Teaching mixed language classes: challenges and opportunities

Dr. Ana Fernández Dobao

University of Washington

Linguistic profile of HL and L2 learners

HL learners	L2 learners
strong oracy skills native-like pronunciation	strong literacy skills spelling & accentuation
familiar with informal registers & home vocabulary	familiar with formal registers & academic vocabulary
spontaneous use of the language	rehearsed language
implicit grammar knowledge	explicit grammar knowledge grammatical terminology
non-standard varieties	standard/academic varieties
family connection to the language & culture; seek personal identity	no family connection to the language

(Adapted from Carreira, 2016, p. 165)

Can HL and L2 learners learn from each other?

- Blake & Zyzik (2003)

- Bowles (2011)

- Bowles, Adams & Toth (2014)

- Henshaw (2015)

- Walls (2018)

The study

The learners

8 Spanish HL learners

3rd year, advanced-level
5 females & 3 males
average age: 20 years
Mexican, Caribbean & Chilean
varieties of Spanish

12 Spanish L2 learners

3rd year, advanced-level
9 females & 3 males
average age: 21 years
English L1

PRETEST	
HL learners	**L2 learners**
.0798 grammar errors/words	.1230 grammar errors/words
.1235 spelling errors/words	.0513 spelling errors/words

The tasks

Week 1	Beginning of the course
Week 2	Pretest: individual writing task
Week 3	Collaborative writing task 1 (7 HL-L2 dyads)
Week 4	Collaborative writing task 2 (7 HL-L2 dyads)
Week 5	Collaborative writing task 3 (3 HL-HL & 5 L2-L2 dyads)
Week 6	Collaborative writing task 4 (7 HL-L2 dyads)
Week 7	Collaborative writing task 5 (2 HL-HL & 5 L2-L2 dyads)
Week 7	Collaborative writing task 6 (6 HL-L2 dyads)
Week 8	Collaborative writing task 7 (2 HL-HL & 5 L2-L2 dyads)
Week 9	Collaborative writing task 8 (3 HL-HL 6 L2-L2 dyads)
Week 10	End of the course: Questionnaire

Cajas de cartón

relatos de la vida peregrina
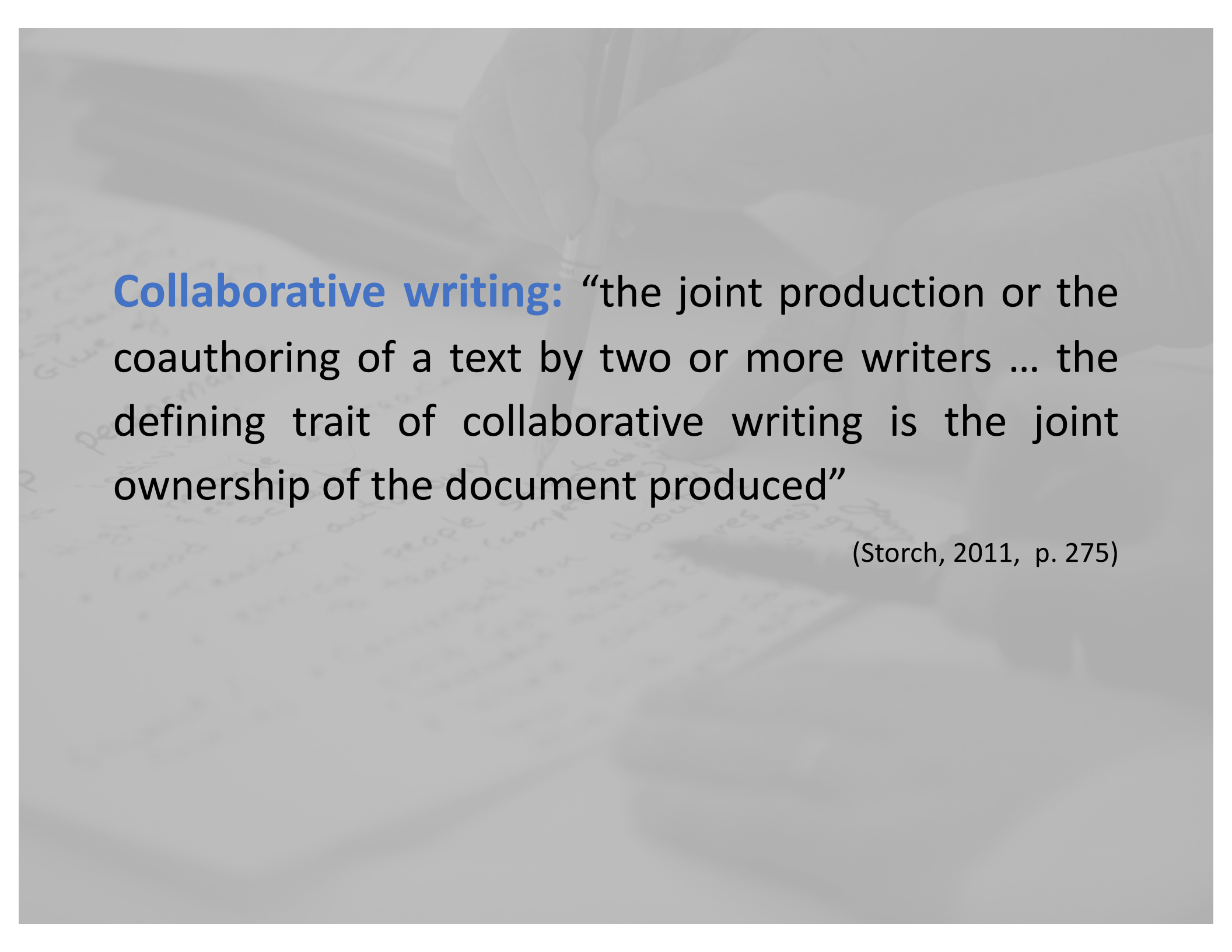## de un niño campesino

Francisco Jiménez

TASK 1: *Expliquen las razones por la cuales la mamá de Panchito no le responde a su hijo en cada uno de los siguientes diálogos.*

TASK 2: *En Muerte perdonada, Panchito menciona que su periquito era indocumentado, igual que él y muchos otros inmigrantes que menciona en la novela. En esta tira cómica se hace referencia a los indocumentados, pero usando la palabra "ilegales". Expliquen cuál es el problema con este término y compartan sus reacciones relacionadas con esta tira.*

TASK 3: *Comenten las siguientes imágenes: ¿A qué hacen referencia? ¿Cómo se contrastan y se parecen a la vez? ¿Cuáles son sus reacciones ante estas imágenes?*

TASK 4: *Después de leer el siguiente cómic, comenten a qué hace referencia, cómo se contrasta con la realidad del país y cómo se relaciona con la historia de Panchito. (Intenten incluir ejemplos concretos que ilustren y apoyen sus argumentos).*
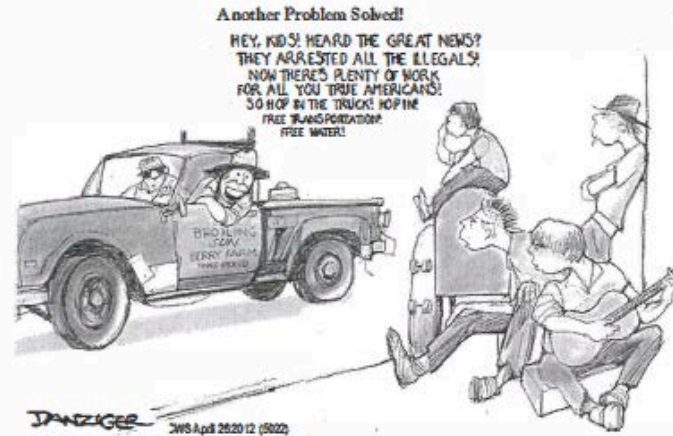
Collaborative writing: "the joint production or the coauthoring of a text by two or more writers ... the defining trait of collaborative writing is the joint ownership of the document produced"

(Storch, 2011, p. 275)

Escritura colaborativa

En *Muerte perdonada*, Panchito menciona que su periquito era indocumentado, igual que él y muchos otros inmigrantes que menciona en la novela. En esta tira cómica se hace referencia a los indocumentados, pero usando la palabra "ilegales". En parejas escriban uno o dos párrafos (100-150 palabras) explicando cuál es el problema con este término y compartiendo sus reacciones relacionadas con esta tira.

Another Problem Solved!

HEY, KIDS! HEARD THE GREAT NEWS? THEY ARRESTED ALL THE ILLEGALS! NOW THERE'S PLENTY OF WORK FOR ALL YOU TRUE AMERICANS! SO HOP IN THE TRUCK! HOP IN! FREE TRANSPORTATION! FREE WATER!

DANZIGER

La palabra "ilegales" se usa para discriminar en contra de las personas indocumentadas, porque implica que ellos son criminales. En realidad, muchas personas saben que no es un crimen ser indocumentado. El uso de la palabra "ilegal" causa muchas problemas para la gente inmigrante. Ha causado que la gente se siente inferior, y en muchos casos, el uso de la palabra "ilegal" ha animado que la gente los trate malo.

El uso de la palabra crea una imágen negativo para la gente inmigrante, y cuando ellos tratan integrarse en la sociedad, no se sienten aceptados. Por ejemplo, cuando Panchito va a la escuela, los niños no lo aceptan. Por eso, es importante no usar la palabra "ilegal" para describir inmigrantes, puede describir ellos como inmigrantes porque es la verdad, y no causa la discriminación.

Findings

Did L2 learners benefit from working with HL learners?

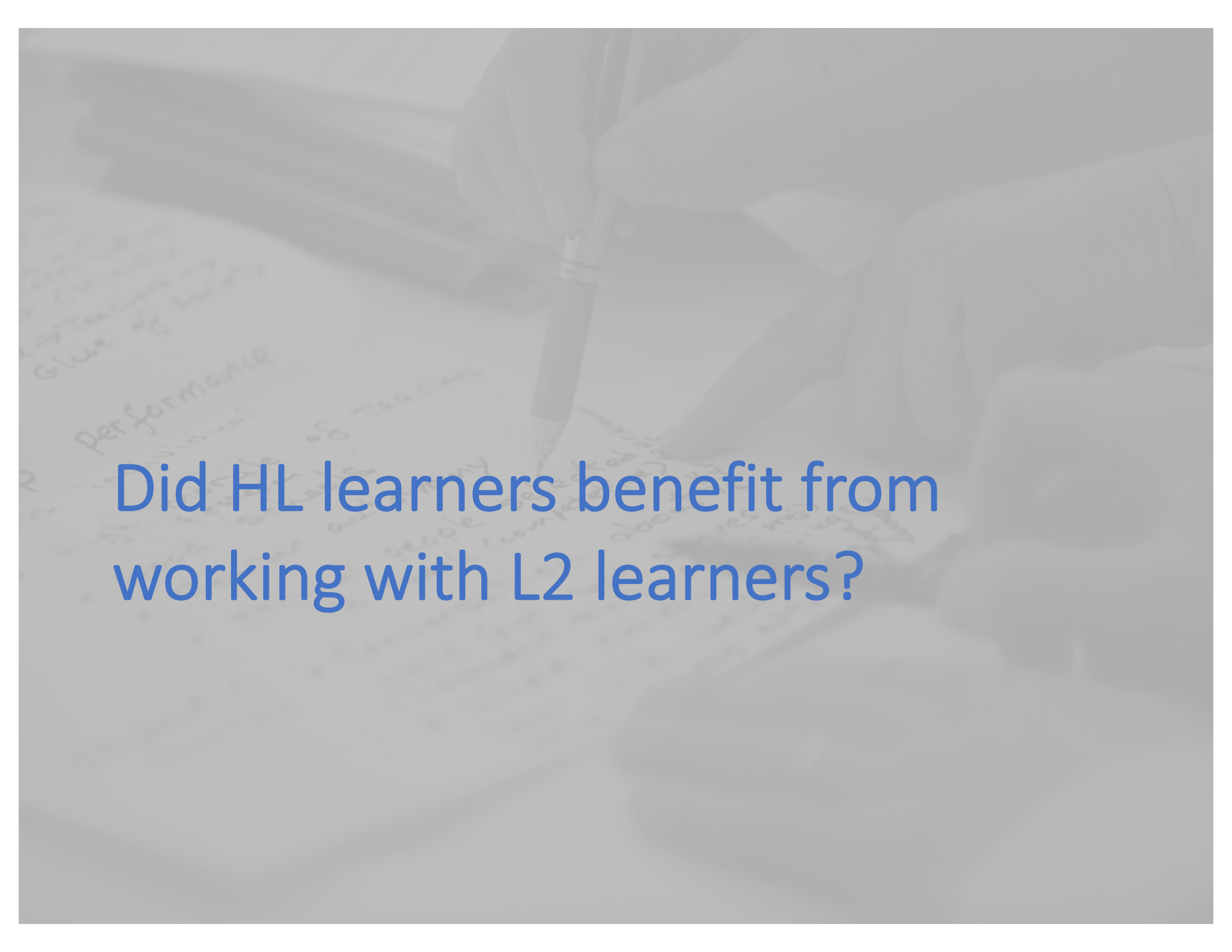# Did L2 learners benefit from working with HL learners?

lexical language-related episode

```
1 L2L: u:h cómo se dice ... eh ... to discriminate?
       (how do you say to discriminate)
2 HLL: discriminar?

       (to discriminate?)

3 L2L: discriminar?

       (to discriminate?)

4 HLL: uh-huh

5 L2L: eh la palabra ilegales, ... discrimina::?
       (the word illegals discriminates)

6 HLL: uh-huh se usa para discriminar

       (it is used to discriminate)
7 L2L: para discriminar
       (to discriminate)
```

grammatical language-related episode

1 L2L: *que no: (.) funcionara, (.) que no funcionara?* **es
      subjuntivo? o que:?**
      (that would not work? is it subjunctive? or what?)
2 HLL: mm
3 L2L: *que no funciona,*
      (that does not work)
4 HLL: **cómo es la oración?**
      (how is the sentence?)
5 L2L: e:h *la economía* eh (.) *agrícola*
      (the agricultural economy)
6 HLL: uh-huh *pero en realidad son:: esenciales a la
      economía agrícola, que no funcionaría sin ellos?*
      (but in fact they are essential to the agricultural
      economy that would not work without them)
7 L2L: *sin ellos? sí, funcionaría, sin ellos,*
      (without them? yes, would work, without them)

Did HL learners benefit from working with L2 learners?

Did HL learners benefit from working with L2 learners?

mechanical language-related episode

1 HLL: *como eh el **papá:** .. de Panchito*
   (like Panchito's father)

   .

   .

2 L2L: ***papá tiene acento en la segunda:: a***
   (father has an accent in the second a)

3 HLL: okay

Did HL learners benefit from working with L2 learners?

grammatical language-related episode

```
1 HLL: el segundo i- el segundo imagen
       (the second image [masc.])
2 L2L: hm hm
3 HLL: podemos empezar a escribir también (.)
       sobre esa (.) mm
       (we can start writing also about that)
4 L2L: la: segunda imagen?
       (the second image [fem.])
5 HLL: uh-huh (.) segunda? porque es fe-
       femenina?
       (second? because it is fe- feminine)
6 L2L: yeah
```

Did HL learners benefit from working with L2 learners?

lexical language-related episode

```
1 HLL: cómo dice field? en las mm
       (how do you say field? in the mm)
2 L2L: es mm (.) que trabajan en:
       (it's mm who work in)
3 HLL: en:
       (in)
4 L2L: oh! el campo? es?
       (the field? is it?)
5 HLL: en: las
       (in the)
6 L2L: no:
7 HLL: campos
       (fields)
8 L2L: campos
       (fields)
```

lexical language-related episode

```
1  L2L: okay es, y están poniendo: mm la los estadosunidenses o:?
2  HLL: lo: (.) la:s personas que viven en los Estados Unidos?
3  L2L: sí, es e:h
4  HLL: uh-huh
5  L2L: es el mismo de: los estadosunidenses
6  HLL: mm
7  L2L: like e:h (.) like americans like o como
8  HLL: americanos?
9  L2L: lo, la palabra, estadounidense (.) es como like eh por
       puertorriqueños like la
10 HLL: america- so americanos?
11 L2L: sí, es, pero es like (.) el es el la palabra para decir
       personas de los estados unidos, como: estadounidenses sí?
12 HLL: okay, yeah heh
13 L2L: heh heh
14 HLL: heh heh tú tú escríbelo
15 L2L: estado-uni::-den-ses
16 HLL: okay uh-huh
```
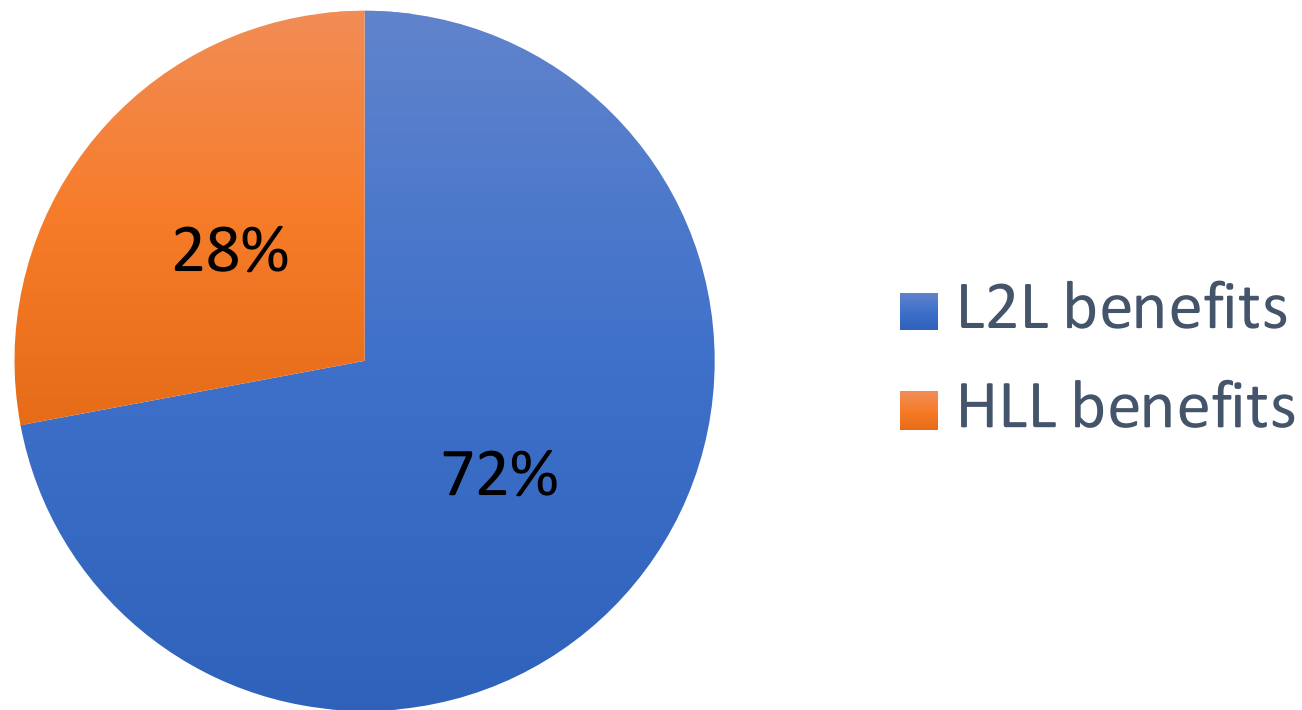
Who benefited most?

Who benefited most?

vocabulary

136 correctly resolved lexical language-related episodes

5 episodes per interaction (n = 27)
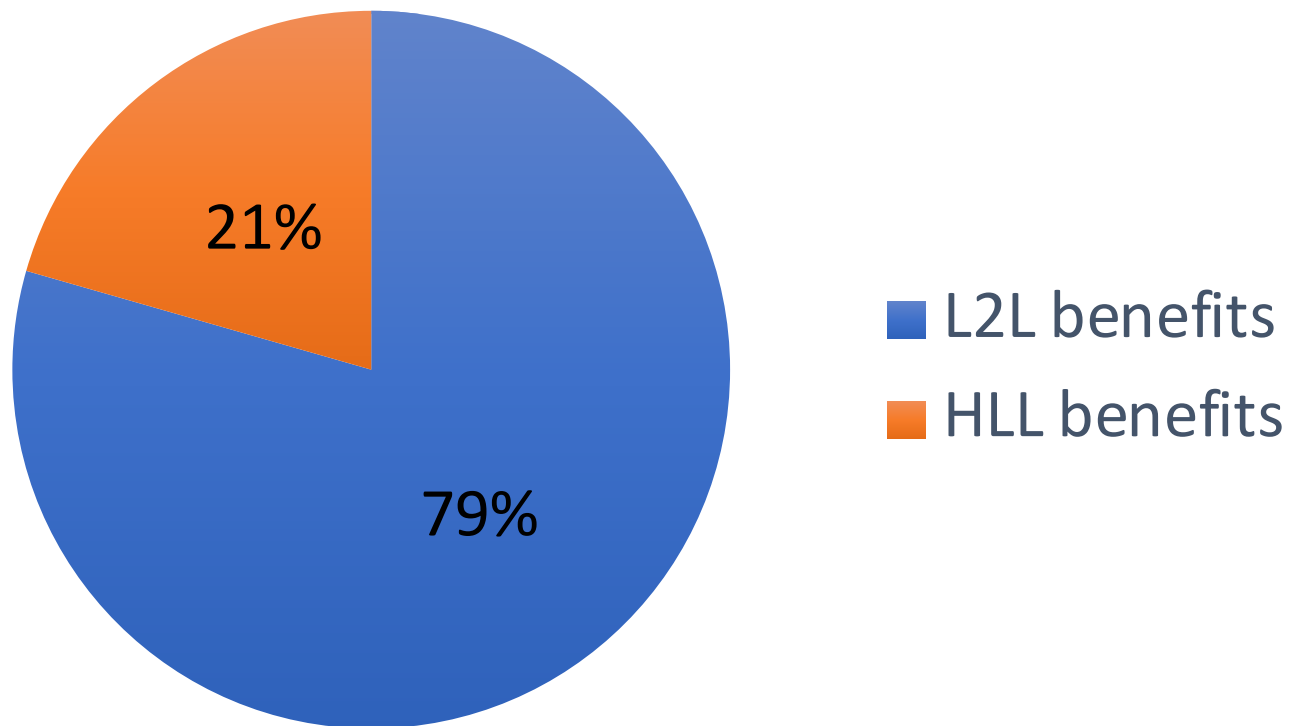

- 28%
- 72%

■ L2L benefits
■ HLL benefits

Who benefited most?

grammar

107 correctly resolved grammatical language-related episodes

4 episodes per interaction (n = 27)
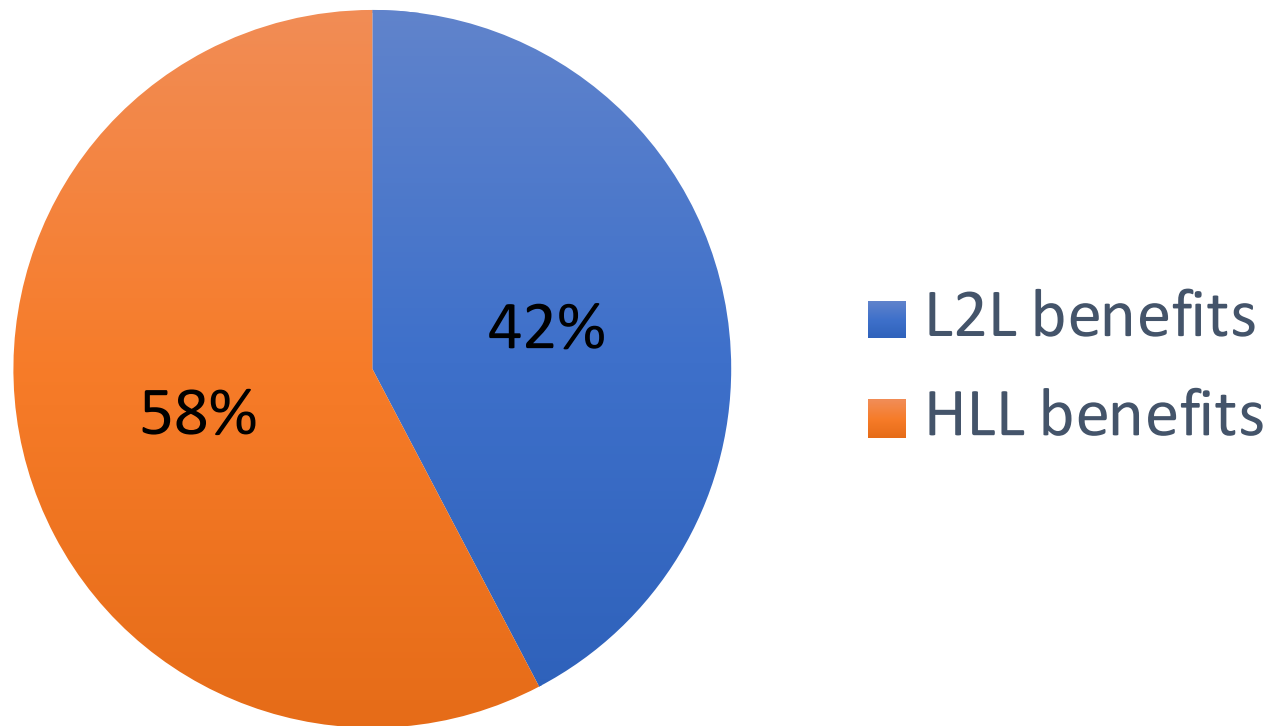

- L2L benefits
- HLL benefits

21%

79%

Who benefited most?

spelling and accentuation

26 successfully resolved mechanical language-related episodes

1 episode per interaction ($n = 27$)

- 42% — L2L benefits
- 58% — HLL benefits

Conclusions

Conclusions

- HL and L2 learners benefited from working together

- HL and L2 learners helped each other solve lexical, grammatical and mechanical problems

- L2 learners received more help with vocabulary and grammar

- HL learners received more help with spelling and accentuation

HL learners' questionnaires

- I would like to repeat the experience in future courses: 7/8

Main challenges could have been them expecting me to know more than them because I am Mexican, which really wasn't always the case

It was helpful because I got to put my skills at task in order to help my peers who are learning Spanish as a second language

One of the main benefits was how much I was able to teach them ... I felt like I did provide a lot for them to learn

Sometimes they did not know very much about the culture, but that gave me the opportunity to share some of my knowledge

Yes, because while it didn't really help me out much, I did feel like I helped them out. It is always satisfying helping someone out and they appreciating it

Thanks!

Ana Fernández Dobao

anadobao@uw.edu

REFERENCES:

Blake, R., & Zyzik, E. (2003). Who's helping whom?: Learner/heritage-speakers' networked discussions in Spanish. *Applied linguistics*, *24*(4), 519-544.

Bowles, M. (2011). Exploring the role of modality: L2-heritage learner interactions in the Spanish language classroom. *Heritage Language Journal*, *8*(1), 30-65.

Bowles, M., Adams, R., & Toth, P. (2014). A comparison of L2–L2 and L2–heritage learner interactions in Spanish language classrooms. *The Modern Language Journal*, *98*(2), 497-517.

Carreira, M. (2016). A general framework and supporting strategies for teaching mixed classes. In D. Pascual y Cabo (Ed.). *Advances in Spanish as a heritage language* (pp. 159-176). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Henshaw, F. (2015). Learning outcomes of L2-heritage learner interaction: The proof is in the posttests. *Heritage Language Journal*, *12*(3), 245-270.

Storch, N. (2011). Collaborative Writing in L2 Contexts: Processes, Outcomes, and Future Directions. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 31*, 275-288.

Walls, L. (2018). The effect of dyad type on collaboration: Interactions among heritage and second language learners. *Foreign Language Annals, 51*(3), 638-657.