content knowledge in an SSS course?” As a white, non-native speaker and teacher of popular and arguably successful SSS courses for several years, I

suspected that the question is better posed as a question of “how” or “under what conditions” teachers can effectively lead SSS course, rather than “if” success is even possible. Christine and Linda both had taught SSS courses in the past and neither mentioned credibility as an issue that they felt affected their courses, though Linda explained “not all Spanish teachers have the qualification to teach a class like that.” The AATSP Professional Development Handbook (2000) cited a need for SSS instructors to have a “minimum of advanced language proficiency,” as well as knowledge of “the sociolinguistic dynamics of Spanish” and knowledge of students’ culture and Hispanic cultures generally (p. 45). While it is likely that some teachers in Nebraska do not possess these qualifications, it is equally possible that in some Nebraska schools qualified Spanish teachers simply lack confidence in their competency for teaching HLLs. Perceptions and experiences of these teachers point to meaningful questions – what level of Spanish language proficiency is necessary to lead an SSS course? Is a strong personal connection to Latino culture necessary to lead an SSS course? Or, is taking a position as Latino student advocate important?

*System-level factors affecting SSS course availability.* Informants described School administrators as gatekeepers to offering SSS courses. Lucas and Julie suggested that the impetus to offer SSS courses at their schools originated with a superintendent and a curriculum director, respectively. At Lucas’ school, a new SSS course was being considered, “Our superintendent, she is new, she is asking the teacher to explain why we cannot have one very specific class for the Spanish speakers, or why we cannot make a place for all of them.” In Julie’s case, the course had been taught at a middle school with the support and encouragement of a district curriculum director, but after his retirement

the course no longer enjoyed support. Julie explained, “I thought it was successful.

The only reason why it didn’t continue was that the principal at our high school did not want to offer a follow-up course.”

The issue of SSS course articulation, the question of how these courses fit within the traditional L2 course sequence, was another important concern for interviewees alongside other logistical factors. “There’s nowhere for them to go after they complete a heritage language course in middle school. In high school there’s no heritage language class to go to,” Steve said, explaining why his school stopped offering an SSS course. Which course students should take before or after an SSS course is an important question in secondary schools – Should the course have prerequisite? Does it replace other courses? How much credit should students earn? Does the course prepare students for Advanced Placement Language or Literature courses? Daniel expressed these concerns, “I have asked about the possibility of teaching a Spanish class for native speakers, but I’m not sure how to go about it, or ... for what level it would be classified under, administratively.” Questions about course sequence and articulation cannot be answered by individual teachers, but rather resolved in conversations with colleagues, counselors, curriculum directors and other administrators.

“It comes down to scheduling, who’s going to teach it, where it’s going to be,” explained Ann, another teacher whose school has considered offering a course. Is there an interested, qualified staff member who could teach a new course? When could it be offered? The problem of a “singleton” course, that is a course of which only one section is offered in a given semester, has always created scheduling problems, even in large

schools. Steve signaled the potential for SSS courses to produce a tracking system in student schedules, “from an organizational standpoint, if we put 15 Hispanic students in one class, (...) a lot of the students take the same classes throughout the day, so you have kids with the same classes.” This statement begs the question: Is this a problem? There are many stakeholders in the system-level conversations about these issues, advocates for HLLs and SSS courses must be able to engage with all of them and weigh these concerns.

In my own experience as an SSS practitioner I was fortunate to work with very supportive administrators and colleagues. Unlike Lucas and Julie, the impetus for the SSS courses in that district did not come from the superintendent or curriculum director, but rather from classroom teachers. That said, the SSS program at my former district enjoyed clear administrative approval; notably, I always felt that administrators and counselors listened to what I and my colleagues recommended in terms of placement procedures and course articulations. I do not doubt that this respect for our professional judgment contributed significantly to the strength and longevity of the SSS courses there.

**Placement of HLLs in Spanish Courses.** Returning to the question of how Nebraska districts serve HLLs, all schools must make a determination regarding the appropriate placement of HLLs within the courses offered, whether or not SSS courses are included in that offering. For this reason, I sought to investigate how schools place HLs in Spanish courses. An error in the construction of the survey’s question flow led the question about how HLs are placed in Spanish courses not to be presented to all of respondents; this error left an important gap in understanding practices in schools.

Bateman and Wilkinson (2010) found that in Utah teachers reported that HL students

were typically placed in beginning and intermediate courses which are unlikely to meet their instructional needs, “only slightly less than one-fourth (23%) of teachers indicated that these students were initially placed in advanced courses” (p. 337). Sadly, I am not able to report if the practice of allowing HLLs to “skip” lower level courses like Spanish 1 and proceed to higher level courses without meeting prerequisites is as widespread in Nebraska as I hypothesized. However, I am able to report survey data regarding how schools with SSS courses place students in these courses.

Five of the nine of the interview subjects, Joan, Daniel, Ann, Steve and Lucas confirmed that Spanish HLLs follow the same course sequences as L2 students at their schools, meaning that they begin their study in beginning courses. Another three interviewees described making exceptions to this practice for individual students. Nancy described moving students to higher levels based on teacher, student or parent request, but also suggested that students weren't always willing to move: “Sometimes we get those kids in a class and we go ‘whoa, whoa, whoa, you’re way beyond where you should be, let’s talk about getting you to another level’ (...) sometimes kids don’t want to move, because they’re too lazy, like, ‘that’s okay, I’ll just be bored to death.’” Teresa described a similar process of encouraging individual students to opt in to higher-level courses. “They (HLLs) all sign up for Spanish 1 and then as soon as they sign up we talk to them and say, ‘Now you probably are much further ahead than what these students are going to be’ (...) So we let them do that (take Spanish 1) for about a day (...) and by then they’re bored. So we bring them into either the next level, or even the level above that.” In both of these cases it appeared that teachers made the recommendation to move students to more advanced courses, but the ultimate decision was in the hands of the students

themselves. Ann identified at least one problem with placing HLLs in upper level Spanish courses. She explained, “about the only thing we can do is drop them into a Spanish level 2 course. Because even with the really good speakers and writers, when we drop them into a 3 or 4 course they’re lost, because they have not had any explicit grammar instruction.” Only one respondent, Christine, described a somewhat systematic approach to modified placement for HLLs in which they “skip” Spanish 1 and 2 and begin in Spanish 3. If these nine interviewees are representative of Spanish teachers in Nebraska, it would seem that the most common practices are for HLLs to follow traditional L2 course sequences while allowing for individual exceptions for accelerated placement based on student or parent volition and teacher recommendation.

The error in survey construction did not prevent data from being collected on the articulation of SSS courses and placement procedures in schools where SSS courses are offered. As summarized in Table 4.4 on below, respondents reported that SSS courses related to L2 Spanish courses in one of two ways: 1) SSS courses replace lower level Spanish courses in course articulation sequences, or 2) that SSS courses are wholly

<b>Which option best describes how courses for heritage speakers related to the scope and sequence of other Spanish courses at your school? (n=12)</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
Heritage speaker courses replace other lower level prerequisite courses. For example, heritage speakers might take Spanish for Spanish speakers instead of Spanish 1 before proceeding to higher-level courses.	6	50%
Heritage speaker courses are advanced level courses that require prerequisite study. For example, heritage speakers might take Spanish for Spanish speakers after successfully completing Spanish 2.	0	0%



Heritage speaker courses are totally independent from other Spanish course sequence articulations. They have no prerequisites and do not serve as prerequisites for other courses.	4	33.33%
Other, please explain.	2*	16.67%
I don't know.	0	0%

independent from L2 Spanish courses.

#### **Table 4.4: Articulation of SSS Courses**

\* One of the respondents indicating “other” described a system in which heritage speaker courses are independent from other Spanish courses; the other indicated that he or she did not know because the course was planned for the upcoming semester.

Clarifying the relationship between SSS courses and other Spanish courses in the department, school or district may prove necessary to establish and sustain the course offerings. If SSS courses are a de facto road-to-nowhere and do not lead to advanced courses, it may be more difficult to recruit and retain students in these courses. The study of Spanish in secondary school, even for HLLs, is often linked to aspirations for post-secondary education. It stands to reason that clear guidelines about how SSS courses meet requirements or provide preparation for college entrance may be very important to some HLLs. Particularly, linking SSS courses to an articulation sequence leading to college preparatory courses such AP Spanish Language and Culture, International Baccalaureate Spanish, Spanish 5, Spanish 6 or literature based courses may help to connect Latino students with credit-by-examination and dual-credit opportunities demonstrated to correlate with subsequent post-secondary success (Speroni, 2011).

Placement is a significant challenge in heritage language education. Because HLLs encompass a wide spectrum of language proficiencies, not all HLLs may have the

prerequisite language skills necessary to succeed in a particular SSS course. For example, in the SSS program where I taught from 2006 to 2014 basic decoding skills and capacity for oral production were necessary to be placed in SSS courses, due to the early and extensive literacy demands of the curriculum. The small number of HLLs without these prerequisite skills was placed in intermediate L2 courses like Spanish 2 or 3. Course placement has significant consequences for students, a fact to which the extensive literature on tracking attests (see Callahan, 2005). SSS placement tests and placement practices have received considerable scrutiny in the literature for their lack of reliability and bias (MacGregor, 2012). Survey respondents indicated that teacher/counselor recommendation and locally developed placement exams were the most common placement practices employed at their schools for SSS courses.

**Table 4.5: Placement of HLLs in Schools with SSS Courses**

<b>Which option best describes the way your school places heritage speakers of Spanish in Spanish classes? (n=12)</b>	Response	%
Students self-select courses	1	8.33%
Teachers or counselors recommend students for courses	6	50%
Students take a locally developed placement test, i.e. a test created by your school or district	4	33.33%
Students take an externally developed placement test, i.e. a test purchased for this purpose, or one provided with a textbook	1	8.33%

The three teachers I interviewed who had taught SSS courses suggested that either teachers or students were responsible for selecting students for SSS courses. Teresa and

Julie explained that teachers and counselors placed or “roped” students into SSS courses, which mirrors the survey data. But according to Christine “it was word of mouth” between students who encouraged one another in this way, “you know, you can have Miss Johnson, she’s really cool, this is a class where you don’t have to take Spanish 1 where you’re learning words you already know and you get to be with all your friends.” None of the interviewees described using placement tests with HLLs so I am unable to report in any greater detail on the nature of placement tests that the survey indicated are in use at Nebraska schools.

In summary, while SSS courses were not particularly common in Nebraska schools at the time this data was collected, SSS courses are the topic of conversation across the state. In the minds of teachers, both classroom level and system level concerns affect the viability of SSS courses. Course sequencing and placement procedures vary across the state and across districts, underscoring the very local nature of this nascent discipline.

**Question 2: What instructional aims do SSS teachers in Nebraska propose for HL instruction?**

The survey identified 12 respondents who were currently teaching or had previously taught a course for HLLs. Interviews were conducted with three of the 12. These respondents were asked to provide information about the curricular aims of the SSS courses they had taught. Survey respondents indicated that teachers had significant responsibility for the design of curriculum in SSS courses and, also, that teachers worked independently or in groups to build curriculum. “Top-down” curriculum, established by a textbook or by an administrative committee, was reported to be slightly less common

than “bottom-up” teacher created curriculum. Six respondents indicated that textbooks played a role in driving curriculum in their SSS courses. This data suggests a contrast to the typical design of curriculum in other K-12 fields. In the present era of instructional standards, a local, state or even national framework guides the curriculum in most subjects and in most classrooms today. Few states have statewide content standards for Spanish as Heritage Language or Spanish Language Arts although there are notable exceptions such as North Carolina, Texas and California. Given that Nebraska does not have such standards, districts that offer SSS courses or teachers who teach SSS courses would inevitably be the architects of the course curriculum.

**Table 4.6: Curriculum Creation in SSS Courses**

<b>How was the majority of the curricular content determined in the heritage speaker course/s you teach or taught? Select all that apply.* (n=12)</b>	Response	%
A commercially developed textbook guides the curriculum	6	50%
A locally developed framework guides the curriculum, i.e. a district or building-level committee created the curriculum	2	16.67%
Another teacher or group of teachers in my building or district created the curriculum	5	41.67%
I independently create/created the curriculum	9	75%

\*because respondents could select more than one response, percentages will not total 100.

The three teachers who had previously taught SSS courses, Christine, Julie and Teresa all described experiencing a great deal of freedom in determining the objectives of the SSS courses. All three said that they received and used, to varying degrees, a textbook intended for SSS instruction. Julie explained, “He (the curriculum director)

went ahead and ordered a set of books (...) and he just kind of let me write my own curriculum, and, narrow in, you know, in on the chapters and units that I thought would help them the most.” Christine relied less on a commercial textbook in her course; “I was given the syllabus from a class that’s taught in some other state (with) objectives and goals and stuff like that. And I kind of based it off of that, I planned as I went along.” Teresa said that several members of her department were involved in establishing the aims for the SSS course, though the textbook shaped instruction considerably. The textbook “was all for native speakers. And it was (...) pretty much a literature- based course.” The three teacher interviewees seemed to mirror the survey responses and my professional experiences: teachers were creating their own curriculum.

In order to examine more comprehensively the nature of SSS courses in Nebraska a list of possible aims for SSS instruction was generated by examining aims proposed in the literature, particularly in the work of Valdés (1998), AATSP (2000) and Leeman (2005). Survey respondents who reported having taught an SSS course in the past were asked to indicate the importance of each of these aims in their SSS course/s. The responses are presented on the following pages are sorted by the number of respondents who identified them as either “somewhat important” or “very important.” The table does not reflect the order in which the options were presented to respondents.

**Table 4.7: Curricular Aims of SSS Courses**

<b>“In the heritage speaker course or courses you recently taught, how important were the following elements in the curriculum of the course? (n=12)</b>	<b>Not part of the course (1)</b>	<b>A minor part of the course (2)</b>	<b>A somewhat important part of the course (3)</b>	<b>A very important part of the course (4)</b>	<b>Total somewhat or very</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Expanding vocabulary	0	1	3	9	12	3.62
Providing grammar instruction for problematic areas	0	1	5	7	12	3.46
Learning grammatical terms	0	1	7	5	12	3.31
Discussing equity and discrimination	1	0	7	5	12	3.23
Addressing errors in written language	0	2	4	7	11	3.38
Reading works of literature	2	0	3	8	11	3.31
Teaching academic and study skills	1	1	4	7	11	3.31
Self and peer editing	0	2	6	5	11	3.23
Motivating students to succeed in school	0	3	2	8	10	3.38
Addressing spelling errors	0	3	3	7	10	3.31
Learning about Latino culture(s) in the United States	1	2	6	4	10	3.00
Comparing and contrasting features of English and Spanish	1	2	9	1	10	2.77
Learning about cultural diversity in the Spanish speaking world	1	3	4	5	9	3.00
Improving presentational communication	0	4	5	4	9	3.00

Improving interpretative communication	2	2	5	4	9	2.85
Improving interpersonal communication	2	2	6	3	9	2.77
Learning about characteristics of Spanish spoken in different parts of the world	0	5	5	3	8	2.85
Discussing purposes for studying Spanish	2	3	4	4	8	2.77
Addressing errors in oral language	0	5	7	1	8	2.69
Learning about the relationship between linguistic diversity and social class	6	1	5	1	6	2.08
Examining attitudes towards different dialects	4	4	3	2	5	2.23
Engaging in community-based or service-learning projects	5	6	1	1	1	1.85

Survey respondents tended to indicate that most, if not all, aims were at least “a minor part of the course” they had taught. However, there was a significant degree of consensus on the significance of some items. Most indicated that vocabulary and grammar instruction, error correction in written production and literature were significant parts of the course(s) they taught, as well as teaching academic or study skills and discussing equity and discrimination. Vocabulary development, literature and writing, were mentioned repeatedly in the interviews as well. Christine described a typical lesson in her SSS course in this way, “learn new vocabulary words, practice spelling and accent stuff on those vocabulary words, read a story, answer comprehension questions and write

a journal response to something.” Teresa and Julie also indicated that reading literature, short stories or “cultural readings” and preparing responses were important parts of their courses. Julie emphasized academic vocabulary, “If you were doing a story, they didn’t know what the plot was, they didn’t know what the theme – those terms” and working on students’ “weak areas,” such as accent placement or metalinguistic knowledge of grammar. Julie suggested that the focus on grammar in her courses came as a result of pressure from other instructors, “that was one criticism that we got from the high school teachers (...) they have to know the terms, which past tense it is ... (even though) they used it pretty accurately, but they didn’t know the reason they were doing it.”

All three interviewees invoked the idea of improving or augmenting language skills to describe the aims of SSS instruction. Teresa: “We want you here because you have such a tremendous skill, and we want to sharpen it for you. We want you to sharpen it.” Christine: “Let’s get them to the point where they can read better and write better (...) they can use this gift that they’ve been given, it’s like giving value to what they can do.” Julie: “They use it and a lot of it is correct... you just kind want to work on their weakness and strengthen those.”

While survey respondents generally indicated that instruction about culture – i.e. comparisons among Spanish-speaking nations/cultures, U.S. Latino history/culture, dialectical variation – was, on average, “a somewhat important” part of the courses they taught, none of the interviewees mentioned these topics in their comments about the content of their courses, save Julie’s passing reference to “cultural readings.” It could be



that there simply was not time or opportunity in the interviews for this to come up, but it may also be the case that even in SSS courses culture-based content is secondary to language and literacy-based course aims. The field of World Language instruction is increasingly interested in the instruction of “interculturality” or the mediation and negotiation of cultural identities. Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) explained:

Language teaching with an intercultural dimension continues to help learners to acquire the linguistic competence needed to communicate in speaking or writing, to formulate what they want to say/write in correct and appropriate ways. But it also develops their intercultural competence i.e. their ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality. (p. 5)

I did not find evidence in my interviews that interculturality or even fact-based culture instruction was a prominent part of SSS courses taught by these teachers.

Returning to Valdes’ (1997) four broad goals for HL instructions, survey and interview responses pointed to at least some aims correlated with all four areas in SSS courses 1) language maintenance, 2) acquisition of a prestige dialect, 3) expansion of the bilingual range and 4) transfer of literacy skills between languages. Results did signal a notable focus on the goal of acquiring the prestige or standard variety of Spanish, through vocabulary development and error correction. Less evident are aims linked to language maintenance, or the successful transmission of the language across generations, such as community based-projects or instruction focused on developing vocabulary or skills

necessary for interpersonal communication. Valdés et al. (2006) found similar results in their study of six SSS programs in California, “In sum, the study and program objectives at the six high schools revealed that teachers are primarily focused on just two of the four goals of previously identified for heritage language instruction (...) the acquisition of the standard dialect and the transfer of reading and writing abilities across languages” (p. 173).

Survey respondents identified “discussing equity and discrimination” as an important aim in their courses, but practices associated with critical HL pedagogy, such as the study of linguistic aspects of diversity, equity and discrimination were not common aims. This led me to suspect that “equity and discrimination” named in the survey was thought of by respondents in racial or ethnic terms, rather than in a cultural, sociolinguistic, or linguistic context.

### **Question 3: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe differentiated instruction in mixed courses with HLLs?**

The survey and interviews sought to explore what teachers do with HLLs in their classrooms, particularly, what they do differently for HLLs than L2Ls. The survey asked respondents about their instructional practices in mixed L2L/HLL courses, particularly regarding the level of differentiation for HLLs. All survey respondents indicated that they performed at least a small amount of differentiation for HLLs, though 39% selected “only very minor modifications” while only 6% selected “many modifications.” Table 4.8 on the following page reports these responses.

**Table 4.8: Reports of differentiation in mixed courses**

<b>You indicated that you teach a traditional Spanish as a second language course in which heritage speakers of Spanish may enroll. Did you modify aspects of the course or your instruction due to the presence of heritage speakers? (n=71)</b>		
	<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, many modifications	4	5.63%
Yes, a few modifications	39	54.93%
Not really, only very minor modifications	28	39.44%
Never	0	0%

I conducted interviews with three teachers who had that indicated that they performed “a few” or “many” modifications for HLLs in the survey. Of these three informants, only one, Nancy, described extensive, elaborate and specific differentiation practices, while the other two provided fewer, more general examples of differentiation. I suspected that if the survey had offered an option in between “many” and “a few,” such as “frequent,” a more revealing general portrait could have been painted. Survey respondents also provided information about how often they engaged in a variety of differentiation practices, as shown in the table below. The overwhelmingly most common practices involved using HLLs as a source of enrichment for L2 students in mixed classes, either as a source of cultural information or as a linguistic resource, while very few reported frequently preparing different vocabulary lessons for HLLs or allowing them not to complete “irrelevant” tasks. The respondents were most widely split with regards to the practice of grouping HLLs homogeneously.

Table 4.9, below and continued on page 130 summarizes all respondents' reports of differentiation practices.

**Table 4.9: Reported differentiation practices**

<b>Thinking about your most recent experience teaching a Spanish as a second language class in which at least one student was a heritage speaker; how often did you engage in the following instructional practices? (n=71)</b>						
	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Total 3 & 4	Mean
Asking heritage learners to share aspects of their culture with the rest of the class	2	3	32	34	66	3.38
Grouping heritage speakers with struggling students to serve as tutors	5	14	36	16	52	2.89
Presenting, explaining or practicing grammar concepts differently for heritage speakers	7	22	27	15	42	2.70
Grouping heritage students together based on language proficiency (i.e. homogeneously)	14	19	26	11	37	2.49
Assigning more difficult tasks to heritage speakers	14	16	35	6	41	2.46

Assigning special roles in class projects to heritage speakers because of their language proficiency	14	18	31	8	39	2.46
Modifying assessments: tests, rubrics, etc. for heritage speakers	23	22	21	5	26	2.11
Preparing lessons with different curricular content for heritage learners and L2s	22	24	21	4	25	2.10
Assigning longer tasks to heritage speakers (i.e. presentations, readings or writing tasks)	24	23	21	3	24	2.04
Using different materials, readings, textbooks, games, etc. for heritage speakers	26	22	19	4	23	2.01
Exempting heritage speakers from activities or assignments irrelevant for them	27	19	23	2	25	2.00
Preparing different vocabulary lessons of heritage speakers	31	23	14	3	17	1.85

During interviews teachers were asked an open-ended question about what they did differently for HLLs, but they were not prompted with specific examples of differentiation from the survey. Some themes from the interviews corroborated or illustrated data from the survey, such the practice of explaining grammar differently for

HLLs both in mixed and SSS courses. In other cases, interviewees diverged significantly from the survey respondents.

The reported practice of providing HLLs with different explanations during explicit grammar instruction indicates an awareness of the instructional relevance of the difference between HLLs' intuitive knowledge of grammar and L2Ls' metalinguistic knowledge of the L2 system. Both Julie and Christine, former teachers of SSS courses, indicated that HLLs need different explanations because, as Christine observed, "They need to be taught grammar, but in a different way, (...) they know how you say it, they don't necessarily know why they say it that way." While none of the interviewees offered as specific example of *how* they explain grammar differently, at least half alluded to an awareness of the need for an alternative presentation of the topic for HLLs. Only Lucas claimed not to differentiate grammar explanations, however he did report elaborating on grammar explanations for HLLs, "because the Spanish speakers always have more questions about the grammar in Spanish, so I try to go deeper in the explanation with the Spanish speakers." The elaboration Lucas described might amount to differentiation for other informants.

Two teachers mentioned relying on HLLs as "helpers," tutors or aides in mixed classes, one of the most common practices identified in the survey. Lucas explained, "I always try to make groups so they can help the students that don't understand, that are struggling with the Spanish. So, I try to use them as helpers for me in class." This representation of the practice emphasizes the utility of HLLs to L2 learners and the teacher, but does not account for what benefit the HLL might receive from acting as a

“helper.” Nancy, the teacher with the most elaborate accounts of differentiation practices painted a more reciprocal picture. She suggested that HLLs have stronger oral production skills therefore during speaking activities, “I have them help me be leaders, we can do a lot more group work because they can lead a group, I too lead a group.” On the other hand, Nancy explained, HLLs have weaker writing and orthography skills, “so if we write a composition, or just some type of project I can, I can have those native speakers work (...) with my top kids, who don't have those spelling issues, (...) so that they can progress, too.” Bowles (2009) suggested that strategic pairing of HLLs and L2Ls based on complementary linguistic strengths and weaknesses was a promising instructional practice for in mixed courses in that both HLLs and L2Ls benefit equally from these strategic activities. Whether the survey respondents use of HLLs as “helpers” was more one-sided or more reciprocal is unknown.

Most of the teachers I interviewed alluded to having different expectations for HLLs' performance in class in one way or another. Lucas explained that he only speaks Spanish with the HLLs, because he knows that they understand, though he does not do this with his L2 students. He also noted that he has higher expectations for correctness in writing, because “(To) write perfect with all the intonation marks, or accent marks, (...) is) probably more challenging for them.” Nancy said that her HLLs “do things that are above and beyond where my other kids are, especially in presentations. If my other kids do a presentation then it's maybe a minute or it's two minutes; my native speakers usually are double that because, well, they can do it.” Even Joan, who did not claim to make significant modifications for HLLs in her mixed courses, described that she had different expectations for HLLs occasionally, “with writing assignments and things I kind of try to

make them open-ended so that they can be more creative. Like ‘yes, I know you know this vocabulary, but I also know that you know,’ so I want them to go beyond. I'm also looking at their style of writing and their voice, and that kind of thing, whereas you probably don't see that too much with your beginning students.” This sort of differentiation represents a relatively simple adjustment of instructional practice – rather than prepare different content or assign different tasks, the teacher merely adjusts his or her expectation and evaluation of student performance on the same tasks. I call these adjustments part of what I think of as “first order” differentiation. First order differentiation involves thinking about the different capabilities and needs of students and adjusting instruction and assessment as it is being delivered. This might mean speaking only in Spanish to my HLL when she asks a question about a difficult term, but using English with an L2 with a similar question, or interpreting differently the meaning of “frequent hesitation” in an oral presentation rubric as I evaluate L2Ls and HLLs.

Second order differentiation, on the other hand, refers to the attention to student differences in advance of instruction. Preparing different content, materials or tasks for different groups of students would be “second order” differentiation. In the survey, assigning more difficult tasks to HLLs, or assigning a special role based on their proficiency were the most common instructional practices that I associated with the second order of differentiation. On the other hand, practices that implied adjustments to materials, content and products were significantly less common. Many more teachers reported that they “never” or “rarely,” modified assessments, prepared lessons with different curricular content for HLLs, assigned longer tasks, used different materials, exempted HLLs from activities, or prepared different vocabulary lessons than those who



claimed they “sometimes” or “often” engaged in these same practices. In other words, more teachers are *not* practicing second order differentiation than those who are.

Nancy was the only teacher I interviewed who provided clear and specific examples of second order differentiation during the interviews. She explained that she does not group strong HLL readers with L2Ls “because they tend to takeover in and do all the reading and translating for everybody else.” Instead she provides them with a more challenging task; “so once I get a feel of what their level was I usually have them read something different, something at a little bit higher level than what my class is (...)” then all groups of students might report to the class on what their group had read. She also described separating HLLs as a small group during L2 vocabulary instruction she presumed they did not need, in order to work on spelling issues particular to HLLs, such as the silent ‘h’ or ‘j/g’ phoneme confusion, or on the placement of the written accent mark. Teresa mentioned a similar practice of small group differentiation for HLLs when L2 instruction is irrelevant for them, “when we get to particular activities that they really are too advanced for, then we have novels in Spanish, that then they work in groups on those, or other types of projects, maybe cultural.” Steve also suggested that HLLs in his courses might occasionally do something different from the rest of the class, though they are not exempted from classroom activities. “My thought is that once a student has proved to me that they know it, I have Spanish books in my room that they can read. They have to do everything the class does, as far as turning in assignments, but if they want to read a Spanish book instead of taking notes over *me gusta*, then that’s fine with me. (...) Or they might come up to me and say ‘I want to do a project on this’ and I’ll say “Ok” and I’ll write them a pass (to the media center).”

The practice of homogeneously grouping of HLLs, as described by Nancy and Teresa, was the practice with the most divergent responses in the survey. It appears that Nebraska teachers were divided in their use of homogeneous group for HLLs, some teachers do so often, others never. Both Teresa and Steve described difficulties in grouping HLLs together. Steve explained, “If I pose to them a task that is more challenging, (they say) ‘Well, why do I have to do this when the other class is doing that?’ (...) Also, they’re kind of embarrassed by the fact that, you know, we group them together, that they’re different, they’re being separated from the class.” Teresa also mentioned that some students resisted homogeneous grouping, “you sometimes would get this kid that, ‘No, I just want to do what everybody else is doing.’ And then, (I) let them know that that’s their choice too,” though she did add that this resistance was more common in the past. I do not know whether Nancy encountered these challenges in her use of instructional grouping, if she did, they did not seem to have deterred her from carrying out homogeneous grouping. Julie described a very different reaction from HLL students, “actually, most of them, I would say, were very proud that they got to do the harder stuff!” How the practice of homogeneous grouping of HLLs can result in such different reactions from student’s merits further investigation, though I suspected it may have has a great deal to do with how such grouping is presented and explained to students as well as the nature of the task with which students are to engage.

The least common instructional practice in the survey was preparing different vocabulary lessons for HLLs and L2Ls. This was an interesting result, given that the teachers who had taught SSS courses were very clear that vocabulary instruction for HLLs is very different from L2 instruction. In fact, Julie pointed out that the difference

was clear in the HL textbook she used: “(In the HL text) It was all advanced vocab. Whereas, when you’re teaching Spanish 1 or Spanish 2 it’s pretty basic.” Christine explained, “I can read a short novel with my native speakers and they know almost every word (...) but if I’m with Spanish 1 or 2 they wouldn’t know any words and we’d just kind of create that foundation.” Julie was the only teacher interviewed that provided an example of differentiation of vocabulary instruction for HLLs. She described homogeneously grouping HLLs and providing vocabulary lessons through an SSS textbook. “(For example) it has a chapter on going to the medical doctors and the specialists, and I would have four or five of them back in my little room and they’d be working together (...) learning the specialists names, because often these kids have to go out and translate, for Mom and Dad, for medical appointments.” Julie’s example illustrates differentiated vocabulary instruction based not only on level lexical difficulty, but also in response to a perceived real communicative need in students’ lives outside of school. The inappropriateness of L2 vocabulary instruction for HLLs (Montrul & Foote, 2012), particularly at the lower levels, might be the most obvious difference between HLs and L2Ls in mixed class; HLLs already know most of the early acquired words on any Spanish 1 vocabulary list: rooms in the house, articles of clothing, food items, family members, etc. Given this fact, why aren’t more teachers preparing different vocabulary for HLLs? I think the answer is simple: second order differentiation is hard.

Lucas put it this way, “I should do something different - like 100 percent - but I cannot do it because it would be two classes in one, (...) teaching different things to different students in the same class. But this is super difficult - I mean it's really hard to teach two classes in one class.” Joan echoed this sentiment as well, “because you have

them in the same class as everyone else, so you're kind of, it's like you're almost kind of constrained with what you can do. And so what can you do with those, I mean it would be, if they had a pull out program that I could, I would be able to do lots of different other things.” Julie, one of the more experienced teachers explained that she used to differentiate more, but that growing class sizes has made it more difficult in recent years, “(Now) we have six classes a day, and many times it’s thirty in class, or twenty-seven in the class. Just the logistics aren’t as good. You can’t, for me anyway. It used to be better; I could differentiate a lot better. There’s nowhere to put these small groups!” These statements acknowledge the reality that while teachers can *theoretically* differentiate extensively for students with radically different learning needs in the same classroom, doing so can be time-consuming to plan, challenging to execute and difficult to manage, so much so that such differentiation becomes impossible.

#### **Question 4: What do Nebraska Spanish teachers say that they believe about HLs?**

With the survey instrument I also attempted to gather some data about what teachers said they believed about heritage learners of Spanish. Stated beliefs, especially in the context of a survey, do not necessarily imply any particular practices employed by these teachers, however, they can illuminate issues of interest in regards to the creation of professional learning opportunities. The interview protocols did not address any belief related items directly, in part in order to keep the interviews to an unobtrusive length. Despite this fact, interviewees occasionally made statements which alluded to the survey items and I have included those comments in my discussion of the data below. The survey solicited Likert style responses on several items aimed at measuring beliefs in

regards to 1) HL maintenance, 2) The relationship between L1 and L2 proficiency, 3) Motives for providing HL instruction and, 4) SSS and HL program design and placement issues. The survey items were based in part on a similar instrument described by Ribeiro (2011) The following table, continued on the next page, reports the results from this portion of the survey organized according to the aforementioned categories, however this is not the order in which the items were presented to respondents.

**Table 4.10: Stated Beliefs about HLLs**

<b>In this section, indicate your level of agreement with each statement: “In this section, indicate your level of agreement with each statement.” (n=71)</b>	Strongly disagree	Some-what disagree	Some-what agree	Strongly agree	Mean
<i>HL MAINTENANCE ITEMS</i>					
Heritage speakers' bilingualism is a valuable skill	0	0	0	71	4.00
Bilingualism should be supported at school	0	1	9	61	3.85
Maintaining a heritage language prevents students from fully assimilating into this society	59	11	1	0	1.18
<i>RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN L1 AND L2</i>					
Improving skills in a heritage language can improve English proficiency	0	0	11	60	3.85
Students who are still learning English should not take Spanish classes	41	24	4	2	1.54
Students who speak Spanish fluently at home do not need to take Spanish classes in school	42	24	3	2	1.51

<i>MOTIVES FOR PROVIDING HL INSTRUCTION</i>					
Studying Spanish can help heritage speakers succeed in school	0	5	24	42	3.52
Heritage speakers should study Spanish to learn about their cultural and linguistic roots	1	1	35	34	3.44
Heritage speakers should study Spanish so they can better communicate with friends and relatives	4	6	37	24	3.14
Heritage speakers should study Spanish because they need to acquire standard Spanish	2	12	44	13	2.96
<i>SSS/HL PROGRAM DESIGN AND PLACEMENT</i>					
It is always preferable to have heritage speakers and second language learners in different classes.	20	32	13	6	2.07
Heritage speakers need different beginning level Spanish classes than second language learners	0	7	17	47	3.56
Heritage speakers need different advanced level Spanish courses than second language learners	1	10	26	34	3.31

It would be expected that world language teachers were among the strongest advocates for multilingualism, so unsurprisingly in this survey Nebraska Spanish teachers expressed clear support for the notion that bilingualism is a valuable skill and that schools have at least some role in supporting and/or encouraging the use of heritage languages. Bilingualism was characterized in interviews as “a gift,” and “a tremendous skill.”

The survey data generally suggested that Nebraska Spanish teachers did not understand the relationship between the Spanish and English skills of HLLs to be “subtractive;” in other words, they did not see one language as an impediment to the

acquisition or development of the other. The belief that Spanish speakers still learning English should continue to develop their Spanish is actually at odds with a once pervasive view of Spanish L1 as an impediment or obstacle to the acquisition of English L2 (Escamilla, 2006). While there is ample scholarly evidence to the contrary, schools continue to engage in practices that communicate this subtractive understanding, such as denying ELL students the opportunity to enroll in Spanish language courses until they have demonstrated a specified level of English proficiency. Both Nebraska districts in which I have worked had established such practices in the past. In this sense it is somewhat surprising that the survey respondents expressed such clear consensus on the “additive” nature of simultaneous language study. This could be explained by the fact that language teachers are more likely to be adequately informed vis-à-vis the field of language acquisition than other educators, or it could be that teachers’ work with students had provided them with experiential evidence of this additive relationship. Only one of the teachers interviewed made a remark that reflected a different understanding of language acquisition with respect to HLLs. In describing the wide variety of proficiencies she observed in HLLs at her school Ann said, “I’ve also had heritage speakers who were effectively non-lingual, like maybe not speaking English fully and they could not speak Spanish fully.” This representation of the language of bilinguals as “non-lingual” or “semi-lingual” seems to be a view similar to the one encountered by Escamilla (2006). She found that the group of teachers in her study had knowledge of language transfer theories, but when evaluating student language samples they demonstrated tendencies to characterize students’ language development in deficit terms, as a sort of ‘bi-

*illiteracy*'. She attributed this phenomenon to a lack of understanding of the mechanisms of bilingual language development.

With respect to items regarding motives for providing HL instruction respondents were in greatest agreement with the belief that Spanish instruction would improve overall academic performance for HLLs. Data on the outcomes of bilingual education models such as the Dual-Language program model lend support to this belief (see Collier & Thomas, 2004). In Nebraska, recent state accountability data from the Omaha Public Schools Dual Language program demonstrated that Dual Language students outperformed non-dual language peers in the same school on 77% of measures (OPS, 2013). However, I am not aware of any such empirical evidence that has demonstrated a link between traditional (L2) secondary Spanish study and improved academic performance for HLLs. On the other hand, SSS programs theoretically overlap with measures likely to increase Latino school success. Carreira (2007) hypothesized that secondary SSS courses could lead to improved achievement and engagement for HLLs. I can lend some support to this claim from my own practice. I have seen SSS courses serve as pathways toward academic engagement and specifically, later AP Spanish Language and Culture enrollment, which in turn facilitated access to other college preparatory courses and experiences.

With respect to other motives for Spanish language study, respondents generally agreed that HLLs should study Spanish to learn about their “roots” and to better communicate with friends and family. On this issue the Nebraska teachers I surveyed seemed to concur with a national survey of college HLLs. The respondents in the



NHLRC survey also identified a desire to connect with culture and communicate with family and friends as major reasons for enrolling in HL courses (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). However, my survey participants were slightly less enthusiastic about the need for HLLs to “acquire the standard dialect;” many fewer indicated that they strongly agreed with this belief. Here is where teacher beliefs seemed to be somewhat at odds with reported practices.

As previously discussed, both the survey data from teachers who had taught SSS courses and interviewee descriptions of instructional practices used with HLLs pointed to instruction much more focused on standardizing language than on connecting students with their culture, family or community. The placement of the written accent, peer-editing, reading academic texts, resolving spelling difficulties and understanding grammar are all practices likely to promote acquisition of the standard dialect, but not necessarily strengthen interpersonal ties or cultural identities.

Finally, while teachers in the survey seemed to clearly reject the notion that HLLs and L2Ls should *always* receive instruction in different classes, they paradoxically professed general agreement that learners need both different beginning *and* different advanced level instruction. It is likely that the categorical word “always” prompted the rejection of the first statement and that respondents might have agreed more strongly with the revised “It is preferable...” rather than “It is always preferable.” That said, there was somewhat stronger agreement in regards to the need for separate beginning language courses than separate advanced courses. Lucas, a teacher of beginning level courses, explained that that HLLs in Spanish 1 “really have problems” that make the need for

separate courses clear: “they start to talk with their partners, they are not paying attention to class because they already know what they are going to learn. (...) I mean, the students that already know Spanish they have two options, or they pay attention and get bored or they start to talk with one of their friends.” The classroom management problem presented by HLLs who are always bored, as Lucas described, is likely one of the reasons that teachers believe that HLLs need different beginning courses. Yet SSS courses are scarce in Nebraska, even though teachers in this study clearly acknowledged the need for courses tailored to the needs of HLLs. We must then surmise that the impediments to creating SSS courses do not include teachers lacking understanding of their utility.

**Question 5: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers describe learning what they know about HLLs?**

Both the survey and interviews sought information from respondents about how or where they learned what they know about HLLs. The findings generally indicated a widespread lack of official pre-service or in-service professional development relevant to HLLs or HL pedagogy among Nebraska Spanish teachers. In interviews teachers attributed their knowledge of HLLs primarily to their professional experience, observation and iterative experimentation in the classroom. Only 13 survey respondents (18.31%) indicated that they had received instruction related to HLLs, HL acquisition or HL pedagogy in their pre-service teacher education program. Of those, more than half reported attending to HLLs for less than one class session and only one respondent had taken a course specifically dedicated to HL issues. Of the respondents who reported that their pre-service teacher preparation program had *not* addressed HLLs or heritage

languages, 45 of 58 or 77.59% agreed that they “would have liked to” and the remaining 22.41% were indifferent.

**Table 4.11: Pre-service HL Learning Experiences**

<b>What sort of instruction did you receive regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy in your pre-service teacher education program? Select all that apply. (n=13)</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>%</b>
A semester-long course dedicated to heritage language education	1	7.69%
At least one class session dedicated to discussing heritage language education	4	30.77%
Assigned book, article, speaker, website or other resource to review	8	61.54%
Examples of lessons and materials appropriate for heritage language education	6	46.15%
Information about the differences between second language and heritage language education	5	38.46%
Information about the socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of heritage language learners in the U.S.	6	46.15%
Information about curricular models or instructional practices for heritage language education	4	30.77%
I don't know or can't remember	3	23.08%

\*Because respondents could select more than one response, percentages will not total 100.

Teacher interviews revealed the changing role of HL issues in teacher professional development. As the academic interest in HLLs has grown steadily in recent years, more recent graduates of teacher preparation programs like Christine or Steve were more likely to have encountered information about HLLs. Christine explained, “I probably read a couple of articles in college, or stuff like that, but not anything extensive to prep me for what I was doing (teaching SSS courses).” In contrast, more experienced

teachers like Julie or Nancy completed their pre-service training more than ten years prior and did not remember receiving any information about HLLs in their pre-service preparation.

Again, a comparable 16.9% of survey respondents indicated that they had participated in some form of in-service professional development related to HLLs. By far the most common form of in-service experience reported was a local presentation, followed by for credit courses and attending conference presentations.

**Table 4.12: In-service HL Learning Experiences**

<b>What sort of in-service professional development have you participated in about heritage language education? Select all that apply.* (n=12)</b>	Response	%
For-credit college course	3	25%
Non-credit college course	1	8.33%
Locally presented workshop or training (i.e. delivered by members of your district or school)	9	75%
Externally presented workshop or training (i.e. delivered by an organization, ESU or company)	1	8.33%
On-line seminar (webinar)	1	8.33%
Presentation I attended at a conference	3	25%
Work within a PLC or other school-based professional development group	2	16.67%
Other, please explain*	3	25%

\*Because respondents were able to choose more than one option, percentages do not total 100.

\*Other responses made reference to a cross-district PLC group, a practicum experience in a bilingual program and independent research.

The fact that teachers in this study had received very little official preparation for working with HLLs does not mean that these teachers did not know anything about HLLs. Too often we forget that much teacher learning does and should take place in practice. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) push back at the far-too-common idea that the only educational experts are those who work outside of schools:

The expert-novice distinction is prevalent in many professional-development efforts, where it is assumed that the expert is one who knows how to implement the formal knowledge base for teaching, which has been generated by experts outside schools, while the novice is one who learns effective practices by imitating the strategies of his or more competent colleagues or expert trainers and coaches. The image of all practitioners as lifelong learners, on the other hand, implies tentativeness and considerations of alternatives in practice that have been finely tuned to particular and local histories, cultures and communities. (p. 144)

The teachers I interviewed described a variety of ways that they learned to work with HLLs through reflection on their experiences and their praxis. Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2008) described the nature of professional learning in this way: “Learning rather than being solely individual (as we have taken it to be) is actually also *social*. It happens through experience and practice. In plain terms—people learn from and with others in particular ways. They learn through practice (learning as doing), through meaning (learning as intentional), through community (learning as participating and being with others), and through identity (learning as changing who we are)” (p. 227).

Along these lines four sources of knowledge about practice other than official professional development mentioned were during the interviews: 1) Biography or personal experience, 2) Iterative experimentation, 3) Student performance observation and analysis and, 4) Interaction with colleagues.

Christine and Teresa both described their own experiences as high schools students as informative for their understanding of HL pedagogy. Christine explained, “I took Spanish with kind of a mixed group of kids and I hung out with the kids who spoke Spanish (and ...) we would work together on things and I would kind of see how they thought about stuff and that was the first experience.” For Christine, seeing how her HLL peers received and understood L2 Spanish instruction helped her to later think pedagogically about presenting content to HLLs. Similarly, Teresa described serving as a classroom assistant in an SSS course as a high school student, “I learned Spanish as a foreign language, and so I knew how that went. But when I watched the kids that already spoke, then yet they were still busy in the class, (...) and yet what they did was different than what, of course we were learning as the English speakers learning Spanish. So I knew that there was a body of knowledge (...), just like we teach our kids English, to enhance their communicative capabilities.” That experience allowed her to understand and imagine the teaching of Spanish to HLLs as analogous to the English Language Arts instruction afforded to English speakers.

“If you teach it enough, you get an idea of how things play out or don't,” Christine said during the interview and she offered the example of developing a teaching the written accent mark. “I’m just playing around with different ideas,” Steve said. In other

words, you try something, you see how things go, you change and then you try it again. While these phrases sound simple and quotidian, I suspect they belie a much more sophisticated process that I might have uncovered in a longer interview. Christine, Steve and Julie all made reference to learning from the unfolding of instruction in their classrooms, the sort of iterative experimentation that is a fundamental part of instructional practice. Julie described her knowledge as the result of a process developing over the course of her career and focused on particular questions; “I think I've had six classes every day, for the last twenty-five or twenty-six years. I was (...) really, emphasizing, you know, how you get this, slow learner to do better? How do you get this Hispanic to do better?”

Nancy, Julie and Christine all pointed to their observations of student skills and deficiencies as sources of knowledge of practice. For example, Nancy explained, “I've been teaching for 32 years. I just look at what the kids are missing, where I see them, you know, lacking and it's usually on tests or quizzes that I see them, or homework; I see spelling errors or I see, like especially when we get into the subjunctive with the grammar, the accents.” Using this information about common student errors, Nancy created mini-lessons in order to differentiate for HLLs. Similarly, Christine described adjusting her expectations and instruction after she became familiar with the particular students in her courses and after working over several years with HLLs.

Five of the nine teachers I interviewed mentioned collaboration or conversation with colleagues as a source of information about HLLs. Nancy had participated in professional organizations and conferences, Teresa had worked with her department to

discuss and create SSS courses and HLLs, Christine and Steve had met with other teachers teaching SSS courses and Lucas had talked regularly with other teachers about differentiation. Lucas lamented that after changing positions, he no longer had access to collegial conversations, “last year (at the high school) there was good contact all the time with the other teachers and we were talking about all these topics, how well we teach some stuff and ideas about differentiated teaching and everything. But right now I am all alone in middle school, so I don't have any other colleague.” Isolation from colleagues, particularly middle school teachers, teachers in rural areas, and in small language departments is a cause for concern, given the social nature of learning.

**Question 6: What do Nebraska Spanish teachers suggest they want to know about HLLs?**

As part of the larger design project, the survey probed teachers for their ideas about professional development related to HLLs. Professional learning experiences that are tailored to the needs teachers articulate are inevitably likely to garner more enthusiastic participation and engagement. When asked if they were interested in learning more about HLLs, HL acquisition or HL pedagogy, 73% of respondents responded with “Yes,” only 7% said “No” and the remaining 20% indicated that they were “Unsure.” These data clearly indicated that professional development about HLLs was relevant in the minds of the Nebraska Spanish teachers that responded to this survey.

Based on the work of Potowski and Carreira (2004), Kagan and Dillon (2009), and the AATSP (2000), I generated a list of potential areas of focus for professional development efforts with teachers of HLLs. Survey respondents were asked how useful they considered each topic on a four-point scale. Only survey respondents who had



indicated that they were interested in HL professional development were presented with these questions (n=66). As the following table illustrates, every option presented to respondents resulted in a mean of greater than 3.25. This meant that all topics were, on average, at least “somewhat relevant and useful” to respondents. Respondents had indicated that they generally had received very little pre-service or in-service professional development, thus it is somewhat unsurprising that most topics would seem of some relevance to respondents.

**Table 4.13: Proposed Topics for HLL Professional Learning**

<b>If you were to receive additional professional development about heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy, how relevant or useful would you consider the following potential topics? (n=66)</b>					
	Irrelevant, useless	Not very relevant or useful	Somewhat relevant and useful	Very relevant, extremely useful	Mean
Identifying instructional needs of heritage learners	0	1	9	56	3.83
Creating classroom activities that engage heritage speakers	0	2	8	56	3.82
Using resources from the heritage language community in the classroom	0	1	15	50	3.74
Creating instructional units to use with heritage learners	0	0	18	48	3.73
Differentiating in mixed (heritage and non-heritage) courses	0	1	17	48	3.71
Selecting materials to use with heritage learners	0	2	15	49	3.71
Differentiation for heritage language learners of different proficiencies	0	0	22	43	3.66

Meeting and sharing with other teachers of heritage learners	0	0	23	42	3.65
Assessing heritage speakers' linguistic knowledge	0	3	18	45	3.64
Integrating cross-curricular themes into heritage language curriculum	0	2	21	43	3.62
<b>How heritage language acquisition differs from second or first language acquisition</b>	0	3	21	42	3.59
Teaching literature to heritage learners	0	2	23	41	3.59
Teaching vocabulary to heritage learners	0	3	21	42	3.59
Curriculum planning and course design for heritage speakers	0	5	20	40	3.54
<b>Characteristics of heritage speakers' language proficiencies</b>	0	3	25	38	3.53
<b>Characteristics of the dialects spoken by heritage speakers</b>	1	2	25	38	3.52
Assessing and tracking heritage learners' growth	1	2	26	36	3.49
<b>Cultural characteristics of heritage speakers</b>	0	5	25	36	3.47
Advocating for heritage language courses, programs and students	2	6	23	34	3.37
Using technology with heritage learners	0	9	23	33	3.37
<b>Heritage speakers' motivations for studying Spanish</b>	0	11	27	28	3.26

Survey items more easily characterized as “theory” or “foundations appear in bold in the table above, while more “practice-oriented topics do not. Topics such as language acquisition theory or learner sociolinguistic characteristics, clearly more “theory” than “practice,” seemed to be considered somewhat less useful by respondents than some of the more overtly practice-oriented items. The five most popular topics, each with a mean of over 3.7, were topics very clearly rooted in classroom instruction, in fact, each employs the active gerund: 1) Identifying instructional needs of heritage learners, 2) creating classroom activities that engage heritage speakers, 3) using resources from the heritage language community in the classroom, 4) creating instructional units to use with heritage learners, and 5) differentiating in mixed (heritage and non-heritage) courses. I make this distinction between “theory” and “practice” items very tentatively as the data truly demonstrated very little variation between items. Of course it is also likely that there were other, even more relevant topics that were not included in the survey at all, for this reason the interview protocol also prompted teachers to suggest topics on their own.

Christine’s initial response to the question “If you were to participate in additional professional development about HLLs, what would you like it to address?” aptly characterizes the responses of I received from all nine teachers: “Everything!” Truly, teachers offered a variety of suggestions for professional development ranging from advocacy to assessment and from methodology to classroom management.

Julie and Daniel suggested topics focused on advocacy with administration. Julie expressed interest in outcome based scholarly research that could help her advocate for

SSS instruction with administration, “How effective it is? (...) Is there follow up? How many of these students went on to college?” Daniel also recommended addressing, “How to create a Spanish-speaking program, or a Spanish class for natives? (...) talking to the administration and getting the program going and developing that.” These ideas clearly reflect a concern with the administrative role in ensuring SSS course success that I discussed earlier in this chapter.

Several teachers indicated that HL methodology would be very helpful, as Ann explained, “I’ve been taught how to teach Spanish to a non-native speaker, but I haven’t necessarily been taught what is the best way to go about addressing the particular spelling issues that a native speaker encounters.” Lucas and Christine made similar remarks. Christine offered grammar methodology with HLLs as an example; she wanted to learn “How to embed grammar in to what I’m teaching, (in an SSS course so that) they could go into 3/4, regular 3/4 (an L2 course), and still be able to handle it okay, so that means they would have to have some recognition of like (...) what a tense was.”

Curriculum was another area of focus – from “the delineation of goals” as Teresa suggested, to “lessons (...) that I can teach alongside the other students” recommended by Steve. Teresa asked, “Exactly what we need to do for these students to get them to the next level? (...) What are the objectives?” Nancy recommended that teachers learn to develop a “diagnostic tool” that could help to drive curriculum. In her opinion, teachers should engage in a process of instructional design based on this “diagnosis.” After determining “Where are they proficient, where are they not? (Teachers could then say,) Okay, if these kids are having issues with spelling and accent marks, then we should have

(instructional) units. (...) And we should have time to create them.” Nancy and Teresa both seemed interested in a process of instructional design for HL curriculum similar to the process of “backward design” proposed by Wiggins, McTighe, Kiernan, & Frost (1998).

Differentiation techniques were proposed by Ann, who asked that professional development respond to the question, “How do you address a class of learners with such varying abilities?” Steve and Joan also were seeking ways to accommodate HLLs in mixed classes. What Joan wanted from a professional development experience was “Strategies that, you know, I can take what I’m doing right now, so that I can just kind of plug them in and not have to reinvent the wheel (...) or adapt the things that we’re doing in class so that it can help those higher level students.”

Additionally Christine proposed classroom management as a focus and Ann suggested “How to deal with credibility issues? Because I don’t know the local slang.” She suggested that learning more about linguistic diversity and the characteristics of different dialects might help teachers to “deal with credibility issues,” like those raised earlier in this chapter.

### **Question 7: How do Nebraska Spanish teachers desire to learn and grow professionally?**

From a design perspective, the delivery format for professional learning experiences is fundamental. If professional development is to meet the needs of practitioners it should be delivered via the means that will most successfully accommodate and engage teachers. While we can acknowledge that research increasingly points to job-embedded and sustained professional development efforts as

the most effective (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009), the size and scope of Spanish language instruction in most Nebraska districts is not likely to garner the significant investment of resources that such initiatives require, such as instructional coaches or ample time and opportunity to meet in professional learning communities at the building level focused on HLLs. Similarly, because the number of teachers who might benefit at any given school building or district in Nebraska from such efforts is typically very small, it is unlikely that most local districts could be relied upon to deliver the most relevant or appropriate learning experiences for teachers of HLLs, if any at all. For these reasons, survey respondents were asked about their preferences for professional development delivery including only those options that might be considered feasible in the context of this design study.

Respondents expressed a clear preference for local and face-to-face experiences over online learning opportunities. Convenience seemed to be a significant factor, as well as credit-earning potential. For credit courses were more attractive than non-credit courses and local or state activities more popular than national or regional options. At the time of this survey, the only professional development opportunities related to HLs that could have been available to Nebraska teachers from this list might have included a local presentation or local professional learning community in the largest districts, a for-credit in-person graduate course at one of the state universities (offered every two years), a national conference (such as the Texas Tech sponsored “Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language), or an online non-credit course (such as the StarTalk NHLRC online workshop). The most popular format, a local presentation was not likely available outside of Nebraska’s largest city, Omaha.

**Table 4.14: Preferred professional learning delivery formats**

<b>How likely would you be to participate in these forms of professional development opportunities for learning about heritage language education? (n=66)</b>							
	Very Unlikely	Some what Unlikely	Undecided	Some what Likely	Very Likely	Mean	Percent somewhat or very
Attend a local presentation	2	4	3	28	29	4.18	86.4%
Attend a state level conference	6	4	9	24	23	3.82	71.2%
Join a local (building, district or ESU) professional learning community	2	8	11	26	19	3.79	68.2%
Take a for-credit in-person graduate course	7	7	9	25	18	3.61	65.2%
Attend a national or regional conference	6	7	8	32	13	3.59	68.2%
Take a for-credit online graduate course	8	8	9	22	19	3.55	62.1%
Join an online local or state professional learning community	4	11	11	25	15	3.55	60.6%

Attend a weekend or summer retreat in state	6	9	12	26	13	3.47	59.1%
A non-credit in-person course	11	6	11	30	8	3.27	57.7%
A non-credit online course	17	13	10	19	7	2.79	39.4%

During the interviews teachers were asked what kind of professional development experience they preferred, where or how they preferred to participate and who they hoped would lead and/or participate in said experience. Interviewees like the survey respondents, generally expressed preferences for conference sessions and workshops over online or formal coursework. However, while 65% survey respondents were at least “somewhat likely” to enroll in a for-credit, in-person graduate course, only one of the interview respondents mentioned this option.

Lucas expressed a sentiment common among interviewees, “I don’t want more courses online – I would like a workshop, one week or something like that, to meet another teacher (...) I would like to have face to face more engagement with the other classmates and it could be a short period of time.” Ann said something similar, “A seminar, something in person, where I could ask questions. I wouldn’t be interested in anything online. But for a seminar workshop that I could go to, preferably on a Saturday or a Sunday (...) as long as I could drive to it.” Local and face-to-face came up again and again as descriptors of ideal professional learning experiences. Teresa “It’s better for me if I can sit down with people and talk, you know, eye-to-eye.” Even though classroom



teachers spend the day surrounded with people, namely students, there is typically very little time to engage with colleagues in sustained conversations about our work. In large schools, teachers may not have common planning periods with other teachers in their field and in smaller schools, the Spanish teacher may be the only teacher of world language. In rural Nebraska a Spanish teacher's nearest colleague may be a hundred miles away. As Julie put it, "(Out here) there is no local!" The most "local" professional development experience that some Spanish teachers could receive would likely come from an Educational Service Unit (ESU). The 17 ESUs in Nebraska serve regional member schools and provide a variety of supports including staff development and technology, aiming to make the delivery of services more cost effective (ESUCC, 2012). Christine suggested meeting with other teachers at the statewide Nebraska International Language Association (NILA) conference, an annual practitioner-organized conference that typically draws teachers from across the state.

"One-shot" professional development models, like workshops, conferences and seminars have been criticized in the research literature for their failure to translate into student performance gains or significant changes in teacher practices (Darling-Hammond et al, 2009). It is important to remember that such evaluations are often focused on outcomes of initiatives that were neither chosen, designed, nor delivered by teachers; in fact, teachers often have very little input regarding the professional learning experiences provided by their employers. Nancy described her frustration with this situation:

In our district we really don't get a say in what those staff developments are. We don't even have a committee that says, 'well, we would like to

work on this.’ It just comes from our head curriculum office, (and) unfortunately for us of World Languages, our person isn't a World Language person and so she doesn't know squat about what we should be looking at or where we should be going. But you know, if they're not knowledgeable about it, they need to get the team or somebody that's knowledgeable to help us find these types of staff development. Or (they should) go out there with a survey or something and say, ‘what would your department like to see?’ and ‘Who would be interested in doing this?’ I mean, we have wonderful, wonderful teachers who (...) can provide and give us insight.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) found that teachers considered professional development experiences related to their content area to be most useful and that teachers who saw practices modeled for them were much more likely to attempt these practices in their own classrooms. This suggests that the sort of teacher-led professional development that Nancy proposed is much more likely to be meaningful than its alternative. Of the nine teachers interviewed, eight expressed a strong preference for practicing teachers as the leaders of professional learning experiences. “They’re on the front lines and they’re the ones who have been doing things – they know what’s successful and what isn’t, things that they’ve tried that brought them success and have also brought those students success,” as Joan explained. That a PD leader be “in the field,” as in presently or recently teaching in a secondary classroom, was very important to the teachers I interviewed. Teachers were generally distrustful of “researchers,” as evidenced in Christine’s comment, “You can research your butt off, but unless you have experience with this type

of situation you don't know what you're talking about." Nancy expressed a similar idea, "(When) you get those (PD experiences) with people who were not in the classroom, they're just researchers or whatever and you're like yeah, how long has it been since you've been in a classroom? Do you really think that's going to work?' You can buy into more if it's your own colleagues, I think." While this distrust of non-practicing PD leaders may be occasionally misplaced, I can confess to having had similar reactions to more than a few professional development presentations or trainings over the course of my career.

Informants described ideal professional learning experiences as those that involved dialogues with colleagues, and sometimes others. The goal, according to Julie was, "Giving them some connections with people that have done it." Teresa wanted a broader conversation about the aims of educating HLLs, "I would want to speak with other people that are teaching (...) Is there something that our society wants from this? And if so, maybe we can have a cross-section of people, not just the educators." She envisioned including community leaders and employers of bilingual workers in conversations about HL education. Ann welcomed the idea of engaging, "some specialists in heritage speaker language acquisition, if there are such things," alongside the "teachers who already teach it."

Two of the teachers I interviewed suggested that they were unlikely to participate in any upcoming professional learning experience that might result from this study because they anticipated retiring from teaching very soon. However, the remaining seven teachers were enthusiastic about the idea of learning more about HLLs and HL pedagogy.

As Steve put it, “I’m willing to do whatever, I guess. I don’t know what else is out there, so if anything else is out there, I would want to get it! My students need something they’re not getting.”

## CHAPTER 5: DESIGN IMPLICATIONS

This chapter signals a return to the four design questions guiding the second phase of the study. I examine the implications of the survey and interview data for the design and delivery of professional learning experiences for Nebraska teachers working with heritage learners. Through a description of the steps taken within design research framework of this study, I address the following questions: 1) What do these data say about how relevant professional development could be provided for Nebraska Spanish teachers for working with heritage learners of Spanish? 2) What do these data say about the format in which could it be delivered? 3) What do these data say about which topics would this professional development address? 4) What do these data say about how professional development related to HLLs could change what practitioners do? Lastly, I describe the initial enactment phase of this study, the design of a prototype workshop that was delivered to Nebraska teachers in March of 2014.

### **Design considerations**

In the design research framework proposed by Bannan-Ritland (2003), the articulation of a ‘intervention’ prototype in educational design research is informed by theory, extant literature, analysis of the need and a characterization of the audience for whom the intervention is proposed (see figure 3.1.2, pg. 65). Under this framework it is assumed that professional development that is responsive to what Nebraska Spanish teachers know, believe, do and want from a professional learning experience will be arguably more successful reaching and engaging both the hearts as well as the minds and hands of those educators (Day, 2004).

**Audience characterization.** The survey and interview data of this study provided insight into the meaningful characteristics of the audience of educators that might benefit from and participate in professional development efforts related to HL education in Nebraska. Unfortunately, professional development offerings are often criticized for failing to acknowledge the expertise and insights of educators. As Dadds (1997) acknowledged, “Teachers and headteachers do not enter into CPD (PD) as empty vessels. They bring existing experiences, practices, perspectives, insights and, most usually, anxieties about the highly complex nature of their work” (p. 32). As I examined the experiences and perspectives of the Nebraska teachers in this study, I was reminded of the language of *challenges* and *opportunities* that framed many conversations in my CPED cohort.

There are several ways in which the characterization of the audience in this study highlights opportunities for teacher professional development. On the one hand, these Nebraska teachers were in large part willing and even enthusiastic about the prospect of participating in professional learning about HLLs and HL pedagogy; more than three-quarters of survey respondents said they’d like to learn more about HLLs and every proposed topic for HL PD garnered on average at least a “somewhat useful” rating. Unlike professional development efforts that target knowledge or skills not considered relevant or useful to practitioners, Nebraska Spanish teachers in this study considered HL instruction pertinent. From a design perspective, this interest and willingness on the part of practitioners supports and increases the viability a PD model that accesses voluntary platforms for delivery. These results suggested that practitioner conferences or elective

workshops rather than district-dispensed and mandated in-service would likely still be attended by a significant number of teachers.

Teachers in this study also held very positive attitudes about HL maintenance, the role of the school in promoting bilingualism and continued Spanish language study for HLLs, including ELLs. They supported the need for specific and separate HL instruction at both beginning and advanced levels. These shared beliefs are a fundamental building block for the emergence of a community of practice among HL educators in Nebraska (Wenger, 2000). The interviews suggested that most teachers were aware that HLLs have different learning needs than L2s and in the survey most proposed that HLLs receive different instruction. This means that these teachers favored differentiated instruction for HLs even when the teacher was not yet providing this differentiated instruction in his or her own classroom. Teachers demonstrated awareness of 1) HLLs' distinct lexical competence by expecting more in comprehension and production, grammatical competence in explaining grammar differently, 2) HLLs' cultural competence in using HLLs as cultural informants and 3) HLLs' development of literacy skills devoting attention to HL specific orthography, for example. These practices were reported and teacher knowledge was evident even when teachers had not received information about HL acquisition in their pre or in-service preparation programs. In this sense, teachers in Nebraska surveyed here do not seem to need to be persuaded that HLLs merit attention or require differentiated instruction. A design sensitive to this inherent opportunity would acknowledge and cultivate teachers' knowledge from practice as a starting point to constructing shared practices.

Another striking opportunity presented by the characteristics of this potential audience was the discovery of sources of expertise and experience among Nebraska Spanish teachers. The survey identified more than a dozen teachers with experience teaching SSS courses and several dozen more that had reportedly engaged in some level of differentiation with the HLLs in their mixed classrooms. A wide variety of practices were reported and even low incidence items such as engaging students in service learning or preparing differentiated vocabulary lessons were practiced by at least a couple of respondents. Some individual respondents were likely to be very rich sources of knowledge and experience in practice. For example, Nancy's experience in significantly differentiating instruction could be leveraged to help teachers like Steve who were just beginning their careers teaching in mixed HLL/L2 classrooms. From just the nine participant interviews there were clear examples of practitioners grappling with problems others had already encountered, and in some cases overcome. Julie reported no difficulty with the homogeneous grouping of HLLs that Steve and Teresa found problematic while Christine and Julie handled lexical challenges from students that Ann feared would undermine her credibility. A professional learning opportunity for these teachers would ideally consider challenges like these and solicit the experiences of participants who had previously confronted them. Joint enterprise, or a sense of shared undertaking, is another of the fundamental characteristics of a community of practice (Wenger, 2000) that might aid Nebraska teachers in articulating and developing expertise.

Alongside these opportunities there are also challenges to the design of professional learning experiences for this audience. One challenge that threatens the viability of the sort of collaboration that I discussed in the preceding paragraph is the



tremendous distance and lack of communication across districts coupled with the relative disinterest of participants in on-line professional learning opportunities. Particularly in new Latino diaspora communities like Nebraska, Spanish teachers are relatively isolated and may be the only teacher at a school or district responsible for working with HLLs. The survey data suggested that these teachers were unlikely to encounter opportunities for professional development provided by their district. At the same time, the nascent field of heritage language pedagogy has not yet produced a substantive cache of practitioner-oriented professional development materials that might facilitate effective independent learning, as is the case of English literacy pedagogy. Teachers working with heritage language learners “make the road by walking,” (Horton & Freire, 2000) and it appears that they would very much like to be walking together. Web-enabled communication and dissemination of information is arguably the simplest and most cost-effective means of connecting teachers across buildings and districts, but if teachers are not likely to participate in virtual communities, efforts undertaken to design and facilitate them might be wasted. A design for professional development that confronts the challenge of distance might consider utilizing pre-existing networks that bring together language teachers from across the state for face-to-face interactions. Some such possibilities include the Nebraska International Language Association (NILA), the Nebraska Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (NATSP), Nebraska Educational Service Units (ESUs), the State of Nebraska Department of Education World Language office or even outreach and extension efforts of the state’s public colleges and universities.

While the data suggested that teachers in this study acknowledged some of the characteristics of HLLs in their practice, the interviews provided little evidence of explicit knowledge of processes of HL language acquisition, sociolinguistic attributes and affective or identity related issues in HL education. In other words, while teachers in this study demonstrated knowledge of what HLLs *know* and can *do* with Spanish, the teachers interviewed did not seem to be as aware of why HLLs know what they know, nor what HLLs might *think* and how they might *feel* about Spanish and their own language skills. When Teresa recounted the difficulty she and her school had encountered with their attempt to offer an SSS course she pointed to student disengagement, or what she perceived as resistance to instruction, as the major contributing factor in the failure of the course. Like Teresa, Christine and Steve similarly identified classroom management difficulties that might be deeply connected with affective and identity-related issues for HLLs. Despite the affective dilemmas mentioned in interviews, student cultural characteristics and motivations for studying the HL were ranked by survey respondents among the least relevant suggested topics for PD.

Teachers in the survey were not explicitly questioned about their understanding HLL motivations or characteristics, however they did agree more strongly that HLLs should study Spanish “to connect to their cultural and linguistic roots” than that they should “to communicate with friends and family” or in order “to acquire a standard dialect.” The significant personal relevance of Spanish to HLLs’ identities and communities did not surface as a significant theme in interviews, nor did it seem to be evidenced in classroom practices reported in the survey.

Where the informants did make a clear connection between language and identity was in reference to teachers themselves. Some interviewees repeatedly suggested that it might be necessary to be a “native” speaker to legitimize one’s qualifications to teach HL courses. To be a “native” speaker, rather than a speaker with advanced or superior proficiency, invokes a competence not only with language, but an authenticity linked to culture and ethnicity. This belief in the superiority of native speakers of English as English language educators is known as the “native speaker *fallacy*” (Phillipson, 1992) precisely because there is significant evidence that both native and L2 speakers of English have advantages as language educators. Implicit in the interviewees’ concerns about credibility and “nativeness” is a degree of language insecurity that might stem from a belief in the “native speaker fallacy” and/or perceptions of one’s own language skills as insufficient.

This study includes no measure of the actual level of Spanish language proficiency of respondents. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) released guidelines in 2006 suggesting that teachers achieve a rating of at least “Advanced Low” on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) for licensure (Pearson, Fonseca-Greber & Foell, 2006). However, Nebraska’s largest teacher preparation program has only recently begun to require pre-service teachers to demonstrate this level of proficiency (CEHS website, accessed 2015), in which case only recent graduates of teacher education programs in Nebraska can be assumed to have this minimum threshold of proficiency. My experience suggests that it is likely that the teachers in this study reflected a wide variety of proficiencies ranging from below to far

above Advanced Low. There are no official guidelines or recommendations regarding the desired level of language proficiency for teachers of HLLs, though various sources indicate that teachers of SSS courses ought to have “advanced,” “strong” or “high levels” of proficiency in Spanish (AATSP, 2000; Kagan & Dillon, 2004; Webb & Miller, 2000). One might assume that these recommendations call for proficiency above what is necessary for a typical L2 classroom, that is, beyond Advanced Low, perhaps reaching Superior. In this case, professional learning opportunities for teachers of HLLs in Nebraska might focus on strengthening Spanish language proficiency and facilitating access to contexts for the use and practice of advanced language skills.

Another significant challenge that surfaced in this study was the apparent distance of respondents from connections to knowledge from the scholarly field of heritage language study. Ann, one informant, offered a very telling image of this distance when she said she would like to hear from an expert in heritage language acquisition, “if there are such things.” Much of the recommended competencies for HL educators include foundational knowledge derived from linguistic and educational research. For example, the AATSP suggested that teachers of HLLs have, among other things, “knowledge of appropriate pedagogical principles in language expansion and enrichment, theories of cognitive processing that underlie bilingualism, and theories of social and linguistic processes that underlie bilingualism and languages in contact” (2000, p. 8). For most in-service teachers access to research in education or linguistics is typically by way of participation in graduate coursework or membership in national professional organizations, and perhaps occasionally through in-service professional development. Access to HL research or foundational knowledge via these means is very limited in

Nebraska. Additionally, survey respondents reported that they were much less likely to pursue graduate credit or attend a national conference than they were to engage locally with presenters or colleagues. In this case, the design of a professional learning opportunity for this audience should confront the challenge of facilitating access to relevant scholarly resources and foundational ideas outside the traditional pathways.

At the same time, as I discussed in Chapter 4, several of the teachers I interviewed expressed notable distrust of outside educational experts, including researchers and university faculty as leaders of professional development. The process in which teachers come to distrust “theory” (proxy, in some cases, for the teachings of their pre-service preparation program) has been documented and discussed in teacher socialization research (e. g. Barone et al.,1996; Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). The interviewees’ preference for practicing teachers as the facilitators of professional development reflects a preference for perceived experts of “practice” over experts of “theory.”

In reality the line between educational theory and educational practice is a great deal less distinct, but a professional learning model that confronts this challenge must effectively straddle this perceived theory/practice divide. In the first place, PD can help teachers to consider the implications of scholarly work to the everyday practice work of practitioners like themselves. Professional learning models based on teacher action-research or professional learning communities present the opportunity for educators to make connections for themselves through direct access to investigation.

**Needs analysis.** For the purposes of design and implementation of in-service professional development, two distinct sets of professional learning needs for this potential audience emerged from the data. The first, larger area of need (82% of survey respondents), includes educators who teach HLLs in mixed courses of all levels in which HLLs are typically less than 25% of students. A second and much smaller subgroup of this population was made up of the instructors who are already teaching SSS courses or exploring the possibility of doing so themselves or in their department or school. While needs of these two groups are appreciably different, there were also a few areas of overlap, which I address first.

***Shared needs.*** Starkly apparent from this study was the need to empower teachers to interrogate and advocate for effective placement and course articulation sequences for HLLs, regardless of the context in which the practitioners work. More than half of survey respondents reported HLLs enrolling in their introductory Spanish courses and interviewees suggested that they were dissatisfied with the co-enrollment of HLLs and L2Ls in beginner L2 Spanish courses. Steve and Lucas both described significant management challenges to their instruction presented by HLLs in introductory courses while Ann, David, and Julie wondered how to discuss placement and articulation with administration. The basic communicative skills, including numbers, basic greetings and simple present tense phrases taught in introductory courses are least likely to meet the learning needs of HLLs. Removing HLLs from introductory courses eliminates pressure for teachers to engage in radical differentiation, or as Lucas put it, “teach two classes at the same time.” Creating a systematic process for placing HLLs in more advanced language courses without pre-requisite study, or in SSS courses if they exist, requires the

mutual understanding and collaboration of teachers, counselors, administrators, parents and students. Engaging others in conversations about this issue constitutes advocacy work that teachers must feel empowered to undertake. Effective advocacy requires informed use of evidence, strategies for effective communication and a clear, albeit negotiable, statement of the desired outcome. In this case, teachers need to be able to point to the recommendations of scholarly literature or other external experts, practices in other districts or schools, or the interests of stakeholders that they could leverage to advocate for improvement in placement practices. While placement and articulation are likely to vary widely given the local nature of course offerings, curriculum, staffing and credit awards, HLLs in Nebraska would be better served if more Spanish teachers were engaged as advocates on their behalf.

The two professional learning topics survey respondents identified as having the greatest potential utility pointed to a larger area of need that encompasses both knowledge of the characteristics of HLLs, but more importantly, their implications for instructional practice. The topics, identifying instructional needs of heritage learners and creating classroom activities that engage heritage learners, imply a need for foundational understanding of HL linguistic and sociolinguistic characteristics, and also tools for gathering information about individual students and strategies for using that information to create instruction. As mentioned in the discussion of audience characterization, the teachers in this study seemed more aware of linguistic characteristics of HLLs than sociolinguistic characteristics relating to motivation and affect. Here there is an opportunity to engage teachers with academic research related to HL acquisition and sociolinguistic characteristics in order to interrogate practices ranging from the use HLLs

as cultural informants in mixed classrooms, to the correction of loanwords from English, or to instructional treatment of the written accent in Spanish. Access to the results of survey research into HLLs preferences and motivation such as the work of Carreira and Kagan (2011) or Ducar (2008) could help teachers imagine and subsequently create instruction that engages HLLs, but also suggest means by which information could be gathered from one's own students.

An example of the opportunity to contemplate the implications for classroom practice from foundational studies of HL pedagogy is the work of Harkalu and Colomer (2015). They described three problematic characteristics of the instruction HLLs encountered in mixed courses in Georgia including dismissive attitudes from both teachers and students towards features of students' home language, essentialized representations of culture where "the teachers' and text's presentation of culture was treated as more authoritative than the students" (p. 158) and double-standards for students' behaviors which reinforced stereotypes of social inequality between whites and Latinos.

Discussing work of this nature is essential to creating the critical collegueship Lord (1994) described as "creating and sustaining positive disequilibrium through self-reflection, collegial dialogue and on-going critique (...) (and) increasing the capacity for empathetic understanding." A pre-service course in HLL characteristics and HL pedagogy represents the ideal opportunity to present a variety of foundational concepts and texts, but any professional learning context can provide an opportunity to both



illuminate the foundational ideas underlying classroom practices and hypothesize about the instructional implications of HLL characteristics.

*Teachers in mixed courses.* Teachers in mixed HLL and L2L courses in this study appeared to be in greatest need of global models of differentiated instruction that might equip them to elucidate when and what to differentiate for HLLs but also how to manage a language classroom in which students are simultaneously engaged with different topics or different tasks. Knowing when to differentiate for HLLs depends upon understanding the fundamental ways HLLs generally differ from L2Ls, and the ability to pre-assess the language skills of individual HLLs in the classroom. In order to differentiate content, products or processes for HLLs teachers must engage in the work of curriculum creation and instructional planning. Leaders in HL pedagogy have called for teachers to rely on macro models of curriculum and instruction, such as content-, task-, or project-based learning for HLLs (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Kagan & Dillon, 2009). In this case model curricula or selected units and activities would be especially pertinent given that many teachers may not be familiar with the aforementioned macro curricular models nor with instructional materials and practices designed for HLLs.

Finally, practices for managing a differentiated classroom ranging from instructional grouping strategies, workflow management, establishing expectations and routines, and assessing outcomes might be the most crucial area of need. If teachers are unable to establish and effectively manage a differentiated classroom, they will be unlikely to follow through with the effort. Evident in the comments of some interviewees was the perception of some inherent difficulty in differentiating for HLLs and this

concern should be acknowledged and considered. Likewise, techniques for differentiating for HLLs without “reinventing the wheel” (Joan’s words), are more likely to be assimilated into the repertoire of in-service practitioners.

*Teachers of SSS courses.* The small number of teachers in Nebraska who are currently teaching SSS courses and the growing number of those considering such courses will likely be called to assume a significant role in the creation of curriculum for those courses. The survey indicated that most SSS curriculum in Nebraska was created by teachers and/or guided by commercial texts in the absence of national, state or even local curricular standards. Given this reality, SSS teachers need skills to both critically evaluate the utility of commercial texts, and the ability to design curriculum beginning from the most fundamental questions of aims and objectives. Because most Nebraska teachers have not experienced SSS instruction as students, nor have they encountered pre-service teacher preparation focused on curriculum design for HLLs, it may be difficult for them to imagine what SSS curriculum even looks like.

Given the absence of specific professional preparation for teaching SSS, it seems likely that the only remaining model of more “advanced” Spanish language instruction is the language, history or literature courses from instructors’ own collegiate experiences, or the “advanced” curriculum of Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses. While some aspects of this type of instruction may be appropriate for HLLs, such as the reliance on authentic texts (texts produced for native speakers, not language learners) and the focus on content over form, not all HLLs needs are likely to be met by these models. I know that when I first began to teach SSS courses I relied heavily on

goals and practices modeled after content and literature courses I had experienced as a student. I needed a model of instruction which I felt ought to be significantly different from novice and intermediate L2 instruction and I turned to my own experiences *because I had no other model*. As Potowski and Carreira (2004), Webb and Miller (2000), and others have proposed, English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum models and methodology may be of greater utility to SSS teachers and programs than second language acquisition models.

In order to support teachers of SSS as curriculum creators they will need more than conceptual understanding of principles of ELA instruction. They will need to examine models of SSS units created by other teachers, SSS standards produced by other states and ELA standards from our state, or even syllabi from university SSS courses taught in the region. Teachers cannot and should not be expected to produce curriculum out of thin air, nor should they be left with a commercial textbook as the only model of curriculum. While the availability of model units for secondary SSS courses is somewhat limited, resources such as the NHLRC's (2012) "Abuelos" curriculum and the "Projecting Language" project-based learning model of Moyer (2013) are certainly productive places to start.

In addition to drawing on external sources of model curriculum, a repository of sample units or syllabi created by Nebraska teachers of SSS could be made available for individuals' access or consideration within a group pre or in-service event. The fundamental focus of conversations surrounding these materials should be on developing

skills in evaluation the quality and utility of models for local contexts and using model curriculum to generatively to spawn the creation of new curricular resources.

Another pressing need revealed by this study was the looming concern expressed in interviews related to “credibility.” SSS Spanish teachers in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Jeremy Aldrich and Phil Yutzy discussed this issue in an article for the NCLRC:

This topic can be sensitive and is often difficult to quantify, but it must be part of the discussion when selecting teachers and when thinking about professional development. The native speaking staff member on your team may be a logical choice, but other characteristics are even more imperative than being Latino. How does the teacher win the trust and affection of heritage language students? How does the teacher make the students feel that they have something in common with the teacher and something to learn from them? It’s not as simple as ‘Well, teacher X is a native or heritage speaker so the students will surely relate to him.’ That is no more true than expecting native English-speaking students to connect with a teacher simply because they also grew up speaking English. Nonetheless, native speaking teachers will have some immediate credibility with students who share their same heritage because of last names, accents, and physical appearance. Non-native teachers need to accept that they are working from a deficit and must gain credibility by their knowledge and relationships with the students. (2014, pg. 1)

Teachers of SSS need to be engaged in frank conversation with one another about both their own ideas and feelings related to the complex notion of credibility. White, native English speakers may be viewed by students as extensions of the schooling system that marginalizes Latino student identities. Aldrich and Yutzy (2014) remind us that credibility is about more than language proficiency, but also stems from teachers' interpersonal skills and knowledge of their students. These skills are often considered a function of individual teachers' personalities or idiosyncratic styles but it should also be acknowledged that such skills can be taught and learned (e.g. den Brok, Brekelmans, Levy & Wubbels, 2002). Professional learning for SSS teachers must approach the credibility question openly and critically in a way that both respectfully acknowledges teacher concerns and produces generative conversation about how "credibility" might be strengthened by individual participants.

### **Enactment**

The information gathered from the study participants about their preferences for delivery of professional learning experiences related to HLLs informed the creation of a prototype one-half day workshop for teachers in Southeast Nebraska. This prototype is meant to serve as an "example space," illustrating how the data collected in this study can impact both policy and practice. In the survey teachers expressed a strong preference for "local and face-to-face" professional development of relatively short duration. Teachers interviewed felt strongly that the experience should be "bottom-up," in which knowledge would be shared from teacher-to-teacher, (what Hamann and Lane (2002) called the "lateral exchange of information"), not external expert-to-teacher.

My previous attempt at organizing a voluntary professional learning community had taught me that teachers' professional learning should be recognized, either through compensation or, at the very least, acknowledgement, if it is to be sustained. The need to acknowledge teachers' efforts, provide a local event and bring teachers together pointed to a necessary collaboration with an organization capable of meeting these conditions.

At the October 2013 conference and annual meeting of the Nebraska International Language Association (NILA) I presented a session in which I shared some of the survey results of this study and then engaged participants in informal focus group conversations about professional development needs and participants' experiences working with HLLs (Eckerson, 2013). At that same NILA conference I attended the annual business meeting of the Nebraska Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (NATSP), the local chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP). The NATSP has historically held an immersion event for Nebraska Spanish teachers in partnership with the fall NILA conference. In the past, the NATSP had also held a second, spring professional development event for member teachers, though had not done so in recent years. At the fall NATSP meeting held at the NILA conference I proposed that the NATSP seek out a partnership with an ESU in order to host a spring event and offered to seek out partners to present a professional learning experience, in part related to HLLs. The benefit of collaboration with an ESU included not only the use of physical space but also the proxy for official acknowledgement. The partnership would allow us to host an event on a school day and permit potential participants to request substitute teachers from their employers and similarly have their own participation recognized.

I reached out first to Nebraska ESU 6, serving communities in southeast Nebraska to the south and southwest of Lincoln. This ESU served my then-school district but it also served many communities large enough to employ several secondary Spanish educators but small enough to rely on ESU's to deliver subject specific professional development. ESU 6 had already chosen a March 2014 date for a World language professional development event and was eager to collaborate with NATSP, it was thought it could help improve attendance at their event. We decided that NATSP would sponsor a three-hour morning workshop and ESU 6 would present in the afternoon about technology tools for flipped classroom language instruction.

The survey data suggested that the HL topic of greatest relevance to a cross-section of teachers likely to attend an ESU 6 event would be differentiation in mixed L2L/HLL courses. Given what I had learned from the surveys and interviews it seemed logical that in order to consider differentiation for HLLs, it would be necessary for participants to have some foundational understanding of the instructional needs of both groups, ideas about how instruction for HLLs might look different from instruction for L2Ls and some executable classroom practices for implementing instructional differentiation. I also knew and expected that teachers already had varying degrees of knowledge and experience related to each of these topics.

Of course there was no expectation that from a three-hour workshop a teacher could learn everything they needed to know about HLLs or about instructional differentiation, nor that participants would return to their classrooms and make radical changes to their practice. However, a three-hour workshop that engaged and energized

teachers, sponsored by a practitioner-driven professional organization like the NATSP, certainly had the potential to advance conversations between colleagues and pique interest in better meeting the needs of HLLs in Nebraska.

The workshop was planned and delivered in cooperation with a colleague from the NATSP, Dr. Janine Theiler. Dr. Theiler had been a secondary Spanish teacher who left teaching to pursue a Ph.D. At the time of the workshop she had returned the classroom after completing her degree and found herself working with a large number of HLLs in mixed courses. It was decided that I would lead the first two hours of the workshop related to my area of expertise - characteristics of HLLs and HLL appropriate instruction - and she would lead the last hour on differentiation strategies, an area more familiar to her. I had attended a workshop on differentiated instruction in mixed L2/HL courses (Carreira, et al., 2014) at UCLA sponsored by the National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC) in conjunction with the Second International Conference on Heritage/Community Languages in March of 2014 just a few weeks before this study's workshop was presented. The NHLRC workshop was instrumental in informing some parts of the content we went on to present; I have signaled and attributed the NHLRC contribution when appropriate in my description of this workshop.

My colleague and I developed and shared with participants these learning objectives for the three-hour workshop we delivered: 1) Understand the instructional needs of heritage language learners (HLLs), 2) Learn strategies for meeting the instructional needs of learners in diverse classes, and 3) Explore differentiated learning in the world language classroom. We felt that the design of the workshop learning



experience itself needed to engage attendees as practitioners with experience and expertise, allow them to have critical and generative conversations with one another, and experience and test real instructional practices that they could use in their own classrooms. We hoped to model instructional strategies as presenters and also engage the expertise of participants as co-presenters.

As a practitioner I have always felt that there is no greater PD irony than participating in “sit and get” in-service workshops about how to exchange our own “sit and get” instructional strategies for more dynamic, engaging, learner-centered tactics. To avoid this pitfall, we thought carefully not just about the content we hoped to share with attendees, but also about the activities we would ask participants to complete and the instructional strategies we would use to present our content. In this sense, we called upon our pedagogical content knowledge, what Shulman (1986) described as our “capacity (...) to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and background presented by the students” (p. 15).

At the start of the workshop we modeled a communicative instructional grouping strategy so that participants would form groups with teachers from other schools or districts in order to facilitate a wider diversity of experiences in each group. Participants were given a small piece of paper with a word in Spanish and asked to find the group whose words were a part of the same category as their own. Those who had words for foods, or zoo animals, or parts of a car, etc. each found their respective groups and sat together at a table. Once together, group members were asked to introduce themselves to

each other and share with their group something about their prior experience with HLLs or with instructional differentiation. This was both to break the ice and draw out some prior knowledge or experiences.

We then presented participants with the workshop objectives, both to provide an overview of the morning and to model the widely disseminated “best practice” of explicitly setting and referring to instructional objectives throughout a lesson (Marzano, Marzano & Pickering, 2003). I then presented both Valdés’ (1997) narrow definition and a broad definition of HLLs. I did this for two reasons; first, to expose participants to the scholarly debate on nature of HLLs and, second, to highlight that affective issues, such as identity and motivation a part of the very definition of an HLL.

Knowing from the survey that participants likely had some knowledge of the characteristics of HLLs, rather than present a series of introductory slides summarizing information about HLLs we asked teachers to work with a partner to sort and reassemble the information from “Table 1.1: Characteristics of HLLs and L2Ls” (pg. 9). In this way participants discussed and negotiated their experiences with one another and reconstructed a scholarly representation from the knowledge they had acquired in practice.

After reviewing the completed “Table 1.1” briefly as a group, we turned to the subject of HLL diversity. I then presented Valdés’ (1997) descriptions of eight different types of U.S. English/Spanish bilinguals, ranging from newly arrived speaker of a prestige dialect of Spanish to a receptive-only bilingual of a stigmatized variety of Spanish. Participants were then asked to place sticky-notes to the corresponding area of a

large poster to represent the types of HLL in their classes. When the group finished placing their notes, they discussed in small groups the instructional implications of the types of students in their courses. The design of the workshop frequently prompted participants to discuss the content in the context of educators' own practice and experience. There was no serious attempt to hold participants accountable for having "on-task" conversations during these opportunities to discuss because we knew that generative conversations emerge in many ways.

Primed for a conversation about the instructional implications of HL characteristics, participants were again asked to reconstruct a table with a partner, this time "Table 1.2 Instructional characteristics of HLLs and L2Ls" (p. 10). This task illustrated the distinction between macro and micro approaches to instruction. After participants finished the task, the group asked answered questions about this distinction. As Wu and Chang (2010:25-26) described the distinction in this way:

Generally speaking, macro-approaches often start with content that is age-appropriate or academically challenging to provide HLLs, who need special work on pragmatics and stylistics, with extensive practice in HLs in as many modes and registers as possible (Roca & Columbi, 2003). In other words, macro approaches seek to help HLLs develop their grammatical and lexical knowledge through discourse-level or genre-based activities. By contrast, micro-approaches isolate language elements based on their complexity and build learners' competency from the bottom-up, that is, moving from the simple to the complex. Such

approaches that emphasize metalinguistic rules and discrete grammatical activities appear to do little to help HLLs, because unlike foreign language learners, HLLs often receive no meta language of instruction in their HL and thus find grammatical explanations illogical and incomprehensible. (Kagan & Dillon, 2001)

Because typical L2 language instruction utilizes a micro approach, macro-instructional approaches were less familiar to participants and we anticipated the need to elaborate this concept in the design of the workshop. We relied on attendees' experience as creators of curriculum to create examples for themselves of instructional activities that illustrated the macro/micro distinction. Working in groups of five or six, participants received a photocopy of two pages of a randomly selected commercial Spanish language textbook. The pages represented a variety of curricular content, from vocabulary presentation to grammar drill and practice, text selections and suggestions for extended projects. The groups were then asked to brainstorm at least two instructional activities that drew from each macro- or micro-approaches to the content suggested by the material. Participants were able to share with one another examples from their own practice and negotiate their understanding of the distinction. In addition to clarifying the concept, the activity served to demonstrate that a wide variety of content could be approached from both a macro or micro perspective. At the conclusion of the activity the participants were presented with a "Key Idea," phrased in this way, "balance macro and micro approaches to meet needs for all types of learners in the mixed classroom."

The next segment of the workshop was borrowed directly from the NHLRC workshop, (with attribution). The NHLRC materials were influenced by the work of Bowles (2009, 2011) investigations of learning outcomes in mixed L2L/HLL pairs. The findings of her research suggest that each partner in L2L/HLL pairs can both benefit from instruction when each is asked to perform a task that challenges them. Tasks that require intuitive knowledge are difficult for L2Ls while tasks that require meta-linguistic knowledge are challenging to HLLs. Participants were asked to discuss at their table an incomplete version of Figure 5.1 and speculate about the ways in which HLLs and L2Ls might have complementary proficiencies.

**Figure 5.1: Complementary Proficiencies of HLLs and L2Ls**

	HLLs	L2Ls
Context of learning (where)	<i>primarily home</i> informal, home register, non-standard, spontaneous	<i>school</i> formal, standard, academic, rehearsed, controlled
Timing of learning (when)	<i>early years, diminished or discontinued upon starting school</i> similar to the language of children	<i>adolescence, early adulthood</i> adult-like with respect to certain features
Amount of input	<i>limited, relative to natives</i> incomplete knowledge of the HL (late-acquired items )	<i>limited (relative to HL's)</i> incomplete with respect to certain features (early acquired features)

Type of input	<i>oral, informal, spontaneous</i> implicit knowledge of the HL	<i>formal, focused on form</i> explicit knowledge of rules
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(Adapted from Carreira et al., 2014)

We then presented a second “Key Idea,” based on the premise that mixed instruction can make strategic use of L2Ls and HLLs complementary strengths and needs, stated as: “Make learners practice their weaker skills.” Again borrowing from the NHLRC workshop, we involved participants in the roles of students in an instructional activity entitled “long-distance dictation.” Participants formed pairs in which one assumed the role of an L2 learner and the other an HL learner positioned on opposite sides of the room. The L2 “learner” received a printed text that he or she was responsible for dictating to the HL “learner,” without showing the HLL the text. The activity requires the L2 learner to memorize short passages of the text, cross the room and recite them to the HLL who must receive and transcribe the message; the process is then repeated until the entire text has been dictated and transcribed. The rationale behind the process is that L2Ls have weaker pronunciation and fluency than HLLs, who can provide them with feedback as they negotiate the delivery of the message. At the same time HLLs often have weaker orthographic skills than L2Ls, so an L2L can then provide the HLL with feedback about spelling, accent placement and punctuation as the written dictation emerges. Engaging in instructional role-plays of this nature has been found to be effective in improving professional skills of practitioners in education and medicine (Lane & Rollnick, 2007; Palmer, 2006). After the long distance dictation simulation the workshop participants were asked to return to their groups and brainstorm at least two

other activities that could make strategic use of the complementary proficiency of L2Ls and HLLs as represented in Figure 5.1. Again we hoped that these practitioner-to-practitioner conversations would help participants to connect the ideas from the workshop to their everyday classroom practice.

The final hour of the workshop, focused generally on instructional differentiation was primarily prepared and led by my collaborator. First, participants completed the pre-assessment shown in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2: Differentiation Pre-assessment**

Differentiation is...	_____ is scripted and inflexible.
_____ is a new idea	_____ is in opposition to whole group instruction.
_____ may be accomplished by adjusting instructional content, process, or product.	_____ looks like “on the fly” adjustments to instruction and learning
_____ equates to providing every student with an individualized educational plan	_____ proactively responds to variance in student interest, learning profile, and readiness.
_____ is a form of tracking	_____ is an “all or nothing” approach.
_____ allows students to choose to work only in preferred ways and on preferred topics	_____ is intentional and purposeful.

Participants were then presented with the following definition of differentiation: “Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences. Rather than marching students through the curriculum lockstep, teachers should modify their instruction to meet students’ varying

readiness levels, learning preferences, and interests” (Wills & Mann, 2000). The presentation then introduced differentiation as an instructional approach based in theory and research, citing studies in engagement and motivation (see Appendix E for the complete workshop presentation). We then introduced Tomlinson’s (1999) elaboration of differentiation as a process for modifying content, process or product and presented a list of instructional strategies supporting differentiation, seen in Table 27.

**Figure 5.3: Instructional Strategies for Differentiation**

•Curriculum compacting	•Think Dots
•Independent studies	•Role playing
•Interest centers	•Mentorships
•Flexible grouping	•RAFT
•Adapting questioning	•Choice menu/board
•Cubing	•Jigsaws
•Webquests	•Tiered activities
•Anchor activities	•Learning contracts

Modeling one of the proposed instructional strategies, the cooperative learning model Jigsaw (see [jigsaw.org](http://jigsaw.org) for an elaborate account of the strategy), participants worked in small groups to become “experts” in one of eight of the instructional strategies (Curriculum compacting, Flexible grouping, Cubing, Anchor activities, Think Dots, RAFT, Choice menu/board, and Tiered activities) by reading a short article and completing a graphic organizer summarizing the purpose, method and potential classroom application of the strategy. As per the Jigsaw procedure, an expert from each



strategy group then met together in a home group and taught about the strategy they reviewed to the other members of the group who completed a graphic organizer (see Appendix F for all the workshop materials associated with this activity).

During the workshop as this process took place, many participants shared stories about using or adapting these strategies in their classrooms along with advice for managing or executing them. Evidence from this study's survey and interviews suggested that this practitioner-to-practitioner exchange of information was an important and particularly desirable facet of professional learning experiences for teachers.

At the conclusion of the jigsaw activity the participants were asked to return to the differentiation pre-assessment (Table 26) and re-evaluate their answers to those questions as a post-assessment. Finally, to conclude the workshop we revisited participants' answers the pre-assessment and the objectives presented to attendees at the start of the workshop.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation of the outcomes of this professional development experiences for attendees go beyond the scope of this dissertation. It is unknown if or how participation in this workshop changed what practitioners knew, believed or did with the HLLs in their courses. However, ESU 6 shared with us the internal participant evaluation information they collected about the entire day's activities (our workshop and the afternoon presentation of the ESU presenter), and in general terms, both the ESU evaluation and the personal communication I received from participants during and after the workshop were very positive.

Obviously, such anecdotal report is by no means a measure of the success of the workshop in facilitating access to more appropriate instruction of HLLs in Nebraska, but it stands to reason that a professional learning experience appreciated by participants is more likely to result in this outcome than either a negative experience or none at all. Moreover, we should remember that the purpose of this project was not to examine the outcomes of professional learning experiences for individual practitioners, but rather to start a conversation about to how to best construct meaningful professional learning opportunities.

### **Implications and suggestions for future investigations**

Among the most significant implications of this investigation was the evidence of clear demand for professional learning experiences related to HLLs and HL pedagogy among the Nebraska Spanish teachers. It is likely that teachers in other new Latino diaspora states have similarly unmet professional development needs as suggested in the work of Harklau and Colomer (2015) in Georgia and the work of Bateman and Wilkinson (2010) in Utah. This study highlighted educators' articulations of some areas of focus for such learning - e.g., advocacy for HLL and SSS programs, differentiation practices in mixed courses, sociolinguistic information about HLL acquisition, identity and motivation, and curriculum development for SSS courses. Hopefully this practitioner perspective can contribute to the ongoing and thus far largely theoretical conversation about teacher preparation and competencies for working with HLLs.

This study also offered one version of a tentative answer to questions about the provision of professional learning for teachers working in marginal contexts. Because

teachers working with HLLs in the new Latino diaspora cannot count on the provision of the robust job-embedded professional development that we might hope for, partnerships, like the NASTP/ESU example describe here, represent one possible model.

The prototype workshop developed in this project responded to practitioners desire for local, face-to-face experiences, led by classroom teachers that allowed them to dialogue with peers and provided classroom-ready ideas and activities, in addition to foundational knowledge. Future studies of professional development efforts such as these should focus on the experiences of participants, including evaluation studies as well as follow-up examinations of the impact of professional development on teacher beliefs and practices.

There is a significant absence in the field of HL research of studies examining secondary-level HLLs and SSS programs, including descriptions of teaching practices, curriculum, student experiences and/or program outcomes. This study contributes in a small way to understanding how secondary teachers in Nebraska are responding to the presence of HLLs in traditional L2 classrooms and their experiences teaching SSS courses. This study also revealed several practitioners' accounts of promising instructional practices and their enthusiasm and interest in better serving the HLLs with whom they work. A challenge presented by this study is the need to identify practitioners engaged in successful practices and find ways to "scale-up," leverage or disseminate their knowledge. One such avenue is through local practitioner-driven professional organizations and partnerships with other statewide entities. This study contributes a

general, albeit incomplete, portrait of the state of SSS education in Nebraska that can inform the work of these actors.

At the same time, studies based on actual classroom observation of HL educators, rather than reported practices such as this one, could provide much needed descriptions of the characteristics of effective HL instruction both in SSS courses and mixed classes. Likewise, research into secondary HLL experiences and outcomes could also inform curriculum development and teacher professional development. Both educator and student perspectives are needed to describe the content and methodology of effective instruction while understanding that effectiveness may vary according to local contextual and demographic factors.

### **Local impact and future local actions**

One goal of this dissertation was to generate knowledge and action that was immediately and practically relevant to this community. The workshop delivered in March of 2014 was a small step, informed by practitioners, toward building a community of practice among HL educators in Nebraska. Shared experiences, joint enterprise and a common language for talking about our practice are much needed and will only begin to develop after one three-hour workshop. While I make no claim that participants in the workshop went on to differentiate more for their HLLs or approached their interaction and instruction differently, I can point to the success of the well-attended event from an organizational and operational perspective. The fruitful cooperation between NATSP and ESU6 in offering the workshop established a precedent for future such collaborations

and simultaneously engaged both institutions in conversations about HLLs and HL pedagogy that were largely novel to both.

The data collected in this survey and interviews should continue to inform the work of those charged with the professional development of Spanish teachers in Nebraska, both in pre-service and in-service capacities and perhaps it may do so outside of the state. A logical next step for me is to further disseminate the findings from this study to the appropriate stakeholders, such as Nebraska Department of Education officials, district-level curriculum specialists, ESU specialists, relevant college and university faculty and others who might be positioned to act on the knowledge. Too often relevant research does not reach the hands of those whose actions it most seeks to influence, and I firmly believe that some of that responsibility rests with the researcher.

As I said above, the March 2014 workshop was a prototype that represents a mere starting point. Subsequent efforts to organize practitioner-driven professional development should leverage the nascent community created by this project. By reaching out to educators like Nancy, Teresa or Christine, those who attended the workshop and others, the experiences and expertise of other practitioners can help determine the form of the next iteration of the workshop or the next prototype. Doing so will require engaging additional stakeholders and continuing to forge partnerships between institutions and individuals.

In Chapter 3 I addressed several potential limitations to this study, including the considerations inherent in both survey and interview research and the tenuous nature of conclusions drawn from participants' self-reported data. It should also be understood that

the experiences of these Nebraska teachers likely parallel those of teachers in similar contexts, but not necessarily those of teachers in other parts of the country or world where access to professional development varies and HLL populations are more widespread or established.

The research design sought to discover answers to seven specific questions in service of informing and creating a design prototype, as well as informing future professional learning designs. As such both data collection and analysis were shaped by the search for answers to these questions. This privileged my sense of what was most worthy of inquiry and likely differs from what a more inductive, ethnographic analysis of the interview transcripts and/or in situ observations might have illuminated. In other words, I suspect there is more that could be learned from the experiences of these practitioners if their accounts were considered through a different lens. This then also means that accounts of practitioner experiences that more openly seek to discover how they make sense of their practice with HLLs should be undertaken.

My own identity as a practitioner peer to my “subjects” was both a key resource for and hazard to this inquiry. It inevitably influenced my interpretation of the data before me. I know that as a practitioner I may be more reticent to problematize the beliefs and practices of my peers or otherwise point out “failings” simply because I identify empathetically with their experiences. Educational research is rife with accounts of the failings of teachers and oftentimes is sorely lacking in empathy (Levinson & Holland, 1996). As a fellow practitioner, it would be unethical for me to exacerbate that problem. In this study I have attempted to acknowledge the reality that Nebraska Spanish

teachers are largely unprepared for the growing number of HLLs of their classrooms, but I shall refrain from admonishing teachers for this fact. The limited preparation is a systemic paucity and problem, but not one that teachers have originated, nor one for which they bear lead responsibility.

Of the four central design questions guiding this study, the one that remains least adequately answered is the first: How could relevant professional development be provided for Nebraska Spanish teachers for working with heritage learners of Spanish? The question of *how* cannot be answered by the data collected in this study alone. As I learned through the process of designing and delivering the prototype workshop, *how* is a question whose answer changes according to the shifting priorities of individuals and institutions, the availability of resources and a host of other pragmatic considerations. The ideal professional development for Nebraska Spanish teachers working with HLLs is not likely to ever come to be, yet more and better answers to the question of how to provide rich, meaningful and *useful* professional learning experiences will inevitably bring us closer to better, if not ideal.

### **Final thoughts**

As I conclude this dissertation, I cannot help but remember myself as the student teacher in a classroom like the one in the opening vignette. I remember my frustration knowing that my ‘Valentinas,’ ‘Lucías,’ and ‘Joaquíns’ needed something other than what they were getting from my instruction. I was frustrated by the lack of options for their placement, frustrated by my novice attempts to differentiate instruction, frustrated

that I wasn't doing enough and frustrated that I knew of no expert, or even book or website, to turn to for help.

My CPED journey “working the dialectic” (Cochran-Lytle & Smith, 2009) between scholarship and my practice has allowed me to explore and envision ways in which Nebraska teachers might build the community of practice that I had long been seeking. The journey, including this dissertation, has not only helped lay the foundation for improving professional learning opportunities for Nebraska teachers like me, but it also empowered me to create a space for myself as a practitioner scholar as envisioned by CPED:

Scholarly Practitioners blend practical wisdom with professional skills and knowledge to name, frame, and solve problems of practice. They use practical research and applied theories as tools for change because they understand the importance of equity and social justice. They disseminate their work in multiple ways, and they have an obligation to resolve problems of practice by collaborating with key stakeholders, including the university, the educational institution, the community, and individuals.

(CPED, 2015)

But the future work of better serving HLLs in Nebraska schools, including better positioning those students' teachers, is not the work of practitioners alone. These pages and paragraphs (and the years of effort they relate) I hope illustrate that practitioners should be present at the design table helping develop new and deeper responses. We



know a lot and we care, but we need to know more and our caring needs to be supplemented and sustained by caring at other levels.

As noted early on in this dissertation and as I recall from my days as a student in “Schooling in Demographically Transitioning Communities,” the schools that best serve ELLs are those that have developed expertise not only among their teachers and in their classrooms, but in administrative tiers at the school and district level (Dentler & Hafner, 1997). It is not too much of a leap to substitute HLL for ELL here and to point out that the more effective strategies and practices that I and my fellow practitioners are seeking will need to be advocated for by principals, superintendents, and NDE personnel. Our professional development infrastructure, for both pre-service and in-service teachers, will need substantial expansion in its capacity to help teachers develop and deploy skills that are most efficacious with HLLs. The study group I created and the March 2014 workshop suggest that those whose daily praxis includes HLLs have important ideas regarding how to work with such learners, eagerness to learn more, and yet also limitations in what we unilaterally can leverage. Now with feet in three worlds—teaching high school, engaging in advanced inquiry, and increasingly teaching future teachers—I want these worlds to better mesh.

In my first doctoral class, we were told that four words define UNL’s CPED program—efficacy, praxis, iterative, and epistemology. In the language of CPED then, I want my praxis with HLLs and that of my colleagues to become more efficacious, that requires not only recognizing the variation in linguistic epistemologies of such students from traditional world language learners, but also the iterative application of reflection as

we develop and implement new ideas, gather data on their impact, and then hone and refine what we do. I can talk and write that way, but I can also point out that as a teacher I am professionally obligated to help these students succeed in my class and, more holistically, in their schooling more generally. I hope what I have shared here shows my commitment as well as some needed next steps forward.

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## APPENDIX A: IRB Approval Letter

March 25, 2013

IRB Number: 20130313450 EX

Project ID: 13450

Project Title: A Census of Secondary Spanish Teachers in Nebraska: The State of Spanish Heritage Language Education

Dear Janet:

This letter is to officially notify you of the certification of exemption of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as Exempt Category 4.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 03/25/2013.

1. Please include the IRB approval number (IRB#20130313450 EX) in the online consent documents. Please email me a copy of the page, with the number included, for our records. Please use these documents to distribute to participants. If you need to make changes to the document, please submit the revised document to the IRB for review and approval prior to using it.

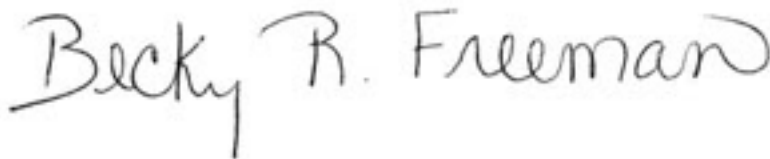
We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:

- \* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
- \* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
- \* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
- \* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
- \* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky R. Freeman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Becky R. Freeman, CIP  
for the IRB



## APPENDIX B: SURVEY

College of Education and Human Sciences 118 Henzlik Hall / P.O. Box 880355 /  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0355 / (402) 472-2231 / FAX (402) 472-2837

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT IRB#20130313450 EX

**Purpose:** This research project is interested in the professional experiences of Spanish teachers in Nebraska, particularly their experiences working with heritage language learners. You must be 19 years of age or older to participate. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a teacher of Spanish to secondary students in Nebraska

**Procedures:** You will be asked to complete a short survey which should take between 5 and 25 minutes. If you consent to take the survey after reading this disclosure, you will be taken immediately to the survey.

**Benefits:** The benefits to you as a participant are that you may express opinions that inform the field of heritage language learning and may improve professional development experiences for teachers.

**Risks and/or Discomforts:** There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

**Confidentiality:** The information you provide will be kept confidential and your personal information, such as your name and contact information will not be shared with anyone but the primary investigator and faculty adviser. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but will report only your responses in aggregate or in the absence of any details which could be used to identify you.

**Compensation:** If you complete the survey, you will be entered in a drawing to receive one of ten \$10.00 Amazon.com gift certificates. While the final odds of receiving a certificate will vary according to the number of participants, the overall odds of winning are at least 1 in 15. You will receive no other compensation for your participation.

**Opportunity to Ask Questions:** You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

**Freedom to Withdraw:** Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:** You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your name below certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You may view this consent form by returning to this link at any time, however you should print and retain this page for your records.

Name and contact information for investigator(s) Janet M. Eckerson, Principal Investigator 402-202-4375 janeteckerson@gmail.com

Dr. Edmund (Ted) Hamann, Faculty Advisor ehamann2@unl.edu

**Q1 Please indicate your consent to participate.**

- Yes, I consent to participate.
- No, I chose not to participate.

If No, I chose not to participate Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

**Q2 This information will be kept confidential and will be used only to organize results**

School where you currently teach  
First and last name

**Q3 This survey is intended for secondary (grades 6-12) Spanish language teachers in Nebraska. Does at least part of your job involved teaching Spanish to secondary students at a Nebraska school?**

- Yes
- No

Answer If This survey is intended for secondary (grades 6-12) (...) No Is Selected  
Thank you for your time.

If Thank you for your time. Is Displayed, Then Skip To End of Survey

**Q4 Which of the following best describes your current position?**

- I teach only Spanish.
- I teach some Spanish and some courses of another subject.
- I teach mostly classes of another subject and some Spanish.
- I teach a subject other than Spanish language/literature but use the Spanish language to deliver content.
- I don't teach Spanish at all.

If I don't teach Spanish at all. Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey & If I teach a subject other tha... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

**Q5 Which of the following grades do you teach? Select all that apply.**

- 6th grade
- 7th grade
- 8th grade
- 9th grade
- 10th grade
- 11th grade
- 12th grade

**Q6 In your current position, do you work with students who would be considered "heritage speakers" of Spanish?**

Use this definition of "heritage speakers" of Spanish: A student who is/was raised in home where Spanish is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language and who is to some degree bilingual in Spanish and English. (Valdés, 2000)

- Yes, I have students who are heritage speakers of Spanish in Spanish courses I teach.
- No, I do not have students who are heritage speakers of Spanish in Spanish courses I teach.

If Yes, I have students who ar... Is Selected, Then Skip To Thinking about the past two school ye...If No, I do not have students ... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

**Q7 Thinking about the past two school years (2012-2013 and 2011-2012): About how many of the students in your courses were heritage speakers of Spanish?**

- Less than 5%
- Between 5% and 15%
- Between 15% and 25%
- Between 25% and 50%
- More than 50%

**Next are a few questions about the Spanish program and types of Spanish courses at the school where you teach.**

**Q8 Does your school offer any Spanish language courses that are specifically intended for heritage/native speakers of Spanish, such as "Spanish for Native Speakers" or "Spanish for Spanish Speakers" or any other course that is designed exclusively for the bilingual student?**

- Yes
- No

Answer If Does your school offer any Spanish language courses that ... Yes Is Selected

**Q9 Which option best describes the way your school places heritage speakers of Spanish in Spanish classes:**

- Heritage speakers typically follow the same course sequence (Spanish 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.) as other students of the same age and grade.
- Heritage speakers typically follow a different course sequence than other students, such as skipping lower level courses (Spanish 1 or 2), or taking more advanced courses without meeting prerequisites.
- Heritage speakers take a placement test that determines the course they will take.
- Teachers or counselors determine placement on a case-by-case basis.
- Students select the course they want to take.
- I don't know.

Answer If Does your school offer any Spanish language courses that ... Yes Is Selected

**Q10 Which option best describes how courses for heritage speakers of Spanish relate to the scope and sequence of other Spanish courses at your school?**

- Heritage speaker courses replace other lower level prerequisite courses. For example, heritage speakers might take Spanish for Spanish speakers instead of Spanish 1 before proceeding to higher-level courses.
- Heritage speaker courses are advanced level courses that require prerequisite study. For example, heritage speakers might take Spanish for Spanish speakers after successfully completing Spanish 2.
- Heritage speaker courses are totally independent from other Spanish course sequence articulations. They have no prerequisites and do not serve as prerequisites for other courses.
- Other, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_
- I don't know.

Answer If Does your school offer any Spanish language courses that ... Yes Is Selected

**Q11 Which option best describes how heritage speakers of Spanish are placed in courses designed for heritage language learners?**

- Students self-select courses
- Teachers or counselors recommend students for courses
- Students take a locally developed placement test, i.e. a test created by your school or district
- Students take an externally developed placement test, i.e. a test purchased for this purpose, or one provided with a textbook

**Q12 Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses that you taught during the past two school years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013)? Select all that apply.**

- Exploratory or non-credit introductory Spanish
- Beginning Spanish (Spanish 1 or 2)
- Intermediate Spanish (Spanish 3 or 4)
- Advanced Spanish (Spanish 4, 5, 6, etc).
- AP Spanish language, AP Spanish Literature, IB Spanish, etc..
- Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish
- Other, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Answer If Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish. Is Not Selected

**Q13 Have you ever taught courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish, even if you did not teach such a course during the past two school years?**

- Yes  
 No

Answer If Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish. Is Selected Or Have you ever taught courses designed for heritage speake... Yes Is Selected

**Q14 You indicated that you teach or have taught Spanish courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish. These next questions are about those courses. If you have taught many different heritage speaker courses or taught them at different schools, focus on your experience teaching heritage speaker courses in the past two years, or your most recent experience.**

Answer If Have you ever taught courses designed for heritage speake... Yes Is Selected Or Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish Is Selected

**Q15 How was the majority of the curricular content determined in the heritage speaker course/s you teach or taught? Select all that apply.**

- A commercially developed textbook guides the curriculum
- A locally developed framework guides the curriculum, i.e. a district or building-level committee created the curriculum
- Another teacher or group of teachers in my building or district created the curriculum
- I independently create/created the curriculum

Answer If Have you ever taught courses designed for heritage speake... Yes Is Selected Or Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish Is Selected

**Q16 In the heritage speaker course or courses you recently taught, how important were the following elements in the curriculum of the course?**

	Not a part of the course	A minor part of the course	A somewhat important part of the course	A very important part of the course
Addressing errors in oral language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discussing purposes for studying Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Examining attitudes towards different dialects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about characteristics of Spanish spoken in different parts of the world	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about cultural diversity in the Spanish speaking world	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing spelling errors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about characteristics of formal and informal registers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expanding vocabulary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self and peer editing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning grammatical terms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Addressing errors in written language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching academic and study skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about Latino culture(s) in the United States	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing the use of the written accent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving interpersonal communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing grammar instruction for problematic areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading works of literature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about the relationship between linguistic diversity and social class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving presentational communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engaging in community-based or service-learning projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comparing and contrasting features of English and Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



students to succeed in school				
Discussing equity and discrimination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving interpretative communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answer If You indicated that you teach or have taught Spanish cours... Is Displayed Or Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish Is Selected

**Q17 Are there any other somewhat or very important elements of the heritage speaker course/s you taught that were not described in the previous question?**

- No
- Yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer If You indicated that you teach or have taught Spanish cours... Is Displayed Or Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish Is Selected

**Q18 In addition to the course/s specifically designed for heritage speakers, have you taught other Spanish courses in the past two years in which at least one of the students in the class was a heritage speaker of Spanish?**

- Yes
- No

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Answer If In addition to the course/s specifically designed for her... Yes Is Selected  
 Or Which of the following best describe the Spanish courses ... Spanish for Spanish  
 speakers or other courses designed for heritage speakers of Spanish. Is Not Selected

**Q19 You indicated that you teach traditional Spanish as a second language courses in which heritage speakers of Spanish may enroll. Did you modify aspects of the course or your instruction due to the presence of heritage speakers?**

- Yes, many modifications
- Yes, a few modifications
- Not really, only very minor modifications
- Never

**Q20 Thinking about your most recent experience teaching a Spanish as a second language class in which at least one student was a heritage speaker; how often did you engage in the following instructional practices?**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Grouping heritage students together based on language proficiency (i.e. homogeneously)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assigning longer tasks to heritage speakers (i.e. presentations, readings or writing tasks)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grouping heritage speakers with struggling students to serve as tutors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assigning more difficult tasks to heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparing lessons with different curricular content for heritage learners and L2s	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking heritage learners to share	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

aspects of their culture with the rest of the class				
Modifying assessments: tests, rubrics, etc. for heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using different materials, readings, textbooks, games, etc. for heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assigning special roles in class projects to heritage speakers because of their language proficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presenting, explaining or practicing grammar concepts differently for heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exempting heritage speakers from activities or assignments irrelevant for them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparing different vocabulary lessons of heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answer If Which of the following best describes your current position? I teach a subject other than Spanish language/literature but use the Spanish language to deliver content. Is Selected Or Are there any other somewhat or very important elements o... No Is Displayed Or Thinking about your most recent experience teaching a Spa... - Never Is Displayed

**Q21 In this section, indicate your level of agreement with each statement.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Heritage speakers' bilingualism is a valuable skill	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving skills in a heritage language can improve English proficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Schools should support heritage language maintenance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who speak Spanish fluently at home do not need to take Spanish classes in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage languages are an important part of students' identities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage speakers should study Spanish because they need to acquire standard Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The maintenance of the heritage language is valuable for strong family ties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining a heritage language prevents students from fully assimilating into this society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heritage speakers should study Spanish to learn about their cultural and linguistic roots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage speakers need different beginning level Spanish classes than second language learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bilingualism should be supported at school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage speakers should study Spanish so they can better communicate with friends and relatives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage speakers should study Spanish because they often do not know the correct grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying Spanish can help heritage speakers succeed in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who are still learning English should not take Spanish classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Heritage speakers need different advanced level Spanish courses than second language learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is always preferable to have heritage speakers and second language learners in different classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q22 In your pre-service teacher preparation program did you receive any instruction regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy?**

- Yes
- No

Answer If In your pre-service teacher preparation program, your edu... No Is Selected

**Q23 Would you like to have received instruction regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy in your pre-service teacher preparation program?**

- Yes
- No
- Indifferent

Answer If In your pre-service teacher preparation program, your edu... Yes Is Selected

**Q24 What sort of instruction did you receive regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy in your pre-service teacher education program? Select all that apply.**

- A semester-long course dedicated to heritage language education
- At least one class session dedicated to discussing heritage language education
- Assigned book, article, speaker, website or other resource to review
- Examples of lessons and materials appropriate for heritage language education
- Information about the differences between second language and heritage language education
- Information about the socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of heritage language learners in the U.S.
- Information about curricular models or instructional practices for heritage language education
- I don't know or can't remember

**Q25 Have you ever participated in any in-service professional development regarding heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy?**

- Yes
- No

Answer If Have you ever participated in any in-service professional... Yes Is Selected

**Q26 What sort of in-service professional development have you participated in about heritage language education? Select all that apply.**

- For-credit college course
- Non-credit college course
- Locally presented workshop or training (i.e. delivered by members of your district or school)
- Externally presented workshop or training (i.e. delivered by an organization, ESU or company)
- On-line seminar (webinar)
- Presentation I attended at a conference
- Work within a PLC or other school-based professional development group
- Other, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Q27 Are you interested learning more about heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block



Answer If Are you interested learning more about heritage language ... Yes Is Selected Or Are you interested learning more about heritage language ... Unsure Is Selected

**Q28 If you were to receive additional professional development about heritage language learners, heritage language acquisition or heritage language pedagogy, how relevant or useful would you consider the following potential topics:**

	Irrelevant, useless	Not very relevant or useful	Somewhat relevant and useful	Very relevant, extremely useful
How heritage language acquisition differs from second or first language acquisition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Characteristics of heritage speakers' language proficiencies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage speakers' motivations for studying Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural characteristics of heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using resources from the heritage language community in the classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Characteristics of the dialects spoken by heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Assessing heritage speakers' linguistic knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying instructional needs of heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching vocabulary to heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching literature to heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selecting materials to use with heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating instructional units to use with heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differentiating in mixed (heritage and non-heritage) courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessing and tracking heritage learners' growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curriculum planning and course design for heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating classroom activities that engage heritage speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Integrating cross-curricular themes into heritage language curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differentiation for heritage language learners of different proficiencies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using technology with heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting and sharing with other teachers of heritage learners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating for heritage language courses, programs and students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q29 How likely would you be to participate in these forms of professional development opportunities for learning about heritage language education?**

	Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Undecided	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely
Take a for-credit in-person graduate course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take a for-credit online graduate course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A non-credit in-person course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A non-credit online course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a national or regional conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a state level conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a weekend or summer retreat in state	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a local presentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Join a local (building, district or ESU) professional learning community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Join an online local or state professional learning community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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**Q30 Including the 2012-2013 school year, for how many years have you been a classroom teacher?**

- 0-4
- 5-9
- 10-14
- 15-19
- 20 or more

**Q31 Which of the following best describes your teaching credentials? Select all that apply.**

- I hold a teaching certificate with an endorsement in Spanish
- I hold a teaching certificate with an endorsement in a subject other than Spanish
- I hold a provisional or substitute teaching certificate

**Q32 Indicate the highest level of education you have received.**

- High school diploma
- Two-year college degree or certificate
- Bachelors degree (or 4-year equivalent)
- Some graduate study beyond a bachelors degree
- Masters degree
- Doctoral degree

Answer If Indicate the highest level of education you have received. Bachelors degree (or 4-year equivalent) Is Selected Or Indicate the highest level of education you have received. Masters degree Is Selected Or Indicate the highest level of education you have received. Doctoral degree Is Selected

**Q33 Which of the following best describes your undergraduate major? Select all that apply.**

- Education
- Spanish
- Another subject \_\_\_\_\_

Answer If Indicate the highest level of education you have received. Masters degree Is Selected Or Indicate the highest level of education you have received. Doctoral degree Is Selected

**Q34 Which of the following best describes your Masters degree major? Select all that apply.**

- Education
- Spanish
- Another subject \_\_\_\_\_

Answer If Indicate the highest level of education you have received. Doctoral degree Is Selected

**Q35 Which of the following best describes your Doctoral degree major? Select all that apply.**

- Education
- Spanish
- Another subject \_\_\_\_\_

**Q36 Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino?**

- Yes
- No

Answer If Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino? Yes Is Selected

**Q37 Do you identify primarily as Mexican? Puerto Rican? Chicano? Latina?**

**Please use the space below to indicate the term you prefer to describe your ethnic identity.**

**Q38 How would you describe your own acquisition of Spanish?**

- Native speaker (born and educated mostly abroad)
- Heritage speaker (learned Spanish at home but educated mostly in English)
- Adult second language learner (acquisition after age 12)
- Early second language learner (acquisition before age 12)

**Q39 Please indicate your gender.**

- Male
- Female

**Q40 Thank you for your participation. Your responses have been recorded. Would you be willing to be contacted again to provide clarification, explanation or additional information about your answers? You are not agreeing here to be interviewed or to complete another survey, only to be contacted about the opportunity to do so. Could we contact you again in the future?**

- Yes
- No

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you! Please provide the e...If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

**Q46 Thank you! Please provide the contact information you would most prefer we used to contact you in the future.**

Email address  
Phone number

## APPENDIX C: IRB APPROVAL FOR INTERVIEWS

September 3, 2013

Janet Eckerson  
Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education  
1940 Sumner St Lincoln, NE 68502

Edmund Hamann  
Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education  
44B HENZ, UNL, 68588-0355

IRB Number:  
Project ID: 13450  
Project Title: A Census of Secondary Spanish Teachers in Nebraska: The State of Spanish Heritage  
Language Education

Dear Janet:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects has completed its review of the Request for Change in Protocol submitted to the IRB.

1. It was been approved to conduct follow-up interviews. The informed consent document, recruitment emails, and interview questions have been approved.

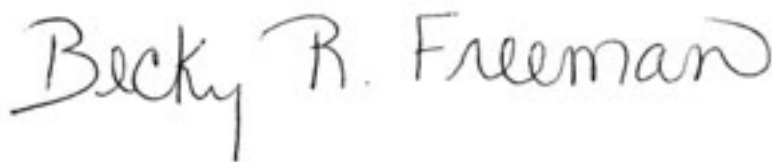
We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:

- \* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
- \* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
- \* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
- \* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
- \* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This letter constitutes official notification of the approval of the protocol change. You are therefore authorized to implement this change accordingly.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky R. Freeman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Becky R. Freeman, CIP  
for the IRB



## APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

## SUBGROUP 1

(Teachers of courses specifically designed for heritage language learners)

1. You indicated in your survey responses that you teach or have taught courses designed specifically for heritage speakers of Spanish. Could you tell me a little about those courses? PROBES
  - A. What sorts of students enrolled?
  - B. What was the purpose of the course(s)?
  - C. What sorts of materials were used?
  - D. How were curricular objectives determined?
2. You indicated in your survey responses that you've also taught traditional Spanish as a second language courses. In what ways would you say your courses for heritage speakers were different from second language courses? PROBES
  - A. Were there differences in curricular content?
  - B. Different materials?
  - C. Classroom interactions?
  - D. Expectations?
3. Where or how did you learn about teaching Spanish to heritage speakers? Can you tell me about your learning experiences? PROBES
  - A. Did you learn from experience? Can you give an example....
  - B. A course or courses?
  - C. Colleagues?
  - D. A professional development workshop?
  - E. A book or article?
4. What do you consider the major challenges faced by teachers working with heritage language learners? PROBES
  - A. Teacher preparation?
  - B. Students?

- C. Materials?
  - D. Administration?
  - E. Curriculum?
5. If you were to participate in additional professional development activities related to heritage language learners or pedagogy, what would you like that professional development to address? PROBES
- A. Topics?
  - B. Activities?
  - C. Skills?
  - D. Students?
6. In your opinion, what would be the best way to provide professional development about heritage language learners to teachers? PROBES
- A. University courses?
  - B. Local presentations?
  - C. Presented by peers or experts?
  - D. Close to home or distance?
  - E. Participatory?

## SUBGROUP 2

(Teachers who make modifications to accommodate heritage language learners)

1. You indicated in your survey responses that you teach Spanish as a second language courses in which heritage speakers of Spanish enroll. Could you tell me a little about those courses? PROBES
  - A. What sorts of students enrolled?
  - B. How many HLLS and L2s?
  - C. What was the purpose of the course(s)?
  - D. Are HLL courses available?
2. You indicated in your survey responses that you make modifications to your Spanish as a second language courses to accommodate heritage language learners. Could you describe those modifications? PROBES

- A. Differences in curricular content?
  - B. Materials?
  - C. Classroom interactions?
  - D. Groups?
  - E. Expectations?
  - F. Explanations of content?
3. Where or how did you learn about adapting courses to accommodate heritage language learners? Where did you get the ideas for the modifications you described? Can you tell me about your learning experiences? PROBES
- A. Did you learn from experience? Can you give an example...
  - B. A course or courses?
  - C. Colleagues?
  - D. A professional development workshop?
  - E. A book or article?
4. What do you consider the major challenges faced by teachers working with heritage language learners in mixed courses? PROBES
- A. Teacher preparation?
  - B. Students?
  - C. Materials?
  - D. Differentiation?
  - E. Administration?
  - F. Curriculum?
5. If you were to participate in additional professional development activities related to heritage language learners or pedagogy, what would you like that professional development to address? PROBES
- A. Topics?
  - B. Activities?
  - C. Skills?
  - D. Students?

6. In your opinion, what would be the best way to provide professional development about heritage language learners to teachers? PROBES
  - A. University courses?
  - B. Local presentations?
  - C. Presented by peers or experts?
  - D. Close to home or distance?
  - E. Participatory?

SUBGROUP 3 (Teachers who are interested in additional professional development, but who are not members of groups 1 or 2)

1. Could you tell me a little about the Spanish courses you teach? Do you work with heritage language learners? PROBES
  - A. What levels?
  - B. What sorts of students enrolled?
  - C. How many HLLS and L2s?
  - D. What was the purpose of the course(s)?
  - E. Are HLL courses available?
2. Have you had any pre or in-service professional development related to heritage language learners or pedagogy? How would you describe that experience?
  - A. Pre-service
  - B. In-service
  - C. Organized by whom?
  - D. Focused on which topics?
  - E. Relevance and quality?
3. You indicated in your survey responses that you were interested in learning more about heritage language learners and heritage language learner pedagogy. Can you explain what you would be most interested in learning about?
  - A. Topics?
  - B. Activities?

C. Skills?

D. Students?

4. In your opinion, what would be the best way to provide professional development about heritage language learners to teachers? PROBES

A. University courses?

B. Local presentations?

C. Presented by peers or experts?

D. Close to home or distance?

E. Participatory?

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# WELCOME

**Please visit the site below and answer  
a few brief questions:**

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<http://goo.gl/n9SOeF>

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## DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES: BETTER INSTRUCTION IN MIXED PROFICIENCY CLASSROOMS

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Janet Eckerson &  
LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Janine Theiler, Ph.D.  
NEBRASKA DIRECTOR OF  
WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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## Who are we? What do we know?

In small groups:

Introduce yourself and discuss:

What brought you to this workshop?

What do you think of when you hear “differentiation” and “heritage language learners”?

---

## Objectives:

1. Understand the instructional needs of heritage language learners (HLLs).
2. Learn strategies for meeting the instructional needs of learners in diverse classes.
3. Explore differentiated learning in the world language classroom.

## Who are HLLs?

**Broad definition of HL learner:** Individuals who "...have familial or ancestral ties to a particular language and who exert their agency in determining whether or not they are HLLs (heritage language learners) of that HL (heritage language) and HC (heritage culture)." (Hornberger and Wang, 2008, p. 27)

**Narrow definition of HL learner:** An individual who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or merely understands the heritage language, and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language" (Valdés, 2001, p. 38)

**HLLs are neither *true* "native speakers" nor second language learners....**

## Comparing HL and L2 competency

- Envelope activity

Work with your elbow partner to match each descriptor in the appropriate category with either "Heritage Learners (HLLs)" or "Second Language Learners (L2Ls)"

Source: Kagan, O., & Dillon, K. (2008). Issues in Heritage Language Learning in the United States. In N. Van Deusen-Scholl & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (2nd ed., Vol 4), New York: Springer. Pp. 143-156).



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## Phonology (Sounds of the language)

### HLLs

Pronunciation, stress and intonation are close to native speaker level; may be dialectal rather than standard

### L2s

Have acquired *most* of the sound system of a standard dialect; pronunciation is accented

---

## Grammar (Rules of the language)

### HLLs

Use most of the grammatical system appropriately, not familiar with the rules

### L2s

Familiar with grammatical rules, but cannot use them fluently, nor comprehend them fully in real-life communications

---

## Sociolinguistic rules

HLLs

Controls registers relating to verbal interactions with family and community members; competence is limited by range of social interactions

L2s

Have very limited knowledge and control of sociolinguistic rules, except those appropriate to the classroom

---

## Vocabulary

HLLs

Have acquired extensive vocabulary in the contexts of home and community. May include a large number of “borrowings” from English.

L2s

Vocabulary is extremely limited, but consistent with the standard dialect.

## Literacy skills

### HLLs

Have often not developed literacy skills beyond elementary levels but can develop such skills very quickly.

### L2s

Have a good to very good foundation for the development of literacy skills in the target language.

## HLL Diversity (Valdés, 1997 in Carreira, 2001)

### Newly arrived Type A

*Well-schooled* in Spanish speaking country, speakers of a *prestige* dialect

### Newly arrived Type B

*Poorly schooled* in Spanish speaking country, speakers of a *stigmatized* dialect

### Bilingual Type A

Access to bilingual instruction in the U.S.: *Basic* academic skills in Spanish, *good* academic skills in English. *Fluent* functional speakers of contact variety of *rural* Spanish.

### Bilingual Type B

*No* academic skills in Spanish, *good* academic skills in English. *Fluent but limited* speakers of contact variety of *rural* Spanish.

### Bilingual Type C

*No* academic skills in Spanish, *good* academic skills in English. *Fluent but limited* speakers of *prestige* variety of Spanish.

### Bilingual Type D

*No* academic skills in Spanish, *poor* academic skills in English. *Fluent but limited* speakers of contact variety of *rural* Spanish.

### Bilingual Type E

*No* academic skills in Spanish, *poor* academic skills in English. *Very limited* speakers of contact variety of *rural* Spanish.

### Bilingual Type F

*No* academic skills in Spanish, *poor* academic skills in English. *Receptive bilingual* only of contact variety of *rural* Spanish.

## Instructional needs HLLs vs. L2Ls

### Envelope activity

Work with your elbow partner to match each descriptor in the appropriate category with either "Heritage Learners (HLLs)" or "Second Language Learners (L2Ls)"

Source: Kagan, O., & Dillon, K. (2008). Issues in Heritage Language Learning in the United States. In N. Van Deusen-Scholl & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.). *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (2nd ed., Vol 4), New York: Springer. Pp. 143-156).

## Pronunciation and intonation

### HLLs

Little or no need for instruction - learners possess native-like capabilities in this domain.

### L2Ls

Learners will need instruction throughout the course of study and may not ever acquire native-like competence.

---

## Grammar

### HLLs

Instruction takes a macro-approach (by concept - Tense, mood, adverbs vs. adjectives)

### L2Ls

Instruction takes a micro-approach (case-by-case - Irregular participles, demonstrative pronouns)

---

## Vocabulary

### HLLs

Learners will need instruction of age appropriate, literary, academic and formal terms.

### L2Ls

Learners will need instruction in the full range of early, middle and late acquired terms.

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## Writing

### HLLs

Macro-approach to instruction: Expansive writing takes place even at early stages of instruction.

### L2Ls

Micro-approach to instruction begins at sentence level, gradually advancing to paragraph.

---

## Reading

### HLLs

Fairly long and somewhat complex texts are accessible even from the beginning of instruction.

### L2Ls

Small texts, slowly and gradually increasing in length and complexity.

---

## Speaking

HLLs

Macro-approach:  
Emphasis on  
monologue  
(presentation) and  
discussion

L2Ls

Micro-approach:  
Initially restricted to  
dialogue, gradually  
progressing to  
monologue and  
discussion

---

## Listening

HLLs

Full range of native  
language input is  
suitable for instruction,  
movies, lectures, news  
reports.

L2Ls

Instruction begins with  
short, simple selections,  
gradually increasing in  
length and complexity.

## Culture

### HLLs

Macro-approach:  
Full range of native  
language input sources,  
insider knowledge and  
comparison

### L2Ls

Micro-approach:  
Initially isolated items,  
outsider knowledge and  
comparison

## HLLs and L2Ls have complementary proficiencies

<small>Carreira et al (2014) Attending to the needs of heritage language learners in mixed classrooms</small>	HLLs	L2Ls
<b>Context of learning (where)</b>	* <i>answer</i> ** <i>how does this impact their knowledge of/skills with Spanish</i>	* **
<b>Timing of learning (when)</b>	* **	* **
<b>Amount of input</b>	* **	* **
<b>Type of input</b>	* **	* **



## HLLs and L2Ls have complementary proficiencies

Carreira et. al (2014) Attending to the needs of heritage language learners in mixed classrooms	HLLs	L2s
<b>Context of learning (where)</b>	<i>primarily home</i> informal, home register, non-standard, spontaneous	<i>school</i> formal, standard, academic, rehearsed, controlled
<b>Timing of learning (when)</b>	<i>early years, diminished or discontinued upon starting school</i> similar to the language of children	<i>adolescence, early adulthood</i> adult-like with respect to certain features
<b>Amount of input</b>	<i>limited, relative to natives</i> incomplete knowledge of the HL (late-acquired items )	<i>limited (relative to HL's)</i> incomplete with respect to certain features (early acquired features)
<b>Type of input</b>	<i>oral, informal, spontaneous</i> implicit knowledge of the HL	<i>formal, focused on form</i> explicit knowledge of rules

## Strategic activities

Making strategic use of L2Ls and HLLs complementary strengths and needs.

**Key idea: Make learners practice their weaker skills!**

- An example activity:

### *Long distance dictation*

*L2Ls will speak, HLLs will write -*

*HLLs will offer feedback on pronunciation, L2Ls will provide feedback on spelling-*

---

## Now you try....

Examine the resource your group has received:

Brainstorm **2 MACRO** approaches to instruction based on this resource

Brainstorm **2 MICRO** approaches to instruction based on this resource

Brainstorm **2 STRATEGIC** uses of this resource for HLs and L2s

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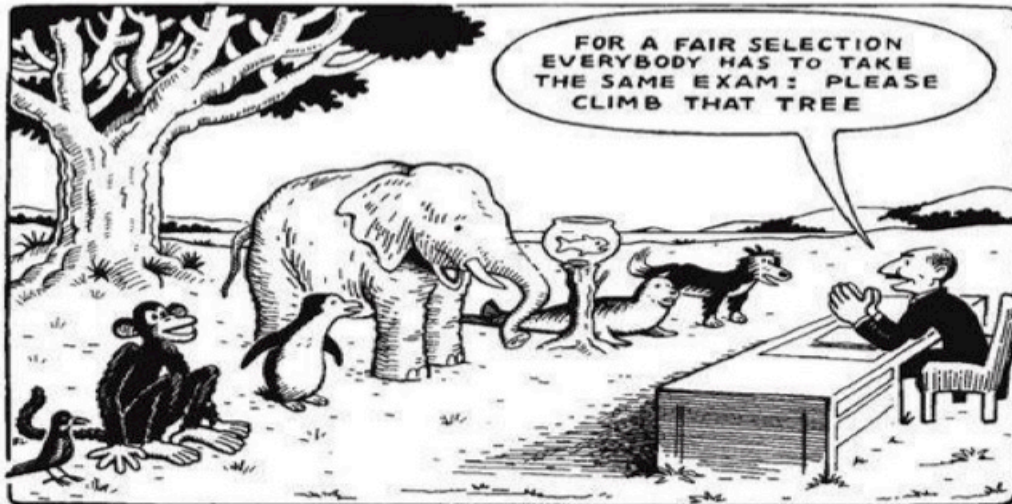
## Macro and micro approaches

**KEY IDEA: Balance macro and micro approaches to meets needs for all types of learners in the mixed classroom!**

## Meeting HL needs: Think, Pair, Share

- Grouping students together based on language proficiency
- Assigning longer tasks
- Assigning more complex tasks
- Preparing lessons with different curricular content
- Modifying assessments: tests, rubrics, etc. for heritage learners
- Using different materials, readings, textbooks, games, etc. for heritage learners
- Assigning special roles in class projects to heritage learners because of their language proficiency
- Presenting, explaining or practicing grammar concepts differently for heritage learners
- Exempting heritage learners from activities or assignments irrelevant for them
- Preparing different vocabulary lessons of heritage learners

## Differentiated instruction



## Differentiation...

<p>___ is a new idea</p> <p>___ may be accomplished by adjusting instructional content, process, or product.</p> <p>___ equates to providing every student with an individualized educational plan</p> <p>___ is a form of tracking</p> <p>___ allows students to choose to work only in preferred ways and on preferred topics</p>	<p>___ is in opposition to whole group instruction.</p> <p>___ looks like "on the fly" adjustments to instruction and learning</p> <p>___ proactively responds to variance in student interest, learning profile, and readiness.</p> <p>___ is an "all or nothing" approach.</p> <p>___ is intentional and purposeful.</p> <p>___ is scripted and inflexible.</p>
---	---

## Differentiated instruction

"Differentiated instruction is a **teaching philosophy** based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences. Rather than marching students through the curriculum lockstep, teachers should modify their instruction to meet students' varying readiness levels, learning preferences, and interests. Therefore, the teacher proactively plans a variety of ways to 'get at' and express learning."

Carol Ann Tomlinson, 2011

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## Differentiated instruction

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## Grounded in theory and research

- To maximize growth, learners must not be over or under-challenged (Howard, 1994; Hunt, 1971, Sousa, 2001; Vygotsky, 1962).
- Differences in how students learn have a significant impact on achievement (Ferguson, 2005; Gardner, 1983).

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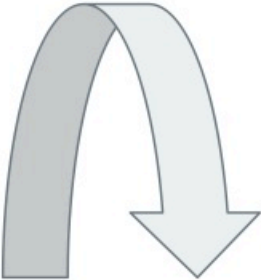
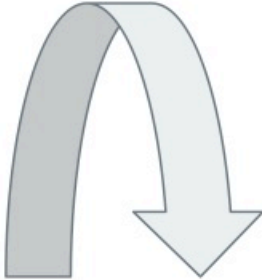
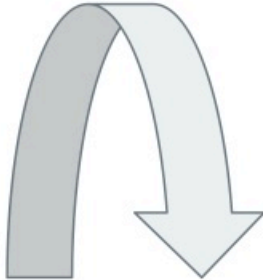
## Grounded in theory and research

- Engagement is maximized through discovery, by stimulating interest, and by allowing choice (Collins and Amabile, 1999; Jensen, 1998)
- Equality of opportunity happens when students receive instruction suited to meet their needs (McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993)

---

## Take into account...

<b>READINESS</b>	<b>INTEREST</b>	<b>LEARNING PROFILE</b>

READINESS	INTEREST	LEARNING PROFILE
		
GROWTH	MOTIVATION	EFFICIENCY

ABCD.ORG

Take into account:

Student Readiness

Student Interests

Learning Profile

Differentiate:

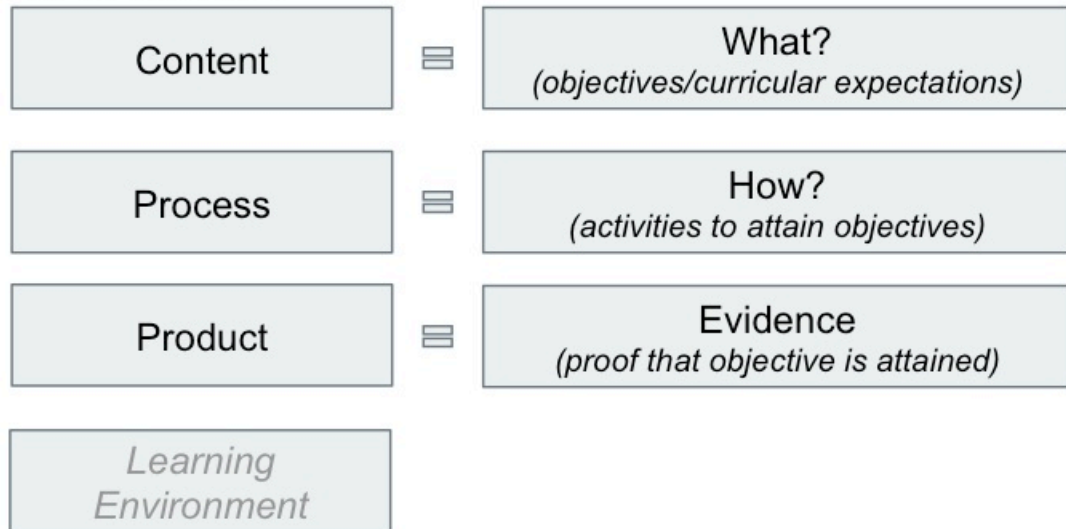
Content

Process

Product

*Learning Environment*

## Differentiate



## Supporting differentiation:

- Curriculum compacting
- Independent studies
- Interest centers
- Flexible grouping
- Adapting questioning
- Cubing
- Webquests
- Anchor activities
- Think Dots
- Role playing
- Mentorships
- RAFT
- Choice menu/board
- Jigsaws
- Tiered activities
- Learning contracts



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## Jigsaw

Become an expert on one strategy or approach that supports differentiation.

1. Read your expert text
2. Summarize your expert text using the graphic organizer
3. Identify the exemplar associated with your text
4. Discuss possible classroom applications

## Choice Menu/Choice Board (p. \_\_\_\_ 8-9 \_\_\_\_)

**General Description:**

*Organizers w/ a variety of activities. Students decide how to demonstrate proficiency or objective attainment.*

**1. What qualities make this a strategy/approach that supports differentiated instruction?**

*The process is differentiated based on student interest and learning style.*

**2. How and when would a teacher utilize it?**

*Choosing homework for a chapter.*

*Choosing practice activities for a single day.*

*Choosing independent projects.*

**3. One practical application might be.....**

*Single lesson – students decide how they will practice vocabulary by selecting vocabulary exercises options from a choice board.*

## Jigsaw

- 1) Become an expert on one strategy or approach that supports differentiation.
- 2) Return to home group and “teach” your peers what you have learned.
- 3) As a group, use what you have learned in order to generate an idea of something - one small thing - that you could adjust in your current practice.

## Differentiation...

<p>___ is a new idea</p> <p>___ may be accomplished by adjusting instructional content, process, or product.</p> <p>___ equates to providing every student with an individualized educational plan</p> <p>___ is a form of tracking</p> <p>___ allows students to choose to work only in preferred ways and on preferred topics</p>	<p>___ is in opposition to whole group instruction.</p> <p>___ looks like "on the fly" adjustments to instruction and learning</p> <p>___ proactively responds to variance in student interest, learning profile, and readiness.</p> <p>___ is an "all or nothing" approach.</p> <p>___ is intentional and purposeful.</p> <p>___ is scripted and inflexible.</p>
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## Resources

- ASCD.org (differentiated instruction professional development modules, Judy Rex and Nanci Smith)
- Tomlinson, C. (1996). *Differentiating Instruction for Mixed Ability Classrooms; A Professional Inquiry Kit*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tomlinson, C. (1999). *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tomlinson, C. & Eidson, Caroline Cunningham (2003). *Differentiation in Practice: A Resource Guide for Differentiating Curriculum, Grades 5-9*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tomlinson, C. (2003). *Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom: Strategies and Tools for Responsive Teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Websites yielding information for this workshop:

<http://ascd.org>

<http://daretodifferentiate.wikispaces.com>

<http://2differentiate.pbworks.com>

<http://differentiationcentral.com> (Tomlinson, 2011)

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## Addendum: Programs that make sense

The need for extensive differentiation can be minimized by creating sensible placement policies and course offerings