# Attending to the Needs of Heritage Language Learners in Mixed Classrooms 

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- As you listen to Arturo, jot down anything you hear that bears on HL teaching:
http://youtu.be/39d6Lb2f2Aw

Overview of the principles, approaches, and applications that I will present today

- Know your learners;
- Strive for Rich Classroom discourse by choosing and using materials with a view towards making learning meaningful, engaging, and accessible to all learners;
- Make students active and autonomous partners in what happens in the classroom;
- Differentiate learning according to learner needs;
- Design courses and curricula that make linguistic and demographic sense.

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Definitions:
Who is a heritage language learner?

- Narrow definitions - based on proficiency
- Broad definitions - based on affiliation


## Example of a narrow definition

"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)

Learners who fit the narrow definition also fit the broad definition


Broad + narrow definitions = two orientations to HL teaching


## Example of a broad definition

Heritage language learners are 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)

Broad + narrow definitions = two orientations to HL teaching


NEEDS STEMMING FROM BROAD DEFINITION?

## Affective needs

While researchers have looked quite extensively at the language exposure we need to learn a new language, a second set of factors that are equally important has received far less attention. These factors relate to "group membership," or the allegiances we feel with particular-language-speaking groups and the attitudes and feelings that flow from being associated with them (Tse, 2001, 60).

Broad + narrow definitions = two orientations to
HL teaching


## An HL learner's view

...my Dad's family always told me I was American. In school I was labeled Mexican, but to the Mexicans, I am an American. It's this weird duality in which you are stuck in the middle. Latinos are often told that they are not Americans but also that they are not connected to their heritage. You take pride in both cultures and learn to deal with the rejection. Socializing with people who share a Common experience helps you deal with this experience.(Carreira \& Beeman, 2014).

## Rich Classroom Discourse

- Discourse that engages students in complex thinking processes;
- Discourse that challenges and engages students with the material
- Materials that attend to HL learners' affective needs make for Rich Classroom Discourse


## Foundations of RCD

- Materials and activities that are meaningful and engaging
- Materials that are accessible


## MEANING AND ENGAGEMENT IN MIXED CLASSES

The "problem" of mixed classes

## Second-language learners

- An outsider perspective of the target language and culture;
- No family connection to the target language and culture;
- Do not identify in terms of the target language and culture.

HL learners

- Insider perspective of the target language and culture
- Family connection to the target language and culture;
- Identify and/or seek identity in the target language and culture.


## What not to do

## What not to do...

## Second-language learners

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## Both matter

## Second-language learners

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## Activity 1

 Discussion 1.1, 1.2 (pp. 1-3)

## Creating meaning and engagement: <br> A discussion prompt for "My Name"

- Regarding marriage, Latinos sometimes think that mainstream Americans are
- Regarding marriage, mainstream Americans sometimes think that Latinos are
$\qquad$ _.


## Strategy

- Comparisons

Cultural perspectives
Stereotypes
Practices

## Reading II

- The pros: Relatively easy to understand
- The cons: How do you make a reading like this meaningful and engaging?


## Strategy

- Think in terms of adding "insider" knowledge or perspectives to the information.
- Think in terms of comparing and contrasting elements of the target culture with American culture (Example: Little Red Riding Hood).



## Five principles (cont.)

- Know your learners;
- Choose and use materials with a view towards making learning meaningful, engaging, and accessible to all learners;
- Make students active and autonomous partners in what happens in the classroom;
- Build pathways to learning for all learners;
- Design courses and curricula that make linguistic and demographic sense.

READY for another one?

Activity II, p. 3


HL learners' linguistic needs are a function of

- The context of learning
- The timing of learning
- The amount input
- The type of input


## Back to...



## HL learner needs and strengths are a function of

- The context of learning: primarily, home -> informal, home register, perhaps non-standard
- The timing of learning: early years, diminished or discontinued upon starting school
-> similar to the language of children
- The amount input: limited, relative to natives
-> incomplete knowledge of the HL (missing features acquired later in life)
- The type of input: oral, informal, spontaneous,
-> implicit knowledge of the HL


## L2 learner needs and strengths

- The context of learning: school
-> formal, standard, academic, rehearsed, controlled
- The timing of learning: adolescence, early adulthood
-> adult-like with respect to certain features
- The amount input: limited (relative to native speakers and HL learners)
-> incomplete with respect to certain features (those acquired early in life)
- The type of input: formal, focused on form
-> explicit knowledge of rules


## HL and L2 learners tend to have complementary skills and needs

## HL language

-The context of learning: primarily, home -> informal, home register, nonstandard, spontaneous

- The timing of learning: early years,
$\rightarrow$ similar to the language of children
The amount input: limited, relative to
natives
-> incomplete knowledge of the HL (late-acquired items)
- The type of input: oral, informal, spontaneous
-> implicit knowledge of the HL


## L2 language

The context of learning: school
-> formal, standard, academic,
rehearsed, controlled

- The timing of learning: adolescence, early
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native spea
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-> incomplete with respect to certain
features (early acquired features)
- The type of input: formal, focused on
-> explicit knowledge of rules

Two perspectives of complementary nature of HL and L2 learners' knowledge


Two studies of paired interactions between HL and L2 (Bowles 2011)

- HL and L2 learners were matched for proficiency;
- They worked together on an information gap activity;
- In the first study learners benefited more from the activity than HL learners;
- In the second study, both types of learners benefited equally from the activity.


## Relative strengths

- HL learners can do a lot with the target language;
- HL learners can engage in real-life tasks (focus on content);
- HL learners can speak and understand the target language well.
- L2 learners know a lot about the target language;
- L2 learners can engage in pedagogical tasks (focus on form);
- L2 learners can read and write the language well.


## Two studies bring these perspectives into focus

First study: L2 learners benefited more from the activity


Second study: Both learners benefited from paired interactions


First study: Only L2 learners benefitted


- Information gap activity with a picture of a kitchen (home vocabulary) All tasks were oral
HL learners already knew this, so they did not gain new knowledge. L2
learners benefitted from HL learners' expertise.


## Take home lesson about HL + L2 pairings

- Take advantage of complementary strengths of HL and L2 learners
- Mix tasks that require intuitive knowledge (hard for L2Ls), and tasks that require metalinguistic knowledge (hard for HLLs);
- Hold both students accountable for contributing to the task (assign the harder task to each type of learner);
- Match HL-L2 learners for proficiency (????)


## What made the difference?

- Material + task

HL learners are better at tasks that tap into intuitive use of language, L2 learners, on the other hand, do better at tasks that require meta-linguistic knowledge (knowledge of rules);
HL learners are more familiar with home vocabulary; L2 learners, on the other hand, are more familiar with academic vocabulary

Second study

- Information gap activity with a crossword puzzle (general vocabulary); Oral and written tasks

Vocabulary was unknown to both learner types, so both benefitted.
Oral task benefitted L2
learners. Written task benefitted HL learners.


## A metaphor for $\mathrm{HL}+\mathrm{L} 2$ pairings

Seating arrangements at a fancy dinner party


## Sample activity for HL + L2 pairings

- Cloze activity
- Dictogloss


## The Dictogloss

- Highly developed cultures, including those of the Olmecs, Mayas, Toltecs, and Aztecs, existed long before the Spanish conquest. Hernan Cortés conquered Mexico during the period 1519-21 and founded a Spanish colony that lasted nearly 300 years. Independence from Spain was proclaimed by Father Miguel Hidalgo on September 16, 1810.


## Cloze activity: HL-L2 learner groupings

My great-grandmother. I__ liked to have known her, a wild, horse of a woman, so wild she___ marry. Until my great-grandfather__ a sack over her head and did it. And the story goes she never forgave him. She __out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she _____the best with what she got or was she sorry because she ___ be all the things she wanted to be.


## Five principles (cont.)

- Know your learners;
- Strive for Rich Classroom Discourse. Choose and use materials with a view towards making learning meaningful, engaging, and accessible to all learners;
- Make students active and autonomous partners in what happens in the classroom by taking advantage of complementary skills and attending to the difficulties associated with micro and macro approaches
- Differentiate learning by learner needs;
- Design courses and curricula that make linguistic and demographic sense.


## Micro approaches

- Isolate grammar, lexical, and pronunciation items;
- Use discrete activities to practice items;
- Are bottom up, moving from simple to complex;
- Deal with conscious knowledge of the language;
- Occur more frequently at lower levels;
- Contrast with macro-approaches


## Macro v. Micro



Macro-based teaching


- Common in HL classes because HL learners have functional abilities in the HL;
- Well suited for HL learners because they naturally focus on content.


## Macro approaches

- Focus on developing functional ability - the wide variety of discourse in the professions, social life, and the community;
- Can be discourse-based, content-based, genre-based, task-based, or experiential;
- Build on global, background knowledge;
- Are more common at the advanced levels and in HL teaching

| Teaching <br> domains | Micro-approaches | Macro-approaches |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Vocabulary | Carefully controlled and selected | Dictated by function and context |
| Reading | Small texts, gradually increasing <br> in volume and complexity | Fairly large and complex texts <br> from the beginning |
| Writing | Sentence level, gradually <br> advancing to paragraph and then <br> longer | Longer texts from the beginning. <br> Integrated emphasis: content, <br> stylistics, grammar, spelling |
| Speaking <br> and listening | Initially restricted, gradually <br> increasing in length and <br> complexity | Full range of native input (movies, <br> news stories, newspaper articles, <br> etc.) |
| Culture | Initially isolated and <br> decontextualized | Full range of topics, integrated |

## Micro-base teaching

- Common in L2 teaching because L2 learners need help accessing authentic materials;
- Well suited to L2 learners because they naturally focus on form



## Micro approaches with HL learners

## THE PROBLEM WITH MIXED CLASSES

Macro Approaches with L2 learners

- Macro-approaches are inaccessible to L2 learners



## Step 1

- Separate L2 learners to give them a mini-lesson on the language structures and vocabulary they need to be able to access and engage with authentic materials

- Micro-approaches confuse HL learners because they lack the meta language of instruction (i.e.
grammatical vocabulary) and are not familiar with the routines of language learning. Also, HL learners focus primarily on content (Julio Torres' Dissertation).

A reading or authentic task

## A

grammar point, vocabulary

Having it both ways in mixed classes



## Strategies and tools that support this

- Access and engagement: Scaffolding strategies such as tapping into background knowledge, pre-teaching vocabulary, previewing the material, using graphic organizers, visual aids, etc.
- Classroom management: A way to keep HL learners engaged in meaningful work while the instructor meets with the L 2 learners.

Step 2


- Separate HL learners to give them what they need to access formfocused instruction and focus their attention on language issues: grammatical terminology, a map of learning,

Now they are ready to work together


Example: A graphic organizer


## Next

Tools and strategies that support offering separate instruction to each population of learners;

Five principles (cont.)

- Know your learners;
- Choose and use materials with a view towards making learning meaningful, engaging, and accessible to all learners;
- Make students active and autonomous partners in what happens in the classroom;
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I differentiate, you differentiate, he/she differentiates..
$>$ Running errands $\rightarrow$ a "to do list" helps with pacing;
$>$ Driving to a destination $\rightarrow$ Google directions help with process.

Differentiatio n

Is not about watering down learning for struggling learners...

Just the opposite...


One-size-fits all/curriculum-centered teaching


But what if...


## And...



## The problem with one-size fits all

> It does not attend to individual learner differences.
$\Rightarrow$ This is a particularly serious deficiency when it comes to heritage language $(\mathrm{HL})$ learners.

The curriculum-centered approach with HL learners (an HL class - all HLLs)


The curriculum-centered approach in a mixed class (HL + L2 learners)


Both types of classes are heterogeneous

- It follows that one-size-fits all approaches are not optimal for these classes;
- Traditional L2 methods are one-size-fits all


## Learner-centered teaching



## Principles of Differentiated Teaching (DT)

In differentiated classrooms, teachers begin where students are, not the front of a curriculum guide. They accept and build upon the premise that learners differ in important ways...In differentiated classrooms, teachers provide specific ways for each individual to learn as deeply as possible and as quickly as possible, without assuming one student's roadmap for learning is identical to anyone else (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 2).

## What can you differentiate?

```
\(>\) Content (*)
```

$>$ Process (how you gain mastery of the material)
$>$ Pacing (the rate at which you acquire the material)
$>$ Product (how you demonstrate mastery of the material)
By
$>$ Readiness
$>$ Interest
$>$ Learning profile

Two views of the learner

## > Collective

What are the characteristics of HL learners as a group? How do they differ from L2 learners?
> Individual
How do individual HL learners differ from each other? Also, how do individual L2 learners differ from each other?

A metaphor for the differentiated classroom


Key to differentiating instruction
>Knowing when to differentiate
Knowing how to differentiate

## When to differentiate

Don't differentiate all the time - only when needed.
> What happens if you differentiate all the time?

Some tools for Differentiation


1. Text-to-self connection (also text-to-text, text-to-world)
2. Agendas
3. Centers
4. Flexible grouping
5. Checks for understanding
6. Exit cards
> Master a small number of instructional tools

## 1. The-text-to-self connection

What it is:

A tool that helps students make connections with the material and personalize learning.

Sample text-to-self connections
(Harvey and Goudvis 2000:266)

| Passage from the text |
| :--- |
| This reminds me of... |
| Passage from the text |
| I agree or disagree because... |
| Passage from the text |
| I find this interesting because... |

Some variants...

Sample text-to-text connections
(Harvey and Goudvis 2000:267)

| Passage from this text |
| :--- |
| This reminds me of___ from... |
| Character from this text |
| This character reminds me of ___ from... |
| A theme of this text |
| This reminds me of ___ from ... |

## The-text-to-self connection

## What it is:

A tool that helps students make connections with the material and personalize learning.

What it does:
Differentiates instruction by learner interest;
Supports flexible grouping and compelling class discussions.

Sample text-to-world connections
(Harvey and Goudvis 2000:267)

| Passage from the text |
| :--- |
| This reminds me of... |
| Character from the text |
| This character reminds me of.... |
| A theme of the text |
| This reminds me of... |

What it is:

A list of tasks and activities students must complete within a set period of time.

## Agendas

What it is:
A list of tasks (e.g., homework exercise) students must complete within a specified period of time.

What it does:
Vary pacing (as well as process, content, and product);

Support strategic grouping (e.g., one group of students receives a mini-lesson from the instructor, while another works on the agenda).

## 3. Learning centers

Examples of two types of centers

What it is:

A resource center (physical or virtual)
offering a variety of activities and materials for students to work independently or with other students to operationalize the material presented in the classroom.

| Physical - sample contents | Virtual-sample contents |
| :--- | :--- |
| $>$ Textbook and workbook |  |
| exercises; |  |$>$ Links to resources, | authentic materials, etc.; |
| :--- |

## Learning center

- What it is:

A resource center (physical or virtual) offering
a variety of activities and materials for students to work independently or with other students to operationalize the material presented in the classroom.
$>$ What it does:
Makes it possible to differentiate instruction by varying the process of instruction (also content and product).

## 4. Flexible grouping

What it is:

Grouping that is not static... students may work with a partner, in small groups, in a teacher-led group, or with the whole class, as needed to optimize learning.

## Types of groups

$$
>\text { Learning partners (1/1) }
$$

$>$ Small groups (3-5)

- Half-class/half-class

Teacher-led mini-lessons

Half-class/half class in a mixed class


Why separate by learner status (HL learners/L2 learners)?


## Half-class/half class in a mixed class



How do you know how to form groups?
$>$ Checks for understanding
$\Rightarrow$ The exit card

Why separate by learner status?
(HL v. L2 learners)

In high school I was one of very few Latinos. My friend and I were called the American kids. This was always funny to me because my Dad's family always told me I was American. In school I was labeled Mexican, but to the Mexicans, I am an American. I am part of each, but not fully accepted by either. It's this weird duality in which you are stuck in the middle...You take pride in both cultures and learn to deal with the rejection. You may never be fully embraced by either side. That's why you seek out other people like yourself. Socializing with people who share a common experience helps you deal with this experience.
(Carreira \& Beeman, 2014, p. 88)

## How to manage mini-lessons

Use agendas and learning centers to assign work to learners who are not taking part in the mini-lesson.

Flexible grouping

## What it is:

Grouping that is not static - students may work with a partner, in small groups, in a teacher-led group, or with the whole class, as needed to optimize learning.

## What it does:

Makes it possible to attend to learners' needs (not just in the area of language, but also affective issues and motivations)

## 5. Checks for understanding

Tips

What it is:
All students respond to a prompt using hand signals (e.g. thumbs up/down) or flashing a sign (e.g., true/false; $a, b, c, d$ )


## Checks for understanding

## What it is:

All students respond to a prompt using hand signals (e.g., thumbs up/down) or flashing a sign (e.g., true/false; a,b,c,d).

What it does:
Engages all learners in answering questions and provides immediate and comprehensive feedback to the instructor.

The exit card (Dodge 2006)

## Describe an "aha!" moment

Formulate a question about a point that remains unclear. Describe one or two strategies that you will use to answer this question.
$>$ Give students time to prepare their answer;
$>$ On the count of three, ask them all to respond.


## 6. Exit cards

What it is:

At the end of class students respond in writing to a prompt.

How I use exit cards
$>$ To give learners a roadmap to learning
Prompt: To write accents, you need (a) to be able to hear where the accent falls in a word, (b) know the basic rules of accentuation, and (c) practice until the process becomes automatic. Assess your abilities in each of these skills.
$>$ To encourage learners to listen to each other
Prompt: Discuss a contribution by a classmate that you found helpful.
> For the attendance and participation grade

## Exit cards

## Check for understanding

What it is:
At the end of class students respond in writing to a prompt.

What it does:
Encourages learners to reflect on their learning, provides immediate feedback to instructors on learners' needs, strengths, and connection to the material.

You know you want it...

Activity IV, p. 6


## Assessment

Placement tests
>Formative (during instruction)
Assessment for learning
$>$ Summative (post instruction)
Assessment of learning

> EXIT CARDS AND CHECKS FOR UNDERSTANDING ARE A FORM OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

How familiar are you with Differentiation?
(1) I know little or nothing about it.
(2) Have never used it but I'm familiar with the general idea of it.
(3) I have some training and some limited experience using it.
(4) I have significant experience using it.
(5) I have trained others to use it.

|  | Formative assessment | Summative assessment |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Purpose | To improve instruction and <br> provide feedback to students | To measure student <br> competency |
| When administered | Ongoing, throughout unit | End of unit or course |
| How students use <br> results | To self-monitor <br> understanding; <br> Identify gaps in understanding <br> and strengths | To monitor grades and <br> progress toward <br> benchmarks |
| How teachers use <br> results | To check for understanding, <br> modify their own teaching to <br> enhance learning | For grades, promotion |
| How programs use <br> results | To modify the curriculum and <br> program | To report to external |

Adapted from Checking for Understanding. Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, ASCD, 2007

## How to do formative assessment

Almost any pedagogical activity can function as formative assessment...
What makes it formative is HOW you use it.
$>$ Exit cards
e.g., Use the information obtained from exit cards to group students by needs/interests

HOW FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT ENHANCES THE POTENTIAL FOR LEARNING

## Formative assessment: Students

Teaches students to manage their own learning by helping them answer the following questions:
(1) where am I going?
(2) where am I now?
(3) how can I close the gap?

In so doing, students acquire a roadmap of learning
(Black and Jones, 2006)

How to do formative assessment (cont.)
$>$ Checks for understanding
e.g. use the information obtained to adjust the pacing of instruction
$>$ Quizzes/Homework
Debriefing - reviewing quizzes/homework in class to:

- debate the merits of different answers;
- identify effective study strategies;


## Formative assessment: Instructors

- Makes it possible for instructors to revise their teaching as needed to attend to the needs of all learners;
- If the whole class is not understanding $\rightarrow$ provide additional instruction and/or practice to all
- If only some of the students are not understanding $\rightarrow$ give those students a minilesson while the rest of the class works on their agenda or on center activities


## Formative assessment

Addresses issues of fairness and access arising from institutional conditions.


Problem: Many departments have fewer courses than needed


How do you assign a grade to these students and


Maintain standards
$>$ Address issues of fairness

## Another view of the problem



## Formative assessment: Fairness

$>$ For instructors: Enables them to respond to the needs of all learners, particularly those who are struggling with the material;
$>$ For students: Encourages metacognition and independence; previews summative assessment, thereby improving their chances of performing well;
$>$ For programs: Provides the knowledge base for effective curriculum and program design.

One
more, please...

Activity V, p. 7


## Five principles (cont.)

- Know your learners;
- Choose and use materials with a view towards making learning meaningful, engaging, and accessible to all learners;
- Make students active and autonomous partners in what happens in the classroom;
- Differentiate learning by learner needs;
- Design courses and curricula that make linguistic and demographic sense.


# An HL Class: <br> Hindi 100 for HL learners 

India: Hindi is the official language of the country. Individual states have their own official languages. 29 languages have over 1 million speakers. India's languages stem primarily from two language families: Indo-Aryan in the north, and Dravidian in the south. Many languages have their own writing systems (Brass 2005, Hasnain 2003)

## Hindi 100:

16 students from five different language backgrounds; Hindi/Urdu (7); Gujarati (4); Punjabi (2);Telugu (2); Marathi (1)

## The crux of the problem

- In the Hindi program "HL classes" are seen as a "catch all" destination for all students that do not meet the traditional profile of L2 learners;
- Hindi 100 does not make linguistic sense.


## A well designed program

- Is linguistically well-formed;
- Aligns well with demographic realities;
- Responds to learners' needs and goals vis-àvis the target language;
- Is anchored in a coherent vision that runs through all courses and learning activities.
- Adapts to changing needs.

Five principles (cont.)

- Know your learners;
- Make materials meaningful and engaging to all learners;
- Make students active partners in the learning and teaching process;
- Use strategies to build in pathways to learning for all learners;
- Design courses and curricula that make linguistic and demographic sense.


## Summary: Strategies for teaching mixed classes

- Separate them to (1) prepare them to work together, and (2) attend to learners' special needs vis-à-vis the target language.
- Bring HL and L2 learners together so that they can benefit from each other's strengths;


## Summary: Principles

- Know your learners (as a type and as individuals);
- Strive of Rich Classroom Discourse. Make materials accessible, meaningful and engaging to all learners;
- Make students active partners in the learning and teaching process (use complementary skills, micro- and macro-approaches, learning strategies);
- Differentiate learning (Differentiation, formative assessment);
- Design courses and curricula that make linguistic and demographic sense.

Thank you!

- For a copy of this presentation, please email me at Carreira@csulb.edu

