Exploring Spanish Heritage Language Learning and Task Design for Virtual Worlds

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Exploring Spanish Heritage Language Learning

and Task Design for Virtual Worlds

by

Brandon J King

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Keywords: heritage language learning, heritage language teaching, Spanish as a heritage language, Second Life

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: Overview</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem of Statement</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of The Study</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory Questions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociocultural Theory &amp; Social Constructivism</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediating Heritage Language Acquisition</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordances</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociocultural Theory &amp; Research Methodology</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background and Personal Perspective</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familial Background</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructing A New Linguistic Identity</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Academic Formation To Current Research</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Study</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: Literature Review</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Heritage Language Learners</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining The Term Heritage Language Learner</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity and Motivations</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Implications</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Life</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordances For Language Learning</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerations For Second Life Task Design</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity In The Digital Age</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaps In Literature</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Methodology</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants and Context</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Recruitment Challenges</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Spanish Course</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings: Research Question 4 .......................................................... 146
Findings: Research Question 5 .......................................................... 147
Lessons Learned ................................................................. 150
  Institutional ............................................................... 150
  Individual Faculty Interactions ........................................ 151
Study Part II (Case Study) ..................................................... 154
Findings: Research Question 1 ..................................................... 155
Findings: Research Question 3 ..................................................... 156
Second Life Lab Pilot .......................................................... 158
  Lab Pilot Vs. David’s Case ............................................. 158
Theoretical Implications .................................................... 161
Social Cultural Theory ..................................................... 161
  Social Activity .......................................................... 162
  Mediation ............................................................... 162
  Affordances ............................................................ 164
  Social & Cognitive Resources .................................... 165
Community of Inquiry Framework & Motivation ...................... 166
  Motivation ............................................................... 167
  Social Presence ......................................................... 169
  Cognitive Presence .................................................. 170
  Teaching Presence ................................................... 170
Pedagogical Implications .................................................. 171
  HLLs & Differentiation ............................................. 172
    Cooperating Instructors ...................................... 172
  Understanding SHLLNeeds ...................................... 173
    Meeting Motivational Demands ......................... 174
  Supporting Ethnic Identity Through Language ............ 175
The Researcher’s Growth & Changes In Perspective ............... 177
Conclusion ................................................................ 180
References .................................................................. 181
Appendices .................................................................. 192
  Appendix A: Bilingual Continuum From Wei (2003) ............. 193
  Appendix B: Entry Survey For Focus Participants ............... 195
  Appendix C: Heritage Language Learner Background Survey .... 205
  Appendix D: End of Course Interview ............................. 215
  Appendix E: Exit Survey ............................................ 220
  Appendix F: ACTFL Standards For Foreign Language Learning 223
  Appendix G: Second Life Task Rubric ............................ 225
  Appendix H: Second Life Lab Syllabus ......................... 227
  Appendix I: Module Progression Outline ....................... 232
  Appendix J: Informed Consent Forms ............................ 237
  Appendix K: ACTFL Proficiency Level Definitions ............ 242
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Social Learning System</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td><em>Las Meninas</em></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>SCT Framework Elements</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>SCT: Language Mediation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Representation of Affordances in Language Learning System</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Organization of the Literature Review</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Bilingual Continuum Grouped by Power and Other Proficiency Components</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8</td>
<td>Example Second Life Avatar Selections</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9</td>
<td>Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison, Anderson, &amp; Archer, 1999)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10</td>
<td>Layout of Spanish Lab Home Island</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11</td>
<td>Second Life Viewer and Spanish Lab Home Island</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 12</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 13</td>
<td>SHLL Ethnicity</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 14</td>
<td>Importance of Maintaining Ethnic Heritage</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 15</td>
<td>SHLL Bilingualism along Bilingual Continuum</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 16</td>
<td>SHLLs and Technology</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 17</td>
<td>SHLL Technology Experience</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 18</td>
<td>SHLL Motivations</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 19</td>
<td>SHLL Pedagogical Perspectives</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 20</td>
<td>SHLL Outside Perspectives</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 21</td>
<td>SHLL Combined Perspectives Tree</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 22. Packed Code Cloud ................................................................. 112
Figure 23. David Bilingualism along Bilingual Continuum ................................. 127
Figure 24. David the Avatar ...................................................................... 130
Figure 25. David’s Avatar Description .......................................................... 131
Figure 26. Vignette A. Language & Identity ...................................................... 148
Figure 27. Vignette B. Motivations ................................................................. 149
Figure 28. SCT Framework ....................................................................... 162
Figure 29. Mediational Model .................................................................... 163
Figure 30. Affordances .............................................................................. 165
Figure 31. Integrated Community of Inquiry and Motivational framework (COI) .......... 166
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. HLL Typology derived from Carreira (2004) ................................................. 43
Table 2. Recommendations based on HLL typology (Carreira, 2004, p. 20) .................. 49
Table 3. Ethnicity Categories and Values ................................................................. 90
Table 4. Bilingualism Questions Mapped to Term ....................................................... 95
Table 5. Values for Packed Word Cloud ................................................................. 107
Table 6. Thematic Code Tree .................................................................................... 111
Table 7. Research Question Evolution ...................................................................... 125
Table 8. Motivational Differences: David vs. Majority of SHLLs ............................... 129
Table 9. David’s Module Progression* ....................................................................... 137
Table 10. Course Outcome Mapped to Module ........................................................ 142
Table 11. Course Outcomes Comparative Analysis: Pilot to Case Study .................. 159
ABSTRACT

In this exploratory case study, I take a constant comparative methods type approach to exploring a shift in second language acquisition (SLA) away from approaches built on the assumption that language participants in the U.S. are monolingual English speakers (Block, 2003; Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013; Valdés, 2005), with little initial investment in the language or its culture (Rivera-Mills, 2012; Valdés, Fishman, Chavéz, & Pérez, 2006). This bias has entrenched a monolingual speaker baseline for statistical analysis within many experimental designs (Block, 2003; Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013; Valdés, 2005). Further, I redress this methodological bias by applying sociocultural theoretical (SCT) (Vygotsky, 1986) approaches to investigating Spanish heritage language learners (SHLLs). Heritage Language Acquisition (HLA) has an established tradition of situating its research within socio-cultural context when considering language-learning phenomena, laying groundwork for relating these contextual factors to the issues in delivering pedagogically sound HL instruction.

Ducar (2008) identifies a specific gap in HLA literature, where HLL voices are underrepresented and Valdés et al. (2006) further highlights the need for the development of resources and strategies for accommodating HLLs specifically. I attempt to fill these gaps under SCT by using qualitative methods that incorporate HLL voices into the broader HLA discussion (Ducar, 2008). I take a bottom up approach to resource and task design targeted to serve Spanish heritage language learners (SHLLs) in the U.S. by first surveying the population’s backgrounds and motivations at universities that serve an over 20% student body of Hispanic/latin@ students. Next, I propose a supplemental resource whose agile design is able to adapt to the unique needs
of these SHLLs. Further, I investigate in what ways one technological resource, the virtual world Second Life (SL), may be adopted to meet Spanish HLL (SHLL) needs. In this second part, I analyze how one SHLL, who I will refer to as David (pseudonym), used this SL resource. I was guided in this analysis by asking: “In what ways does differentiating HL instruction with SL afford identity mediation through symbolic artifacts within SL?” and “In what ways can task design and extension activities be adapted to meet specific SHLLs’ needs without overly constraining their creative language use or the open format of SL?”.

I do this by first taking a snap shot via anonymous survey of 47 SHLLs across the U.S., attending 133 universities with a high level of undergraduate latin@/Hispanic students (20% or higher) that offer concentrations in Spanish (see http://www.collegedata.com). The respondents needed to be currently enrolled in a course advancing them beyond the Novice High level of proficiency as defined by ACFTL (2012). My analysis and discussion of these responses is organized around trends illuminated with descriptive statistics in their backgrounds and then motivations. Finally, I draw on open ended responses to create a qualitative analysis and present vignettes that highlight SHLL voices, while exemplifying trends found through word count analysis and axial coding of the data. Next, I explore the case of a single SHLL, reporting a familial connection to the language and studying intermediate Spanish at a university in the U.S, and his experience with SL.

My analysis of David’s case draws on data from a pre-survey that was designed to elicit data on his background, align discussion with established criteria for matching HLL backgrounds to learning needs, and elicit his emic perspective about using SL to study his HL. Additionally, the community of inquiry framework (COI) (Arbaugh, Cleveland-Innes, Diaz, Garrison, Ice, Richardson, & Swan, 2008) guided me in meticulously designing SL tasks that elicited data
about David’s engagement with the SL environment, its affordances, and the HL. These also provided insights into what ways that he chose to expand or deepen his command of the HL. I coded these data with Dedoose, a qualitative research tool, using a three-stage coding process similar to axial coding, building code trees and constantly relating themes to one another until saturated thematic categories emerge.

I build a critical discussion of what this coding process reveals in relation to the case-study’s research focuses above, the guiding research questions, and relate the resulting findings to possible implications for teaching Spanish to SHLLs in the U.S., instructional design for this population within specific intuitional constraints, and for task design that leverages specific affordances that SL may offer SHLLs.

In Part I, I present a rationale for introducing two new research questions to help guide my investigation of the survey of 47 SHLLs: “In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?” and “In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?”. I then used these research questions to analyze these data and weave a discussion. At the beginning of each stage of this analysis I explain the methodology behind the analysis and the generation of any figures or tables that helped me in interpreting the data and answering the research questions. Ultimately, I create vignettes to highlight SHLL voices (Ducar, 2008) and weave a narrative grounded in the major trends and themes sown together throughout the chapter.

In Part II, I present rationale for modifying my original three research questions, removing the second one completely due to lack of data: “In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?” and “In what ways do SHLL
motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?” I interweave my exploratory analysis and discussion about David’s background and motivations with that of the previous chapter to related David’s case to the larger data set. Further, I use the COI framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001) and Dörnyei’s (1994, 2005, 2009, 2014) work on motivation to analyze my instructional design in relation to David’s experience within the SL Lab. I analyze David’s motivational attractor states from a qualitative perspective as he progressed through to completion of the lab and compare motivational factors between David and pilot study participants. Based on these findings I offer some recommendations for both revising the proposed resource’s design and for the design of other resources that might capitalize on what I have learned during the course of this investigation.

During the course of these investigative efforts I also encountered some challenges and surprising rewards. I reserve a section of this study to discuss some of these challenges, such as institutional barriers, demands on student time, strains on student motivation, and instructional design adaptations that frequently failed to address these challenges despite being research supported approaches. I correspondingly recount how these challenges coupled with moments of collegial collaboration to help both myself as a researcher and the project to grow, persevere, and adapt during the long course of the investigation. It is my sincere hope that sharing this personal perspective provides greater context to the study and insight for other researchers that would take on similar research endeavors.
CHAPTER ONE
OVERVIEW

In Chapter 1, I provide some background on the purpose of this study: to describe and explain in what ways Spanish heritage language learners engage in pedagogically structured and tailored learning of their heritage language within Second Life. Moreover, I provide a concise review of the theoretical framework for the case-study, sociocultural theory (SCT), and key concepts related to understanding this theory (i.e., mediation and affordances). In addition, I provide a narrative accounting of how my own background as a learner of Spanish and my family’s connection to the language inspired such interest in the topic of this case-study. In the next chapter, Chapter 2, I provide a review of the relevant literature and synthesis on both Spanish heritage language learning (SHLA) and using Second Life (SL) for language teaching. Specifically, I focus on:

- Spanish heritage language learners
- Second Life
- Authenticity in the Digital Age

Finally, I identify some specific gaps that persist in the literature of the emerging fields of HLA and language education in SL. In Chapter 3, I elucidate the methodology for the study, which I apply in Chapters 4 and 5 during as I analyze the data and discuss the implications for trends uncovered during the analysis, ultimately weaving a narrative with vignettes that highlights SHLL voices. In Chapter 5, I also offer some recommendations for both revising the proposed resource’s design and for the design of other resources that might capitalize on what I
have learned during the course of this investigation. Finally, in Chapter 6, I reserve a section of this study to discuss some of these challenges and lessons learned. I correspondingly recount how these challenges coupled with moments of collegial collaboration to help both myself as a researcher and the project to grow, persevere, and adapt during the long course of the investigation. It is my sincere hope that sharing this personal perspective provides greater context to the study and insight for other researchers that would take on similar research endeavors.

**INTRODUCTION**

Teaching Spanish in the U.S. has traditionally been modeled on the assumption that the participants are monolingual English speakers with little initial investment in the language or its culture (Rivera-Mills, 2012; Valdés, Fishman, Chavéz, & Pérez, 2006). This reflects an overall bias in second language acquisition (SLA) research that has used monolingual speakers as a baseline for statistical analysis within experimental design (Block, 2003; Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013; Valdés, 2005). Further, Valdés (1995) notes that for substantial discussion into the direction for different fields of SLA to take place, the embedded methodological and epistemological assumptions between research traditions within these fields must be made evident. SLA research has since started to reflect a shift in understanding the difference between individual differences for language learning for bilingual and bicultural participants that are studying a language (Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013); although, this research is often cognitively focused and reticent to embrace sociocultural theoretical (SCT) (Vygotsky, 1986) approaches that are well established in educational research.

Heritage Language Acquisition (HLA), as a subfield within SLA, has not followed this monolingually biased trend, however, and has embraced socio-cultural and factors when considering language learning phenomena. Further, this field is still emerging as an academic
area distinct from other SLA subfields, leaving a good deal of work to be done. Ducar (2008), nevertheless, identifies a gap in the current HLA literature where heritage language learner (HLL) voices are underrepresented and Valdés et al. (2006) further highlights the need for the development of resources and strategies for accommodating HLLs specifically. The case-study would fill these gaps under SCT by using qualitative methods to bring HLL voices into the discussion (Ducar, 2008) and investigating in what ways one resource, the virtual world Second Life, may be adopted to meet HLL needs.

![Social Learning System](image)

**Figure 1.** Social Learning System

From a theoretical perspective, Lantolf and Thorne (2006) and Johnson (2004) critique SLA’s entrenched cognitive focus for being based on language production rather than the underlying processes, and they offer a response for reframing language learning research dialectally under SCT. This shift would allow for the unification of both internal and environmental factors by understanding learning as a fundamentally social process that is influenced not only by motivations, aptitude, and self-identity factors, but also social, historical,
and group identity factors (see Figure 1) (Lantolf & Throne, 2006; Johnson, 2004; Vygotsky, 1986). Valdés (2005) also critiques SLA’s focus in bilingualism in the case of minority language and heritage language speakers for being unconcerned with broader social contexts that are necessary for understanding these types of bilinguals.

In the case of Spanish in the U.S., where there has been a steady influx of immigrants from Spanish countries (Carreira, 2013) and several communities of Spanish speakers have been established since colonial times (Valdés et al., 2006), the assumption that all participants of Spanish in foreign language (FL) classrooms began as monolingual English speakers is an illogical one. While SLA research has begun to recognize that shifting from monolingual bias in research design must be reflected in the field (Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013), the field of Spanish HLA (SHLA) has understood how this monolingual bias diverges from the reality of instructing participants from minority language populations (Lynch, 2003; Rivera-Mills, 2012; Valdés, 1995, 2001, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2001).

The body of work, though growing rapidly, in the area of HLA is still a recent field when compared to other areas of SLA; it diverges from traditional SLA (Lynch, 2003) in its critically informed perspective and specific focus on heritage languages (HLs) and their learners. HLA deals exclusively with minority language learning (Leeman, 2012; Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Valdés, 1995, 2001, 2005; Valdés, Fishman, Chavéz, & Pérez, 2006), which in the U.S. is defined as any language other than English (Valdés et al., 2006), and has typically focused on cases where the student’s development of an HL was impeded/interrupted in some way so that the majority language system assumes dominance (Valdés, 1995, 2005; Wei, 2000). HLA is also significantly concerned with subverting dominant language ideologies, by empowering participants with HL proficiency and cultural resources (Leeman, 2012; Leeman,
Most of the literature, though framed within a critical theoretical perspective, follows the post-positivist research tradition in its methodological approaches (i.e., Valdés, 1995, 2001; Valdés et al., 2006); however, as is argued here, it is also well suited for investigation from a social historical or social constructivist perspective. Specifically, this perspective is suitable due to the influence that both social and historical factors have had on the marginalization and academic development of Spanish Heritage Language Learner (S/HLL) populations in the U.S. (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Rivera-Mills, 2012).

Participants being instructed in their heritage language (HL), which in the context of the U.S. would be any language other than English (Valdés et al., 2006) that the student shares a familial connection to (Carreira, 2004), are varied (Valdés, 2001) across linguistic spectrums of bilingualism (Wei, 2000) and typologies that based on sociocultural backgrounds, motivations, and other needs (Carreira, 2004). Efforts to parse out participants (and study participants) who may qualify for SHLL status has teased out a complex debate about awarding this status to participants and subsequently has led to the creation of several frameworks for considering SHLL classification (Carreira, 2004; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2001; Wei, 2000). Specifically, HLA has focused on pre-existing linguistic and cultural competencies that SHLLs do not share with their monolingual English-speaking classmates and the pedagogical challenges associated with addressing this imbalance (Valdés et al., 2006; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2001).

Teachers can, however, capitalize on these differences and leverage them to benefit both SHLLs and other classmates (Carreira, 2004). HLA informed critical pedagogy recognizes Spanish heritage language learners’ (S/HLLs) needs for authentic resources and interactions (Valdés 1995, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006), such as those that incorporate authentic interactions in
simulated cultural environments relevant to SHLLs (Carreira, 2004), such as Second Life (SL), and allow SHLLs to meet their own needs while bridging other learners to the HL and its culture(s). Additionally, for some SHLLs, assuming an expert role can bolster confidence and address feelings of rejection or inadequacy in SHLLs (Carreira, 2004). Calls for pedagogies that afford HLLs cognitive resources and interaction with cultural artifacts that can mediate HLL identity construction (Oh & Filigini, 2010) in relation to knowledge of their HL and HL culture (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011) have pervaded the field; however, guidance for using recent novel technologies to foster collaborative and social learning or the creation and exchange of cultural artifacts has yet to be included.

To fill this gap, the study would provide SHLLs with access to a social learning environment, the 3D virtual world Second Life (SL), that fosters authentic interactions with Spanish speakers from all over the world (Blasing, 2010) and cultural artifacts. SL is a stunningly rendered, immersive, and adaptive social environment that is experienced through an avatar, a customizable 3D representation of the user (Andreas, Tsiatsos, Terzidou, & Pomportsis, 2010). The open format of SL shows promise in providing invaluable affordances for mediating language learning (Blasing, 2010; Chen, Warden, Tai, Chen, & Chao, 2011; Ibáñez, García, Galán, Maroto, Morillo, & Kloos, 2011; Jauregi, Canto, de Graaff, Koenraad, & Moonen, 2011) for SHLLs. Rich cultural sites and groups can afford SHLLs expeditions (Blasing, 2010) into their heritage through avatar mediated immersive interaction with these sites and their denizens.

SL is a virtual world that offers multiple artifacts and affordances for language learning, many of which are just now beginning to be investigated (Andreas et al., 2010). Within the virtual environment exists a vast array of populations and social groups that are eager to interact with people from other cultures (Sykes, 2008; Sykes, Oskoz, & Thorne, 2008), perhaps most
relevant to SHLLs, and mediate their communication through a variety of languages via a host of in world tools afforded to residents (Andreas et al., 2010). Chat, for example, affords SHLLs engagement with TL speakers and a sense of agency that allows them to weave multiple semiotic texts and the words of others into authentic interactions (Lam, 2000) as TL speakers mediate student language learning with real time feedback.

The existing SL research suggests that the many SL affordances support collaborative language learning by fostering authentic dialogue with target language (TL) speakers (Blasing, 2010; Jauregi et al., 2011; Sykes, 2008), facilitating TL community access (Jauregi et al. 2011), heightening intercultural competency (Jauregi et al. 2011), and motivating participants (Wehner, Downey, & Gump, 2011). Specifically, the ability to customize an avatar over time has shown to have a unique effect on language learning (Blasing, 2010), which could be especially useful for some SHLLs. In fact, the affordances identified above could each be employed to address specific needs through directed task design (Jauregi et al., 2011).

**PROBLEM OF STATEMENT**

Both the fields of HLA and language learning in SL are relatively recent areas of study that have only begun to explore the phenomena within each area. Moreover, although repeated calls for investigation into the development of resources to support HLA have been made (Carreira, 2004; Leeman et al., 2011; Valdés 1995, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006), very few studies focus on the development and impact of these resources on SHLLs and none to my knowledge capitalize on the affordances that structured task design can have for SHLLs. SL also supports unique opportunities to investigate how SHLLs make use of an open social learning environment that is completely missing from the HLA literature, and only beginning to be understood in the context of language learning in general. Further, the importance of task design for using SL for
language learning has also been continually identified as important to understanding learning outcomes (Jauregi et al., 2011) but remain elusive in the literature. Grounded in these two identified gaps, it follows that investigation remains important into both how SHLLs make use of SL as a resource for studying their HL while developing their own sense of identity in relation to that HL (Oh & Filigini, 2010) and the impact of structured task design on those processes.

In the process of exploring these two areas, it also remains important to understand what affordances or cultural artifacts offered by SL are best employed by SHLLs and how these learners utilize these to negotiate their own sense of identity in relation to their HL. In addition, the role that a customizable avatar might play in affording SHLLs a malleable visual representation of these processes for all also remains a mystery that is worth exploring (Blasing, 2010). Although social constructivist perspectives also are missing from the HLA literature, they remain consistent with efforts to include sociolinguistic factors that contribute to the development of SHLLs as a phenomenon in the U.S. Further expansion on this by viewing HLA as a social learning experience by applying SCT to understanding how HLA occurs within SL is also an important step to bridging the HLA research fields and computer assisted language learning (CALL) fields, which widely view learning in SL from a social constructivist perspective (Blasing, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Ibáñez et al., 2011; Jauregi et al., 2011; Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011), in a way that has not been done previously.
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to first to take a bottom up approach to designing a tool for SHLLs who are actively working to study their HL. The first part of this study focusses on the investigating SHLL backgrounds and motivations in the U.S. The second part of this study then seeks to describe and explain how one SHLL engages in pedagogically structured and tailored learning of their HL within the immersive world Second Life.

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS

This exploratory study integrates a theoretical understanding of the current state for SHLA research and an investigation into delivering informed HL instruction in SL through situated learning and differentiated extension activities. It employs a primarily qualitative research design, consistent with Vygotsky’s genetic method as described by Lantolf and Thorne (2006) to address a call for such SHLA research within the literature (Rivera-Mills, 2012), generalizable results from large sample sizes are beyond the scope of this case study. Grounded in the theoretical considerations above, the following guiding research questions were derived:

1) In what ways does differentiating HL instruction with SL impact performance in the HL and afford identity mediation through the HL or other symbolic artifacts within SL?

2) What affordances do SHLLs find most useful for studying their HL and reinforcing their own sense of ethnic identity?

3) In what ways can task design and extension activities be adapted to meet specific SHLLs’ needs without overly constraining their creative language use or the open format of SL?
However, given the exploratory and qualitative nature of this study, I have left room for these questions to evolve, as discussed further in Chapter 5, and for additional questions to be generated based on where my exploration and the data take me. To that end, the additional two research questions that were created following my initial data analyses, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4:

4) In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?

5) In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?

**DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Before transitioning from the case-study focus into its theoretical framework, I would first like to define some terms that are key to understanding later sections. A broader discussion of the following terms is made in later sections; however, it is my hope that proposing the below definitions here make the following text more accessible and establish a baseline for that later discussion. Additionally, for the purpose of being as clear as possible when discussing the case-study, I outline below how terms that may be contested within other literature are defined for current purposes.

*Affordance:* In this study, these are the social and simulated opportunities that are provided to SHLLs within SL, typically named within the meditational process.

*Artifact:* In the context of SL, artifacts are simulated through beautifully rendered constructs that users can interact with through their avatar, artifacts still serve their meditational purposes in goal-directed activity, but they do this in a way that is abstracted from the physical world.
**Avatar:** A customizable 3D representation of the user, that may be changed over time or manipulated to suit specific social purposes. These are not limited to humanoid constructs.

**Chat-logs:** These are files created by the SL chat feature, which documents user interaction others, the environment, artifacts, and actions. They include time stamps for each time a user ends a turn in conversation by pressing the “return” or “enter” keys, or when automated messages that result from user interaction with objects or actions within the SL.

**Heritage Language:** In this study, this is considered any language to which the learners have a familial connection. Specifically, the HL targeted is Spanish and includes multiple varieties beyond the standardized Castilian typically taught in the study context.

**Mediation:** This refers to a dynamic process where a learner and others engage with affordances provided by tools, artifacts, and social and cognitive resources (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) of their environment to construct meaning through speech that influences their material activity.

**Real Life:** This is also sometimes referred to as First Life but represents the physical and social reality outside of SL of a study participant or interlocutor to which they are speaking.

**Second Life:** This is a stunningly rendered, immersive, and adaptive social 3D environment that is experienced through an avatar.

**Spanish Heritage Language Learner:** In this study, this refers to any student actively engaged in the acquisition of the Spanish language to which they can exert a familial (heritage) claim.
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the following section, I outline the frameworks that I draw on in taking a constant comparative method grounded theoretical approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) for framing this exploratory case-study and interpreting results related to the study’s resulting research questions. Under this approach, I begin with theoretical sampling that evolves throughout the course of the study, as my understanding of the underlying phenomena evolves and my research questions along with it. I expand on this further as data collection and analysis proceed in Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6. I do this by first describing how a shift from positivist research traditions has led to the raise of later paradigms and relate these to manifestations of evolving human thought in art from the corresponding eras. These paradigms are essential to begin my exploration and are primarily concerned with broad interpretations of the nature of reality and methods for establishing phenomena within this understanding but are not focused on specific theoretical perspectives that explain the processes of those theories. Second, I broadly outline how sociocultural theory (SCT) arose from these shifting paradigms by linking the post-structural works of Bakhtin (1986) to the social constructivist work of Vygotsky (1986). Finally, I describe how SCT has been interpreted and applied within studies of virtual worlds and language learning.
*Note. On the left is Diego Velázquez’s version of *Las Meninas* as painted from a single perspective, but still includes multiple levels of perspective by including the artist within a mirror in the scene. On the right is Pablo Picasso’s later interpretation of the same scene but viewed from a post-modern perspective. He paints each element as if seen from multiple angles at once to provide a more whole version of the subject matter but strips out much of the details and even the color. This renders what appears to be a distorted version of the scene but also presents a more honest representation as he is able to perceive and process without making untenable claims about recreating reality in its entirety. Bakhtin (1986) might conflate this with the processes that language learners go through as they take the utterances of others and eventually use those utterances in new and novel ways. In SLA, there has been a shift from the positivist tradition—concerned with understanding singular universal truth—that formed during the Enlightenment to contemporary poststructuralist views and later the postmodern rejection of these views (Crotty, 1998). This shift has not been isolated to areas of SLA research but also echoed in artistic and literary movements (i.e., the corresponding aesthetic movement to positivism would be realism). Positioned between both the literary and linguistic research camps, Bakhtin (1986) advocates for literary and SLA research to embrace postmodern ideals. In his writings, he describes language learners as drowning in a sea of voices that they eventually manage to incorporate into their own voice (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), much like the postmodern artists such as Picasso who painted...
subject matter from multiple views within a single comprehensive image to create a unique representation (see Figure 2). This view is especially suited towards unifying (S)HLA under a single dialectal theory. Vygotsky (1986) builds on the ontological and epistemological foundations that Bakhtin’s (1986) dialogism lays in his writings on speech genres, but from a social constructivist perspective, with the advent of what is commonly referred to as SCT.

Vygotsky (1986) describes a process of genesis for language learning and other psychological processes, where mimicry of the external world (echoing the voices of others) eventually turns inward as private speech. In the case of SHLLs, the linguistic input that is available to them depends greatly on the context in which they are learning and how inclusive of linguistic variety that these contexts may be (Carreira, 2004; Leeman, 2012, Valdés, 2005). It is important to note that Vygotsky (1986) understood this inward shift differently than internalization as described in cognitive SLA, as the process remains socially grounded (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006) private speech mediates language learning by affording the learner an explicit means of monitoring input and output and mediating their language performance internally. For SHLLs that are struggling with their own ethnic identity due to their linguistic proficiency, the force and even code of private speech may be a significant variable to understanding that meditational process. Further, Lantolf and Thorne (2006) describe that over time, this private speech leads to proceduralization of linguistic features and the learner is able to turn outward again, weaving the echoes of other voices into their own creative utterances that “potentially impacts the self and the community” (p. 158).

It then follows that any theory that would seek to include a spectrum for SHLLs, would need to account for each SHLL’s own position within the community and their motivations related to community membership. There has not been any research, that I am aware of, that
would seek to include this impact in their investigation; although, the impact of language transmission from parents and newly arrived immigrants has been investigated (Carreira, 2013).

Language learning is an inherently social process situated within social, historical, and political contexts that learners are motivated to operate in and construct their own identity in relation to (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1986). Educational researchers using social technologies like Web 2.0 and Virtual worlds have established a tradition of framing their research within a social constructivist theory that accounts for these variables (Dawley & Dede, 2014), while S/HLA has established a critical research tradition that brings power dynamics surrounding those variables to light so that they may be interrupted and HLLs freed from their repressive influences. However, the dialectal nature of SCT allows for a merger of these two traditions by accounting for what many underlying socio-historical and motivational variables have on S/HLA and considering how it occurs through situated learning in SL.

**Sociocultural Theory & Social Constructivism**

Much of the existing research on SL is framed within a social constructivist perspective, which draws on many SCT theoretical constructs and has been the way that computer assisted language learning (CALL) and instructional technology (IT) have typically interpreted Vygotskian SCT. In the following section I outline the connection between SCT and social constructivism while defining key theoretical constructs that the case-study draws upon. Additionally, I provide justification for why SCT is a good fit for explaining SHLA related phenomena and filling the previously identified research gap.

Lantolf and Thorne (2006) critique many established research traditions favored in SLA for focusing on the products of cognitive processes rather than the processes themselves, arguing that SCT (Vygotsky, 1986) represents a dialogical research tradition (Bakhtin, 1986) that derives
dialectal understanding through qualitative and mixed methods research. Consistent with Bakhtin’s notion of dialogism and informed by postmodernism, Lantolf and Thorne (2006) and Johnson (2004) advocate for an approach that weaves a chorus of perspectives into a unified theory for language learning and teaching. Johnson (2004) specifically advocates for a dialectal unification of cognitive and social approaches to SLA under the theoretical framework for SCT, which includes greater accounting for dynamic systems, which SHLA critical research has brought to light (Valdés, 2005), and the interaction of complex social, psychological, and historical variables in relation to motivational and cognitive factors.

Research into virtual worlds, however, is often framed in the social constructivist tradition because of its ability to foster situated and collaborative learning within social environments that brings leaders within zones of proximal development (ZPD) (Hsu, Ching, & Grabowski, 2014). This tradition is “not only sympathetic to Vygotsky’s General theory but in fact has appropriated several of its constructs” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 157) and specifically represents how IT has interpreted Vygotsky’s work (van Merriënboer & de Bruin, 2014). In fact, one would be hard pressed to find language research carried out in SL without SCT incorporated into the framework (Blasing, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Ibáñez et al., 2011; Jauregi et al., 2011; Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011).
SCT considers language learning as a socially mediated process that draws upon affordances provided by tools, artifacts, and social and cognitive resources (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), which can also be applied to SHLA specifically (see Figure 3). The dialectal approach that Vygotsky (1986) proposes, would unite notions of the self and the outside world under a single theoretical framework that is built around social mediation (see Figure 4). Key to understanding this is considering artifacts beyond their physicality, such as their immaterial but social manifestations within virtual worlds like SL. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) explain that “artifacts are simultaneously material and conceptual aspects ... of goal-directed activity that are not only incorporated into this activity but are constitutive of it” (p. 62). In the context of SL, artifacts are simulated through beautifully rendered constructs that users can
interact with through their avatar. Artifacts still serve their meditational purposes in goal-directed activity, but they do this in a way that is abstracted from the physical world. For SHLLs, such an environment may foster a low risk social learning experiences, by incorporating authentic cultural artifacts and affording SHLLs HLA mediation in a novel and comfortable way.

Figure 4. SCT: Language Mediation

*Note. “Mediation is a bi-directional process that creates the single (person-environment) system. The mediating artifact allows external objective social activity to become idealized through the construction of personally relevant meaning while mental activity (the ideal) becomes objectified through speech and thus influences the material activity of the self and others” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 154).

Lantolf and Thorne (2006) further advocate for challenges to artifact conceptualizations by encouraging language teachers and participants, “to interrogate meditational artifacts and their cultures-of-use as an important (and altogether neglected) dimension of educational uses of Internet-mediated communication” (p. 67). This is precisely what research that applies SCT to understanding HLA in virtual worlds does but has yet to do for SHLLs; however, much of the existing SL language research focuses on the affordances that are offered in SLA (Blasing, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Ibáñez et al., 2011; Jauregi et al., 2011).
Affordances

The term affordances is discussed differently by many computer assisted language learning (CALL) researchers using the social constructivist perspective (i.e., Belz, 2001; Ho, Rappa, & Chee, 2009; Dawley & Dede, 2014) than by other researchers operating within SCT or social constructivism (i.e., Andreas et al., 2010; Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Many CALL studies do not explicitly define what affordances are but tend to treat the term interchangeably with features of the technology being studied, rather than as a part of the processes involved in social constructivist language learning. Caroline Mei Lin Ho, Natasha Anne Rappa, and Yam San Chee (2009), for example, describe “the ‘visually enlightening’ affordances of SL technology” (p.393), citing the SL avatar as an affordance rather than a social construct that affords participants customization of how their identity is visually represented or affords them a means for interacting with other artifacts in the virtual environment, as would be done within SCT. Further, Belz (2001) explicitly conflates affordances with features of technology when describing how computer mediated communication (CMC) research has used the term, “it is precisely these features of CMC that some researchers have called its greatest affordances to learning” (p.224). Other theoretical work and reviews of the existing literature within instructional technology also does this, as do Dawley and Dede (2014) while they synthesize research on identified affordances offered by Second Life, “spatial simulation is one of the fundamental affordances of VW environments” (p. 729), naming “spatial simulation” as a feature rather than the opportunities (affordances) (van Lier, 2000, 2004) that this feature offers learners or how it functions in meditational processes.

van Lier (2000, 2004), who has been accredited with first introducing the concept of affordances to SCT (Vorobel, 2013), presents a contrary understanding of this concept to that
presented in the CALL studies cited above. He describes, for example, how opportunities arise as a function of contextual conditions, “in this way the context provides affordances (possibilities for action that yield opportunities for engagement and participation) that can stimulate intersubjectivity, joint attention, and various kinds of linguistic commentary” (van Lier, 2004, p. 81). Moreover, van Lier (2000, 2004) would argue that in SCT research on SL the individual features such as artifacts, tools, and agents (SL residents) in themselves should not be discussed as affordances; however, the opportunities for learning through socially mediated meaning making should be discussed as affordances.

Further, van Lier (2004) draws on postmodern understandings of how individuals relate to their own constructed sense of reality (Bakhtin, 1986) to describe a fundamental problem with creating universally applicable lists of affordances for studied environments. To explain, an affordance is not only a function of the environment with a feature of that environment, but also how an individual understands the opportunity to make use of that feature within that context (see Figure 5 as an interpretation of the concept of affordances as described by van Lier, 2004). He uses the example of someone needing cross a narrow body of water that sees a stone to step on, the stone presents an opportunity, but it is up to that person to understand that opportunity and capitalize on it. Someone else might be impaired in some way, for example, from being able to leap to the rock and so they would not consider that same rock as useful for achieving their goal of crossing the body of water. In much the same way, features of a technology like SL must be understood by language learners as presenting them with specific opportunities to interact in the target language, gain access to its culture, or some other related objective. This has implications for both the training of language learners on how to use the SL platform and for modeling how language learners can capitalize on the resources being afforded them by SL.
Sociocultural Theory and Research Methodology

SCT research, according to Vygotsky (1986), should be done in a way that is antithetical to traditional SLA research methodologies, which tests presupposed hypotheses against data under experimentally controlled conditions. As discussed above, this approach has led to an entrenched monolingual bias in the research because participants who did not fit into controlled experimental parameters, such as SHLLs, were discounted as outliers and clear benchmarks were required for experimental design (Ortega, 2009, 2013). Vygotsky’s genetic approach, however, inductively derives understanding from data gathered under authentic conditions (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), such as those fostered in synchronous SL interactions with HL speakers and through HL community membership, like those employed in Conversation/Discourse Analyses (CA and DA) (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne 2006) that have recently been adapted for analyzing SL chat interactions (Pojapunya & Jaroenkitboworm, 2011).
Lantolf and Thorne (2006) also critique other research traditions favored in SLA for focusing on the products of cognition rather than the processes themselves, suggesting that Vygotsky’s genetic method and SCT are able to foster a new dialogical research tradition (Bakhtin, 1986) that would bring about understanding through qualitative research methods. Consistent with Bakhtin’s notion of dialogism and grounded in his postmodern stance, Lantolf and Thorne (2006) and Johnson (2004) advocate for an approach to language research methodologies that include a chorus of perspectives. Johnson (2004) specifically advocates for a dialectal unification of cognitive and social approaches to SLA under the theoretical framework for SCT, which includes greater accounting for dynamic systems and the interaction of complex social, psychological, and historical variables in addition to biological and cognitive factors.

The body of work on SHLA in the U.S. has rigorously included portraits of the historical and social influences that impact SHL learning in the U.S. (Carreira, 2004, 2013; Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012; Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Valdés 1995, 2000; Valdés et al., 2006). Analysis of these variables has typically been to methodically illuminate hidden curricula and language ideologies in an attempt to interrupt their hegemonic reproduction through directed and critical discourse (Crotty, 1998). Only in recent cases has it been incorporated directly into understanding the phenomena of SHLL identity related to pedagogy as Carreira (2004) does, which indicates an unanswered need for investigation from an SCT perspective.
BACKGROUND AND PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

This study approaches understanding in what ways SHLLs would benefit from engaging in pedagogically structured and tailored learning of their HL within SL from an SCT perspective, utilizing qualitative research methodologies (for a full discussion, see the Methodology section in Chapter 3). In the context of such qualitative research, the researcher is considered the primary research instrument and the research context as essential to understanding the phenomena being studied, it is important to define the motivations and biases of this instrument (Janesick, 2011). For this reason, the following section is organized to first link my own familial background as Spanish-speaking immigrants to the U.S. to the subsequent renegotiation of identities, related to language dominance and national identity affiliation. Next, I describe how my academic pursuit of the heritage that my (great)grandparents had left behind in Spain has worked to form me as a researcher and connect me to those SHLLs whom I have educated or whom have participated in research HLA with me. I describe how I became involved in this area of research and came to understand SL as a potentially useful venue for fostering SHLLs’ own pursuits of their heritage through the study of Spanish and interaction with some varied populations its speakers.

Familial Background

Like many children in the United States, I spent the majority of my childhood considering myself as an American, first and foremost. My identity was not something that I spent a great deal of time contemplating, my family seemed more or less like anyone else’s and so I did not spend a large amount of time dwelling on where we came from, what languages we may have spoken, or why we might have ended up in the United States. My world was much smaller than it is now. It was not until the sixth grade when I was presented with the task of compiling an autobiography that questions about my ethnicity or heritage even came into focus,
but with the simple act of sitting with my grandmother to discuss where she and grandfather met and where their relatives lived that the course of my life was forever altered.

I discovered that she had in fact started her life in the northern regions of Spain, a place called Viscaya, that was populated by her people, the Spanish Basque. She told me how her father packed her and her older brother up with their mother to leave their home and escape the fate that their neighbors had suffered under the repressive regime of a dictator called Franco. They were to be smuggled into England and from there to board a cattle barge bound for the United States of America. I would not understand much of what the conditions were like in Spain for the Basque and many other less-prestigious ethnic groups in Spain, until working on my masters in Spanish literature and encountering the eye-opening work of Dulce Chacón’s (2006) *La voz dormida* that breaks the silence of repression by bringing the voices of repressed Spanish populations to print. I could certainly not have imagined what the war to repress these marginalized populations might have seemed through the eyes of a little girl, as in *El laberinto del fauno* (see del Toro, 2006).

The emigration process from Spain was not without some rewards, however, my grandmother fortuitously also met my grandfather when he was a boy on that same boat that she and her family bartered for passage on. He was a very young cowherd bound for the United States to live with an aunt since his father and mother could not care for him back in Britain.

I was the grandson of immigrants, immigrants who had come to this country with very little more than a desire for a better life. I felt instantly indebted to them for what they had gone through so that I could be raised in such comfort here in the United States, but I could not also help but feel like a huge hole had just opened up in the space where my identity had been so solid
before. I became more and more motivated over time to find this missing part of myself, to fill in the blanks about this chapter of my heritage.

My mind became flooded with questions, not the least of which was Why don’t any of us speak Spanish or Basque anymore? My grandmother looked at me dumbfounded when posed this question, she simply responded with “We don’t live there anymore. We’re American now and we speak English here” (a quote that still sticks with me to this day). I was still confused so I probed further over time and she slowly released little bits of the story. She told me how, as a little girl, she had spoken several languages besides English, including Spanish, Basque, and French. She said that her teachers would not have any other language than English spoken, however, and that her parents were asked to only use English at home. I could not help but see my grandmother as I read Sonia Nieto’s (2011) Learning to Tie a Bow, and other recollections of becoming biliterate, which is part of the required course materials for a class about teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. I could see her becoming quiet and withdrawn because of the status that the monolingual English speaker ideal was being endowed with and that my grandmother spent her life working to master.

She was forced from what I would grow to appreciate and what my colleagues reify as being a balanced bilingual (Wei, 2000) of several languages. Denigrated in status, she assumed the lesser position that English Language Learners (ELLs), such as her, could negotiate within the classroom and came to understand that this was somehow less than the loftier positions that her monolingual English-speaking classmates were able to attain (Katz & Dasilva Iddings, 2009). How ludicrous, from my perspective now that I have gone to great lengths to acquire Spanish among other languages, to think that someone with less skill, knowledge, and cultural competence should be the ideal for an academic environment of any level. Unfortunately, being
grouped with speakers of less prestigious languages and language varieties within social contexts is something that is still observed, more than 60 years later (McNamara, 1997).

With this move, imposed by the school system and other societal pressures of the time, my link to a wonderfully diverse linguistic and cultural heritage had all but been severed just as with many others since (Faux, 2013). More than that, as far as I was and still am concerned, my grandmother’s identity was splintered into the repressed memory of a bright bilingual child from a land in turmoil and a monolingual English-speaker facade, which she would work tirelessly to craft and effect for the rest of her life. My grandmother had worked tirelessly to negate the othering that had dominated her childhood by mastering English and masking any foreignness in her accent, letting American culture and the English language consume our familial heritage until it was a distant and unpleasant memory.

**Constructing a New Linguistic Identity**

I began my work to reconnect with my heritage in Middle School, somewhat misguidedly, when for the first time I was given the option of learning a language other than English and I eagerly enrolled in Spanish. I say misguided because I did not understand what it meant to be Spanish Basque let alone realize that Basque was a minority language in Spain, confusion I hope to help other participants avoid. It had been marginalized along with other languages of the Iberian Peninsula by the dominance of Castilian and the subjugation of other regions of Spain to Castile in centuries passed. Not that it would have made a great deal of difference, since Basque is rarely taught even at the University level let alone in a Midwestern Middle School. My choices were fairly limited to much more prevalently taught languages (Spanish, German, Italian, and French). Needless to say, my grandmother was confused by my choice to study Spanish since she had worked so hard to leave that chapter of our family history
behind her and fit with the majority monolingual English speaking population that she saw as advantaged in the U.S.

I excelled in the Spanish courses offered through high school, not quite realizing the gap in standards between public school Spanish in the U.S. and university level course but was infuriated by how little substance these classes offered me. They seemed to praise my classmates who belittled culture as easily mastered through the addition of a sombrero, chihuahua, and nacho cheese dip to any role-plays or class skits. Beyond this trivialization of the cultural information that I was starting to learn more about, especially concerning my lost heritage, I found my advancement linguistically to also be painfully inadequate. I was earning above average marks, I had worked hard to study for almost six years, and then by the time I graduated, and I could still do little more than ask where the bathroom was (at least in any fluid manner). My struggles with this phase of my education and even into college are not uncommon, unfortunately (Valdés et al., 2006).

I was rewarded with much more substance when working on my masters in Spanish literature, however, but my path had been set: I was going to do something about this broken system and work to help others who wanted to learn about where they came from because I surely could not be the only one. This background has generally helped me to forge stronger relationships with the SHLLs that I have had the privilege to work with and has also allowed them to speak more openly about their experiences with their HL and other HL speakers.

I began teaching Spanish while working on my masters, then eventually my Ph.D., and given my own Spanish courses to teach. I began looking into the education of heritage populations in the U.S. After assuming posts as both a substitute teacher, specializing in working with young ESOL new comer participants, and as a teacher educator, working to prepare teacher...
candidates to serve ELLs in the public schools, I see a phenomenon that is not isolated to helping
participants reclaim their command of an HL but a systemic cycle that creates such a need.

**From Academic Formation to Current Research**

For these reasons, I have centered my research on systematic investigation that delivers
the powerful and personal narratives of other HLL participants to the conversation about HLA,
just as called for Ducar (2008), and also finding ways to leverage technologies to help connect
HLLs to their heritage culture(s) and language(s). I have generally been guided by the post-
modernist and poststructuralist paradigms that the literary works, which were so pivotal in
forming my understanding of the climate in Spain surrounding my family’s emigration (Chacón,
2006; del Toro, 2006). I find that the bond I am able to grow with many of my HL participants
based on this shared understanding is invaluable to me as an educator and researchers. I feel that
energy spent on this topic is well worth the effort, since I know all too well how important open
discussion is to breaking repressive cycles (Chacón, 2006).

I first became interested in the use of virtual worlds for learning Spanish when I was
admitted to study for my Ph.D. and was asked if I had ever considered investigating the topic
because of my previous interest in both language learning and using technology. That same
semester I began working to explore the affordances and resources that SL could offer both my
participants and myself. I came to quickly realize the potential of the environment; although,
occasional technical glitches made wary of widespread application. I began using SL with a
small class of particularly motivated FL participants that had expressed an interest in both online
gaming and learning Spanish. This semester was a steep learning experience for all of us but in
general we were able to engage in practicing the language together in authentic interactions that
would not have been possible without taking my class on a physical trip to a location densely populated by Spanish speakers that were actively socializing with international outsiders.

During the second semester of integrating SL into my instruction, I was able to work with several SHLLs and became much more acutely aware of how this population of participants might be particularly accommodated by the affordances of SL. Over the course of the semester, we still learned quite a bit about the challenges of working within SL, such as initiating a conversation with a complete stranger, overcoming occasional technical glitches, dealing with unwanted social advances, and finding our way through the sheer volume of possibilities that the virtual world offered us. I came to realize, through discussion with my SHLL participants and assignments, just how deeply my own family’s experience with identity renegotiation was echoed in my SHLL participants’. I saw them as leaders into the virtual frontier that SL represented, serving to direct other participants towards simulated cultural artifacts related to the SHLL’s personal heritage and to bridge introductions to other speakers of Spanish inside of SL. From here I became focused on understanding how I could meld our use of SL with understanding how to better serve the needs of my SHLL participants as they worked, much as I had, to better understand not just their heritage culture but access the factors leading to their family’s emigration to the U.S., the transition to dominant English-speakers, and to empower them with the linguistic tools they needed. It became evident to me that any understanding of how to use SL with these participants would require a greater understanding of the relation between SHLLs’ sense of ethnic identity and their command of the Spanish language, along with a greater understanding of how to scaffold support of their language and identity mediation in SL through structured task design.
IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

This study does two things. First, it takes a snap shot of the backgrounds and motivations of SHLLs across the U.S. and uses this to construct a bottom up approach to building a tailored resource for differing SHLLs. Second, it looks at the experience one SHLL has with using this resource. I draw on the primarily quantitative data from the first part of this study to delve deeper into a single case, where I use a case-study type of focused qualitative enquiry that provides localized results. Further, this approach illuminates in what ways that the theoretical frameworks for HLA discussed by Carreira (2004) and SCT (Vygotsky, 1986) apply in the description and analysis of the focus participant studying his HL through SL. My findings in this case-study contribute to the fields of HLA and SL research, but not in the generalizable way studies with greater numbers of participants and statistical modeling claim to be able to do. I, instead, seek to fill a call for qualitative enquiry to generate portraits of how theories of HLA function in applied settings (Rivera-Mills, 2014).

As in the field of SLA, there is an ongoing need to have theoretical models applied and further investigated by other researchers in HLA (Valdés, 2005). The application of Carreira’s (2004) framework provides greater insight into its adaptation into educational settings within the U.S. context that she writes specifically for. Additionally, the focused nature of the study’s investigation allows me to weave a more detailed investigation of what ways that an SHLL used and viewed SL’s affordances and meditational artifacts for learning his HL. Moreover, by including SHLL opinions and reflections as a central thread within this qualitative case-study, I highlight SHLL voices that are typically missing from HLA research, which are underrepresented (Ducar, 2008).
This also uncovers SL specific strategies for tailoring task design (Jauregi et al., 2011) to suit the specific needs of individual HLLs (Carreira, 2004) and bringing them within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1986) through critical pedagogical approaches that incorporate authentic interactions with HL varieties (Correa, 2011). In fact, the integration of SCT may provide unique insights for considering HLA in general and integrating situated learning specifically, where neither has been integrated previously. Finally, by framing the case-study with a prevalent theory in foreign language education within the U.S., SCT, the study uses familiar and accessible means of framing the HLA processes that foreign language teachers are typically underprepared to address (Carreira & Kagan, 2011).

**SUMMARY**

In Chapter 1, I identified and provided some background on the purpose of the case-study: to describe and explain in what ways Spanish heritage language learners engage in pedagogically structured and tailored learning of their heritage language within Second Life. Moreover, I provided a concise review of the theoretical framework for the study, sociocultural theory (SCT), and key concepts related to understanding this theory (i.e., mediation and affordances). In addition, I provided a narrative accounting of how my own background as a learner of Spanish and my family’s connection to the language inspired such interest in the topic of this study. In the following chapter, Chapter 2, I provide a review of the relevant literature and synthesis on both Spanish heritage language learning (SHLA) and using Second Life (SL) for language teaching. Specifically, I focus on:

- Spanish heritage language learners
- Second Life
- Authenticity in the Digital Age
Finally, I identify some specific gaps that persist in the literature of the emerging fields of HLA and language education in SL. In Chapter 3, I elucidate the methodology for the study, which I apply in Chapter 4 during as I analyze the data and discuss the implications for trends uncovered during the analysis, ultimately weaving a narrative with vignettes that highlights SHLL voices. In Chapter 5, I offer some recommendations for both revising the proposed resource’s design and for the design of other resources that might capitalize on what I have learned during the course of this investigation. Finally, I reserve a section of this study to discuss some of these challenges and lessons learned during the course of the study. I correspondingly recount how these challenges coupled with moments of collegial collaboration to help both myself as a researcher and the project to grow, persevere, and adapt during the long course of the investigation. It is my sincere hope that sharing this personal perspective provides greater context to the study and insight for other researchers that would take on similar research endeavors.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to first to take a bottom up approach to designing a tool for SHLLs who are actively working to study their HL. The research questions to address this were developed later in the study as data collection and analysis revealed a path that required further exploration than the initial guiding research questions permitted. The first part of this study focusses on the investigating SHLL backgrounds and motivations in the U.S. by asking:

6) In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?

7) In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?

The second part of this study then seeks to describe and explain how one SHLL engages in pedagogically structured and tailored learning of their HL within the immersive world Second Life asking:

1) In what ways does differentiating HL instruction with SL impact performance in the HL and afford identity mediation through the HL or other symbolic artifacts within SL?

2) What affordances do SHLLs find most useful for studying their HL and reinforcing their own sense of ethnic identity?
3) In what ways can task design and extension activities be adapted to meet specific SHLLs’ needs without overly constraining their creative language use or the open format of SL?

The following literature review addresses first the underlying sociocultural phenomena of identifying SHLLs and a social constructivist integration of how SL can help meet SHLLs’ needs as they work to connect with their heritage through language. Specifically, themes of SHLL motivation and identity with foundational pedagogical challenges for the language classroom are woven together and then applied to constructing a portrait of how SL affordances, tools, and metaphors function in SHLL mediated language learning. Additionally, the issue of authenticity and learner agency in virtual environments are explored in relation to SLA and HLA. Finally, some general implications for applying these to research are made.

**Figure 6.** Organization of the Literature Review
SPANISH HERITAGE LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The study of heritage languages originated with linguistic research on bilingualism, arguably to combat the monolingual bias in SLA research (Rivera-Mills, 2012). There is still a growing body of research into the differences between what SLA generally considers bilinguals and other learners who have one developed linguistic system in place (L1) before learning the second (L2) (Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013; Valdés, 2005). Combating this bias in SLA research remains a continuous focus of recent bilingualism research (Oretega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013). Guadalupe Valdés (1995, 2001, 2005) and Valdés et al. (2006) build a case, widely considered to be of seminal importance to (S)HLA research and pedagogy (Carreira, 2004; Rivera-Mills, 2012), for classifying SHLLs along a spectrum for bilingualism (see Wei, 2000) and considering them separately from L2 participants (see Appendix A).

**Defining the Term Heritage Language Learner**

Valdés et al. (2006) defines heritage languages (HL), in the context of the U.S., as any language other than English, and Carreira (2004) adds that the student also shares a familial connection to. The determination of which participants learning an HL may be considered HLLs has sparked some debate in the field of HLA (Valdés, 2005). In the case of SHLLs in the U.S., Valdés’ body of research paints a portrait of bilingual Spanish speakers that fall into one or more categories of Wei’s (2000) taxonomy (see Appendix A and Figure 7), and whose HL development was impeded, interrupted, or otherwise degraded because of the importance placed on English in schools, by society, and even by L1 Spanish speaking families (Cho, 2000; Leeman, 2012).
Wei (2000) and Valdés create a compelling argument for the harmful effects that subtractive bilingualism creates for language learners like SHLLs; these bilinguals often suffer from feelings of shame and rejection for their underdeveloped HL proficiencies that are deeply rooted in their own sense of ethnic identity (Carreira, 2004; Cho, 2000). This is shown in Figure 7 by the extremely denigrating sense of disempowerment that these types of bilinguals experience, quite the opposite of additive bilinguals who experience a sense empowerment and status due to their additional access to other languages and their communities of speakers. Further, this is compounded by the importance that many Spanish participants with a familial connection to the Spanish language(s) and culture(s) place on being able to identify themselves as SHLLs (Abdi, 2011; Cho, 2000; Tallon, 2006), often searching for empowerment through their linguistic identity rather than marginalization for varying proficiency levels or proficiency in low-prestige language varieties.

**Figure 7.** Bilingual Continuum Grouped by Power and Other Proficiency Components
*Note. In Figure 7, I have grouped the bilingual types from Wei’s (2000) continuum to show how language ideology influences how each type can be considered according to the amount of power associated with it, also demonstrating how the manner in which bilingualism development can be viewed from a social status standpoint. The continuum shows reified types of bilingualism towards the left side with green shading, while lower status types are grouped towards the right with intensifying red shading.

Discussion about how to define HLLs, to a great extent, has been less focused on denying participants HLL status in the classroom and more concerned with specific objectives for the research or classroom that has done the classification. Research and programs that are tightly focused around linguistic proficiency in the HL (Valdés, 1995, 2000, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006) tend to classify SHLLs across linguistic spectrums of bilingualism (Wei, 2000), rather than also considering the student’s motivation or desire to connect with their heritage (Carreira, 2004); although, they all recognize that participants being instructed in their HL are varied (Valdés, 2001, 2005). However, recent researchers that acknowledge the integrative effect of identity and motivation and linguistic proficiency have created typologies that consider HLL sociocultural backgrounds, motivations, and other needs with specifically aligned pedagogical considerations (Carreira, 2004), which have been called for in HLA (Valdés, 2005).

Identity & Motivations

This typology implies need for greater SCT research and theoretically informed classroom pedagogies that contribute to the model’s validity. Specifically, Carreira’s (2004) model demonstrates inclusivity for SHLLs that was previously missing from the research and reflects the importance that some Spanish participants with a familial connection to the Spanish language(s) and culture(s) place on being able to identify themselves as SHLLs (Tallon, 2006). Carreira (2004) highlights a general consensus from all stakeholders in HLA research that “the Spanish language is part of the ethnic identity and experience of U.S. Latinos” (p. 9), though it is not a stretch to extend that to those of Peninsular Spanish descent as well. The HLL status is
problematic when it is awarded by institutions to specific language learners based on the institutionalized ideal of what being an HLL means; it can lift up some participants while simultaneously denigrating others (Carreira, 2004; Tallon, 2006). SHLLs have also been shown to engage in perpetuating language ideologies that favor an idealized standard Spanish and even aspire to become and idealized speaker of that variety (Coryell, Clark, & Pomerantz, 2010).

Carreira (2004) states that “HLLs are participants whose identity and/or linguistic needs differ from those of second language learners by virtue of having a family background in the heritage language (HL) or culture (HC)” (p. 1). She further cautions against denying HLL status to learners with any hereditary claim, particularly those actively engaged in learning their HL, and whom risk being added to an FLE or SLA language track: “In this sense, the placement of these participants into the SLA track constitutes a de facto negation their HL identity” (p. 15). Moreover, denying this privileged status impedes the learner’s process(es) of identity construction and mediation through the HL, thereby demotivating the student and discouraging HLA (Carreira, 2004; Cho, 2000; Cho, Cho, & Tse, 1997; Fishman, 2001; McCarty, Watahomigie, Yamamoto, & Zepeda, 1997; Van Deusen-Scholl, 2001; Wiley, 2001; Yamauchi, Ceppi, & Lau-Smith, 2000).

Identity is widely considered to be a social construct dependent on community membership (Potowski, 2012), something denied many SHLLs because of limited Spanish proficiency, or at least proficiency in the heritage variety (see Table 1). Research has shown that language dominance can group language users or exclude them (McNamara, 1997). In the case of many SHLLs in the U.S., this is defined by dominance in a variety of English and an underdeveloped proficiency in their heritage variety of Spanish (Carreira, 2004; Valdés, 1995, 2001, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006). Additionally, later generations from initial immigration to the
U.S. become successively distanced from their HL (Carreira, 2013; Valdés, 2005) and increasingly deranged from their HL cultural ethnic identity. Membership within communities also requires pragmatic knowledge to negotiate positions in relation to other members (McNamara, 1997), though limited linguistic proficiencies may marginalize SHLLs within Spanish speaking communities and affect community membership (Oh & Fuligini, 2010).

Table 1. HLL Typology derived from Carreira (2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HLL-1</td>
<td>“…language learning takes place in the context of a community which 1) has strong heritage culture/language identity, 2) has limited numbers of speakers of the HL, and 3) is striving to reverse language shift” (p. 4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLL-2</td>
<td>“… learners who study the HL in an effort to connect with their family or ethnic background. These learners … have a more remote connection to the HL/HC than do HLL1s, in the sense that they are not active members of a community that is affiliated with an HL” (p. 5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLL-3</td>
<td>“… individuals who a) are raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, b) speak or merely understand the heritage language, and c) who are to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language” (p. 9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLL-4</td>
<td>Participants “learning Spanish in the context of dual language track, one for “insiders” (i.e. native speakers) and the other for “outsiders” (non-native speakers), and that they do not qualify for the “insider” track” (p. 15).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oh and Fuligni (2010) in their investigation of the role that HLs play in ethnic identity and family relations among 414 adolescents from Latin American and Asian backgrounds in the U.S., they found that “language itself is a key influence on ethnic identity, especially for language minority individuals” (p. 204). In other words, the HL can help HLLs define themselves in relation to their own ethnic identification with familial and heritage communities (Cho, 2000). Furthermore, Oh and Fuligni (2010) state that in order for “individuals to participate in their cultural communities more fully, the HL can also be used (or not used) by the speaker to indicate identification (or lack thereof) with their cultural group” (p. 204). Further, Abdi (2011) finds that SHLLs that do not display sufficient productive Spanish proficiency are
marginalized by other SHLLs within classrooms, due to embedded language ideology that equates this display of Spanish with proof of ethnic identity.

The role that language plays in the formation and performance of ethnic identity has invited comment from more than HLA researchers. In a recent broadcast on National Public Radio (Faulx, 2009), a journalist, who also happened to be of immigrant decent, an HLL4 according to Carreira’s (2004) typology, brought to light the dynamic between HL proficiency and identity in the media. The story was viral on social networks within hours, it could easily have touched those whom she terms as the many second-generation Americans or immigrant families in general:

There are approximately 20 million adult second-generation Americans in the country today—U.S.-born children of immigrants—and another 16 million second-generation Americans under the age of 18, according to the Pew Research Center. Among the Hispanic second-generation Americans profiled in the report, 94 percent said retaining their ancestral language was somewhat or very important, as did 76 percent of Asian-Americans (Faulx, 2013).

She further reveals her personal reason for reaching out to HLA researchers, such as Maria Carreira, in her own desire to understand these feeling about HLs: “the desire to reinforce ethnic identity through language is a feeling that I and many other first-, second- and third-generation Americans understand well” (Faulx, 2013). Unfortunately, with SHLLs in the U.S. it is not common for participants to receive any formal instruction in their HL before attending college, assuming that they do attend college; in a survey of 400 Latinos, Carreira and Kagan (2011) found that less than half of respondents had received formal Spanish language instruction before reaching university level.
From an SLA perspective, this seems inconsistent with what research suggests for developing balanced bilingualism (Wei, 2000; Valdés, 2005). It has been well established, even when considering models built on monolingual bias, that supporting a well-developed linguistic system in an L1 can allow L2 learners to make sharp gains by transferring skills to the development of a new linguistic system (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Skills such as learning to associate specific sounds to written symbols, for example, create a theoretical foundation essential to literacy development. SHLLs suffer such irrational developmental setbacks (Valdés, 2005), if their literacy skills were developed in Spanish, these participants could then begin to transfer those and use this system to help mediate SLA of English.

The study applies Carreira’s (2004) typology to sorting participants and investigating whether these SHLLs demonstrate behavior in SL and views aligned with her matched needs for each type. The rationale for this is to gain both greater insight into the validity of this framework from an SCT perspective and the effectiveness of delivering tailored HL instruction mediated by SL tools, artifacts, and affordances.

**Pedagogical Implications**

Regardless of the taxonomy applied to classifying SHLLs or the underlying power dynamics involved, HLA researchers tend to agree that SHLLs present unique challenges to language education in the U.S. that have their methodologies based on monolingually biased SLA research (Ortega, 2009; Valdés, 2005). Specifically, this context has all too often been designed to accommodate English monolingual foreign language participants, many with limited investment in the target language and/or culture (Valdés, 1995, 2001; Valdés et al., 2006). Research into HLA has sought to weave critical pedagogy that recognizes SHLLs’ needs for
authentic resources and interactions into SLA based curricula and also advocated for specific HLA tracks (Valdés 1995, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006).

Calls for pedagogies that afford HLLs cognitive resources and cultural artifacts that can mediate HLL identity construction (Oh & Filigini, 2010) in relation to knowledge of their HL and HL culture (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011) have pervaded the field. Guidance for using recent novel technologies that foster collaborative and social learning or the creation and exchange of cultural artifacts has yet to be included in the literature; although, there have been sustained efforts to create guidelines for the creation of complete pedagogies, from HLA programs and tracks (Carreira, 2004) to specific resources (Valdés, 1995; Valdés et al., 2006).

Unfortunately, for SHLLs in the U.S., it is not common for participants to receive any formal instruction in their HL before attending college, assuming that they do attend college. In a survey of 400 Latinos, Carreira and Kagan (2011) found that less than half of respondents had received formal Spanish language instruction before reaching university level educational settings. In the U.S., the early transmission of HL skills from the immigrant generation to successive generations, even in the home, has been traditionally discouraged because of the importance placed on English mastery by the school system (Abdi, 2011; Cho, 2000). Myths in SLA, such as bilingualism creating confusion in children, that once prevailed have largely been discredited but still remain engrained in the beliefs of many educators (Dicker, 2003). Spanish language vitality has relied heavily on infusions of Spanish speaker immigrants that do transmit HL varieties to second, third, fourth, etc. generation decedents of immigrants to the U.S. (Carreira, 2013). Moreover, they have also served a role in language maintenance amongst L1 Spanish speakers within heritage language communities (Carreira, 2013).
Carreira (2013), in her study of the state of the Spanish language amongst heritage and immigrant speakers in the U.S., reports there are nearly 50 million Spanish speakers in the U.S. but posits that Spanish’s sustainable presence is declining due to inadequate transmission from first generation immigrants to later generations. Further, she argues that decreased rates of immigration from Spanish speaking countries result in a decline of the supply of Spanish speakers in a country where English is holds such dominance. This, she claims, clearly illustrates the need for formal Spanish language education to be integrated into the curriculum of SHLLs early on and a shift from focusing solely on developing English proficiency.

Many SHLLs come to study their HL as adults (Carreira, 2013) but encounter yet another educational system that is underprepared to address their needs (Correa, 2011). Valdés et al. (2006) further point out that the typical FLE classroom is not prepared to meet the unique needs of HLLs and is still operating under the outdated assumption that their participants are monolingual English speakers and elective bilinguals, people who have chosen to study a language generally for academic purposes. They also identify specific objectives that existing HL education programs typically contain to accommodate those whom they define as SHLLs:

“1) the acquisition of a standard dialect, 2) the transfer of reading and writing abilities across languages, 3) the expansion of bilingual range, 4) the maintenance of the heritage language, 5) the development of academic skills, and 6) the increase of participants’ pride and self-esteem” (p. 173).

They further concede that educators, many prepared to teach literature but not adequately prepared in language education, favor the perpetuation of a standardized peninsular dialect and prescriptive grammar instruction.
During the course of their empirical survey of both the (post) secondary school-scapes in the U.S. (particularly in California) Valdés et al. (2006) conclude that the variation in SHLLs is just as expansive as the programs in which they matriculate. The preparation that educators within those programs have received for addressing challenges in HL instruction for SHLLs, unfortunately was found to be missing from the curriculum or underdeveloped. In fact, they find that this preparation is generally informally acquired from engaging in informal research, self-motivated reading, and in-service experience with SHLLs. This irregular and informal teacher preparation leads to misconceptions about HLA and how to accommodate SHLLs, which the authors say must be addressed by forming of research-based HLA teacher training programs.

Carreira (2013) paints a portrait of a country that thrives on Spanish speaking linguistic and cultural diversity, that receives infusions of new speakers from a historically steady flow of immigrants. Moreover, the U.S. plays host to rich Spanish language varieties that originate from a plethora of immigrant populations, concluding that “there is no single U.S. Spanish variety” (p. 104). Unfortunately, hegemonic perpetuation of language ideologies (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011), by traditionally trained language teachers with a strong focus on literature rather than SLA or HLA, disregards this diversity and seeks to impose a linguistic variety of Spanish on SHLLs that is quite literally an ocean away from Latino varieties. Imposing a standardized peninsular dialect and prescriptive grammar instruction are antithetical to what HLA research identifies as appropriate for SHLLs yet are typically the benchmarks for SLA research and combined with a monolingual bias (Valdés, 2005). This is not to suggest that education, through direct grammar instruction, of academic Spanish is inappropriate; instead, that the reification of peninsular Castilian over HL varieties denigrates them and can lead to feelings of shame or frustration (Carreira, 2004; Leeman, 2012; Valdés, 2005). Additionally,
SHLLs consistently do better with tasks using implicit grammar knowledge, especially when the task does not conflict with implicit grammars from HL varieties (Montrul, 2012; Valdés, 2005).

To fill the gap in education discussed above, Carreira (2004) recommends that HLA pedagogy should include meaningful topics like “displacement, separation, poverty, the clash of cultures, identity, and the many different political and historical circumstances that have brought Latino immigrants to this country” (pp. 17-18); however, it is important to note that immigrants from Spain within the last century may have also fled repressive political and social conditions under the dictatorial Franco regime. These themes should be inclusive of the expansive and realistic range of issues that are relevant to SHLLs’ desire to come to terms with why their families emigrated, the feelings that this process created, and how they can use this to relate to others through literature and culture. Further, Carriera (2004) offers specifically targeted pedagogical considerations (table 2) for SHLLs types (table 1) that she describes according linguistic proficiency, community access, and social status afforded by a combination of both the former and latter.

Table 2. Recommendations based on HLL typology (Carreira, 2004, p. 20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Focus of instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HLL-1</td>
<td>Group notions of culture, membership in the HL community, the learner’s part in preserving the cultural and linguistic legacy of his community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLL-2</td>
<td>Individual notions of culture, the search for personal identity, the learner’s prerogative to define himself in terms of his ancestry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLL-3</td>
<td>Building linguistic and cultural skills that are consonant with external realities of how the HL is used outside the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLL-4</td>
<td>Countering identity negation, tapping into background knowledge, student as resource.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

Due to the complex nature of defining how to identify participants based on a myriad of sometimes fluid social, historical, and biological components, the singular objective lens that many research paradigms require seems inadequate to accommodate this complexity. Several HLA studies into HLL ethnic identity have taken a critical approach and considered the influence of language related power dynamics on determining linguistic dominance (Cho, Cho, & Tse, 1997; Kang, & Kim, 2012; Katz, & Dasilva Iddings, 2009; Schecter, & Bayley, 1997; Leeman, 2012; Oh, & Fuligni, 2010). The literature in HLA has a tradition for considering a variety of social and historical variables, which influence language ideologies (Abdi, 2011; Leeman, 2012; Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011) and result in a broad spectrum of HLLs (Carreira, 2004; Valdés et al., 2006). Additionally, it has offered directed pedagogical approaches (Carreira, 2004; Valdés, 1995) and resources (Valdés, 1995; Valdés et al., 2006) to accommodating this spectrum of learners and interrupting the underlying ideologies that often marginalize them (Abdi, 2011; Leeman, 2012; Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011). Specifically, HLA emphasizes the incorporation of authentic resources that are contextually, culturally, and linguistically relevant to HLLs (Carreira, 2004), such as those found in SL.

SECOND LIFE

3D virtual immersive worlds, such as Second Life (SL), have recently given language teachers the ability to structure their educational environments in ways that were previously impossible, while taking advantage of rich sociocultural resources (Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011; Sykes, 2008). SL is “designed to facilitate socialization, support user creation of in-world objects, and even function as possible venues for commerce” (Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011, p.4). Connolly, Stansfield, and Hainey (2011) narrow the investigation of educational contexts...
within SL to language learning specifically and find that the environment with its worldwide member base and beautifully rendered reproductions of both fantastic and realistic cultural sites is well suited for language learning. According to Dawley and Dede (2014) common themes among studies in SL include a focus on their affordances for situated learning in *authentic* and simulated environments (Blasing, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Ibáñez et al., 2011; Jauregi et al., 2011) and learner motivation (Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011), for which identity is an integral part (Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner, 1985, 2001).

SL is free to join and is hosted by Linden Labs, who offers a free download of the program viewer from [www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com). It is populated by “residents”, real people that may elect to become as involved as they would like with the SL world. There are several tutorial resources for prospective residents available at [http://community.secondlife.com/t5/English-Knowledge-Base/tkb-p/English_KB%40tkb](http://community.secondlife.com/t5/English-Knowledge-Base/tkb-p/English_KB%40tkb). The SL environment is designed to realistically follow the day/night patterns of the California time-zone where the SL servers and Linden Labs are physically located, which residents call SL Time (SLT). SL is itself entirely built by its users and is not the construct of Linden Labs’ design, they have simply afforded the tools for users to employ in the construction and modification of artifacts.
Each area in SL has a searchable profile through the built-in browser that shows if it is either private or public, has an official language, and a rating that determines what age groups are allowed access. Moreover, there are multiple reproductions of cultural artifacts, such as the *Parque Güell* by Antonio Gaudí in Barcelona. A list of enticing destinations can be found at http://secondlife.com/destinations?lang=en-US. Interaction in SL can take place verbally, by written chat, or through gestures performed by their avatar (see Figure 8). Avatars are a customizable 3D virtual construct that facilitates social interactions as well as interactions with artifacts in the virtual environment itself.

**Affordances for Language Learning**

SL offers multiple artifacts and affordances for language learning, many of which are just now beginning to be investigated (Blasing, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Ibáñez et al., 2011; Jauregi et al., 2011). Within the virtual environment exists a vast array of populations and social groups that are eager to interact with people from other cultures (Sykes, 2008; Sykes, Oskoz, & Thorne,
2008), perhaps most relevant to SHLLs, and mediate their communication through a variety of languages via a host of in world tools afforded to residents (Andreas et al., 2010): written chat, voice chat, gestural communication, artifact exchange, graphical communication, environmental manipulation, etc.

SL has been shown to offer a multitude of affordances for learning through tools (artifacts) such as voice and text chat, a customizable avatar, browser, cultural sites and user created objects (Andreas et al., 2006), that can be employed by SHLLs to study their HL and its culture(s). Experiences in this world are mediated through their avatar, which Blasing (2010) and deNoyelles and Seo (2011) explain is also how users mediate identity performance and construction in SL, which affords learners control over how other users perceive them within this virtual environment. Furthermore, SL’s affordances support collaborative language learning through authentic dialogue with other speakers (Blasing, 2010; Jauregi et al., 2011; Sykes, 2008), facilitating community access (Jauregi et al. 2011), heightening intercultural competency (Jauregi et al. 2011), and motivation (Wehner, Downey, & Gump, 2011).

Blasing (2010) weaves a detailed overview of SL and its educational resources with a case study that highlights how participants used the virtual world for language learning. They conclude that SL offers educators access to what she calls native speaker communities (Sykes, 2008), along with cultural exchanges and the possibility of creating content rich learning activities (Jauregi et al., 2011), such as scavenger hunts, role-plays and virtual cities or museums. She also notes that the open format, evolving tools, and affordances make these tasks differentiable for all levels of learners. Because learners can access SL from a personal computer, this virtual world promotes increased time-on-task, opportunities for input, negotiation of meaning, output production, and fosters life-long learning that extends far beyond the
boundaries of the classroom. She also provides a brief analysis of L2 identity construction and performance via avatars, which she finds is a fluid and complex phenomenon. Finally, in an analysis of student chat-logs, she finds that participants received synchronous feedback and experienced uptake in authentic interactions with Spanish speakers (Sykes, 2005).

Jauregi et al. (2011) provide a focused review of some of SL’s affordances for language learning and intercultural exchanges, using well-defined frameworks, including SCT and Byram’s (1997) “five savoirs”. They also provide clear analysis of dyad interactions related to their focus of intercultural competence. They found that both task design and number of interlocutors seems to have an impact on the amount of the TL that is produced and level of discourse. Perhaps more important for SHLLs, they also found that time spent in SL had a measurable effect on intercultural competence, including cultural events and traditions, and critical cultural awareness of practices and products of TL communities. Thus, more focus in future research should be given to the structuring of tasks to elicit specific learning outcomes.

Wehner, Gump, and Downey (2011) also include some description of affordances, however, they primarily focus on the impact on motivation that these affordances and other features of SL had on FL student motivation. They apply Gardner’s (1985) model for motivation and attitude in SLA and conclude that both motivation and attitudes oriented towards learning the Spanish were positively increased in the SL group. Additionally, the SL group reported lower anxiety, which they attribute to the role that avatar’s play in mediating interactions between the student and other Spanish speakers. Blasing (2010) calls this the “avatar effect” in computer-mediated communication and notes that the phenomenon is interesting but, unfortunately, under researched. Potentially, the use of avatars in HLA would afford these participants control over the construction and performance of their identities that would otherwise not be possible, which
would be particularly relevant to types HLL2 and 4 because of their desire to renegotiate their identity in relation to their language performance and ethnic heritage.

The ability to create and customize an avatar over time has shown to have a unique effect on language learning (Blasing, 2010), which could be especially useful for some SHLLs. In fact, the affordances identified above could each be employed to address specific needs (Jauregi et al., 2011) through directed task design or extension activities that build on SL experiences.

Furthermore, using SL to study language with appropriate training and guidance affords learners opportunities to interact with native speakers in a nonthreatening environment (Sykes, 2008; Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011), while affording a life-like context for language learners to practice their TLs (Blankenship & Kim, 2012). This context offers affordances for socially mediating learning by exposing learners to naturalistic and virtually immersive settings that challenge learners to within the zone for proximal development (Vygotsky, 1986) and where educators, language learners, and other SL residents share common ground (Sykes, 2008) so that they can share in social learning experiences that were previously not possible.

**Considerations for Second Life Task Design**

Despite the alluring variety of the resources available to language learners and teachers in SL, the open format of the virtual world can be intimidating to new comers unless they receive structured training and sustained technical support; although, they have ultimately shown to increase motivation (Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2010) and be viewed positively by teachers and participants (Blasing, 2010; De Lucia, Francese, Passero, & Tortora, 2009). The open format specifically may prove inconsistent with some teacher-centered methodologies (Lowyck, 2014; van Merriënboer & de Bruin, 2014); although, a general shift from those methodologies has been taking place in teacher education for some time. One way to model this shift is by using
inductive methods to language learning such as employing conversation analysis (CA) of *authentic* interactions (discussed in the next section). For example, having participants inductively analyze their chat-logs from SL to arrive at an understanding of how language functions in varying contexts, which can lead participants to deeper understandings of language and its speakers.

Vygotsky (1986) describes a process of genesis for language learning, where mimicry of the external world (echoing the voices of others) eventually turns inward as private speech, like Bakhtin’s (1986) description of the voices of others that swallow up language learners until they can integrate them with their own. This process can be observed within SL chat-logs, for example, where participants are first seen primarily observing discussions unfold and interjecting bits of chunked speech that may not quite fit, but later weaving their own voice into the overall discourse. In the traditional FL classroom, the linguistic input that was available to SHLLs depended greatly on the teacher selected content and utterances from other participants, a context that presented minimal inclusivity of linguistic variety (Carreira, 2004; Leeman, 2012; Valdés, 2005) but *authentic* contexts like SL can afford SHLLs input from more linguistically diverse sources that are naturally occurring across a variety of virtual contexts.

It is important to note that Vygotsky (1986) understood the inward shift mentioned above differently than internalization as described in cognitive research traditions, since the process remains socially grounded (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006), private speech mediates language learning by affording the learner an explicit means of monitoring input, output, and mediating their language skills internally. Affordances offered by screen capture of SL voice chats and by saving chat-logs as text files, can afford SHLLs opportunities to inductively analyze language that they previously participated in (Seedhouse,
2004), and help them to develop their own private speech as they find deeper understanding of the language. For SHLLs that are struggling with their own ethnic identity due to their linguistic proficiency, the force and even code of that private speech may be a significant variable to understanding that meditational process. Further, Lantolf and Thorne (2006) describe that over time, this private speech leads to proceduralization of linguistic features and the learner is able to turn outward again, weaving the echoes of other voices into their own creative utterance(s) that “potentially impacts the self and the community” (p. 158).

AUTHENTICITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Herrington, Reeves, and Oliver (2014) build on the discussion of situated learning in virtual worlds by constructing an argument for considering them as authentic learning environments. The authors lay a foundation for considering what authenticity means in the digital age and how this is framed within SCT and related social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1986). Authentic communication in real contexts, rather than under laboratory conditions, is a defined parameter for valid C/DA methodologies (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 1968; Seedhouse, 2004), which have recently been applied to SL (Pojapunya & Jaroenkitboworm, 2011). With rapidly growing ubiquity of computer-mediated communication (CMC), researchers and educators have been broadening their understanding of what constitutes authenticity (Chapelle & Lui, 2007; Kramsch, A’Ness, & Lam, 2000; Lam, 2000).

Chat, for example, affords language learners with the opportunity to engage TL speakers (in real time and across vast distances) with a sense of agency that allows them to weave multiple semiotic texts and the words of others into their authentic interactions (Lam, 2000), as TL speakers mediate student language learning with real time feedback.
In both cognitive SLA perspectives and SCT approaches, it is important that language learners be exposed to *authentic* input, materials, communication, artifacts, etc. (Gass, Behney, & Plonsky, 2013; Johnson, 2004) so that learners have the chance to acquire linguistic patterns and knowledge that allow them to function in TL contexts beyond the classroom. Finally, incorporating *authentic* language and interactions, rather than synthetically modeled interaction that follows prescribed grammatical and lexical conventions, provides language learners with exposure to both standard and nonstandard varieties of target languages. This, in turn, from an HLA perspective can foster an atmosphere that promotes understanding of linguistic diversity (Valdés, 2005) and elevate participants from marginalized heritage populations within the language classroom by recognizing linguistic variety (Correa, 2011) and interrupting hegemonic language ideologies (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011).

**GAPS IN LITERATURE**

Due to recent shifts in SLA, specifically those concerning understanding the effects in variation between individual differences for language learning for bilingual and bicultural participants that are studying a language (Ortega, 2009, 2013; Thompson, 2013), SLA has begun revising and improving on existing theoretical approaches. Further, this research is often cognitively focused and while it has been willing to embrace dynamic systems as a theoretical framework with individual difference researcher into identity and motivation from researchers like Dörnyei (2014, 2009, 2005) and Dörnyei and Chan (2013). This same research, however, has been reticent to embrace SCT (Vygotsky, 1986) approaches, which also consider dynamic interaction of multiple factors, which are well established in educational research.
HLA as a subfield within SLA, has not followed the above noted monolingually biased trend, however, and has embraced socio-cultural and historical factors when considering language learning phenomena. Further, this field is still emerging as an academic area distinct from other SLA subfields, leaving a good deal of work to be done. Ducar (2008), nevertheless, identifies a gap in the current HLA literature where heritage language learner (HLL) voices are underrepresented and Valdés et al. (2006) further highlights the need for the development of resources and strategies for accommodating HLLs specifically. The case-study would fill these gaps under SCT by using qualitative methods to bring HLL voices into the discussion (Ducar, 2008) and investigating in what ways that SL, may be adopted to meet HLL needs.

Due to the complex nature of defining how to identify participants based on a myriad of sometimes fluid social, historical, and biological components, the singular objective lens that many research paradigms require seems inadequate to accommodate this complexity. Several HLA studies into HLL ethnic identity have taken a critical approach and considered the influence of language related power dynamics on determining linguistic dominance (Cho, Cho, & Tse, 1997; Kang, & Kim, 2012; Katz, & Dasilva Iddings, 2009; Schecter, & Bayley, 1997; Leeman, 2012; Oh, & Fuligni, 2010); however, research in this area is still emerging and the wealth of studies that SLA has to draw from pales those specifically focused on HLA.

It is worth noting, however, that the literature in HLA has a tradition for considering a variety of social and historical variables, which influence language ideologies (Abdi, 2011; Leeman, 2012; Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011) and result in a broad spectrum of HLLs (Carreira, 2004; Valdés et al., 2006). This research has not always included the voices of individual HLLs (Ducar, 2008), which creates a gap that urgently needs to be filled by qualitative case-studies that respect their participants’ emic voices. Additionally, researchers in
this field have offered directed pedagogical approaches (Carreira, 2004; Valdés, 1995) and resources (Valdés, 1995; Valdés et al., 2006) to accommodating this spectrum of learners and interrupting the underlying ideologies that often marginalize them (Abdi, 2011; Leeman, 2012; Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011).

Specifically, HLA emphasizes the incorporation of authentic resources that are contextually, culturally, and linguistically relevant to HLLs (Carreira, 2004), such as those found in SL. However, these elements have yet to be combined into a single study, let alone a richly developed qualitative case-study. Further, while calls for specific pedagogies that incorporate authentic resources and technology have been made, specific guidance for how to apply proposed frameworks in their application is missing and have not considered how to incorporate established or emerging frameworks for computer assisted language learning. In addition, empirical (case-)studies that apply those frameworks in a technology infused learning environment are generally missing. Finally, due to the recency of HLA research as a field of study, the overall body of empirical research that seeks to apply and investigate how emerging HLA frameworks translate into pedagogy are either missing, overly generalized in their scope, or in need of supporting investigations that provide rich and qualitative analysis.

**SUMMARY**

Research in SHLA has broadened its scope since Valdés (1995) first began considering how to identify bilingual and bicultural participants of Spanish immigrant decent by using a bilingual continuum (Wei, 2000). Researchers such as Carreira (2004) began consolidating social, historical, motivational, and linguistic factors with considerations of identity to create new typologies (see Table 1). Grounded in the needs and motivations that this typology revealed, she also was able to offer specific pedagogical recommendations for meeting these needs and
affording participants tailored resources, activities, and opportunities that were aligned with their unique motivations (see Table 2).

SHLA has consistently recognized the importance that HL communities play in SHLL motivation and learning (Carreira, 2004, 2013; Valdés et al., 2006). However, the application of an SCT framework (Vygotsky, 1986) that would examine social learning mediated by cultural artifacts has been missing from the growing body of SHLA work. Much as in the field of SLA, SHLA has separated the self and the environment, which Vygotsky (1986) argued should be unified under a dialectical approach within SCT (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). This framework would integrate social, historical, motivational, and cognitive factors that Carreira (2004) laid the groundwork for. Additionally, this framework would foster holistic investigations and dialogic understandings (Bakhtin, 1986) of how collaborative learning (Andreas et al., 2010) in situated learning environments, like SL, is able to mediate SHLL learning and ethnic identity formation (Oh & Fuligini, 2010).

Research in virtual worlds like SL that afford SHLLs spaces for social interaction with HL and HL communities, has operated within SCT and social constructivist traditions from Vygotsky (1986) (Dawley & Dede, 2014). Understanding of the various affordances for language learning offered by SL has only begun to be explored, given the vastness of the virtual landscape and continuous updates to the technology. However, the existing research suggests that the affordances that have been identified support collaborative language learning by fostering authentic dialogue with TL speakers (Blasing, 2010; Jauregi et al., 2011; Sykes, 2008), facilitating TL community access (Jauregi et al. 2011), heightening intercultural competency (Jauregi et al. 2011), and motivating participants (Wehner, Downey, & Gump, 2011). Specifically, the ability to build a fluid 3D social representation, an avatar, that learners can
modify over time has shown to have a unique effect on language learning (Blasing, 2010), which could be especially useful for specific types of SHLLs (see Table 2). In fact, the affordances identified above could each be employed to address specific needs (Jauregi et al., 2011), such as those derived for each SHLL type through directed pedagogical task design.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The following chapter outlines how I implement a qualitative case-study methodology to investigate the five research questions (two from Part I and three from Part II of the study) from Chapters One and Two. I begin with an overview of the participant criteria and a detailed description of the physical and virtual contexts in which my investigation takes place. Further, I discuss the pedagogical factors involved in designing the experimental conditions investigated, including discussion of the distance learning frameworks implemented in supporting SHLL learning through the use of SL. Next, I detail my methods for collecting data and overall experimental design. Finally, I conclude by reviewing data analysis and discussion procedures/protocols.

PARTICIPANTS AND CONTEXT

Overview

The exploratory case-study focuses on the case of one SHLL but also takes a snap shot of the motivations and backgrounds of SHLLs in the U.S., attending 133 universities with a high level of undergraduate latin@/Hispanic participants (20% or higher) that offer concentrations in Spanish (see http://www.collegedata.com/cs/search/college/college_match_tmpl.jhtml). It includes two parts that seek participation: 1) Part I participants were a sample of SHLLs enrolled in Spanish, with an ACTFL proficiency level of Novice High (see Appendix K) or above at the 133 Universities discussed during the Fall 2017 semester; and 2) the Part II participant was an SHLL selected from a university in the southwest U.S that met the same criteria as those in Part
I. Part I participants had to be studying Spanish at the undergraduate University level, at a university in the U.S. with a high concentration of latin@/Hispanic undergraduate participants (20% or higher), reporting a familial connection to the language. The case-study participant from Part II was enrolled in his second semester of Spanish and had basic technological literacy skills.

Technical support from the University’s SL staff and an orientation to the technology used was provided to supplement any gaps in technical knowledge beyond basic literacy, along with access to university computers loaded with all necessary programs and hardware requirements for running SL. Aside from access to this equipment in the University Language Lab, a designated computer lab, and a student lounge that are all centrally located for student convenience, two work spaces were added to my office specifically for assisting the case-study participant with face-to-face support. As an incentive, participants also received free supplemental tutoring from me for their primary Spanish course and, upon completion of the Lab, they are entitled to an individualized certificate for the skills they have developed over the course of the Lab.

**Meeting Recruitment Challenges**

To address these challenges, I arranged to send some explanatory material included in this study and set in-person meetings to discuss the proposed study. Several of the cooperating instructors did agree to meet briefly, typically for no longer than 15 minutes, and after the meetings agreed to allow the dissemination of recruitment materials (flyers and emails) for participation. Two instructors agreed to have me come in to address their classes directly and take questions from the group for about five minutes, which was perhaps the most useful recruitment effort.
I began circulating hundreds of flyers around the University in key areas where undergraduate SHLLs were likely to congregate and take note of such materials. For instance, the majority of Spanish level I, II, and III courses were offered in two floors of one building on campus that included a physical computer lab for language students. I researched the class scheduling and room assignments for all targeted Spanish class meetings and placed flyers in these rooms directly before each class was scheduled to meet several times over the course of the study recruitment period.

These SHLLs were already under heavy demands for their time and participating in this study as a focus student was tantamount to taking a 1 credit online course over the course of a regular semester; although, they would have had the option to complete the lab much more quickly. I estimated that the full lab would take between 8-10 hours of their time depending on how quickly they worked and what technological challenges might have arisen. I worked to be very sensitive to what I was asking of (potential) participants and accommodate them whenever possible. Despite this, working with focus participants in a dynamic where I was not also their instructor or already working closely with their instructor introduced a number of challenges to both recruitment and retention.

**Primary Spanish Course**

The primary Spanish class that the SL Lab supplemented was one of several courses, standardized by the Spanish language division of the World Languages Department, and strictly paced to progress together. Each class may include up to 35 participants, screened to either meet the minimum prerequisite course requirements or tested for academic Spanish grammatical proficiency in the academic Castilian variety of Spanish. These were the only controls for ability tracking in the program and there was not a track designed specifically for SHLLs; although,
those SHLLs with exceptional existing grammatical competency may have enrolled in an accelerated grammar course.

There were two options for Spanish I and II; there was a completely online course option and then there was a standard face-to-face and blended instruction option. The supplemental Lab I propose is designed to support the standard option for Spanish level II. The standard Spanish level I and II courses were taught primarily in-person but supported from online resources in an online Moodle type course shell. Further, these courses were designed to serve mostly monolingual English-speaking participants whom have had one previous semester of Spanish at the college level or equivalent in high school. Specific supports were not included for heritage participants of the language and the instructors did not receive any supplemental training/mentoring on how to serve these participants. The university’s geographical location in the U.S., however, had a large population of Spanish speaking participants and residents.

In 2011, the Pew Research Center estimated that 16% of all persons in Florida only spoke Spanish at home, with a total Hispanic population ranked 3rd in the U.S. at 4,354,000 (http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/state/fl/). The research site itself supported an undergraduate student body that is 28% Hispanic, non-resident alien, or two or more races (internal university reporting system), which may not directly indicate a home language other than English but certainly highlights that the population was not the Caucasian monolingual English speaker that the course design was meant to serve. This was too large of a population to continue to be ignored when considering curricular and pedagogical planning for college level Spanish courses, especially given that, according to The Pew Research Center (2011), the median age for native-born Hispanics (to the U.S.), which certainly includes SHLLs, was consistent with the age range of undergraduate participants typically enrolled in Spanish I or II at the research site: 20 years of
age. The city where the research site was located itself boasts a strong connection to Cuban American heritage, including several Cuban heritage businesses. Additionally, the city was also a port city with a very diverse population; however, neither this diversity nor the personal cultural resources of the participants have received any special attention in the structuring of pedagogy for entry-level Spanish course or their teachers.

Both the Spanish level I and II courses were based on a template Syllabus that included course outcomes derived from the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages* (ACTFL), specifically describing the participants as emerging from the course in the *intermediate* range of proficiency. Further, the course aligned with this outcome by building vocabulary about the world around the student, grammatical structures that allow them to express feelings about familiar topics and issue advice to others, but primarily operating in the present tense (ACTFL, 2012). The courses did, however, spend a significant amount of time on the subjunctive mood and introducing participants to the Spanish past tense constructions and narration of past events.

The underlying assumption was that participants entering the course were at what ACTFL (2012) describes as the *novice* range of learners, which is primarily focused on building familiar vocabulary, chunked phrases, and describing oneself biographically. This syllabus also explicitly stated that the class be modeled on communicative language teaching; although, the supporting pedagogical materials and assessments were not necessarily aligned with this framework. These outlined misalignments have left a gap for resources that are able to build communicative proficiency of participants and connect course content to authentic artifacts, interactions, and Spanish speakers outside of the classroom. To fill this gap, I have proposed
using SL and have previously received approval for creating a SL lab that is designed to bring participants additional affordances for developing communicative language proficiency.

Both the Spanish I and II courses used a prescribed textbook with accompanying online workbook that primarily focused on developing and assessing vocabulary and grammar skills, both in and out of context. The book itself provided a mostly grammar focus and approached culture from a very topical perspective, avoiding artifacts too deeply aligned with critical pedagogical approaches to language learning, and presenting idealized speech models that perpetuate Castilian as the archetype for what constitutes correctly used Spanish. This has shown to be somewhat of a confrontational point when I have worked with SHLLs in the classroom and has begged for the inclusion of other non-standard Spanish varieties. The book does include some limited but interesting charts that compare different regional vocabulary from Latin America and also a brief article on acronyms widely used in chat rooms/text messaging.

Student proficiency, related to mastering these pedagogical materials, was assessed with chapter tests that were drafted collaboratively by primarily masters level graduate teaching assistants, with some adjunct instructors and Ph.D. level graduate teaching assistants, which were then approved by a language coordinator. These tests were designed to primarily judge vocabulary comprehension and verb conjugation, typically in isolation of context. Each one also included a short writing section (2-3 sentences on a given topic) and a brief verbal section, where participants responded individually to a prompt given by the instructor (1-3 utterances).

**Language Lab**

Preparation for these assessments was largely supported by the use of the online workbook. The amount and type of exercises assigned for participants to complete with these online supports was determined by each individual instructor; although, the exploratory case-
study participant was supported in the development of their proficiency in their HL through the
SL language lab. I have designed this lab to continue to operate within the ACTFL framework
established by the program that it supports, by requiring all SL tasks to be related back to
specific ACTFL standards and develop proficiencies according to this same framework. While
there are many other frameworks to choose from, such as the Common European Framework of
Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) (available at
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp), ACTFL’s has already been established within
the educational context that the case-study operated in. Moreover, it is my view that maintaining
a seamless transition between different pedagogical designs through the same framework better
serves the participant by providing consistency.

The SL language lab that I have designed also follows the same sixteen-week course
schedule as the primary class it supplemented; although, its asynchronous nature allowed the
participant to also work ahead if they so desired. This lab was designed in alignment with current
research into using SL for language education (for a full discussion see Chapter 2) to provide
participants with an opportunity to engage with other speakers of Spanish in a low-risk
environment (Sykes, 2005; Wehner et al., 2011) and allow participants to extend those
experiences by reflecting on and analyzing authentic conversations and contexts. In deciding
how to balance this online class between structuring and guiding participants’ learning
experiences, engaging them socially with peers and other speakers of Spanish, and also
encouraging higher-order thinking while reflecting on these experiences, I referred to an
established framework for instructional design in online or distance education: The Community
of Inquiry framework (COI) (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999).
PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK: OVERVIEW

Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (1999) position the student’s learning experience between three measures (see Figure 9) that need to be balanced: social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence. It also represents a balanced shift between teacher centered approaches and autonomous learning, which is important in situated learning environments like SL, also considering the role that social interaction plays in language learning (Vygotsky, 1986).

![Diagram of the Community of Inquiry Framework](image)

**Figure 9.** Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999)

Research into the COI framework (see Figure 9) has shown that specific affordances of CMI, through purposeful structuring, can be used to augment student presence within virtual environments. In these virtual learning spaces participants can substitute virtual presence for real life (RL) presence (Yamada, 2009). Moreover, with the guidance of engaging content mediated by a skilled instructor, participants become invested in the learning experience (deNoyelles, & Kyeong-Ju Seo, 2011; Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Garrison, Anderson, & Archer,
2001; Garrison, & Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Garrison, & Arbaugh, 2007). The following sections provide definitions and synthesize relevant literature for the three types of presence: social, cognitive, and teaching.

**Social presence**

Social Presence is the perhaps the gateway by which participants become active within a community of inquiry. It is the ability for learners to project themselves and prescience others socially within virtual spaces (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 2004) and is closely linked to how a sense of community and personal bond is established between members, which is essential in fostering open and informed critical discourse (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001). Perceiving the identities of others and projecting their own is essential for meaningful learning outcomes to occur within these virtual spaces (Deng & Yuen, 2011). In fact, researchers contend that social presence must be established before worthwhile learning experiences can be expected (deNoyelles & Kyeong-Ju Seo, 2011; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005). Further, in order for critical discourse to take place, an environment of trust, respect, and collaboration must be established through fostering social presence (deNoyelles & Kyeong-Ju Seo, 2011; Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007).

Several measures for determining social presence have been depending on the distance learning resource being studied. For example, Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000, 2001) focused on written discourse environments such as discussion boards, while more recent research by deNoyelles & Kyeong-Ju Seo (2011), Wehner, Gump, and Downey (2011) and Yamada (2009) have all focused on presence within 3D virtual immersive environments. When coding for social presence within written discourse environments, use of emoticons and exchanges of personal information are used; however, within more dynamic spaces that immerse users within
a world of hidden and graphical meaning, alongside auditory and written discourse semiotically, studies have tended to code for the customization of avatars, use of gestures, and incorporating para-linguistic communication.

Specifically, within the framework provided by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000, 2001), social presence can be identified in data that show: (a) emotions, (b) risk-free expression, and (b) encouraging collaboration. Regardless of environment however, it has become clear that increased levels of social presence also encourage a sense of ownership for the community, which can be harnessed in realizing desired learning outcomes (deNoyelles & Kyeong-Ju Seo, 2011; Redmond & Lock, 2006), such as the development of critical thinking skills from structured critical discourse and open collaboration (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 2004).

**Cognitive presence**

Cognitive presence can only be achieved after social presence within a community has been established and is marked by meaning making while engaged in critical discourse and self-reflection. Perhaps most importantly to educational contexts, it "reflects higher-order knowledge acquisition and application and is associated with critical thinking" (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 2004), such that learners become cognitively engaged in the community of inquiry. Without this cognitive component, communities formed in virtual spaces are more likely to retain the characteristics of social networking without any directed educational outcomes possible. The framework provided by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000, 2001) codes for social presence by conning data that indicate: (a) sense of puzzlement, (b) information exchange, (c) connecting ideas, and (d) applying new ideas.
Teaching Presence

While "both social and content-related interactions among participants are necessary in virtual learning environments, interactions by themselves are not sufficient to ensure effective online learning" (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). Such interactions require targeted guidance and directed mediation in order to successfully engage in purposeful critical discourse and reach desired learning outcomes. The role of the teacher, even if assumed by a peer or colleague, is essential in bringing both social and cognitive dimensions into alignment for meaning learning to occur. The third element to the COI framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001) is consequently termed teaching presence or "the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes" (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). This type of presence is coded for: (a) Defining and initiating discussion topics, (b) Sharing personal meaning, and (c) Focusing discussion (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001). Though it is also described as "having three components: (1) instructional design and organization; (2) facilitating discourse (originally called 'building understanding'); and (3) direct instruction" (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007).

PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK: APPLIED

Social presence is defined by learner reported feelings of social engagement with their peers and collaboration. Further, this was accommodated by encouraging SHLLs to engage in conversation with other speakers of Spanish in SL, join cultural or language groups, and interact. Next, cognitive presence is defined by how engaging tasks and content are for participants, along with the amount of effort learners feel is required to complete the work. In this context, the participant was required to build upon their experiences in SL in a meaningful way, treating his chat-logs and photos as data to be reflected on and analyzed using either linguistic or narrative
strategies. Moreover, the creative development of other approaches by the SHLL to deepening his understanding of the Spanish language or his heritage was also encouraged. Finally, teaching presence is constituted from the level of engagement that the instructor has with participants. In this context, teaching presence was contributed through four asynchronous orientation modules with the SHLL, by task design, from detailed feedback in each task submission, from face-to-face support/instruction, and supplemental pedagogical resources inside of SL.

**Virtual Context**

To explain, for the purposes of establishing a persistent virtual presence inside of SL, I have worked with technology support staff at the university to develop a Spanish island for participants to use as a home base from which to mount excursions into SL. This island includes two interactive homes, designed by a Spanish content developer, an interactive dance area that allows avatars to engage in either Salsa or Flamenco dance moves to corresponding music, an interactive food stand for role-playing, a patio area, a central fountain area, a series of teleport boards linked to Spanish speaking areas of SL or cultural sites, and group joiner board linked to a group of online Spanish participants and teachers (see Figures 8 and 9). The participant was not, however, limited in any way to this area. It was meant to be used as a home or launch area for his excursions into the broader SL virtual world and specific Spanish speaking islands/areas.
Participants interfaced with areas, such as the Spanish island that I worked with university support staff to create or other sites, via the SL viewer (see Figure 11). Participants were able to instantly teleport back to Spanish Lab Home Island by pressing the house shaped button in the top left-hand corner of the viewer, which is next to the browser window that they were able to use to search SL content. The SL viewer also displays two main sets of tool bars in the environment window. The first, on the left, allows access to saved avatar personas, clothing and other wearable items, a brief case of collected texts and other artifacts, a search button, a

**Figure 10.** Layout of Spanish Lab Home Island
world map with saved teleport coordinates and other data for locations, a mini-map that lists nearby people and artifacts in a navigable terrain view, a camera for capturing photos, and finally a social media button for sharing in-world artifacts or content. The second tool bar, along the bottom, provides access to a community chat window (private chats are initiated by clicking on the avatar of a person nearby or selecting them from your contacts list), toggling the voice chat feature (public), a searchable destination guide, the user’s contacts (people), the user’s profile (with access to mail, people, favorites, and settings), avatar action controls (these can also be controlled with the key board and arrow keys), camera controls for adjusting view angles and zoom, and finally a “How to” guide.

Figure 11. Second Life Viewer and Spanish Lab Home Island
More detailed controls for the viewer itself and other features of SL can be found along the very top of the viewer. This menu offers choices between such as customizing the demands on a systems graphic processor or other advanced features. It also provides a more advanced set of tools for building in-world content, interacting with it or its users, seeking help. In this menu, participants also have access to selections for the language that the viewer operates in (there are many language betas that are available to choose from and the list grows over time as SL expands into new markets). In the top right corner of this menu bar, a user’s Linden $ balance is displayed along with the time in SL time units (set to pacific time where Linden Labs is located).

**Data Collection**

The study is structured into two parts, the first part is designed to use survey data to compile a profile for the general SHLA population at the studied University. The data for the exploratory case-study was gathered from three sources: a) surveys/asynchronous interviews, b) chat-logs, and c) reflective journals with extension activities. The variety of data sources were used to triangulate data (Perry, 2005) and explore SHLA within SL in relation to each of the evolving research questions.

**Part One: Entrance Surveys**

First, all SHLLs enrolled at the 133 Universities with high Hispanic/Latin@ populations were asked to complete an SHLL background and motivation survey, to provide insight into the general population of university level SHLLs in the U.S... This helped to guide discussion of representativeness of the sample of focus SHLLs for the case-study.

In order to ensure validity of the instrument, that it gathers information that addresses the study purpose and appropriate research questions a pilot of the survey was conducted. It was piloted and blindly reviewed by pilot testing SHLLs for inconsistencies or vague language.
According to the results of the 15 pilot participants surveyed it was found that the instrument does in fact validly address the study purpose and appropriate research questions and any inconsistencies or vague language were corrected, resulting in only minor preference changes in Google Forms and a spelling correction.

The survey was delivered as a link to a google form from an informed consent compliant email communication that sought the permission of SHLLs to use their responses in research anonymously and disclosed who may view their responses during the data analysis process. Next, the survey requested some background information to establish the demographics of the participants, including their academic focus and their own open-ended description of their ethnic identity and familial background. Further, the survey probed the importance of studying Spanish to the SHLL and their reasons for studying Spanish. This background section also inquired about the SHLLs’ experience with using technology and their own perceived technological literacy level. The third section posed binary questions (yes/no), each one modeled after the characteristics for the bilingual types along Wei’s (2000) continuum. The fourth section of the survey used a Likert-like scale to measure SHLL motivations for studying Spanish and also their perception of in what ways that their formal Spanish instruction has accommodated their needs as SHLLs. Finally, the last section allowed SHLLs to include open-ended comments about anything that they would like me to know concerning their family, technology backgrounds, or experiences in learning Spanish through formal instruction. The results from this survey were used to discuss these SHLLs and provide insight into their bilingual profiles based on Wei’s (2000) continuum, while also eliciting some quantitative data about their experience in formal Spanish language instruction (see Appendix C).
The second survey very closely followed the structure of the first survey; however, it did not include an informed consent section since this was received through a more detailed process that required signature on an IRB informed consent form. Additionally, only the focus participant completed the survey, gathering personally identifiable data (i.e.: name, student identification number, etc.) so that this data can be matched to other data gathered for this level of participant.

This data was also used in the first part of the study to help determine the representativeness of the sample that will be studied in depth within the case-study. This qualitative survey also gathered background information about their technological literacy and experience in using social media for socializing and collaborative learning. To ensure validity of the data gathered, the instruments were designed to address the defined research questions and study participants were asked to be as truthful as possible in their responses. His responses and participation in the study did not have any bearing on their academic progress in any Spanish course that he may have been taking.

**Part Two: Second Life Task Design**

In designing tasks for SHLLs to complete in SL, as mentioned in the description of the language lab previously, the COI Framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999; Arbaugh et al., 2008) was used to conceptually frame each stage. This framework draws on balancing the incorporation of three factors for structuring instruction for online and distance learning, such as the online SL Language Lab will facilitate (see Figure 9): teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence.
To ensure that teaching presence scaffolds student learning during the language lab, David (pseudonym) completed four asynchronous modules that oriented him to the SL environments’ affordances and model the task structure, resources used in compiling the task submission document(s), ways for extending the SL experience, and explaining how the standard qualitative rubric was applied for assessing each task submission. These orientation sessions were designed for delivery in the first four weeks out of sixteen that the lab convenes; although, participants could choose to work ahead. They were designed to follow a progression that incorporates modeled SL use of targeted SL affordances, student replication of the modeled behavior, and summative assessments that build in complexity after each session. These sessions covered an orientation to the lab itself, the SL interface, and technical support for setting up student laptops to run SL as smoothly as possible, then move into shopping in SL and personalizing avatars, followed by exploring the virtual world and joining groups, and concluding with methods for extending the SL experience. Moreover, I further supported David during the replication phase of each session with individual feedback and guidance. Additionally, I included qualitative feedback directly on all of his submissions along with some instant feedback generated by any quizzes delivered through Canvas at the end of each orientation module (see Module progression in Appendix I). Before David moved onto the independent structured task completion phase, I reviewed the assessment rubric with him by modeling how it was applied it to a sample task similar to their fourth assessment in the orientation phase: completion of a full task with extension activity.

The qualitative rubric (see Appendix G) was designed to be used by participants to self-assess, as a personal learning tool, the remaining submissions for the lab, beginning with Task one of six, and is designed to assess six elements of each task: following instructions (0-5%), the
objective or “meta” (0-10%), the inclusion of a chat-log or transcribed audio chat (0-35%), the inclusion of contextualized photos or “fotos” documenting their SL experience (0-5%), a summary or “resumen” of their SL experience in either English or Spanish (0-15%), and an extension activity that deepens their understanding up the HL or its culture in either English or Spanish upon approval (0-30%). Further, the design provides feedback by assessing each of these categories along a three-stage scale: exceeding expectations (100-80% of the points available for that category), meeting the expectations (79-60% of the points available for that category), or failing to meet expectations (59-0% of the points available for that category).

In assessing the first category, following instructions, I would help participants to monitor that they labeled their file with first and last name, have followed MLA style in the formatting, that all sections are present and labeled, and that the rubric (Appendix G) would be included as the first page. In category two, the “meta”, they would check to see that the SHLLs had included at least two ACFTL standards (Appendix F), with an objective for the task and an extension activity that links that standard to a course learning outcome, which they clearly state. In category three, “chat”, they would focus on to what extent that demonstrated that they were socially present in the task (Arbaugh et al., 2008). To explain, the participant would submit chat-log(s) that show(s) a well-developed attempt to align with the stated “meta”, work completely in Spanish, and make use of SL resources, including other speakers of Spanish. In the fourth category, “fotos”, they could look for visual evidence that the participants had demonstrated social presence though their engagement with the SL environment, this would be shown through their inclusion of contextualized images that are embedded within the “resumen”, “discusión”, and/or the chat-logs to artfully illustrate how the student took advantage of the SL environment or other resources. In the fifth category, “resumen”, they would be asked to assess to what extent
that they have demonstrated their cognitive presence in the task by their inclusion of an excellent narrative summary about their time spent on the task in SL and how they attempted to achieve their “meta”. Further, in this category it should be evident that the student has made ample effort to achieve their “meta” and take advantage of SL resources. In the final category, “extensión”, they would be self-assessed on their cognitive presence through their use of explicit evidence from their chat-logs, photos, and/or “resumen” to deepen their understanding of language structure, linguistic variety, speech register, cultural differences/norms, HL customs, or otherwise develop their command of Spanish in a well-structured extension activity. Further, they would assess to what extent that they explicitly connected their extension activity to the established “meta” and clearly illustrated the processes that the student used in their analysis.

The previously discussed rubric would be used in the self-assessment of each of the four individually designed SL tasks. These four task-oriented assignments would be completed by SHLLs with other HL speakers in SL that consist of the same elements named in the rubric (Appendix G). In this series of tasks, participants would be allowed to set the goals for each task/extension combination by choosing at least one option from a list of ACTFL standards (Appendix F) to fulfill and setting an objective to accomplish inside of SL with either other participants or other speakers of Spanish. Students would be challenged to engage socially with peers and other speakers of Spanish inside of SL. The task would also include demonstrating their cognitive engagement by creating a journal document (Word format) according to the progression on the syllabus.

The student would be responsible for negotiating each task with other speakers of Spanish in the HL and for describing to the instructor, myself, how the task/extension they designed aligns with Spanish language or cultural content, the selected standards, and their own
objectives for studying Spanish. It is important to note that a set minimum amount of time spent inside of SL for each task was established and could be used later in the findings or discussion section of the case-study. Specifically, these tasks should result in at least 45 minutes of time spent in SL.

By choosing specific ACTFL standards (see Appendix F) and learning objectives that are addressed either by the interaction in SL and/or through the chosen extension activity, SHLLs would be able to filter the vast affordances of SL and direct their focus towards objectives that are aligned with course outcomes. There are seven specifically set course outcomes for the lab that are described in their Syllabus (Appendix H): 1) students will adapt classroom content to naturalistic settings; 2) students will engage with Spanish culture and authentic materials; 3) participants will create personal relationships with other speakers of Spanish, improving pragmatic awareness and motivation; 4) students will gain confidence and experience with using Spanish in authentic settings and in a variety of contexts; 5) students will identify and test linguistic forms in naturalistic settings; 6) students will use Spanish language creatively to interact with other speakers of Spanish; and 7) students will become members of Hispanic communities and gain sustainable access to these communities, the Spanish language, and Hispanic cultures through Second Life.

SHLLs would build on these established objectives and their experiences in SL by engaging in reflection through rich qualitative journals, written in either English or Spanish directly after task completion, which would provide insight into what ways that the SHLLs process their experiences in SL. Further they would include some extension activity with the chat-logs from the session and/or photos, such as analyzing interactions for specific features,
weaving a narrative in the HL, or some other activity that deepens the student’s understanding of the HL or its culture based on data gathered from their SL experience.

To ensure the integrity of the data submitted by SHLLs, original log files that are created by the SL platform would be submitted along with student journals. These logs contain time stamps by the minute for each turn taken in SL chat and would also embed a file creation/modification index for each log file. Additionally, any segments of recorded audio or video that SHLLs might choose to include in their journals and/or extension activities would need to be transcribed by the SHLLs before submission, which may leave it open to editing; therefore, the original media would also be collected and would include the same created/modified data embedded in each file. This original file would be transcribed independently by the researcher for coding with original chat-log files, separately from the journal segments that are submitted. SHLLs would be advised that altering any of the data with the hopes of gaining a better assessment score would not result in such. Any of the data that would also be used for assessment in their course would be assessed on a qualitative rubric that does not emphasize grammaticality or successfulness of attempts to interact with other speakers of the HL (see Appendix G).

**Part Two: End of Course Interview & Exit Survey**

At the end of the study, David was asked to complete a brief but mostly open-ended asynchronous interview (see Appendix D). It was broken into four sections: 1) personal information, 2) creating your Second Life identity, 3) behavior in Second Life, and 4) recommendations. The first part would gather the same identification information as the entrance survey that focus participants completed, which would be used to match the data gathered in this interview to other data gathered throughout the study. The second part would elicit open-ended
qualitative responses and Likert like scale data related to the processes involved in creating a SL identity and an avatar persona within the virtual world. This would include discussion about the avatar’s physical appearance as well as any behavioral aspects that contribute to the SHLL’s individual sense of identity inside of SL. Next, the third part would also gather a mixture of open-ended and Likert like scale responses about the kinds of behavior that the SHLLs recall engaging in within SL. These responses would be used to contrast the SHLL’s recalled uses of specific tools, artifacts, and other features of the SL environment or platform, which afforded them specific learning opportunities. Finally, the last section of the exit survey asked to list and describe any recommendations that he might have for future SHLLs looking to study their HL in SL and/or for instructors wishing to guide those same participants as they pursue understanding of their HL and culture.

Finally, David was asked to complete the brief COI framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999) survey (downloaded from https://coi.athabascau.ca/coi-model/coi-survey/) in Google Forms (see Appendix E) to gather data about the effectiveness of the lab and task design. This survey has been standardized and validated (Arbaugh et al., 2008) over the past fifteen years to describe how participants perceive the three types of presence (social, cognitive, and teaching) to be balanced in distance learning environments. This instrument poses a total of 34 Likert scale questions with 13 for teaching presence, 9 for social presence, and 12 for cognitive presence.

Each of the three types of presence is further divided into at least 3 additional domains each by the survey. First, teaching presence is parsed into design and organization (how the instructor has planned the course and organized its delivery/pedagogical materials), facilitation (the instructor’s ability to guide participants through email, discussion, etc.), and direct
instruction (providing explicit answers in feedback and focused discussion). Next, social presence is discussed in terms of affective expression (feelings towards others in the online environment and the environment for engaging socially), open communication (perceptions towards comfort level in the online environment), and group cohesion (perceptions about collaboration and group dynamics). Lastly, cognitive presence is explored via triggering event (impetus for engaging more deeply with content, concepts, skills, etc.), exploration (processes for expanding on content, concepts, skills, etc.), integration (the synthesis of content, concepts, skills, etc. with expanded understanding), and resolution (knowledge and higher order understanding gained through the previous three stages).

Data Coding & Analysis

Data gathered from surveys, audio recordings, and screen captures was analyzed inductively in the qualitative and mixed methods research program called Dedoose. All audio conversation would be transcribed, using the Transcriptions application, before analysis and chat-logs would be translated before analysis, which would allow the researcher to become saturated by the data and facilitate qualitative interpretation of the results. Additionally, visual data of the avatar from photos or screen capture videos was analyzed semiotically to monitor any customization of the avatar and how its appearance aligns with the SHLLs’ own processes of identity mediation. Before analysis, each participant had a bilingual profile generated to describe their relationship to the HL and their instructional needs (Carreira, 2004), then data for each SHLL was analyzed individually, results of inductive analysis is then compared and contrasted with outcomes anticipated by Wei’s (2000) Bilingual Continuum (modified to include a power delineation access, see Chapter 2), Carreira’s (2004) framework, and finally links between the resulting findings are made to the greater body of HLA and SL research.
Figure 12. Data Analysis

Data analysis follows three phases of coding similar to open coding, axial coding, and the process of sewing codes into themes after open coding (see Figure 12) (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). The first stage of coding sorts raw data into pre-categories, by a process of sewing pieces of saturated subcategories together to form new thematic ones. Finally, these generated themes are compared and contrasted continuously, as the themes are woven together to address each research question from an SCT perspective.

In alignment with qualitative research methodology, described by Lichtman (2013), analysis focuses on creating rigor by funneling the data through the researcher until they have saturated me. Since the researcher is an integral part of the coding and analysis process, it is important to note that the resulting findings and discussion will be subject to my impressions of patterns within the data and any biases that I previously outlined in Chapter 1. However, the incorporation of rigorous coding procedures and software also generates a thematic coding cloud that are used to guide discussion. The code cloud visually demonstrates an entanglement of thematic threads in the form of codes that reveals the nexuses where the phenomenon being investigated is most greatly concentrated. This representation reflects code density in the size that the individual thread is represented, and the hierarchy of codes will be represented by different colors: one for the highest level, a second for the secondary level, a third for the tertiary
level, and another as the very lowest level. I use this representation to structure discussion, endeavoring to provide greater attention to the more heavily represented nexuses. Each step in the coding and analysis process are also described in stages in Chapters 4 and 5, while discussion is also interwoven.
CHAPTER FOUR
ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

PART I: SHLL BACKGROUNDS AND MOTIVATIONS

This chapter is dedicated to the analysis and discussion of data gathered during both Part I, SHLL backgrounds and motivations, and Part II, SHLL using SL case study. I begin by analyzing the data gathered in each part, drawing comparisons between them as I discuss trends within the general population data and that of the case study participant, as I weave a narrative about his experience in using SL to study his HL. During the course of conducting this analysis I discovered that what the data were telling me were not necessarily what I set out to understand. There were some trends in the data gathered from the nation-wide survey that I circulated, which were not targeted for investigation by my original research questions. Because of this realization, and consistent with the constant comparative method approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, A. & Corbin, 1998) of this exploratory study, I crafted the following two research questions to help guide my analysis and discussion of the data gathered for Part I of this study:

4) In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?

5) In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?

My analysis and discussion in Part I begins by addressing research questions one and two. I do this by applying a mixed methods analysis of SHLL backgrounds, centered around ethnic identity, importance of maintaining ethnic heritage, nexuses of bilingualism among the
SHLL population, and technological background. Next, I focus on SHLL motivations for studying Spanish, including academic and personal factors. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the data for Part I is drawn entirely from a survey that was distributed amongst 133 Universities in the U.S. that were identified as having a latin@/Hispanic population of above 20%. This generated 47 individual responses (n) from across the U.S., a lower than anticipated response rate.

**SHLL Backgrounds**

In this section, I use the close ended responses to the survey described above and in Chapter 3 to answer research question 4:

4. In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?

The primary topics within this section are SHLL ethnicity, importance of maintaining ethnic heritage, and SHLL bilingualism along the Bilingual Continuum (Wei, 2000). Finally, I probe the appropriateness for technology-based HLA resources by probing SHLL technological experience.

**Table 3. Ethnicity Categories and Values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Case Study Participant</th>
<th>Largest Identifier Set</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afrolatin@</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chican@</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latin@</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican-American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Hispanic/Latin@</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first area of SHLL backgrounds that I look at is the complex component of identity: ethnicity. Entering into this investigation, I have to admit that I carry with me some expectations for these backgrounds to differ in ways that compliment my own experiences with students and the lens that the literature highlights such differences. However, throughout the process of analyzing the responses from each individual SHLL, I discovered a kaleidoscope of the ways that backgrounds can combine into unique individuals and perspectives about themselves, which were not expected. To avoid imposing any of my own constructs for ethnic identity into how the SHLLs being surveyed discussed this component of themselves, I allowed open responses to be filled in. I did this so that SHLLs would disclose how they are used to describing themselves in their own words. This uncovered a few terms that I do not typically see represented in discussions about SHLL backgrounds, such as Afrolatin@, and complex combinations of terms that demonstrate how varied and intricate one’s sense of ethnic self can be.

To identify trends in these responses, I first needed to fashion uniformity in the categories created from the open responses by reviewing them for spelling errors and adjusting for word gender by changing –o and –a endings in terms like Latino/Latina by replacing the terminating vowel with the accepted convention of an -@. After doing this, I generated a set of descriptive statistics by taking each category and creating an alphabetized list (see Table 3) that could be used as a reference for the countif function to count and then creating a percent value. These statistics were used to generate the first kaleidoscopic view of the SHLL ethnic spectrum depicted in Figure 13.
In general, the majority of the SHLLs, described themselves as being Hispanic (62%), Hispanic/Latin@ (9%), and Mexican (6%). Nearly 13% of the responses involved some combination of White and/or Caucasian with other descriptors; surprisingly, two respondents completely rejected their ethnic identification with Hispanic or Latin@ heritage and described themselves as White and White/Caucasian. I say surprising, given the context in which this description was disclosed; although, it is not that surprising in the larger picture given how heavily reified whiteness is within the context of the U.S. for someone who is “passably white” to align themselves with the power associated with such a status.
To understand the importance of maintaining the ethnic heritage that the SHLLs identified with in the previous section, I asked them to rate this importance on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (very low to very high). These responses were then counted, divided by the number of responses (47), and the resulting percent was graphically depicted (see Figure 14). Overwhelmingly, the SHLLs expressed a very high level of importance for maintaining their ethnic heritage (81%) with only 17% indicating that ethnic heritage was of neutral or low importance to them. These numbers appear to consistently support the notion presented above that a small percentage (13%) of the SHLLs surveyed show signs of aligning with a more “white” social identity and rejecting their Hispanic/Latin@ heritage as part of their identity.

Figure 14. Importance of Maintaining Ethnic Heritage
Next, I looked at the language components of how SHLLs identify by posing binary true/false questions-based Wei’s (2000) bilingual continuum. For the purposes of this study I arranged that continuum graphically along a scale that demonstrates how different types of bilingualism are associated with greater or lesser prestige. It is important to mention that bilingualism much like ethnicity is complex. Further, an individual would not likely only be one type of bilingual, rather they would likely identify with several types of bilingualism. With this in mind, I first looked for where the greatest nexuses of bilingualism exist across all of the SHLLs surveyed.

To get a snapshot of where SHLLs in general fit along the continuum, I first compiled all of their responses into a single table. In order to make sense of the questions and prepare the table to be translated into a single graphic, I mapped all of the questions shown in the column header of the table to the correct bilingual term from Wei’s (2000) continuum (see Table 3). Then, I used the countif function to count all of the “true” values, divide them by the number of responses (47), and use the resulting percentages to generate a bar chart (see Figure 15).

Table 4 shows bilingualism questions that are mapped to the corresponding term from Wei’s (2000) continuum, as mentioned above. It also includes the calculated percent values for “true” responses from the 47 SHLL respondents, those values in the top 25% are highlighted in green to showcase these nexuses and those in the bottom 25% are highlighted in red. The greatest nexuses are around productive and additive bilingualism (91%). This means that most of the SHLLs, more than 90%, see their knowledge and experience of both Spanish and English combining in a way that enriches both languages, can understand both English and Spanish, and might even be able to write something meaningful in Spanish. Additionally, at least 75% believe that they have a lot to learn in either English or Spanish, are doing better in one of their
languages because they’ve started using it more and can function just fine with respect to daily tasks and interactions in both languages. Further, at least 79% report having learned each language in separate contexts.

**Table 4. Bilingualism Questions Mapped to Term**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>additive bilingual</td>
<td>My knowledge and experience of both Spanish and English combine in a way that enriches both languages.</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascendant bilingual</td>
<td>I am doing better in one of my languages because I've started using it more.</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balanced bilingual</td>
<td>I can use and understand Spanish and English about the same.</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compound bilingual</td>
<td>I've learned Spanish and English at the same time.</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-ordinat bilingual</td>
<td>I learned Spanish and English in separate contexts.</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>covert bilingual</td>
<td>I try to hide that I know either English or Spanish.</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diagonal bilingual</td>
<td>I can speak Spanish but not the kind that's taught by schools or used to write academically.</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominant bilingual</td>
<td>I can speak either English or Spanish much better than the other because I use it more.</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dormant bilingual</td>
<td>I moved here from a Spanish speaking country but haven't been able to keep it up.</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early bilingual</td>
<td>I learned both English and Spanish as a child.</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>functional bilingual</td>
<td>I can function just fine with respect to daily tasks and interactions in both Spanish and English.</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horizontal bilingual</td>
<td>I think that Spanish and English are really similar, and I can use them both.</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipient bilingual</td>
<td>I have a lot to learn in either English or Spanish.</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late bilingual</td>
<td>I didn't learn either English or Spanish until I was an adult.</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maximal bilingual</td>
<td>I speak, write and read like English and Spanish speaking natives.</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minimal bilingual</td>
<td>I can only say a couple of things in either English or Spanish.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural bilingual</td>
<td>I don’t have very much experience learning Spanish in an academic setting and I don’t feel like I can serve as a translator in formal settings.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>productive bilingual</td>
<td>I can understand both English and Spanish, and I might even be able to write something meaningful in Spanish.</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receptive bilingual</td>
<td>I can understand both Spanish, either written or spoken, but I can’t necessarily produce it.</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recessive bilingual</td>
<td>I feel like I can’t use Spanish very well because I don’t use it enough.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semilingual</td>
<td>I don’t really feel like I can use either Spanish or English very well.</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simultaneous bilingual</td>
<td>I have been using both English and Spanish since I first learned how to speak.</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subordinate bilingual</td>
<td>I use either my English or Spanish grammar in the other language, such as with word order or compound tenses.</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtractive bilingual</td>
<td>I had to give up my Spanish because I was told that English took priority when I was a child, or because someone else decided I needed to use English dominantly.</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>successive bilingual</td>
<td>I learned English only after I already knew how to speak, read, and write in Spanish.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertical bilingual</td>
<td>I learned Spanish only after I already knew how to speak, read, and write in English.</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data depicted in the SHLL Bilingualism along Bilingual Continuum figure below (Figure 15), takes the analysis beyond the representation of survey response values and discussion about what the most common bilingual profile is for the SHLLs surveyed. I have also arranged the x axis to display the type of bilingualism in order of prestige, consistent with Figure 7 from Chapter 2, and arranged them along a color-coded arrow. The more prestigious varieties of bilingualism are toward the left (green) and move to the less prestigious varieties to the right (red). In order to clearly see where the trends are for SHLLs identifying with different varieties of bilingualism, I applied a polynomial trend line to the bar graph.
This analysis shows a clear trending for the SHLLs surveyed to identify more heavily towards the more prestigious varieties of bilingualism than the less prestigious varieties. While the peak in the trend line is not entirely shifted to the left, it would indicate that the SHLLs surveyed have a sense of empowerment from their bilingualism and for the most part do not see themselves suffering from the extreme effects of subtractive bilingualism. This is contrary to some strong concerns that I highlighted from the literature on HLLs in the U.S. in Chapter 2 (Cho, 2000; Leeman, 2012; Valdés, 2005); however, supports the idea that SHLLs are searching for empowerment through their linguistic identity rather than marginalization for varying proficiency levels or proficiency in low-prestige language varieties.
There are some limitations to how representative that this graphic should be considered, including the low number of participants (47) and possible limitation by the institutions circulating the survey instrument on which the analysis is based. It is important to note, however, that this analysis is based on each SHLL’s own perspective rather than on any outside measure that would evaluate actual language proficiency levels and may reflect their own desire to express an ideal self rather than an objective assessment. Additionally, it is possible that those who chose to complete the survey were uniquely motivated to do so specifically because of this sense of empowerment and that others may have elected not to participate due to the feelings of insecurity and shame mentioned elsewhere in the HLA literature. Moreover, regardless of
explicitly defining the population for whom the survey was intended to be circulated amongst, it is possible that the entrenched biases mentioned in Chapter 2 surrounding how HLLs are identified by institutions may have also influenced these findings. Such biases would naturally find those SHLLs that have a specific level of linguistic skills that would predispose them to a greater sense of empowerment than those with a familial claim to the language but are lacking the linguistic proficiency of those typically favored for HLL status by institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have at least one social media account.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used a messenger program or text messaging before.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have customized an avatar for a game or social platform before.</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used a browser to look for places, events, or information before.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have played an MMO(RPG) before (like World of Warcraft).</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have created a user profile for social media before.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used Canvas before.</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have taken an online or blended format course before.</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 17. SHLL Technology Experience**

To probe how appropriate the employment of technology-based solutions for meeting SHLL needs, the survey asked SHLLs how technologically proficient they felt they were. Using a Likert scale from 1-5, overwhelmingly 87% of SHLLs expressed that they were either highly or very highly proficient in using technology (see Figure 16) such as Microsoft office, social media, and/or virtual gaming (see Figure 17). In more detail, the greatest percentage of experience was around using social media (98%, 83%), messaging (94%), an internet browser to look up facts or social events (92%) and taking a blended format course (60%). Very few SHLLs, however, had played any type of Massive Multiplayer Open (Role Player Game)
(MMORGP) that would take advantage of an open virtually immersive world like SL. This kind of response supports the idea of leveraging technology to help SHLLs in studying their HL and/or accessing HL communities. This is an important note of validation for the proposed use of technological resource like SL that affords SHLLs familiar artifacts for social networking, messaging, and browsing for research and finding social events. I will look at one SHLLs experience with SL in greater detail with the analysis and discussion of the Part II case study.

It is important to note that the low reported use of virtual worlds would suggest that well supported and guided orientation to this specific type of technology is an absolute necessity in order for it to be a viable option. There just would not be enough background familiarity with using it to have students engage in cognitively demanding tasks without an orientation to address this and relieve some of the cognitive strain imposed by operating in an alien environment.

**SHLL Motivations & Pedagogical Perspectives**

In this section, I ask in what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design? I provide mixed methods analysis of the quantitative and qualitative survey answers that target what motivates the SHLLs surveyed to study Spanish. In the qualitative analysis, I treat open ended responses as the basis for qualitative analysis as I highlight their individual voices, bringing their stories to light as vignettes.

In Figures 18-20, I present a multimodal summary for the SHLLs responses to survey questions that elicited data about their motivations to study Spanish. This summary displays the individual statements that SHLLs rated on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (very low to very high) as each applied to them. These responses were organized into a table, where the `countif` function was used to find the number of responses that were very low, low, neutral, high, or very high for each
statement. From these values, I generated a stacked bar chart to graphically depict the proportions of these ratings by each statement. Based on this, I go a step further and map the statements into categories to facilitate discussion about the ways that these SHLLs are motivated, how their current instruction meets their needs, and how they believe others studying/teaching Spanish see them.

**SHLL Motivations**

1. I study Spanish because I want to learn the language.

4. I am interested in Hispanic cultures in general.

5. I am studying Spanish to better communicate with other family members.

6. There are groups of Spanish speakers that I wish I could speak with.

7. I admire people who are fluent in two or more languages.

8. Learning Spanish is something that I want to do.

9. I have family members that are native Spanish speakers.

10. I want to learn more about where my family came from and why they might have left (political, economic, or other social reasons).

15. I study Spanish to connect with my past.

16. I feel that learning Spanish is a part of my family's heritage or important for our community.

22. I can speak in Spanish but I take classes to work on my grammar.

![Figure 18. SHLL Motivations](image-url)
In Figure 18, the SHLLs surveyed in general express very highly agreeing with each of
the statements presented to them that were designed to identify different types of motivations for
studying their HL. Consistent with the high priority for preserving their ethnic heritage (see
Figure13) and their sense of empowerment through bilingualism (see Figure 15), the majority of
SHLLs (70% or higher) are either very highly or highly motivated to study Spanish because they
want to learn the language (questions 1 & 8) as a means of connecting to their past (questions 15
& 16) and are interested in learning more about their cultural heritage (questions 4, 10, & 16).

Surprisingly, there is somewhat more moderation when it comes to how the SHLLs
actually seeing themselves using Spanish to reach out or interact with other speakers of Spanish
and the HL community (questions 5 & 6). In fact, while still a majority, only 64% of those
surveyed are studying Spanish with the intention of speaking to family or any other group of
Spanish speakers. This would suggest that for at least 36% of the SHLLs, they see Spanish as a
more academic or personal asset rather than something that affords them communication with
members of heritage communities. This shows a divide in how SHLLs view the function of their
HL in their lives and could affect the types of activities in the Spanish language classroom that
they find most valuable for them. For example, the 64% that see themselves using Spanish as a
mode of communication with speakers that they do not currently feel that they have access to, it
may be valuable build their confidence in not only communicative competencies, but also
strategies for reaching out to other speakers of Spanish. Conversely, these types of targeted and
cognitively demanding activities may be of less value to the remaining 34% that value the
language and culture but have little interest in interacting with other speakers. These SHLLs
might value activities that build reading and writing strategies and/or cultural
knowledge/experiences.
**SHLL Pedagogical Perspectives**

Figure 19 represents some perspectives that SHLLs have about the pedagogy that they experience in the typical U.S. foreign language classroom. Despite the argument generally presented in the literature that SHLLs should be accommodated with more targeted classes that differ from the typical U.S. foreign language classroom that most SHLLs find themselves in, the SHLLs surveyed overwhelming do not agree (question 18). In fact, 79% either a neutral, low, or very low agreement with the notion of taking a separate course that is designed for them because of their backgrounds with Spanish. Surprisingly, 53% have a low or very low desire to be in such a class; however, 31% neutral, low, or very low respondents still disagree or show indifference to these typical foreign language classrooms meeting their needs as SHLLs. In general, however, the majority of SHLLs view their classrooms from the perspective that they understand there are different varieties of Spanish, that their heritage variety is valued, that are empowered in class because of their familial connection to the language, and the courses are challenging. This would suggest, that for the SHLLs surveyed at least, that a separate heritage track is not their preference. In addition, it would also suggest around a third of SHLLs would benefit from more tailored instructional design that is differentiated to allow their learning experience to more directly meet their personal needs. This suggests that an adaptive learning resource, such as the SL lab that this study proposes could be a good fit for accommodating the SHLLs that would like a more personalized learning experience and still keep them in the same types of courses that they would like to remain in.
SHLL Outside Perspectives

Up until this point, my analysis has focused on SHLL backgrounds, behaviors, motivations, and intentions. These are all factors that come from within the SHLL (intrinsic) or are more objective measures of environmental exposure to language/culture and have little to do with their opinions about outside influences on their relation their HL and/or culture (extrinsic). More specifically, Figure 20 shows how SHLLs rated their agreement with statements about what they believe that outside influences think about or expect from them. Previous research by Dörnyei (1994, 2005, 2009) has shown that motivation coming from external sources is an important factor in language acquisition and ultimate attainment of proficiency levels, which makes it an important element to consider when designing supports and overall pedagogy for SHLLs. The majority of SHLLs (at least 62%) believe that their families have high expectations for their performance in in Spanish and positively receive being viewed as a mentor by their peers within their Spanish courses. Further, the latter may offer some insight into some of the motivational
benefits perceived by that those SHLLs who prefer to remain in classes with foreign language learners. Being in a position of mentorship and having one’s expertise relied upon is empowering and provides motivational support to learners (Abdi, 2011).

It is interesting to note that SHLLs overwhelmingly did not resent being grouped within their language courses based on what they understand as their teacher’s perception of their cultural heritage. In fact, teachers regularly try and strategically group students to include students of higher proficiency or insider subject knowledge as a means of supporting other students (differentiated instruction) in their development (Coyne, Kame’enui, & Carnine, 2007). From an SCT perspective, this facilitates social learning by grouping students of different ability levels in several domains through challenging them beyond their current individual ability levels \((i + 1)\) but keeping the goal for achievement within an attainable range for the group (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1986). While this shows great potential to benefit other language learners, should the SHLLs resent this grouping, it could present drains on the SHLL’s motivation within the course and even breed resentment. For only 13% of those surveyed, this may be the case, but the majority do not share their view.

SHLL views are somewhat more balanced when it comes to the remaining questions, without strongly obvious trends toward the high or low ends of the spectrum. In general, SHLLs have more a balanced distribution of views about what they perceive as their teacher’s views for their performance to be better than the other students (question 19), having their heritage validate in comparison to other SHLLs (question 25), or linguistic profiling based on their name or race (question 24).
In this section, use the open-ended survey responses to answer research question 5 by creating a series of vignettes that depict themes within the data while highlighting SHLL voices:

5. In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?

To facilitate analysis and arrange the qualitative survey data into vignettes that highlight SHLL voices, as called for by Ducar (2008), and weave a narrative about what motivates those surveyed and their perspectives, the open-ended responses analyzed in this section very largely consisted of short personal narratives that helped to fill in the gaps for what was really important to the SHLLs and that they wanted me to know, but that the other survey questions did not fully cover. These responses were gathered at the end of the survey, so their narratives are framed by their previous responses.
To aid in my analysis in this section, I needed to internalize and process the narratives that I was reading. Thus, after reading through each one I began using techniques to help me find themes and trends within the data. With that in mind, I have generated two figures that represent nexuses in the data and that serve as scaffolds for weaving the narrative. The first figure (Figure 21) takes a very high-level view based solely on term usage but strips away context by using a linguistic word count type analysis to generate insights into trends within the data (Lin, Lin, Wen, & Chu, 2016). The second figure (Figure 22), however, relies on the code tree that was generated from my axial coding of the data, which provides a more refined and contextualized view as I internalize and process the data. I use both of these to guide my discussion, ultimately weaving a narrative as I highlight SHLL perspectives that add context to the analysis.

### Table 5. Values for Packed Word Cloud

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very High &lt;20</th>
<th>High 20 - 10</th>
<th>Low 9 - 5</th>
<th>Very Low &gt;5*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56 Spanish</td>
<td>17 speak</td>
<td>9 teach</td>
<td>4 different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 language</td>
<td>13 family</td>
<td>8 communicate</td>
<td>4 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 learn</td>
<td>13 want</td>
<td>8 heritage</td>
<td>4 continue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 English</td>
<td>8 culture</td>
<td>4 parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 know</td>
<td>8 study</td>
<td>4 course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 take</td>
<td>7 classes</td>
<td>4 always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 first</td>
<td>4 future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 never</td>
<td>4 really</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 year</td>
<td>4 start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 able</td>
<td>4 major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 understand</td>
<td>4 think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 important</td>
<td>4 word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 speaker</td>
<td>4 love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 grammar</td>
<td>4 much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 Mexico</td>
<td>3 generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 forget</td>
<td>3 background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 native</td>
<td>3 literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 school</td>
<td>3 Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 class</td>
<td>3 maintain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 feel</td>
<td>3 Mexican</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Figure 21, I depict nexuses of term prevalence within open ended responses from the SHLLs. I used an internet-based algorithm that counts term prevalence in a data set, then graphically represents term usage. Once term occurrence was found, the algorithm output a tabled list. Because my objective was to search for meaning and concepts, the terms with like roots were grouped together, by sorting the list alphabetically and looking for derivations of similar terms. For instance, if a plural was used like “classes” it was counted along with the singular “class”. This list was then used to generate the packed word cloud displayed in Figure 21. In order to provide better perspective when interpreting the results of this analysis and facilitate discussion, I have also arranged the terms in four categories (see Table 5): very high, high, low, and very low.

*Terms with occurrence values below three were not depicted in the table because of how infrequently they appear in the responses.*
It shows more saliently used terms larger than those used less frequently, but lacks the context of each narrative; however, I found the results of using this algorithm fairly insightful as I began looking for trends and themes within the data. One thing that immediately stood out was the prevalence of themes like “Spanish”, “language”, and “learn” (arranged in order of salience, from most salient to least). When looking at the narratives, it becomes clear that there is a strong preference to say “Spanish” or “the language” and relate it to an ethnic identity or
heritage type statement. Contextually, this reference to identity is consistent with what the literature suggests when heritage learners discuss their heritage language (Potowski, 2012). It is an integral part of ethnicity identity to be able to claim the related language and have a demonstrated ability (Cho, Cho, & Tse, 1997; Faulx, 2013; Oh & Fuligini, 2010). For those who cannot demonstrate this ability, they tend to express unease with claiming an ethnic identity or showing solidarity with members of that community (“grouping”, McNamara, 1997) whom do have demonstrated ability with the language (Abdi, 2011; Cho, 2000; Oh & Fuligini, 2010). Moreover, terms occurring at the “High” frequency level were also relevant to this complex discussion surrounding identity and how proficiency in either the “Spanish” or “English” languages impacts their relation to other Spanish speakers such as “family” members. It is also important to note that high occurrence terms such as “want”, “know”, and “speak” and low occurrence terms like “teach”, “communicate”, “heritage”, “culture”, and “study” occur in those narratives where the SHLLs discuss their motivations for studying the language, which I highlight in “Vignette B. Motivations”.

In order to provide greater context to my analysis and accurately portray SHLL voices through the vignettes I present, I used the mixed methods coding software Dedoose to engage in a three-stage coding process. In the first stage I created several codes inductively based on what I was seeing in the SHLL narratives and began applying them to the data. I then went through the data again, this time refining the coding process and sowing codes into hierarchies. Ultimately, I made a final pass through the data, further refining the coding process and more finely sowing the codes together into the Code Tree presented in Table 6.
Table 6. Thematic Code Tree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Density</th>
<th>Parent Code</th>
<th>Child Codes Level 1</th>
<th>Child Code 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>(9) Learn Prestige Variety (Standardized Castilian)</td>
<td>(3) Language mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(9) Preserve language/culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7) Communicate with Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5) Connect with culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5) Academic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Language maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Explore heritage/language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Help other Spanish speakers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Ideal Self Context</td>
<td>(6) Work</td>
<td>(2) Outsider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5) School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Literary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Bilingualism</td>
<td>(3) Interruption in HL acquisition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Spanish home language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Balanced bilingual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Functional bilingual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Receptive bilingual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Subtractive Bilingualism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Empowerment through language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mode of acquisition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pedagogical Perspective</td>
<td>(1) Tailored Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Institutional Assumptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Not Challenged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify through heritage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Language status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Combat language shift</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 6, the Code Tree is shown with three layers of codes. The highest-level theme is presented in the second column, with the number of instances for any child code under that theme shown in the first column. Next, there are two levels of child codes that are shown, which show a more detailed accounting for the themes and their concentration in the data. The most prevalent themes in the narratives were centered around “Objectives” (63), “Ideal Self” (26), and
“Bilingualism” (21). Figure 22 provides a better visualization for how themes can be seen as strands within the tapestry of the SHLL narratives and how the patterns in that tapestry would clearly focus on the three salient trends mentioned previously. This figure also shows how central the objective for studying was in these narratives, I also equate this along with ideal self context as themes that show motivations for studying the HL later on in Vignette B.

![Figure 22. Packed Code Cloud](image)

I operationalized “Objectives” as being the explicit statement for “why” an SHLL was studying Spanish or “what” that they expressed the language would do for them. Primarily, the narratives focused on learning a prestige variety of the language and preserving the language and/or culture for future generations in their family (9). In the same vein, SHLLs also described wanting to better communication with their non-English-speaking family members (7) and to connect with their heritage culture (5). Other SHLLs wanted to study the language for academic reasons like mastering language conventions to teach the language as a career or purely to access
Spanish literature (5). There was very little mention of studying for the purposes of language maintenance (3), exploration of their H/L (1), or helping other Spanish speakers by engaging with them directly in the language.

The next salient theme I found was in how SHLLs would describe themselves in relation to the language and how they envisioned themselves using it. This spoke so strongly of how Dörnyei and Chan (2013) and Dörnyei (2005) describe a language learner’s *ideal self* that I borrowed the term to describe this theme as “Ideal Self Context”. In fact, this thematic code is best operationalized by the context in which the SHLLs see themselves using their HL.

In general, the SHLLs saw Spanish as a useful tool for developing their professional (6) or academic (5) selves, while some saw it useful for traveling (3) becoming consumers of Spanish literature (1). Surprisingly, very few SHLLs described how they would become more active participants in HL communities or actually establish new relationships with other speakers of Spanish. The concentration around professional and academic themes would even suggest that SHLLs more highly value the monetary or social gains that mastering a prestigious variety of Spanish might offer them over connecting to other speakers of Spanish. It is important to note, however, that when describing their “Objectives”, SHLLs did mention studying Spanish to connect with or communicate with close family members but not with other Spanish speakers outside of the family. To explain, there was a decisive lack of expressions like “I want to make more friends that speak Spanish” or “I can see myself using Spanish to join groups of other Spanish speakers”, while objectives or imperative needs for talking to members of their family were explicitly made like, “I do not want to go another day without being able to communicate in one of my family’s languages” (SHLL 4) or “Spanish is very strong in my background and really want to communicate better with my family in Mexico” (SHLL 16).
Vignette A. Language & Identity

I found the theme of language and identity very prevalent in the data; however, the way that it was expressed exposed a varied scale of narratives that demonstrated anywhere from a very strong and positive sense of the Spanish language being ingrained in the SHLLs ethnic identity to weaker and less positive or even subtractive narratives. I was surprised to see a lack of conformity with narratives that could be typified according to Carreira’s (2000) typology however. My impression is that the richness of each individual’s personal narrative would allow them to identify with aspects of each of those SHLL types and possibly show mobility between types over the course of their life. In “Vignette A. Language and Identity”, I highlight three SHLL narratives that show this relation between Spanish, their sense of identity, and how they see their membership within Spanish speaking/heritage communities.

The connection that SHLLs have to their HL and how that translates into their sense of identity can serve to motivate them in their studies, even in the face of adversity like subtractive bilingualism. SHLL 2, for example very strongly identifies as Mexican and has worked against external forces, shamefully such as teachers, that actively impeded Spanish acquisition and maintenance.

Pane 1. Very Strong.

“My family has always had at least one trip to Mexico per year and I feel that has really helped with growing closer to the language and culture. and the way both my parents have told me and forced me to never stop speaking even though teachers and other adults would try to make me think that Spanish would never be important as English” (SHLL 2).
Nieto (2011) tells a similar story and emphasized the shame that she felt as a child when surrounded by teachers that would try and convince her parents to not speak Spanish at home and reduce her exposure to the language. Unfortunately, educators have long reproduced this dialogue under the mistaken misconception that knowing more than one language will confuse the child or stunt their intellectual and linguistic growth, when the opposite has been shown to be true (Dicker, 2003). In this instance, however, a yearly trip to Mexico with support at home for maintaining a connection their Mexican heritage and the Spanish language helped to combat these forces.

Not all SHLLs have families that work so fervently to reinforce this sense of heritage and emphasize continued HL acquisition. These SHLLs can feel a sense of isolation as they struggle to balance their sense of ethnic identity with developing linguistic proficiency. To illustrate, SHLL 39 began learning Spanish up until about age 5 and then found later in life that they wanted to reconnect with the language. Like SHLL 2, SHLL 39 also says that travel to Mexico and connecting with family there was a key element to their linguistic development. Further, this SHLL strongly advocates for language maintenance and acquisition as an essential part of being “of Mexican descent” (SHLL 39), something they vow to cultivate in their own future decedents.

 Pane 2. Strong.

“I was born in USA but raised in Mexico for the first four years of my life. After that I moved to USA and slowly started to forget Spanish. I made an effort to visit family in Mexico as much as possible and learned to speak properly. I [taught] myself to read and write in Spanish at a young age by just making sense of things by attempting to read and noticing the different pronunciations used for different letters and words. I am disappointed when someone who is clearly of Mexican
descent does not know Spanish properly. I feel it is the parents fault for not teaching them. When I have kids, they will learn Spanish first and make sure they don't lose their roots” (SHLL 39).

Other SHLLs do not benefit from at home supports or travel to their heritage country, yet their HL beckons to them as having a sense of “familiarity” (SHLL 4). Infrequent immersion and lack of formal instruction can result in an understanding of the phonological features of the language without understanding of what is actually being said, as with SHLL 4. Not being able to understand the HL has left SHLL feeling like an outsider, especially among family, because they cannot communicate or interpret the communication going on around them in familial environments. This feeling can only be exacerbated with an almost palpable resentment toward parents who erect blocks between their child and that child’s HL, as can be seen below:

_Pane 3. Weak._

“My father did not teach me nor my brother Spanish growing up and never explained his reasoning for it. We also had infrequent exposure to our extended Mexican family. Despite this, Spanish has always had a sense of familiarity to me and pronunciation and understanding of it has come somewhat easy. Even so, I had to grow up feeling like a complete outsider to my own family because I just didn't know what they were saying. Therefore, I am studying Spanish because I want complete fluency; not only to be able to finally communicate well with my family, but because I want to be able to use my skills professionally. I do not want to go another day without being able to communicate in one of my family's languages” (SHLL 4).
Despite the barriers erected between SHLL 4 and their acquisition of Spanish, they have decided to pursue studying their HL and break down this barrier. Their desire to connect to their family and finally feel like an insider has provided them sufficient intrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 1994, 2005, 2013) to see themselves as finally being able to communicate with their loved ones.

Many parents in the HL literature are not like those depicted in the first two panes of Vignette A, where they continually reinforce HL acquisition and build strong connections with the HL culture (Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012; Carreira, 2004; Faulx, 2013; Valdés, 2001). However, as we have seen in this chapter, most of the SHLLs participating in this study as much more aligned with SHLL 2 and 39 than 4. One them between all three panes is the sense of culpability placed on parents for whether or not the HL is passed on to their children. Not one of these panes says something like, “it should be required for schools to develop both the child’s HL and English in U.S.”. Every one of them places the power and ownership on parents for passing along HLs to their children, it is a choice that is made for the child without necessarily involving the child or fully understanding the effects for this choice. SHLL 2, in Pane 1. Very Strong, is thankful that their parents “forced” them to learn and maintain the language, while SHLL 39 and 4 blame parents for not actively asserting themselves in favor of passing on the HL. Ultimately, SHLL 39, in Pane 2. Strong, was able to self-motivate from a young age and actively work towards HL acquisition; however, SHLL 4, in Pane 3. Weak, was resigned to be an outsider and waited until adulthood to start studying.
**Vignette B. Motivations**

Even in the previous vignette, the importance of motivation rings true and its complex intertwining with intrinsic and extrinsic motivational states can be seen. Dörnyei (2014, 2009, 2005) and Dörnyei and Chan (2013) frame these states within dynamic systems that change over time and can be impacted by stimuli, such as effective pedagogical design that bolsters motivation in precise ways. One aspect of this theoretical model for understanding motivation in dynamic systems shone through the other threads as I sowed themes together during my thematic analysis: *Future L2 Self Image*. However, as this concept is framed in the literature specifically for second or foreign language learners studying a language in addition to their first or home language, I have understood this term as being the *Ideal Self* and related it to specific contexts and purposes. The *Ideal Self Context* theme that I found when conducting my analysis clearly established a vision for how SHLLs see themselves in relation to the language now and how they will use it in the future. With this adjusted understanding, I frame four panes within *Vignette B. Motivation*: Pane 1. Learn Academic Variety & Connect with Family, Pane 2. Travel, Pane 3. Professional & Connect to Culture, and Pane 4. Preserve Language & Heritage.

Although my earlier analysis showed trends of bilingualism more highly shifted away for the lower or very middle of the bilingualism continuum (Wei, 2000) when I situated it along a power axis, many SHLLs like SHLL 1 still hold the academic variety in high esteem and strive towards mastering it. This academic variety further empowers SHLLs with prestige that other varieties may not share. However, the academic variety may still create distance between those family members that speak a less prestigious variety and the SHLL who speak the more prestigious variety, perhaps without differentiating between the two and their appropriate contexts.
In Pane 1. Learn Academic Variety & Connect with Family, SHLL 1 considers the Spanish that they are studying at the University to be “the official language”, rejecting considerations that varieties used in their heritage country or region may still be official just not academic level Castilian. At the same time, they, like many other of the SHLLs surveyed, see their Ideal Self using academic Castilian in both “official” and familial contexts. In fact, they say that their motivation is to maintain their HL and acquire the academic Spanish variety in order to “… not struggle with translation once I visit my family or come to school or work” (SHLL 1).

The complex interaction between the extrinsic motivations imposed by parents that do not speak English, a professional life where translation is a job function, and a perceived “… academic advantage to know the official language” (SHLL 1) and the intrinsic motivations of gained prestige, easier transition into translation contexts, and to counter the subtractive bilingual effects of being “placed in monolingual classes in English before … learn[ing]… Spanish grammar” have combined in a such a way that SHLL 1 has cemented goals and vision of their Ideal Self that involve ultimate attainment of their HL.

Pane 1. Learn Academic Variety & Connect with Family.

“I major in Spanish for an academic advantage to know the official language. I learned to speak Spanish first, but once I was around 8 years old I got placed in monolingual classes in English before I got to learn to Spanish grammar. It's been a great benefit to take Spanish classes because my parents don't speak English and sometimes when I don't speak Spanish for a long amount of time I start to forget certain words in the language. While it's natural for me to speak both languages I need to keep practicing both simultaneously for me to not struggle with translation once I visit my family or come to school or work” (SHLL 1).
Even shorter and more light-hearted narratives demonstrate the level of complexity found in the first pane, with a consistent thread of family. As an illustration, *Pane 2. Travel & Connect to Culture* establishes their vision for the context in which they see themselves using their HL as having a sense of astute freedom where the language is a vehicle for jet setting through “Europe and South America” (SHLL 3) and delighting in cultural artefacts such as Pablo Neruda’s poetry. Moreover, SHLL 3 sees their Ideal Self needing mastery of their HL in order to initiate themselves into their girlfriend’s family by asking their blessing on marrying into it. In contrast to the first pane, however, SHLL 3 sees their Ideal Self using the HL with someone else’s family rather than connecting with their own. They do not describe the close ties that the HL creates within a family, but rather as a tool for a singular purpose, a way to perform their ethnic identity in a familial context but not for the purpose of overcoming long rooted separation from loved ones like with SHLL 4 in *Vignette A*.

*Pane 2. Travel & Connect to Culture.*

“Travelling to Europe and South America will be quite accessible once I become more fluent in Spanish, reading literature for example from one of my favorite poets Pablo Neruda will be much more understandable. A preguntar los benediciones de los parentes de mi novia puede ser mas facil para mi. :)

(SHLL 3).

It is important to note that not all SHLLs see studying their HL as essential to maintaining or establishing connections to family. This is case in *Pane 3. Professional & Connect to Culture*, where SHLL 6 explicitly states that they are “… currently studying Spanish Language and Literature not to better communicate with [their] family”. Nevertheless, the SHLL goes on to say that they already have sufficient command of their HL to communicate effectively
in Spanish and points out that they believe this to be different for other SHLLs. For SHLL 6, their *Ideal Self* using the HL to access literature and function in a professional capacity as a “Spanish High School teacher”. Their *Ideal Self* is an academic, using the language to access and pass on cultural and linguistic knowledge in institutional contexts. Further, they see learning the mechanics of the language as a side effect of accessing that cultural knowledge and gaining an institutional position where they are the gatekeeper to that knowledge for any future high school students that find themselves in their class.

*Pane 3. Professional & Connect to Culture.*

“I am currently studying Spanish Language and Literature not to better communicate with my family, but to learn more about the literature and eventually become a Spanish High School teacher. Although the following is not true for everyone, my first language is Spanish and since I was able to nurture it even after I learned English at 11, communication comes quite easily for me. Therefore, the ultimate or main goal for my studies is not for learning how to speak or read in the language or communication aspect, but for the literature (Question 3.) Although I definitely am learning about academic language and grammar in my classes when we write essays or during my Grammar course three semesters ago” (SHLL 6).

Thus far, several of the SHLLs highlighted in the panes from both *Vignettes A* and *B* have been from the perspective of the child rather than the parent, someone with children. As discussed in Vignette A, parents are seen by the SHLLs as the ones with the power and responsibility to pass on the HL. In *Pane 4. Preserve Language & Heritage*, SHLL 34 is such a
parent and they feel the weight of that burden. They see their Ideal Self using the HL in the context of parenting and serving as a role model to their children, to pass on the HL and culture.

Pane 4. Preserve Language & Heritage.

“It's important to me to continue and maintain not only a culture for myself but for my children and our future generations. If we do not instill our roots at a young age, they will not be able to connect to their past and our culture and heritage die off slowly. Especially with my children they are bi-racial and it's extremely important that they know both sides of their heritage that way they continue instilling it in their children” (SHLL 34).

SUMMARY

In this chapter, I started by presenting rationale for introducing two new research questions to help guide my investigation of the Part I data from a survey of 47 SHLLs from across the U.S. I then used these research questions to begin analyzing the data and weaving a discussion while referring to the literature reviewed in Chapters 1 and 2. At the beginning of each stage of this analysis I explained the methodology behind its analysis and the generation of any figures or tables that helped me in interpreting the data and answering the first two research questions. Ultimately, I created vignettes to highlight SHLL voices (Ducar, 2008) and weave a narrative grounded in the major trends and themes sown together throughout the chapter.

Within Vignette A and B, I have highlighted SHLL voices representative of combinations of overarching themes uncovered during both the word count and thematic analyses above. Each of the different panes have demonstrated, in contextual and narrative ways, the complex interactions there are between SHLLs’ senses of identity, their HL, and belonging. First, in Vignette A. Language & Identity I use the panes to show how family is one of the most
consistent threads amongst these narratives, it binds them even when they explicitly state the opposite as with SHLL 6. Second, in *Vignette B. Motivations* I weave a greater narrative between each SHLL voice about how the vision that these SHLLs have for who they will be and how they will use their HL in different contexts shines through in their individual narratives.

These narrative vignettes and earlier discussion, fulfill a need to highlight SHLL voices within HLA research (Ducar, 2008) that may have been overlooked by my original research questions when it came to these data. Further, the shifting trend from the disenfranchised and subtractive bilinguals that are depicted in earlier HLA literature (Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012; Carreira, 2004; Leeman, 2012; Valdés, 2005) to more empowered learners of their HL which my analysis uncovered would have been overlooked. Additionally, the severe misalignment between the structure of the typical foreign language classroom curriculum and the needs of SHLLs and the current more aligned state would also have been neglected. Certainly, I did not anticipate these points; however, they should not have been. For a sustained period of time, the researchers cited in my review of the literature have been working in the same types of universities that my survey was circulated to address the problems that they uncovered in their research. Additionally, their research itself has made its way into the hands of more emerging educators and researchers working in similar contexts, such as myself. Education and research professionals that chose to act to better the state of things. For these reasons, it is unsurprising that my more recent analysis reflects progress.
CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

PART II: CASE STUDY

My analysis of Part II follows a similar structure to Part I but continually draws comparisons between the focus participant and the trends found from analyzing the data from the larger sample. Further, these trends are related to relevant literature as a discussion is woven around the focus participant’s background, motivations, and finally his experience in SL. In addition, Part II includes data drawn from David’s engagement with this study’s proposed supplemental Spanish learning experience in Second Life. I use the mixed methods approach described in Chapter 3 with some additional linguistic analysis of David’s task data to addresses the modified research questions shown in Table 7.

Just as I discovered that some important trends in the data would be overlooked without crafting some additional research questions, some developments during the course of data collection and analysis during Part II resulted in the realization that my originally proposed research questions needed to evolve. Some reasons for this include the focus participant, David (pseudonym), not completing the SL Lab and the University removing their requirement for students to complete any language lab along with their Spanish course, creating a difference in extrinsic motivational variables within the study design between the study pilot and the exploratory case study with David. These challenges are discussed more fully in Chapter 6; however, I detail some of the impacts on the study’s original research questions in the table below.
Table 7. Research Question Evolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q #</th>
<th>Original Question</th>
<th>Revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In what ways does differentiating HL instruction with SL impact performance in the HL and afford identity mediation through the HL or other symbolic artifacts within SL?</td>
<td>In what ways does differentiating HL instruction with SL afford identity mediation through symbolic artifacts within SL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What affordances do SHLLs find most useful for studying their HL and reinforcing their own sense of ethnic identity?</td>
<td>Insufficient data to answer this question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In what ways can task design and extension activities be adapted to meet specific SHLLs’ needs without overly constraining their creative language use or the open format of SL?</td>
<td>Unmodified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identity Mediation in Second Life

In this section, I focus on answering the modified version of research question 1 from Table 7:

1. In what ways does differentiating HL instruction with SL afford identity mediation through symbolic artifacts within SL?

I do this by first exploring some of the baselines for how David describes himself in the survey data collected at the beginning of his participation in the study. I also apply linguistic analysis to a sample of David’s task data to provide some context and perspective to how he self-identifies along my modified version of Wei’s (2000) bilingual continuum. Further, the entrance survey used to gather data (see Appendix B) is very similar to the one used to generate the data for analysis and discussion in Chapter 4 (see Appendix C), having just some additional prompts for personally identifiable information that was intentionally not part of the general survey (for a full explanation see Chapter 3). These baselines are also compared to those trends previously discussed in Chapter 4, to get a sense for how David aligns and presents a unique case when it comes to factors related to David’s identity as an SHLL in terms of ethnicity, bilingualism, and motivations. This also helps to expand my exploration of research question 4 from Chapter 4:
4. In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?

Finally, I constantly draw connections between the what analysis suggests in the survey data and how it manifests in the SL Lab data, where David performed identity rather than only subjectively describing it. This triangulation, helps me to weave a narrative that emphasizes features specific to David and his experience in using SL while also answering the research question above.

*Identity & Bilingualism*

As discussed earlier, one aspect that this study examines is the complex relation between ethnic identity and command of the HL (Faulx, 2013). In David’s case, he describes his ethnic identity as “latino” or “afrolatino” and his familial origins as “latin roots” but does not claim any country, region, or even continent. There was only one other SHLL surveyed that identified as “afrolatino”, making it one of the less frequent used ethnic identifiers by the 48 SHLLs surveyed, including David. As a reminder, “Hispanic” was overwhelming the way that those surveyed identified themselves.

In the previous section, I depicted data from the general survey of SHLLs across the U.S. along a Bilingual Continuum in Figure 15. That figure goes one step further displays each type of bilingualism in order of prestige, consistent with Figure 7 from Chapter 2, along a color-coded arrow. I have done the same in Figure 23 below, but I have highlighted where David falls along this continuum with a red box that is stacked on top of the overall SHLL survey data. Further, the same conventions are observed in regard to the arrow’s color coding: the more prestigious varieties of bilingualism are toward the left (green) and move to the less prestigious varieties to the right (red).
In contrast to the earlier analysis, where I found a clear trending for the SHLLs surveyed to identify more heavily towards the more prestigious varieties of bilingualism, David is more tightly clustered around the less prestigious varieties; however, he still claims several of the higher status varieties. There is some evidence in the lab data that suggest that his identification in these prestigious categories like balanced bilingual may be more of a subjective rather than objective self-evaluation of linguistics proficiencies. To explain, a balanced bilingual is someone whose linguistic proficiencies are equal in both languages.

In David’s case, I can see distinct differences in his ability when it comes to English and Spanish syntax, particularly due to errors, when looking at his Avatar Customization Assignment:

“Mi avatar es regular estatura. Yo sinti que español gente no lo pudi gusta. Mi avatar parecerse a cercano como haz possible”

(David, Avatar Customization Assignment).
First, there are two errors in word order with “regular estatura” instead of *estatura regular* and “español gente” instead of *gente español*. Next, there is a missing lexical item, *de* before “regular estatura” once the word order is corrected. Third, there an error in gender agreement between “español”, which is presented as a masculine adjective where it needs to be feminine like the noun that it modifies, and “gente”. Finally, there is a severe failure to conjugate verbs outside of the present indicative and misunderstanding for how the verb *gustar* functions with direct and indirect object pronouns. This is not to say that the English that David produced in his comments, shown below, on the same assignment were free from errors:

“I choose this avatar Because it best suits me. I think it's average height has the afro latino looks. It is a vampire though. I didn't really customize much on it”

(David, Avatar Customization Assignment).

In fact, he has errors in capitalization with “Because” instead of *because*. Also, he has trouble distinguishing between its (the possessive pronoun) and “it’s” (the contraction of *it* and *is*). However, many of these errors are only noticeable because they are written out. In an oral context, David’s English utterance would still be intelligible while his Spanish utterance would be unintelligible to anyone who was not a very sympathetic listener.

This misalignment further supports the previously mentioned idea that David like other SHLLs are searching for empowerment through their linguistic identity rather than marginalization for varying proficiency levels or proficiency in low-prestige language varieties. This desire to feel more empowered, or at the very least avoid feeling marginalized, might lead some to identify more positively with ideal or future states of linguistic proficiency, rather than with their current abilities. This also supports my earlier caution that the data from which both Figures 15 and 23 are derived are based on each SHLL’s own perspective rather than on any
outside measure that would evaluate actual language proficiency levels and may reflect their own desire to express an ideal self rather than an objective assessment.

**Motivations**

Largely, David aligns with the major trends found in the data for other SHLLs in similar contexts; however, there are some key differences (see Table 8). David is closely aligned with the majority of SHLLs in “remember[ing] speaking Spanish as a child”. However, he disagrees with the majority of SHLL that felt very strongly that “feel empowered in class because of [their] family connection to Spanish” and that “can speak in Spanish but … take classes to work on [their] grammar”. He does feel very strongly “like [his] Spanish teachers expect [him] to perform better than [his] classmates” and that “people think [he] want[s] to learn Spanish and that [he is] good at it because of [his] race or family name”. These differences are important to note because of how they align him more closely with the kinds of trends supporting the idea that the majority of SHLLs are progressing away from, but are described in the literature (Carreira, 2004; Cho, 2000; Leeman, 2012; Valdés, 2005), which are the guiding principles behind designing the SL Lab investigated within this case study.

**Table 8. Motivational Differences: David vs. Majority of SHLLs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>David</th>
<th>Majority of SHLLs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I remember speaking Spanish as a child.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel empowered in class because of my family connection to Spanish.</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes I have felt like my Spanish teachers expect me to perform better than my classmates.</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can speak in Spanish, but I take classes to work on my grammar.</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People think I want to learn Spanish and that I am good at it because of my race or family name.</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identity Mediation & David’s Avatar

In Chapter 1 I introduced the concept of an avatar as a customizable 3D representation of the user (Andreas, Tsiatsos, Terzidou, & Pomportsis, 2010). Further, I framed it as a tool afforded to SHLLS for interacting with rich cultural sites and groups, which can afford SHLLs expeditions (Blasing, 2010) into their heritage through avatar mediated immersive interaction with these sites and their denizens. Specifically, I singled out the ability to customize an avatar over time as having a unique effect on language learning (Blasing, 2010), which could be especially useful for some SHLLs like David. In fact, these affordances could each be employed to address specific needs through directed task design (Jauregi et al., 2011) and increase the feeling of social presence in immersive worlds (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001).

As part of the orientation to using SL, David was provided with a structured task to create an avatar version of himself. The degree to which he customized this avatar to portray any range of fictitious, ideal, or physical self was left entirely up to him; however, guidance on how to use the SL interface to express his choices was detailed in the task’s design. The avatar that David created is shown below in Figure 24.

![David the Avatar](image)

Figure 24. David the Avatar
The choices that David made in constructing his avatar reflect a mix of performing specific physical and ethnic features from his real-world self in the virtual environment and accepting some stock fantasy features of the avatar that he chose. As an illustration, David describes his avatar in Figure 25 as having “average height” and “afro latino looks”, which I would agree are also true for his real-life self. It is important to note that the original study design included an exit interview that David did not complete (see Appendix D), which would have asked him to explicitly make these connections for himself. While this data would have provided some greater insight into “why” David made the choices that he did and could have guided him through critical thought provoking self-evaluation, David and I did have twice weekly real-life interactions for five weeks, where I was able to observe the same physical features mentioned above. Further, in his initial survey David self-identified himself as afrolatino, so his choice to perform that ethnic identity here is consistent with how performs that identity in real-life.

Assignment Comments

I choose this avatar Because it best suits me. I think it's average height has the afro latino looks. It is a vampire though. I didn't really customize much on it.

**Figure 25.** David’s Avatar Description

As mentioned earlier, David also provided a Spanish description of his avatar in the Avatar Customization Assignment, where again states, “Mi avatar es regular estatura”, which translated with some corrections to grammar means “My avatar s average height”. Interestingly, he goes on to say, “Yo sintí que español gente no lo pudi gusta” or “I feel that Spanish people won’t like it” and then goes on to say, “Mi avatar parecerse a cercano como haz possible” or
“My avatar looks as close to me as possible”. What is interesting about this is that he chose an avatar that he feels represents himself as an average height afrolatino but then qualifies that choice as one that will still leave him marginalized in the virtual environment. This could be reflective of his sense in real-life that his physical appearance and ownership of his ethnic identity as afrolatino is either not what he believes is the ideal for latino men, or even that he does not feel comfortable with his ability to perform his afrolatino identity in real-life situations.

David’s decisions are surprising given the fantastic options available to him for mediating his identity in SL through the literally infinite stock and customizable avatar options afforded him. However, it could be that creating alignment between his physical self and his virtual self-helped him to feel more of a social presence in the immersive virtual environment (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001), as more of a projection of his current self than a performance of his ideal self. His choice to closely portray his real-life self through his avatar may also be an expression of genuineness or truthfulness in the virtual environment, regardless of the reaction that he perceives this may elicit from other speakers of Spanish.

**Instructional Design & SHLLs**

In this section, I focus on answering the unmodified version of research question 3 from Table 7 at the beginning of this chapter:

3. In what ways can task design and extension activities be adapted to meet specific SHLLs’ needs without overly constraining their creative language use or the open format of SL?

I want to note that because of the limitations and developments during the course of the study, which are further discussed in Chapter 6, there was insufficient data to address research question 2. For this reason, I am moving on to question 3 in this section; however, those
circumstances that prevented answering research question 2 are an important factor in answering question 3. While much more detailed discussion of what those circumstances were and what measures I took to overcome them and maintain the integrity of the experimental design for this case study in Part II, some general descriptions and their impact on the “ways [that] … task design and extension activities [can] be adapted to meet specific SHLLs’ needs” cannot be ignored.

As the analysis and discussion in this section is also relevant to the second part of the same in Chapter 4, I also further explore research question 5 by drawing connections between David and the trends/themes reconnoitered for SHLLs in general:

5. In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?

Just as with the previous section, this weaving between David as a single case and the larger themes or trends found with the sample of 47 other SHLLs helps to create greater context for the discussion about David’s experience and provide better descriptive power to my exploration of the research questions.

*Technological Background*

As mentioned in Chapter 4, it is important to note that the low reported use of virtual worlds among most SHLLs would suggest that well supported and guided orientation to this specific type of technology is an absolute necessity in order for it to be a viable option. There just would not be enough background familiarity with using it to have students engage in cognitively demanding tasks without an orientation to address this and relieve some of the cognitive strain imposed by operating in an alien environment.
This was not the case with David, he reported being an avid gamer, familiar with virtual immersive environments, avatar customization, open exploration type tasks. At the beginning of the lab and during the recruitment process he appeared excited when we talked about using SL to help him with studying his HL and boasted about his prowess in virtual immersive environments when it came to gaming activities. This is reflected in his survey responses about his technological background:

“I have at least one social media account. I have used a messenger program or text messaging before. I have customized an avatar for a game or social platform before. I have used a browser to look for places, events, or information before. I have played an MMO(RPG) before (like World of Warcraft). I have created a user profile for social media before. I have used Canvas before. I have taken an online or blended format course before” (David, Entrance Survey).

By all of the measures for establishing experience with the tools, features, environments, and supports that could be afforded a learner within the SL Lab, David would appear to have a high amount of expertise.

In Chapter 1 I built a discussion around affordances, which emphasizes why this background is important to consider. To explain, van Lier (2004) draws on postmodern understandings of how individuals relate to their own constructed sense of reality (Bakhtin, 1986) to describe a fundamental problem with creating universally applicable lists of affordances for studied environments like SL. In David’s case affordances have to be viewed through the lens of his experience. To explain, van Lier (2004) further discusses that since an affordance is not only a function of the environment with a feature of that environment, like chat inside SL, but also how an individual understands the opportunity to make use of that feature within that
context (see Figure 5 as an interpretation of the concept of affordances as described by van Lier, 2004), like seeing another avatar and chatting with them.

In David’s case, this has implications for the importance of the orientation tasks at the beginning of the SL Lab and for understanding the effects cognitive load might impose on David while focused on studying his HL. For someone with this type of background, the orientation tasks are less about illuminating what the different features could afford him and more about scaffolding how to take ownership of the learning process by establishing objectives and thinking critically when he expanded on his experiences in SL. Unfortunately, David progressed through the lab’s modular design to the point where he could engage in those customized learning experiences and critical reflections. Based on his background knowledge, excitement for working in an engaging virtual immersive environment, and his intrinsic motivations for studying Spanish, it is unlikely that technological challenges or lack of understanding what different features of SL afforded him were the causes for his non-completion of the full lab.

In fact, when compared to the backgrounds of those SHLLs that participated in the study’s pilot and did complete the lab, David would be considered having advanced expertise on virtual immersive environments and the affordances of SL. Out of the three SHLLs participating in the study pilot, not one of them had much experience with virtual immersive environments or similar gaming environments of any sort. One participant did not even have a social media account, she considered it to be an unwanted distraction. Despite these backgrounds when it came to technology, all three persisted in summoning the necessary combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to complete the lab. It is important to note that the version of the lab that these pilot participants completed was far less refined, with fewer supports than the one that David experienced.
Motivation & Task Design

In Chapter 3, I described the COI theoretical framework upon which I designed the SL Lab that this case study portion with David investigates. In this framework, Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (1999) position the student’s learning experience between three measures that need to be balanced: social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence. Further, this framework represents a shift from teacher centered approaches and autonomous learning, which is important in situated learning environments like SL and in respect to the role that social interaction plays in language learning (Vygotsky, 1986). However, without completion of either the extension tasks or the COI framework-based survey (see Appendix E) that was created to evaluate the course within the same framework as it was designed (see Table 9), I am unable to analyze the course in the way that I had intended within this subsection. For this reason, I instead weave an analysis and discussion that pulls from the overall design as discussed in Chapter 3 and the work that David did submit, in order to analyze the design’s strengths and weaknesses in terms of the COI framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999). Moreover, to frame David’s experience with the course appropriately and draw inferences from his progression through the modules along with his actual submissions, I ground my discussion in the work by Dörnyei and Chan (2013) and Dörnyei (1994, 2005, 2009, 2014).
Table 9. David’s Module Progression*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Evidence/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Orientation Island (Teleporting, Controls, Interface Features)</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Completed entrance survey and quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Avatar Creation, Modification, &amp; Shopping</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Avatar task with picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Group joining &amp; Cultural Scavenger Hunt</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Cultural scavenger hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Extending the SL Experience</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>SL extension document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Does not include all of the information requested or follow the template format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Self-directed Task with Extension Activity</td>
<td>David Designed Task</td>
<td>Not Attempted</td>
<td>All attempts to establish communication failed. No response to attempts to compensate for last completed module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Self-directed Task with Extension Activity</td>
<td>David Designed Task</td>
<td>Not Attempted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Self-directed Task with Extension Activity</td>
<td>David Designed Task</td>
<td>Not Attempted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Self-directed Task with Extension Activity, Exit Interview, Exit Survey</td>
<td>David Designed Task</td>
<td>Not Attempted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Appendices H and I for more detailed descriptions about the modules, instructional supports, and task guidelines.

In Table 9, I provide a high-level view of David’s progression the course modules, classify the module type, and organize related task submission (evidence) with research notes. As can be seen, David made it through all of the modules classified as orientation. These modules provide significant pedagogical support and structuring (teaching presence), which is scaffolded as the modules progress to gradually shift control over the learning experience to David as contextualized knowledge about SL and how to structure experiences in SL on his own. Nevertheless, I lost contact with David once this control has been shifted to him in Module 5.
In Modules 1 and 2, David engaged in tasks that oriented him to the SL interface, its features, and walked him through constructing his SL identity by building his profile and customizing his avatar. Moreover, Module 1 is where he completed the entrance survey. These data are analyzed in detail above to answer research question 3. What is important to note here is that David completed these modules with the instructional supports provided and responded to my feedback. At this point, the pedagogical design relies heavily on teaching presence, where my instructional supports and those afforded from the SL tutorials do most of the work and David takes a more passive role. He is not yet engaged socially with other speakers of Spanish and so this sphere of the COI framework is not in balance with that of teaching presence. He does have to demonstrate critical thought in both of these modules by completing the entrance survey which asks him to critically examine his background, motivations, bilingual self, and overall identity. Further, when creating his avatar and describing his reasoning behind it, he has to engage in higher order thinking by making decisions and then reflecting on them.

In the third orientation module, David had the opportunity to go on a cultural scavenger hunt to find cultural artefacts within SL. He could have chosen any six sites that he could think of; however, he only used the sampling of teleport locations that I provided in the example. These sites were selected to showcase a wide sampling of cultural nexuses from different linguistic and regional/country backgrounds, which included: 1) Spain: Parque Güel, 2) Germany: Völkerschlachtdenkmal, 3) Latin America: Instituto Español, 4) France: Paris Bourbon Island, 5) Asia: Virtual Asia, and 6) Italy: Basilica Papale di San Francesco. The design for this module still places the majority of the balance between teaching and cognitive presences, where David has not yet been asked to interact with any of the other denizens of the SL world. Unfortunately, while the design may offer the opportunity to engage critically when making
decisions about what sites to visit and reflecting on the decisions for choosing these sites, David did not include any of the descriptions or reasoning that the task asked for. This was a consistent trend where he would follow the examples for a structured task and say that he enjoyed his time completing it but would stop when it came to expanding on the task in SL through reflection or applying critical thinking. Therefore, the primary sphere of the COI framework that is present in David’s learning experience in Module 3 is teaching presence.

In the final orientation task, the heavier scaffolding and supports that were present in the previous three modules has been gradually shifted to David so he had more control over his learning experience. At this point, these scaffolds should have built up enough contextualized knowledge about SL and how to structure experiences in SL that David could start assuming that control. This task provides several examples on how to extend his experience in SL, of which he chose to investigate the meanings of two terms that he encountered and explain them in Spanish. The first term that he investigated was “tuteamos” or “tutear”, which he describes in Spanish as the practice of using “tú” and speaking informally. He draws cultural equivalences with English by comparing it to “ya’ll”.

“Tuteamos es una palabra que viene de “Tutear”. Tutear es utiliza cuando se refiere an informal “Tú”. Tuteamos es el equivalente a la jerga del sur “y’all”.

Que siempre se utiliza igual a vosotros, así” (David, Extension Task).

While his investigation has some flaws, like equating an error in matching speech register for formal contexts (tú) with a term that is regionally acceptable in the U.S. (ya’ll), it reflects critical thinking and demonstrates his cognitive presence in the task. The second term that he investigated was “Boricua” which he defines as a valiant and noble man. He looks a little further into this terms etymology by stating its origins as being Taino and explaining that these were the
indigenous people of Puerto Rico. He also situates the term with sociohistorical context by elucidating the history behind the ethnic integration of races on the island throughout the import of African slaves to the island and European colonial domination of it.

“Boricua viene de el Taínos, los habitantes originales de Puerto Rico. Boricua significa señor valiente y noble. Pero los colonos mezclan con los nativos y se mezclaron con los nativos los esclavos. Y ahí es donde el término proviene del Boricua” (David, Extension Task).

It is unclear from his submission how much of the teaching presence David experienced within his learning experience since this is where his participation in the lab ends.

By the time that David had completed the four orientation tasks, and it became evident that he would have no choice but to begin applying critical thinking and taking ownership for the direction that his learning would take by customizing each free task, he stopped submitting work and became unreachable. The last orientation task was designed to scaffold the transition from tasks that were structured for David to him being able to set his own goals and expand on them with experience and reflection. He chose to skip over the parts of the task that asked to set goals, describe the task, and reflect on it. What he submitted was a description in Spanish of what two terms that he had encountered meant: “Tuteamos” and “Boricua”. I tried to elicit the missing information from him with comments on the assignment and through emails; however, this is the point when I lost contact with him.

The point in which his participation ends is important to note because it suggests that the open format of the tasks was too cognitively demanding, presenting a drain on the motivational attractor states drawing him to completion, thus detracting him from persisting in completion of the SL Lab without extrinsic motivational factors to assist him in overcoming this change in
attractor states. When the teaching presence made up the majority of his learning experience and critical thinking was supported with scaffolds in the cognitive experience domain, the tasks were completed, and he would report enjoying them while completing them in my office. However, SL also has a social component that up to this point only made up David’s learning experience in as far as being socially present in activity within SL that was mediated by his avatar but not to any great extent socially engaged with other speakers of Spanish.

Pedagogy & Course Outcomes

The pedagogical structure of the SL Lab that David took part in was designed to incorporate the COI framework into a structure that would lead SHLLs to seven outcomes (see Appendix H), the reasoning of how this accomplished is described in more detail in Chapter 3. In Figure 10, I present a summary of this reasoning by mapping each objective to the section of the course and then specific modules. However, as discussed earlier, David did not complete all of the modules. To show the areas where his learning experience diverged from reaching the intended outcome, I have indicated the gaps in pedagogical structure created by David’s departure from the design in red.
### Table 10. Course Outcome Mapped to Module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective Outcome</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Participants will adapt classroom content to naturalistic settings.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (2) Avatar Creation, Modification, &amp; Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (3) Group joining &amp; Cultural Scavenger Hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Participants will engage with Spanish culture and authentic materials.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (2) Avatar Creation, Modification, &amp; Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (3) Group joining &amp; Cultural Scavenger Hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Participants will create personal relationships with other speakers of Spanish, improving pragmatic awareness and motivation.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (3) Group joining &amp; Cultural Scavenger Hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Participants will gain confidence and experience with using Spanish in authentic settings and in a variety of contexts.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Participants will identify and test linguistic forms in naturalistic settings.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Participants will use Spanish language creatively to interact with other speakers of Spanish.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Participants will become members of Hispanic communities and gain sustainable access to these communities, the Spanish language, and Hispanic cultures through Second Life.</strong></td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
<td>• (3) Group joining &amp; Cultural Scavenger Hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities</td>
<td>• (4) Extending the SL Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (5-8) Self-directed Tasks with Extension Activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in Table 10, the Lab’s design addresses each of the desired outcomes in both the orientation and extension phases. The orientation was designed to walk David through structured tasks that supported him through to achieving each outcome in progression. This initial phase differed from the extension phase primarily in the supports provided and the depth to which David exhibited evidence of those outcomes through his own creative capitalization of SL affordances, metaphors, and critical reflection.

In David’s case, he did not benefit from this depth of experience with each of the outcomes categorically across all seven desired outcomes. In practice, this means that he did not show evidence of reaching those outcomes without significant supports (teaching presence).

**Summary**

In this chapter, I completed my analysis and discussion for the second part of the study, which is a case study of one SHLL’s experiences in SL. I also interwove this discussion with that of the previous chapter to related David’s case to the larger data set. Additionally, I presented some rationale for modifying my original three research questions, removing the second one completely due to lack of data. This modification still proved beneficial as I was able to use the COI framework and Dörnyei’s work on motivation to analyze my instructional design in relation to David’s experience within the SL Lab. By looking at the factors involved with design and the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational attractor states for David, I described how there was evidence to support that there was insufficient extrinsic motivation to support David through to completion of the lab. I compared David’s progress through the lab with that of pilot study participants who did complete the pilot lab and focused on how David’s technological background should have provided an advantage over the pilot participants in this particular type of design that uses an open immersive virtual environment. Despite this advantage and alignment
with David’s own propensity for using technology for learning, socializing, and gaming
enjoyment, he still did not complete the lab. Importantly, this analysis suggests that future
deeavors to incorporate this type of design for SHLLs should be tied to institutional credit in
order to provide sufficient extrinsic motivation for SHLLs to complete the lab.
CHAPTER 6
FINDINGS & LESSONS LEARNED

OVERVIEW

In this chapter, I summarize key findings from Chapters 4 and 5, provide theoretical and pedagogical implications grounded in these findings, and raise several considerations for challenges that I encountered during the course of the investigation that should be accounted for in other future similar research endeavors or when designing pedagogy for SHLLs in similar contexts. Many of these were ones that I had anticipated as part of the instructional and research design processes, proposing research-based solutions. However, the ability of this research-based approach to developing solutions for meeting the demands of an applied context was not always sufficient. Further, I discuss how other challenges, which are unaccounted for in the literature, introduced a novel opportunity to integrate my own experiences as a researcher and educator into this study. Specifically, I highlight the challenges that I faced in trying to keep up with institutional changes, demands on participant time, and collaborating with other educators. Finally, I develop an introspective discussion about my own personal growth and refinement in my perspectives since I first introduced myself in Chapter 1.

STUDY PART I: GENERAL SHLL SURVEY

In Chapter 4, I analyzed Part I data from a survey (see Appendix C) of 47 SHLLs from across the U.S. to answer research questions 4 and 5:

4. In what ways do SHLL backgrounds differ and influence their objectives for studying their HL?
5. In what ways do SHLL motivations for studying their HL differ and how might these motivations be best accommodated through instructional design?

I developed these questions after realizing that trends in the data were not what I had expected based on the literature and felt that these data deserved more attention than just providing a base line for describing how representative my focus participant David (pseudonym) for Part II of the study was.

Findings: Research Question 4

The data show that SHLLs have complex bilingual backgrounds and senses of ethnic identity, though the majority of the SHLLs surveyed identify as Hispanic. Importantly, I found a shifting trend from the disenfranchised and subtractive bilinguals that are depicted in earlier HLA literature (Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012; Carreira, 2004; Leeman, 2012; Valdés, 2005) to more empowered learners of their HL. Additionally, I find that the severe misalignment between the structure of the typical foreign language classroom curriculum and the needs of SHLLs that was prevalent in the literature (Valdés, 1995, 2001, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006) has shifted to SHLLs perceiving these classes in a much more favorable light. While, I did not anticipate these points they are an important marker in the continued monitoring of progress when it comes to meeting SHLL needs in the foreign language classroom.

One explanation of these shifts is that the researchers cited in my review of the literature have been working for a sustained period of time in the same types of universities that my survey was circulated to address the problems that they uncovered in their research. Additionally, their research itself has made its way into the hands of more emerging educators and researchers working in similar contexts, such as myself. Education and research professionals may have
started choosing to act to better the state of HL education for these SHLLs. For these reasons, it is unsurprising that my more recent analysis reflects progress.

**Findings: Research Question 5**

To explore the second research question, I created vignettes to highlight SHLL voices, as called for by Ducar (2008), and wove a narrative grounded in the major trends and themes sown together throughout the chapter. First, it is important to note that my analysis of SHLL technological backgrounds suggest that these learners are well acquainted with platforms and programs that have similar features to those found with SL, which indicates that they would understand what to do with these SL features and thus classify them as affordances. Next, within *Vignette A* and *B*, I highlighted SHLL voices representative of combinations of overarching themes uncovered during both the word count and thematic analyses from Chapter 4. In Figure 26 and 27, I provide a graphic overview of the themes depicted in those vignettes.

For Vignette A, I show the theme of language and identity on a varied scale of narratives that demonstrated anywhere from a very strong and positive sense of the Spanish language being ingrained in the SHLLs ethnic identity to weaker and less positive or even subtractive narratives. I was surprised to see a lack of conformity with narratives that could be typified according to Carreira’s (2000) typology, however. My impression, based on my analysis and discussion in Chapter 4, is that the richness of each individual’s personal narrative would allow them to identify with aspects of each of those SHLL types and possibly show mobility between types over the course of their life. In “Vignette A. Language and Identity”, I highlight three SHLL narratives that show this relation between Spanish, their sense of identity, and how they see their membership within Spanish speaking/heritage communities, weaving a narrative between them which calls upon the literature for framing.
At the end of this narrative, I arrived at some comparisons and inferences concerning the roles that parents play within shaping this vignette. Many parents in the HL literature are not like those depicted in the first two panes of Vignette A, where they continually reinforce HL acquisition and build strong connections with the HL culture (Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012; Carreira, 2004; Faulx, 2013; Valdés, 2001). However, as we have seen in this chapter, most of the SHLLs participating in this study as much more aligned with SHLL 2 and 39 than 4. One them between all three panes is the sense of culpability placed on parents for whether or not the HL is passed on to their children. Not one of these panes says something like, “it should be required for schools to develop both the child’s HL and English in U.S.”. Every one of them places the power and ownership on parents for passing along HLs to their children, it is a choice that is made for the child without necessarily involving the child or fully understanding the effects for this choice. SHLL 2, in Pane 1. Very Strong, is thankful that their parents “forced” them to learn and maintain the language, while SHLL 39 and 4 blame parents for not actively asserting themselves in favor of passing on the HL. Ultimately, SHLL 39, in Pane 2. Strong, was able to self-motivate from a young age and actively work towards HL acquisition; however, SHLL 4, in Pane 3. Weak, was resigned to be an outsider and waited until adulthood to start studying.
In Vignette B, I relate SHLL voices to the importance of motivation that Dörnyei (2014, 2009, 2005) and Dörnyei and Chan (2013) frame within dynamic systems. These systems change over time and can be impacted by stimuli, such as effective pedagogical design that bolsters motivation in precise ways. The Ideal Self Context theme that I found when conducting my analysis clearly established a vision for how SHLLs see themselves in relation to the language now and how they will use it in the future. With this in mind, I framed four panes within Vignette B. Motivation shown in Figure 27.

![Figure 27. Vignette B. Motivations](image)

Each of the different panes have demonstrated, in contextual and narrative ways, the complex interactions there are between SHLLs’ senses of identity, their HL, and belonging. First, in Vignette A. Language & Identity I use the panes to show how family is one of the most consistent threads amongst these narratives, it binds them even when they explicitly state the opposite as with SHLL 6. Second, in Vignette B. Motivations I weave a greater narrative between each SHLL voice about how the vision that these SHLLs have for who they will be and how they will use their HL in different contexts shines through in their individual narratives. These narrative vignettes and earlier discussion, fulfill a need to highlight SHLL voices within HLA
research (Ducar, 2008) that may have been overlooked by my original research questions when it came to these data.

**Lessons Learned**

As part of establishing a broader perspective about the study context, including factors like technological and linguistic backgrounds of SHLLs at institutions with high concentrations of Hispanic/Latin@ students, this study circulated a survey among 133 different universities with student populations that met those criteria. This presented numerous logistical challenges and some surprising reactions from the university faculty that I contacted.

**Institutional**

In order to first reach out to each university’s faculty I established a process for identifying the university and then researching the contact information for the person that I should likely establish communication with to have the survey circulated. To do this, I used CollegeData.com to find universities with the demographic population density of 20% or higher of Hispanic/Latin@ students. This generated a list of 133 universities and a link to their website but lacked the necessary contact information for faculty that would be involved in collaborating on research efforts with language students. I began a process of going to each university website and using the “Search” box on their splash page to find links to language faculty, entering the terms “Spanish”, “Languages”, and “World Languages”. This would often provide several link possibilities to the correct department or program page; however, finding individual contact information or understanding the structure for these departments/programs was generally somewhat of a convoluted process. Most pages included a link directly to “Faculty”. In these cases, I would scroll through the faculty to find someone or several individuals with a “Director”, “Chair” or “Program Chair/Coordinator” title listed and document their email address.
and phone number. During this process, I was glad to see at least a few departmental pages where heritage language programs/tracks were immediately mentioned, and an HLA program coordinator was listed. Conversely, I was somewhat dismayed by the lack of HLA related resources, tracks, programs, etc. on the majority of language department/program pages. This was only further echoed by some of the surprising, although perhaps they should not have been, responses that I received from some faculty when I reached out to them about disseminating the survey.

**Individual Faculty Interactions**

I was encouraged by the general collaborative and professional spirit that I was met with from the faculty that I contacted. It began a conversation with several faculty at different institutions where SHLLs are most highly concentrated in the U.S. that I found very informative and beneficial. For the most part, faculty were happy to help if they were able and expressed interest in my research topic, often sharing their own publications in areas of SHLL research and conducting research on a national level. Most faculty that agreed to circulate my survey or pass it on to other faculty to do so, would request a little bit of additional background information. This information would vary from faculty member to faculty member as they would pose specific questions, many of which required somewhat lengthy responses and additional digging into the literature in order to answer. Once I was able to answer these questions, however, I was able to establish my expertise in the area and demonstrate how my research is positioned in the broader academic discussion surround SHLLs and HLA.

It was something of a daunting and exciting process to establish this conversation with some of the researchers whose work actually establish the frameworks for my research. As some of them asked for background on my research, where I direct cite and interpret their work. In
these instances, I found that I felt a little anxiety about the accuracy of how I was integrating their perspectives into my framework and discussion. However, once the conversation was started, the resulting dialog was very encouraging and enlightening to me. Ultimately, it provided some direct validation for the importance of HLA research and the perspective that I bring to the ongoing academic conversations surrounding HLA and working with SHLLs.

It is worth mentioning not all faculty were particularly receptive to my request for assistance in my investigative efforts. Perhaps most impactful reaction to me personally as an emerging scholar was that the university I attend, having had the greatest hand in shaping my perspectives/methodologies for research, simply refused to help or provide any other options. I found this extremely disheartening, even in the face of the support that I was encountering on a national level and among some of the strongest voices in the HLA field. I was not, however, surprised by the reaction given the number of barriers that I encountered in conducting Part II of this study, particularly with respect to support for my recruitment efforts and the project in general. While I remain unsure of the source of these barriers, some of the feedback during Part II of this study from instructors indicates a general lack of familiarity with the technology being used and lack of concern beyond tracking speakers according to grammatical proficiency with a placement test are consistent themes when interacting with faculty, administrators, and cooperating instructors.

My request for assistance in disseminating the SHLL backgrounds and motivations survey (see Appendix C) placed me in the position of directly confronting some of the institutional biases for only considering those with advanced grammatical and oral proficiencies as SHLLs that I discuss earlier in this study (see Chapters 1 & 2). I was met with several faculty who were puzzled why I was even asking for them to help me reach out to SHLLs at their
university. For example, contentions that a University did not have SHLLs because there was not a heritage track or native speakers were not allowed in their lower division Spanish courses. Confusion between the ideas of all SHLLs having to be native speakers with advanced language proficiencies seemed to be at the basis of these types of responses, which indicates there is still a great deal of work to do when it comes to educating faculty about SHLLs and heritage language acquisition. This type of challenge required several communications with varying explanations of what SHLLs were in the context of this study and how they were considered in the broader context of the literature when factors such as motivation and family rather than only existing linguistic competency from early childhood exposure to Spanish were introduced. To help with the explanation, I created a brief and graphically engaging presentation that could be used when trying to establish my credibility and the broader positioning of the study. Some faculty responded positively to this approach, though several such as the example faculty member above simply stopped replying to the conversation. The institutional bias, from my perspective, is too ingrained in some cases and so I documented this. I believe that the act of ending communication at this point presents a barrier that will only be overcome with greater professional discourse and continued exposure to the subject through research and enquiry, such as I attempt to do here.

My overall impressions from interacting with such a broad audience, whether they were receptive to my request or supportive of my research endeavors or neither, was that simply asking for collaboration raised awareness of the topic. By reaching out to these institutions and these faculty, I was able to at least start a conversation surrounding HLA. One that I was somewhat disheartened to find so many were only barely aware existed or functioned with the impression that it did not relate to them. Some faculty seemed a little shocked to even learn that their universities had over 20% of their student body being reported as Hispanic/Latin@. Further,
in those universities that did have some type of heritage track or class, I was able to often get faculty to agree to circulate the survey among students that may not have made it into the heritage track by asking questions like:

- “Does your heritage student track only include students with advanced academic Spanish linguistic ability or does it also account for those students that use a less prestigious variety?”
- “Do you accommodate those students with heritage claims to the language, even if they do not score highly on your placement test, in any way?”

These types of questions would also help to keep some faculty from dismissing my request by getting them to consider that some students may not have the type of linguistic ability assessed by their placement exams but still would identify as a SHLL. Moreover, I would reinforce that the overall purpose of the study included determining if SHLLs would benefit from additional resources such as the SL Lab proposed and studies here and what their backgrounds and motivations could reveal a need for such resources to target.

**STUDY PART II (CASE STUDY)**

In Chapter 5, I analyzed David’s background and experiences in SL. I also interwove this discussion with that of the previous chapter to relate David’s case to the larger data set. Additionally, I presented some rationale for modifying my original three research questions to reflect Table 7, removing the second one completely due to lack of data. This modification still proved beneficial as I was able to use both the COI framework and Dörnyei’s work on motivation to analyze my instructional design in relation to David’s experience within the SL Lab and gain insight into possible reasons for him not finishing it.
Findings: Research Question 1

I also found some discrepancies in how David identified along Wei’s (2000) bilingual continuum and his actual performance in both the HL and English. In contrast to the earlier analysis, where I found a clear trending for the SHLLs surveyed to identify more heavily towards the more prestigious varieties of bilingualism, David is more tightly clustered around the less prestigious varieties; however, he still claims several of the higher status varieties like being a balanced bilingual. To explain, a balanced bilingual is someone whose linguistic proficiencies are equal in both languages; however, the Spanish he produced during the lab did not reflect this identification. Moreover, I suggested that David, like other SHLLs, is searching for empowerment through his linguistic identity rather than marginalization for varying proficiency levels or proficiency in low-prestige language varieties. This desire to feel more empowered, or at the very least avoid feeling marginalized, might lead some to identify more positively with ideal or future states of linguistic proficiency, rather than with their current abilities. This also supports my earlier caution that the data from which both Figures 15 and 23 are derived are based on each SHLL’s own perspective rather than on any outside measure that would evaluate actual language proficiency levels and may reflect their own desire to express an ideal self rather than an objective assessment.

The choices that David made in constructing his avatar reflected a mix of performing specific physical and ethnic features from his real-world self in the virtual environment and accepting some stock fantasy features of the avatar that he chose. What is interesting about this is that he chose an avatar that he felt represented himself as an average height afrolatino but then qualifies that choice as one that will still leave him marginalized in the virtual environment. This could be reflective of his sense in real-life that his physical appearance and ownership of his
ethic identity as afrolatino is either not what he believes is the ideal for latino men, or even that he does not feel comfortable with his ability to perform his afrolatino identity in real-life situations.

David’s decisions are surprising given the fantastic options available to him for mediating his identity in SL through the literally infinite stock and customizable avatar options afforded him. However, it could be that creating alignment between his physical self and his virtual self-helped him to feel more of a social presence in the immersive virtual environment (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001), as more of a projection of his current self than a performance of his ideal self. His choice to closely portray his real-life self through his avatar may also be an expression of genuineness or truthfulness in the virtual environment, regardless of the reaction that he perceives this may elicit from other speakers of Spanish.

**Findings: Research Question 3**

To answer research question 3, I provide a high-level view of David’s progression through the course modules in Table 9, classifying the module type, and organizing related task submission (evidence) with research notes. David made it through all of the modules classified as orientation, which provided significant pedagogical support and structuring (teaching presence). This was scaffolded as the modules progressed to gradually shift control over the learning experience to David. Nevertheless, I lost contact with David once this control had been shifted to him in Module 5 and the majority of the scaffolds had been removed. I found a consistent trend where he would follow the examples for a structured task and say that he enjoyed his time completing it but would stop when it came to expanding on the task in SL through reflection or applying critical thinking. By the time that David had completed the four orientation tasks, and it became evident that he would have no choice but to begin applying
critical thinking and taking ownership for the direction that his learning would take by customizing each free task, he stopped submitting work and became unreachable.

The point in which his participation ends is important to note because it suggested that the open format of the tasks was too overwhelming for him to persist in completing the SL lab. When the teaching presence made up the majority of his learning experience and critical thinking was supported with scaffolds, the tasks were completed, and he would report enjoying them while completing them in my office. However, SL also has a social component that up to this point only made up David’s learning experience primarily as being socially present in activity within SL that was mediated by his avatar but not typically socially engaged with other speakers of Spanish or even with synchronous interaction between he and myself.

This where looking at the design solely through the lens of the COI framework to analyze the instructional design behind the SL Lab needs some help. As can be seen above, great effort was put forth into carefully structuring task designs to afford David strong teaching presence, elicit cognitively presence, and provide opportunities for David to increase his social presence over time. Therefore, I decided to look more closely at motivational factors that COI does not account for but are important elements in the language learning process (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Dörnyei, 1994, 2005, 2009, 2014). To explain, as soon as tasks required David to draw on his intrinsic motivation and summon additional effort, engage with other speakers of Spanish socially, and assume more cognitive load, it is likely that he may have discovered that there simply was not enough motivation to continue.

To further investigate, I compared David’s progress through the lab with that of pilot study participants who did complete the pilot lab. For example, citing how David’s technological background should have provided an advantage over the pilot participants in this particular type
of design that uses an open immersive virtual environment. Despite this advantage and alignment with David’s own propensity for using technology for learning, socializing, and gaming enjoyment, he still did not complete the lab.

Importantly, this analysis suggests that future endeavors to incorporate this type of design for SHLLs should be tied to institutional credit in order to provide sufficient extrinsic motivation for SHLLs to complete the lab and still supports further research under experimental conditions where this institutional credit is present. Moreover, I suggest that finding resources able to adapt to individual SHLL needs should still remain a priority, they just need to be careful to include appropriate extrinsic motivational incentive.

**Second Life Lab Pilot**

In order to investigate the effectiveness and evaluate the instructional design for my proposed supplemental SHLL Language Lab, it had been previously piloted and found to show promise in affording SHLLs a novel way to access Spanish speakers, Spanish-speaking cultures, and reflect on their experiences in a meaningful way. The pilot also highlighted some areas of design that needed improvement upon, including a more structured adherence to the COI Framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001), and improved orientation to the technology to reduce cognitive demands on language learners. However, by losing the extrinsic motivation of institutional credit when David’s case took place, it became evident that looking at the design solely through the lens of the COI framework was insufficient.

**Lab Pilot vs. David’s Case**

As can be seen in Chapters 3 and 5, great effort was put forth into carefully structuring task designs to afford David strong teaching presence, elicit cognitive presence, and provide opportunities for David to increase his social presence over time. Therefore, I decided to look
more closely at motivational factors that COI does not account for but are important elements in the language learning process (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Dörnyei, 1994, 2005, 2009, 2014). To explain, as soon as tasks required David to draw on his intrinsic motivation and summon additional effort, engage with other speakers of Spanish socially, and assume more cognitive load, it is likely that he may have discovered that there simply was not enough motivation to continue.

Table 11. Course Outcomes Comparative Analysis: Pilot to Case Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective Outcome</th>
<th>Pilot</th>
<th>David</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participants will adapt classroom content to naturalistic settings.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Orientation activities • Extensions activities</td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Participants will engage with Spanish culture and authentic materials.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Orientation activities • Extensions activities</td>
<td>• Orientation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participants will create personal relationships with other speakers of Spanish, improving pragmatic awareness and motivation.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities • Reflective journals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participants will gain confidence and experience with using Spanish in authentic settings and in a variety of contexts.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities • Reflective journals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Participants will identify and test linguistic forms in naturalistic settings.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities • Chat Logs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Participants will use Spanish language creatively to interact with other speakers of Spanish.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extensions activities • Chat Logs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participants will become members of Hispanic communities and gain sustainable access to these communities, the Spanish language, and Hispanic cultures through Second Life.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Orientation activities • Extensions activities • Chat Logs</td>
<td>• Orientation activity 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To better understanding the effect that this had pedagogically between the pilot participants and David I built upon the outcomes summary presented in Table 11 by including what was seen in the study’s pilot. This comparative analysis reveals evidence that their learning experience was much more complete in terms of evidence for reaching the desired outcomes and thus supported the integrity of the lab’s design under the COI framework. However, David’s learning experience differed, not from a change in the design but in terms of extrinsic motivational factors once the institutional credit was removed as an incentive for completing the SL Lab’s designed curriculum. Additionally, there were apparently insufficient extrinsic motivational factors that were integrated in the study design to incentivize putting forth the additional effort. To explain, completion of each task would have earned him $25 for about an hour worth of work and I offered incentives to help him develop his linguistic abilities through free education supports and access to technological resources not available to other students.

It is interesting to note that while David did not complete the SL Lab, the participants in the pilot precursor did fulfill all of the lab requirements. The noticeable difference is that during the pilot, the University offered credit for its completion and allowed participation to fulfill a university language lab requirement but did not offer any financial incentive for participating in research. It is also an important point that when participating in the SL Lab instead of the traditional language lab earned the student both a credit and fulfillment of a degree requirement, several SHLLs chose the SL Lab over the traditional workbook-based lab and completed it. Further, when institutional credit was offered, the pilot participants submitted completed tasks that demonstrated a significant amount of effort in both their SL experiences and reflections.
THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The constant comparative type methods approach that I have taken in this exploratory case-study has allowed me to explore multiple overlapping phenomena that have only begun to be studied and have up to this point have not been studied together. It has also allowed me to remain agile during the course of the study. In the following section, I detail some of the theoretical implications of this exploratory approach in relation to SHLLs, HLA, and task design for immersive virtual worlds.

Social Cultural Theory

SCT considers language learning as a socially mediated process that draws upon affordances provided by tools, artifacts, and social and cognitive resources (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), which I apply to understanding and discussing HLA within SL. I discovered this theoretical approach particularly well-suited to understanding and describing the complex nature of David and the pilot SHLLs’ experiences in SL. The most useful elements of this theoretical framework are the notions of mediation, affordances, and social/cognitive resources in their relation to material activity and language learning.

As I will discuss later in relation to the COI Framework, there is one component missing that my experiences in delving into the data of this study and seeing the effect of having institutional credit removed from my original SL Labs design: Motivation. There is an underlying understanding built into this model that learners are sufficiently motivated, either by extrinsic or intrinsic factors, to want to see the learning experience through to its completion. In other words, it does not consider the effect that these motivational attractor states have on pulling learners through and actually engaging in any language learning experience.
Figure 28. SCT Framework

Social Activity

As David did not complete the full lab and many SHLLs in general are focused primarily on using the language to speak with family or explore their cultural roots, there was limited opportunity for exploring how this model accounts for their social activity in relation to their learning experience. Although, as has been the case with other areas of this study, this absence in itself may be telling. To explain, the absence of this social activity indicates that the manner in which the lab and its tasks were designed did not place enough emphasis on this type of activity or possibly that SHLLs like David need more support in seeing directly how their time in SL connects them to their family and heritage.

Mediation
Mediation is a bi-directional process that creates the single (person-environment) system. The mediating artifact allows external objective social activity to become idealized through the construction of personally relevant meaning while mental activity (the ideal) becomes objectified through speech and thus influences the material activity of the self and others (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 154).

Figure 29. Mediational Model

In relation this exploratory study, mediation has proven to be an effective catalyst for addressing the complex nature of SHLL identity as it is performed and constructed in relation to both the Spanish language and within SL through the avatar. More specifically, this concept has been key in examining the link between SHLLs’ perceived beliefs about the link between the Spanish language and their own sense of ethnic identity as it is mediated through their social activity with other speakers of Spanish (primarily family). In practice, this idealization manifests
in their competency in the language and is objectified by that performance. The explanatory power of the model above (see Figure 29), has shown to be a great asset in describing the interaction of the complex phenomena explored in this study.

**Affordances**

An affordance is not only a function of the environment with a feature of that environment but also how an individual understands the opportunity to make use of that feature within that context (van Lier, 2004). Features of a technology like SL must be understood by language learners as presenting them with specific opportunities to interact in the target language, gain access to its culture, or some other related objective. Distinguishing between what feature that a technology, method, task, etc. offer and how an SHLL is afforded something has been key within. If simply listing features were sufficient, then the need for this study would not really exist. An affordance requires perception, interpretation, and action for an SHLL to navigate the interplay of the three central domains shown interacting in Figure 30. While this may be true for all language learning, this concept has shown throughout the course of this exploratory case-study to be particularly important when working with emerging technologies such as SL and other virtual immersive environments.
Social & Cognitive Resources

The construct of Social and Cognitive Resources was instrumental in exploring potential reasons for why David did not complete the SL Lab. In particular, this construct guided my analysis of how my design provided supports to supplement demands on cognition that distracted from each language learning task. Further, over time these supports were removed as David became more comfortable with the lab’s design, the SL environment, and his role in the learning experience. By identifying the point in which David’s persistence in the lab faltered and then analyzing the demands imposed on cognition at that point, I was able to draw some inferences related to these demands becoming too overwhelming for his level of extrinsic motivation to support him in overcoming the challenges imposed by those demands.
Community of Inquiry Framework & Motivation

The pedagogical design based on the COI Framework initially showed great potential when applied in a classroom environment with the pilot study’s participants. All of whom completed each of the modules in their less refined format. Following the differences between the study’s pilot group and David’s case, as discussed previously, it became evident that the COI framework itself was not sufficient to ensure a well-planned instructional design. There was a component revealed to be missing from the design: motivation. In this section, I propose integrating motivational system considerations into the COI framework to help hold each sphere of presence together and ensure a better supported learning experience (see Figure 31). This recommendation echoes my earlier one to bring motivation into the SCT framework as well.

![Figure 31. Integrated Community of Inquiry and Motivational framework (COI)](image-url)
**Motivation**

As mentioned previously, I took several approaches when working to balance SHLL extrinsic motivational states to support David through to completion of the SL Language Lab that Part II of this study was designed to investigate. These efforts manifested in several iterations, each time addressing motivational challenges that arose due to the removal of the Language Lab requirement/option from the Spanish level I and II courses in the study context.

The institution removed the language lab component of all level I and II courses between the time that the pilot was conducted, and the study began. This created a gap in the mechanism that was originally used for motivating them into completing the pilot lab by assigning a grade and providing college credit. To explain, the pilot design assumed that all students would be required to complete a one credit hour online language lab component. The standard component was primarily composed of rote vocabulary and grammar activities, such as fill in the blank, transcribe what you hear, and select the best option. The lab was designed as a self-contained one-hour course and already described as a supplement to the primary course sections being offered, which made it an ideal fit for use as a mechanism for supplementing instruction for SHLLs. In fact, it had the added appeal of being more interactive, more targeted towards developing communicative competencies, and more fun than the largely decontextualized grammar-based exercises in the original lab.

When I received notice that the lab component had been removed, I began trying to find alternative ways to keep participation from seeming like “extra” rather than “supplemental” support for SHLLs, who already had significant demands on their time. For instance, the department approved the substitution of lab work for some course assignments and I offered
compensation for participation. However, I was met with very little success in replacing that extrinsic motivation.

Extrinsic or external motivation, operates independently from intrinsic or internal motivation that comes from within a language learner and is ultimately tends to play a key role in the language acquisition process (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Dörnyei, 1994, 2005, 2009, 2014). There are several examples of extrinsic motivation, including financial (the cost for enrolling in and completing a course, or financial compensation), professional (completing a course or attaining a skill because it is required by an employer or to attain employment), academic (being evaluated for performance in a course and its completion), or familial (being required to learn by a parent or someone or even a group in the familial hierarchy with a greater position of power). In this case, I was unable to replace the academic and financial motivation that paying for and completing the required lab for credit represented with another type of academic motivation. However, I was able to the financial motivation of getting the value out of an educational investment for financial gain by offering payment for each module of the SHLL Language Lab that participants completed ($25 per each module).

As discussed in the previous section, I compared the extrinsic motivation for David with that present for the pilot participants. In this comparison, I find that institutional credit and fulfilling a language requirement by successfully completing a language lab was the primary difference between what successfully motivated the pilot participants to complete the SL Lab and what was lacking in David’s case. Ultimately, I offer the recommendation that any efforts to use my SL Lab design as a resource for helping SHLLs to study their HL also include an institutional incentive for successfully completing it.
**Social Presence**

Social Presence is described as perhaps the gateway by which participants become active within a community of inquiry. In this exploratory case-study, I described David’s identity mediation through his avatar and projection into the virtual world and prescience others socially within virtual this virtual space (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 2004) within this domain of the COI Framework. However, I did not find evidence that David established a sense of community and personal bond between established members of other Spanish speaking communities, which would have been essential in fostering open and informed critical discourse (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, 2001) about his heritage culture and language.

I continue to agree that perceiving the identities of others and projecting their own is essential for meaningful learning outcomes to occur within these virtual spaces (Deng & Yuen, 2011), which is perhaps one of the contributing factors to understanding how having multiple SHLLs engaged in social learning within the SL Lab design that I propose would differ from David’s more isolated experience. In fact, researchers contend that social presence must be established before worthwhile learning experiences can be expected (deNoyelles & Kyeong-Ju Seo, 2011; Garrison & Cleveland- Innes, 2005) and while David created his avatar, he did not establish a meaningful social presence that was embedded in communities in-world or outside but related to the SL experience.

Should this design be implemented institutionally, this would be a fundamental difference to consider and I suggest that future studies wishing to expand on my exploration here should incorporate into their study design. Further, they should examine how critical discourse to takes place, an environment of trust is created, respect developed, and collaboration established through fostering social presence (deNoyelles & Kyeong-Ju Seo, 2011; Garrison & Arbaugh,
2007), something that was not possible with a single SHLL without involvement of other in
world denizens becoming more central to his learning experience or classmates to establish this
community with.

**Cognitive Presence**

Cognitive presence can only be achieved after social presence within a community has
been established and is marked by meaning making while engaged in critical discourse and self-
reflection. Perhaps most importantly to educational contexts, it "reflects higher-order knowledge
acquisition and application and is associated with critical thinking" (McIsaac & Gunawardena,
2004), such that learners become cognitively engaged in the community of inquiry. In the
context of the SL Lab, cognitive presence was established by engaging socially through David’s
avatar in material activity within SL, adapting to the challenges posed by each task and the
environment, and then reflecting on these experiences that were shared with me as the audience.
Without this cognitive component, communities formed in virtual spaces are more likely to
retain the characteristics of social networking without any directed educational outcomes
possible, which is why this critical thinking and reflection component was important in my
design. When applying this to David’s experience, I was able to verify cognitive presence in the
SL task data that indicated: (a) sense of puzzlement, (b) information exchange, (c) connecting
ideas, and (d) applying new ideas.

**Teaching Presence**

While "both social and content-related interactions among participants are necessary in
virtual learning environments, interactions by themselves are not sufficient to ensure effective
online learning" (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). Such interactions require targeted guidance and
directed mediation in order to successfully engage in purposeful critical discourse and reach
desired learning outcomes, which continues to be verified by my analysis of where in the SL Lab design that David’s persistence faltered. While my teaching presence was strongly evidenced with instructional supports and established objectives, he completed the tasks; however, when teaching presence was established in other ways (templates, feedback, encouragement, etc.) his participation in the lab ended.

The role of the teacher, is essential in bringing both social and cognitive dimensions into alignment for meaning learning to occur. The third element to the framework provided by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000, 2001) is consequently termed teaching presence or "the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes" (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). The types of tasks that David did not complete allowed a structure for David to choose these objectives for himself from a list, and these were the ones that he did not complete. This is an important insight highlighted within this theoretical framework for understanding task design within virtual immersive spaces because it shows that creating tasks can be too flexible in their design, which may cause the learning experience to become unbalanced, cognitively and motivationally challenging, and less effective.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Throughout Chapters 4, 5 and 6 my analysis and discussion have woven several key implications from the resulting findings for pedagogy concerning meeting SHLL needs, the state of HLA currently, and task design for open virtual immersive environments like SL. In the following section, I address each of these and provide some additional context by including some of my experiences while conducting this study that may present challenges to these implications.
HLLs and Differentiation

As part of the instructional design process, I completed a needs analysis in Chapter 3 that primarily took into account the curriculum, the audience, and instructional paradigms. This needs analysis pointed to misalignments between the pedagogical framework of communicative language teaching and its application in the classroom. It further pointed to a need, one that is commonly called out by HLA researchers, to build pedagogy and supporting resources for heritage learners in a different way than would be done for foreign language students. They are simply too different of a population for a one size fits all approach.

As a result of this needs analysis, I proposed the creation of an alternative language lab that would meet the identified needs and realign the pedagogical framework with instructional practice by making communicative and experiential activity the focus of that lab. This approach seemed a sound and reasonable way of providing differentiated instruction not just for SHLLs but for other students that wanted a more communicative approach to their language studies. This resulted in the departmental approval of the alternative lab and its successful piloting, which was used as a basis for the final instructional design model used in this study. It was found particularly useful for SHLL students in the study University. This pilot and the viability of this supplemental lab approach relied on some key factors, however, which did not prove to be consistent during the course of this exploratory case-study with David.

Cooperating Instructors

The success of the initial exploratory case-study design, depended greatly on the cooperation from instructors whose students would be asked to participate into the study. They were key to not only gaining approval for disseminating recruitment materials among the students in the courses that they taught but also in endorsing the educational advantages of
perusing the SHLL Language Lab as a supplement to their course. The cooperating instructors whose students were recruited into the alternative language lab prior to David’s experience were familiar with using SL and very supportive of integrating the technology into language learning. As happens, however, these instructors moved into other positions or departments between the time that the pilot was conducted, and the actual study recruitment began to take place. This created a significant lack of experience with the technology in the department and deflated support for the project. This is not to say that department opposed students participating, but they did not demonstrate the level of enthusiasm as those instructors from the pilot and did not make attempts to integrate the supplemental lab more fluidly into course structure.

In order for a similar lab design to be adapted in institutional settings, it will be important to find instructors who can clearly see the advantages of using SL, which differs significantly from the static online workbook activities to which many are accustomed. Further, they need to understand that SHLL students could benefit from an approach that was different from that used with their foreign language students. In other words, these instructors need to be able to capitalize on the affordances of the design and virtual world features by understanding them and see them as useful just as learners need to understand them and see them as useful.

**Understanding SHLL Needs**

Beyond the challenge presented by convincing cooperating instructors of the value of an immersive virtual reality language lab to supplement the SHLL learning experience, was to argue that they needed something different from the foreign language learner students in the first place. In other words, the paradigm shift started by HLA researchers is still in need of time to continue developing and allow foreign language teachers time to adapt. As HLA research is a relatively
new area for research, its push to update entrenched methodological monolingual biases for addressing only foreign language learners is still developing strength.

There was a prevailing perception that all SHLLs require only one supplement and this was accomplished by simply placing them in an advanced grammar track for the study of prescriptivist Castilian Spanish grammar rules. The general perception among the different instructors I approached was that SHLLs could be only be considered SHLLs if they were those students raised in a Spanish speaking household and already grammatically beyond the ACTFL Intermediate Mid-level for oral proficiency. This general manner for classifying SHLLs is one that institutions have been found to echo and this study makes an argument against in Chapters 1 and 2. To recap, SHLLs are better considered in relation to both Wei’s (2000) continuum for bilingualism and Carreira’s (2004) HLL typology. Based on the above points and the conversations that I had with several of the 133 University contacts where I worked to negotiate having the Part I survey circulated, it remains likely that this argument will continue to need to be made.

**Meeting Motivational Demands**

As mentioned previously, I made some adaptations between the piloted lab and when working with David. These efforts manifested in several iterations, each time addressing motivational challenges that arose due to the removal of the Language Lab requirement/option from the Spanish level I and II courses in the study context. I decided to try a different tact to addressing the void in external motivation created by losing the Language Lab as a factor.

Extrinsic motivation, operates independently from intrinsic or internal motivation that comes from within a language learner and is ultimately tends to play a key role in the language acquisition process (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Dörnyei, 1994, 2005, 2009, 2014). There are several
examples of extrinsic motivation, including financial (the cost for enrolling in and completing a course, or financial compensation), professional (completing a course or attaining a skill because it is required by an employer or to attain employment), academic (being evaluated for performance in a course and its completion), or familial (being required to learn by a parent or someone or even a group in the familial hierarchy with a greater position of power). In this case, I was unable to replace the academic and financial motivation by paying for them to complete their work in the lab.

As discussed, I compared the extrinsic motivation for David with that present for the pilot participants. In this comparison, I find that institutional credit and fulfilling a language requirement by successfully completing a language lab was the primary difference between what successfully motivated the pilot participants to complete the SL Lab and what was lacking in David’s case. Importantly, this analysis suggests that future endeavors to incorporate this type of design for SHLLs should be tied to institutional credit in order to provide sufficient extrinsic motivation for SHLLs to complete the lab and still supports further research under experimental conditions where this institutional credit is present. Moreover, I suggest that finding resources able to adapt to individual SHLL needs should still remain a priority, they just need to be careful to include appropriate extrinsic motivational incentive.

**Supporting Ethnic Identity through Language**

The results of the Part I survey, which are further supported by the literature (Abdi, 2011; Carreira, 2004; Cho, 2000; Cho, 2000; Tallon, 2006;) support the continued push to reinforce SHLLs’ senses of ethnic identity in relation to Spanish. Ethnicity and language continue to have strong relationship, one that can be a valuable asset in understanding how SHLLs are significantly different from their foreign language peers in terms of motivation and pedagogy.
First, it may be important to embrace different varieties of Spanish as just that, different rather than inferior, or risk invalidating SHLL identities in the classroom. Further, this means that touting cultural tropes in the classroom as some foreign language curricula do is equivalent to placing SHLL identity on the stage in a distorted and inauthentic way. Along those lines, the criteria by which “authenticity” for materials also continues to need reevaluation.

In Chapter 2, I wove the shift between traditional notions for authenticity and emerging ones in this digital age (Blasing, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Ibáñez et al., 2011; Jauregi et al., 2011). In the context of HLA, this shift should also consider what SHLLs perceive as intrinsically relevant to them personally, their cultural backgrounds, and the way that they seem themselves using the language (Valdés 1995, 2005; Valdés et al., 2006). To explain, this group of learners overwhelmingly say that they intend to use the language in relation to their families and backgrounds. This could mean that texts framed in a familial context would be more authentic to them than an advertisement in a travel agency flier. Cultural scavenger hunts like the one explained in Appendix I can provide a structured way for SHLLs to explore their heritage through cultural artefacts and metaphors within SL or other digital spaces. Further, digital texts such as modeled conversations with important cultural information in digital spaces through features such as chat echo their familiarity with these modes of communication as “authentic” letters did in the past and could deliver cultural content in a more contextualized and “authentic” way. Additionally, SHLLs consistently saw themselves using the language for connecting to family over other groups of Spanish speakers, which suggests that “pen pal” type activities would be much less effective with this group. There should be a shift away from pushing the “access to all Spanish speakers” approach used with foreign language learners, to an “access to
your family and heritage” approach. Structured activities should keep this in mind, especially when framing their context and developing their objectives.

**THE RESEARCHER’S GROWTH & CHANGES IN PERSPECTIVE**

I doubt that I am alone in admitting that over the several years that passed from conception of this research project until now that I am putting my final thoughts on a page that I have grown considerably. I attribute a lot of this growth to undertaking the challenges and rewards of writing a dissertation and conducting a study where I worked closely with SHLLs studying their HL and collaborating with other educators across the U.S. that do the same. As I have mentioned earlier, I found some of the positive and enthusiastic responses to my outreach when circulating the survey for Part I of this study to be very encouraging.

There have definitely been many challenges that I have faced during this process, including the restructuring of my committee several times due to faculty leaving the university and other institutional dynamics. I have to say that facing these challenges and persevering have made my work with SHLLs like David and the other educators that have supported me has made my work all the more rewarding. Preparing for this journey was a long and trying process. I consulted very helpful resources like Hawley’s (2010) *Being bright is not enough*, which gave excellent advice on what lay ahead. However, the lived experiences tend be significantly different than what any well-meaning author or wizened scholar generally writes. As can be seen by some of the challenges and realizations made over the course of this study, doing what the research suggests in applied contexts does not always mean that the outcomes will be what are expected.
Hawley (2010) dedicates chapters of her book to topics such as maintaining life balances and advice on structuring a Ph.D. student’s committee. It is all very sound and at least helped me to brace myself for what was to come. However, life is not a textbook or set of experimental conditions. Despite my efforts to maintain balance, there were always competing demands, chief of which was finding ways to put food on the table and tuition in the registrar’s account. Somehow, with long days and late nights I was able to balance my need to eat with my academic formation and establish some close relationships that sustained me socially. However, I do not believe that at one point all three spheres were balanced. At most I could balance two of the three at a time.

I have discovered that research shares a lot in common with the unpredictable and challenging nature of the life of an aspiring academic. In fact, I discovered that even my experiment was not just a set of experimental conditions. The challenges that I accounted for which are outlined above and in Chapter 3, still bred more challenges that the literature was inadequate in preparing me for. Ultimately, my preparation amounted to working hard, doing what I could, and then hoping for the best.

I have also grown professionally over this period and gained some important experience in designing results-based e-learning experiences. I have had the opportunity to work in industry and as an instructional design consultant, growing my experience in a variety of subject areas and collaborating with some amazing professionals. This has given me a unique opportunity to develop my perspectives on bringing technology in the learning equation and the impact that extrinsic motivation has on learner achievement. When working with industry clients, they have not always shared my passion for tying social learning experiences and engaging context with the designs that hire me to innovate. In fact, there is a prevailing attachment to death by power
point followed by a quiz models. Having said that, I have generally been able to find happy mediums. I believe that encouraging contextual and authentic learning experiences such as those offered within SL are worth designing.

After conducting this experiment, as I have mentioned before, my perspective on the importance of balancing theoretical models such as the COI Framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999) while also taking into account factors that are outside of the actual learning experience, such as motivational factors, is has grown considerably when considering any design. In general, workers needing training, professionals requiring continuing education, and students wanting a degree all participate in these educational activities because of a combination of internal and external factors. For me, I study Spanish to connect with my heritage and I am completing my doctoral studies to become an expert in helping others to meet their goals. I meet my due deadlines because if I do then I receive credit of some sort: continued employment, a happy client, college credits, or to finally earn my Ph.D. For learners, these types of extrinsic motivational factors need to be considered as part of the overall design as well.

In sum, my work on this project has allowed me the time, necessary challenges, and valuable amounts of support to grow in more ways than I am even able to currently take stock of. I believe that my overall experiences in working on this project have helped to more deeply understand the field of HLA and even gain valuable connections with other educators working with SHLLs. Further, my work outside of academia during this time has allowed me to more fully appreciate the value of extrinsic motivation when developing a design. In short, I would not trade the experiences, despite their challenges, of conducting this type of research for anything and I hope that others will find some inspiration in knowing that even when things do not go as planned, there is still value in seeing a doctoral research project through to completion.
CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I provided a brief overview of key findings and raised several considerations for challenges that I encountered during the course of the investigation that should be accounted for in other future similar research endeavors or when designing pedagogy for SHLLs in similar contexts. I drew conclusions and offered recommendations for both theoretical and pedagogical implications based on my findings and experiences in conducting this study. Further, I detail factors I anticipated as part of the instructional and research design processes, proposing research-based solutions and narrate how the ability of this research-based approach was not always sufficient in the applied context of David’s experience with the SL Lab. Further, I highlighted the pedagogical implications and resulting from my discussion, analysis, and those challenges that I faced in trying to keep up with institutional changes, demands on participant time, and collaborating with other educators. Finally, I expanded on my original discussion of myself as the primary research instrument of this study and the narrative of my background as it has changed since this study first was conceptualized. It is my sincere hope that sharing these experiences will lend insight into both the development of instructional supports for SHLLs and into structuring research efforts for similar contexts.
REFERENCES


Reyhner (Ed.), *Teaching Indigenous Languages* (pp. 85-104). Flagstaff, AZ: Northern Arizona University.


Tallon, M. (2006). Foreign language anxiety in heritage participants of Spanish: To be (anxious) or not to be (anxious)? That is the question. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (UMI No. 3245300)


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: BILINGUAL CONTINUUM FROM WEI (2003) (PP. 6-7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>achieved bilingual</td>
<td>same as late bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additive bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose two languages combine in a complementary and enriching fashion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambilingual</td>
<td>same as balanced bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascendant bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose ability to function in a second language is developing due to increased use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascribed bilingual</td>
<td>same as early bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asymmetrical bilingual</td>
<td>see receptive bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balanced bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose mastery of two languages is roughly equivalent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compound bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose two languages are learnt at the same time, often in the same context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consecutive bilingual</td>
<td>same as successive bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-ordinat bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose two languages are learnt in distinctively separate contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>covert bilingual</td>
<td>someone who conceals his or her knowledge of a given language due to an attitudinal disposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diagonal bilingual</td>
<td>someone who is bilingual in a non-standard language or a dialect and an unrelated standard language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominant bilingual</td>
<td>someone with greater proficiency in one of his or her languages and uses it significantly more than the other language(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dormant bilingual</td>
<td>someone who has emigrated to a foreign country for a considerable period of time and has little opportunity to keep the first language actively in use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early bilingual</td>
<td>someone who has acquired two languages early in childhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equiltilingual</td>
<td>same as balanced bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>functional bilingual</td>
<td>someone who can operate in two languages with or without full fluency for the task at hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horizontal bilingual</td>
<td>someone who is bilingual in two distinct languages which have a similar or equal status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipient bilingual</td>
<td>someone at the early stages of bilingualism where one language is not fully developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late bilingual</td>
<td>someone who has become a bilingual later than childhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maximal bilingual</td>
<td>someone with near native control of two or more languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incipient bilingual</td>
<td>someone at the early stages of bilingualism where one language is not fully developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minimal bilingual</td>
<td>someone with only a few words and phrases in a second language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural bilingual</td>
<td>someone who has not undergone any specific training and who is often not in a position to translate or interpret with facility between two languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive bilingual</td>
<td>same as receptive bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary bilingual</td>
<td>same as natural bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>productive bilingual</td>
<td>someone who not only understands but also speaks and possibly writes in two or more languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receptive bilingual</td>
<td>someone who understands a second language, in either its spoken or written form, or both, but does not necessarily speak or write it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recessive bilingual</td>
<td>someone who begins to feel some difficulty in either understanding or expressing him or herself with ease, due to lack of use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secondary bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose second language has been added to a first language via instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semibilingual</td>
<td>same as receptive bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semilingual</td>
<td>someone with insufficient knowledge of either language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simultaneous bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose two languages are present from the onset of speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subordinate bilingual</td>
<td>someone who exhibits interference in his or her language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtractive bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose second language is acquired at the expense of the aptitudes already acquired in the first language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>successive bilingual</td>
<td>someone whose second language is added at some stage after the first has begun to develop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>symmetrical bilingual</td>
<td>same as balanced bilingual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertical bilingual</td>
<td>someone who is bilingual in a standard language and a distinct but related language or dialect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Heritage Language Learners and Second Life Survey

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this brief survey. Please respond as honestly as you are able to each question. Your name or other identifying information will not be shared and the use of this data may be revoked by you at any time during the course of the study. Please follow the directions for completion provided throughout the survey in each section.

* Required

A. Personal information:
Please fill in all of the fields provided. Information from this section will be kept confidential and used solely for internal purposes.

First Name *

Last Name *

U* 

email *
B. Background information:
Please fill in all of the fields provided.

Major *

What ethnicity would you describe yourself as? *

Minor *

How would you describe your family origins? *

How important is maintaining your ethnic heritage? *
Please rate on a scale of 1-5 (1 being very low & 5 being very important)

Please choose your reasons for taking Spanish from the list below.*
Check all that apply

☐ To preserve the Spanish language for my community or family.
☐ To connect with my family and/or heritage.
☐ To speak an academic variety of Spanish that is different from the one I use at home or in my community.
☐ To improve my ability to speak Spanish so that I can fit in better with my family or community.
☐ I view Spanish as an integral part of my ethnic identity.
☐ I feel awkward saying that I am hispanic/latino without being able to speak Spanish in academic contexts.
☐ I can understand and speak Spanish but I want to be able to understand the grammar more explicitly.
☐ Other: _____________________________

Please tell me a little bit about your background with technology.*
Check all that apply

☐ I have at least one social media account.
☐ I have used a messenger program or text messaging before.
☐ I have customized an avatar for a game or social platform before.
☐ I have used a browser to look for places, events, or information before.
☐ I have played an MMO(RPG) before (like World of Warcraft).
Please indicate how comfortable you are with technology on a scale of 1-5.
This doesn't include advanced skills like web programming or building technology, just using it for tasks and in daily life or for enjoyment.

1 2 3 4 5

Very uncomfortable □ □ □ □ □ Very comfortable

C. Yes or No:

My knowledge and experience of both Spanish and English combine in a way that enriches both languages.

□ Yes
□ No

I am doing better in one of my languages because I've started using it more.

□ Yes
□ No

I can use and understand Spanish and English about the same.

□ Yes
□ No

I've learned Spanish and English at the same time.

□ Yes
□ No

I learned Spanish and English in separate contexts.

□ Yes
□ No

I try to hide that I know either English or Spanish.
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can speak Spanish but not the kind that’s taught by schools or used to write academically.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can speak either English or Spanish much better than the other because I use it more.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I moved here from a Spanish speaking country but haven’t been able to keep it up.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I learnt both English and Spanish as a child.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can function just fine with respect to daily tasks and interactions in both Spanish and English.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I think that Spanish and English are really similar and I can use them both.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I have a lot to learn in either English or Spanish.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I didn’t learn either English or Spanish until I was an adult.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I speak, write and read like English and Spanish speaking natives.*
☐ Yes
No

I can only say a couple of things in either English or Spanish. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I don't have very much experience learning Spanish in an academic setting and I don't feel like I can serve as a translator in formal settings. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can understand both English and Spanish, and I might even be able to write something meaningful in Spanish. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can understand both Spanish, either written or spoken, but I can't necessarily produce it. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I feel like I can't use Spanish very well because I don't use it enough. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I don't really feel like I can use either Spanish or English very well. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I have been using both English and Spanish since I first learned how to speak. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I use either my English or Spanish grammar in the other language, such as with word order or compound tenses. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I had to give up my Spanish because I was told that English took priority when I was a child, or because someone else decided I needed to use English dominantly. *
I learned English only after I already knew how to speak, read, and write in Spanish. *

☐ Yes
☐ No

I learned Spanish only after I already knew how to speak, read, and write in English. *

☐ Yes
☐ No

D. On a scale of 1-5:
Please rate the following statements on a scale of 0-5 as they apply to you in the space provided.
For example:

I enjoy learning new languages.

0 = I do not enjoy learning new languages.
5 = I really enjoy learning new languages

1. I enrolled in Spanish because I want to learn the language. *

1 2 3 4 5

2. I remember speaking Spanish as a child. *

1 2 3 4 5

3. My parents primarily spoke Spanish when I was young. *

1 2 3 4 5

4. I am interested in Hispanic cultures in general. *

1 2 3 4 5
5. I am studying Spanish to better communicate with other family members. *
   1 2 3 4 5

6. There are groups of Spanish speakers that I wish I could speak with. *
   1 2 3 4 5

7. I admire people who are fluent in two or more languages. *
   1 2 3 4 5

8. Learning Spanish is something that I want to do. *
   1 2 3 4 5

9. I have family members that are native Spanish speakers. *
   1 2 3 4 5

11. I want to learn more about where my family came from and why they might have left (political, economic, or other social reasons). *
   1 2 3 4 5

13. I remember hearing Spanish spoken by other family members when I was a child. *
   1 2 3 4 5
14. I feel like the typical Spanish class is designed to address my needs. *
   1 2 3 4 5
   
15. I feel challenged by my Spanish classes. *
   1 2 3 4 5
   
16. I take Spanish to connect with my past. *
   1 2 3 4 5
   
17. I feel that learning Spanish is a part of my family’s heritage or important for our community. *
   1 2 3 4 5
   
18. I feel empowered in class because of my family connection to Spanish. *
   1 2 3 4 5
   
20. I think I should be in a different type of Spanish class because of my background with Spanish. *
21. Sometimes I feel like my teachers expect me to perform better than my classmates. *

22. My family has high expectations for my performance in Spanish. *

24. I like having other students look to me for guidance about Spanish or hispanic/latino cultures. *

26. I can speak in Spanish but I take classes to work on my grammar. *

28. I don't like being grouped with other students because of what my teacher thinks is my heritage. *

29. People think I want to learn Spanish and that I am good at it because of my race or family name. *
30. I find it offensive when teachers don’t consider my connection to the Spanish language as valid as someone else who grew up around Spanish.

1 2 3 4 5

E. Comments:

Please use this section to provide any comments that you feel are relevant for explaining your motivation to take the class, your personal background, or anything that you would like for me to know.*

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

100%: You made it.

This form was created inside of University of South Florida.
Heritage Language Learners Background and Motivations Survey

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this brief survey. Please respond as honestly as you are able to each question. Your name or other identifying information will not be shared and the use of this data may be revoked by you at any time during the course of the study. Please follow the directions for completion provided throughout the survey in each section.

* Required

A. Informed Consent

The purpose of this survey is to gather some background information about the students here at USF whom come from Spanish speaking families or ancestry and have chosen to study Spanish formally at the University. This survey will not gather any information that can be directly linked to its respondents and should be filled out anonymously.

Do you agree to have your responses used for research purposes? *
Please check one.

☐ I give permission for my responses to be used for research purposes and may be shared with authorized USF personnel. This information may also be used for academic publications.
☐ I do not agree to have my responses used for research or shared with authorized USF personnel.

Do you understand that your name, student number, email, or any other personally identifiable information should not be included in this form? *
Please check one.

☐ I understand that this form should be completed anonymously and I will omit information that could explicitly identify myself. I also understand that any personally identifiable information that I provide will be removed by the primary investigator before use in any academic publications or shared with authorized USF personnel.
☐ I do not agree to participate in this survey or share any information for this study. (Please stop here if you
choose this option and thank you for your time).

Do you understand that because no personally identifiable information will be gathered it may not be possible to have your responses removed from the study at a later time? *
Please check one.
☐ I understand that because no personally identifiable information will be gathered it may not be possible to have your responses removed from the study at a later time.
☐ I do not agree to waive my ability to cancel participation in this study at a later time. (Please stop here if you choose this option, as it may not be possible to located and remove your responses later).

Do you understand that you may contact the primary researcher, Brandon King, at any time with any questions about the study or how your information might be used? *
Please check if you understand how to contact the primary investigator.
☐ I understand that I may contact the primary investigator at bking@usf.edu

B. Background information:

Please fill in all of the fields provided.

Major *

What ethnicity would you describe yourself as? *

Minor *

How would you describe your family origins? *

How important is maintaining your ethnic heritage? *
Please rate on a scale of 1-5 (1 being very low & 5 being very important)

1 2 3 4 5

Not very important ○ ○ ○ ○ Very important:○○○○
Please choose your reasons for taking Spanish from the list below. *
Check all that apply

☐ To preserve the Spanish language for my community or family.
☐ To connect with my family and/or heritage.
☐ To speak an academic variety of Spanish that is different from the one I use at home or in my community.
☐ To improve my ability to speak Spanish so that I can fit in better with my family or community.
☐ I view Spanish as an integral part of my ethnic identity.
☐ I feel awkward saying that I am hispanic/latin/o without being able to speak Spanish in academic contexts.
☐ I can understand and speak Spanish but I want to be able to understand the grammar more explicitly.
☐ Other: ________________

Please tell me a little bit about your background with technology. *
Check all that apply

☐ I have at least one social media account.
☐ I have used a messenger program or text messaging before.
☐ I have customized an avatar for a game or social platform before.
☐ I have used a browser to look for places, events, or information before.
☐ I have played an MMO(RPG) before (like World of Warcraft).
☐ I have created a user profile for social media before.
☐ I have used Canvas before.
☐ I have taken an online or blended format course before.
☐ Other: ________________

Please indicate how comfortable you are with technology on a scale of 1-5 *
This doesn’t include advanced skills like web programming or building technology, just using it for tasks and in daily life or for enjoyment.

1 2 3 4 5

Very uncomfortable ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very comfortable

C. Yes or No:
Please indicate if the following are true or not for you by checking the box for yes or no.

My knowledge and experience of both Spanish and English combine in a way that enriches both languages. *
☐ Yes
☐ No
I am doing better in one of my languages because I've started using it more.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can use and understand Spanish and English about the same.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I’ve learned Spanish and English at the same time.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I learned Spanish and English in separate contexts.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I try to hide that I know either English or Spanish.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can speak Spanish but not the kind that’s taught by schools or used to write academically.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can speak either English or Spanish much better than the other because I use it more.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I moved here from a Spanish speaking country but haven’t been able to keep it up.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I learnt both English and Spanish as a child.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can function just fine with respect to daily tasks and interactions in both Spanish and English.*
☐ Yes
☐ No
I think that Spanish and English are really similar and I can use them both. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I have a lot to learn in either English or Spanish. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I didn’t learn either English or Spanish until I was an adult. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I speak, write and read like English and Spanish speaking natives. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can only say a couple of things in either English or Spanish. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I don’t have very much experience learning Spanish in an academic setting and I don’t feel like I can serve as a translator in formal settings. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can understand both English and Spanish, and I might even be able to write something meaningful in Spanish. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I can understand both Spanish, either written or spoken, but I can’t necessarily produce it. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I feel like I can’t use Spanish very well because I don’t use it enough. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I don’t really feel like I can use either Spanish or English very well. *
☐ Yes
☐ No

I have been using both English and Spanish since I first learned how to speak.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I use either my English or Spanish grammar in the other language, such as with word order or compound tenses.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I had to give up my Spanish because I was told that English took priority when I was a child, or because someone else decided I needed to use English dominantly.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I learned English only after I already knew how to speak, read, and write in Spanish.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

I learned Spanish only after I already knew how to speak, read, and write in English.*
☐ Yes
☐ No

D. On a scale of 1-5:

Please rate the following statements on a scale of 0-5 as they apply to you in the space provided.
For example:

I enjoy learning new languages.

0 - I do not enjoy learning new languages.
5 - I really enjoy learning new languages

1. I enrolled in Spanish because I want to learn the language.*

1 2 3 4 5

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. I remember speaking Spanish as a child.*
3. My parents primarily spoke Spanish when I was young. *

4. I am interested in Hispanic cultures in general. *

5. I am studying Spanish to better communicate with other family members. *

6. There are groups of Spanish speakers that I wish I could speak with. *

7. I admire people who are fluent in two or more languages. *

8. Learning Spanish is something that I want to do. *

9. I have family members that are native Spanish speakers. *
11. I want to learn more about where my family came from and why they might have left (political, economic, or other social reasons). *

1 2 3 4 5

13. I remember hearing Spanish spoken by other family members when I was a child. *

1 2 3 4 5

14. I feel like the typical Spanish class is designed to address my needs. *

1 2 3 4 5

15. I feel challenged by my Spanish classes. *

1 2 3 4 5

15. I feel like my Spanish classes understand that there are different types of Spanish and that my heritage variety is valued in these classes. *

1 2 3 4 5

16. I take Spanish to connect with my past. *

1 2 3 4 5

17. I feel that learning Spanish is a part of my family’s heritage or important for our community. *

1 2 3 4 5
18. I feel empowered in class because of my family connection to Spanish.*

1 2 3 4 5

20. I think I should be in a different type of Spanish class because of my background with Spanish.*

1 2 3 4 5

21. Sometimes I feel like my teachers expect me to perform better than my classmates.*

1 2 3 4 5

22. My family has high expectations for my performance in Spanish.*

1 2 3 4 5

24. I like having other students look to me for guidance about Spanish or hispanic/latino cultures.*

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26. I can speak in Spanish but I take classes to work on my grammar.*

1 2 3 4 5

28. I don’t like being grouped with other students because of what my teacher thinks is my heritage.*

1 2 3 4 5
29. People think I want to learn Spanish and that I am good at it because of my race or family name.*

1 2 3 4 5

30. I find it offensive when teachers don’t consider my connection to the Spanish language as valid as someone else who grew up around Spanish.*

1 2 3 4 5

E. Comments:

Please use this section to provide any comments that you feel are relevant for explaining you motivation to take the class, your personal background, or anything that you would like for me to know. Please remember to omit any information that explicitly identifies you.*

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

100%: You made it.
End of Course Survey

Thank you very much for participating in this semester long study of using Second Life for teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible. Your feedback is valuable and we appreciate the time you have taken to participate in this study.

* Required

Personal Information:

- **First Name**
- **Last Name**
- **Second Life Name**
- **U#**
- **email**

Creating your Second Life identity

* Please describe your avatar
What do they look like? What ethnicity do you envision them being? Would you describe them as being a predominantly Spanish speaker? What clothes do they wear? Did you add any gestures or special features? Do they have any special personality traits that helped you interact with other Spanish speakers or communities?

Please tell me about your SL profile if you created one.

Please tell me about any groups that you joined and/or friends that you made in SL.

Please describe how you chose your avatar’s name and what effect you think that that name might have had on other Spanish speakers being open or closed to talking with you.

What role did your Avatar play in your experience in SL, particularly in interacting with other people and the environment? Tell me about a time that either your avatar was helpful or harmful to your SL experience.
Please rate the usefulness of your avatar in projecting yourself as a Spanish speaker in SL. *

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all helpful ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very helpful

Please rate the importance of your avatar’s appearance in interacting with other Spanish speakers or groups in SL. *

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very important

Please rate how important you found your avatar for studying Spanish in SL. *

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very important

Behavior in SL

Can you please tell me a little bit about what you did in SL? Please include at least one example of an experience you found memorable (either good, bad, or even awkward or strange). *

What kinds of activities did you engage in within SL? *

☐ Joining groups of other Spanish speakers
☐ Attending cultural events like concerts or art shows
☐ Visiting Spanish cultural sites
☐ Meeting other Spanish speakers
☐ Finding Spanish grammar games or other automated Spanish language practice activities
☐ Taking tours or other guided educational activity in Spanish
☐ Practicing speaking Spanish with other classmates
☐ Role playing to practice Spanish
☐ Other: _______________________

Please rate how important you found the text chat feature for studying Spanish in SL.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very important

What did you find SL especially useful/useless for in respect to learning Spanish? *


Please rate the usefulness of text chat for projecting yourself as a Spanish speaker in SL.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all helpful ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very helpful

Please rate the usefulness of voice chat for projecting yourself as a Spanish speaker in SL.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all helpful ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very helpful

Please rate how important you found the voice chat feature for studying Spanish in SL.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very important

Please rate the importance of the type of Spanish you used in interacting with other Spanish
speakers or groups in SL.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important ○ ○ ○ ○ Very important

Recommendations

Do you have any recommendations for students or teachers using SL? *

Please provide any other feedback you have.*

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

100%. You made it.
APPENDIX E: EXIT SURVEY

Community of Inquiry Survey Instrument (draft v14) (Arbaugh et al., 2008)

Teaching Presence

*Design & Organization*

1. The instructor clearly communicated important course topics.
2. The instructor clearly communicated important course goals.
3. The instructor provided clear instructions on how to participate in course learning activities.
4. The instructor clearly communicated important due dates/time frames for learning activities.

*Facilitation*

5. The instructor was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics that helped me to learn.
6. The instructor was helpful in guiding the class towards understanding course topics in a way that helped me clarify my thinking.
7. The instructor helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in productive dialogue.
8. The instructor helped keep the course participants on task in a way that helped me to learn.
9. The instructor encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in this course.
10. Instructor actions reinforced the development of a sense of community among course participants.

*Direct Instruction*

11. The instructor helped to focus discussion on relevant issues in a way that helped me to learn.
12. The instructor provided feedback that helped me understand my strengths and weaknesses.
13. The instructor provided feedback in a timely fashion.
Social Presence

Affective expression

14. Getting to know other course participants gave me a sense of belonging in the course.
15. I was able to form distinct impressions of some course participants.
16. Online or web-based communication is an excellent medium for social interaction.

Open communication

17. I felt comfortable conversing through the online medium.
18. I felt comfortable participating in the course discussions.
19. I felt comfortable interacting with other course participants.

Group cohesion

20. I felt comfortable disagreeing with other course participants while still maintaining a sense of trust.
21. I felt that my point of view was acknowledged by other course participants.
22. Online discussions help me to develop a sense of collaboration.

Cognitive Presence

Triggering event

23. Problems posed increased my interest in course issues.
24. Course activities piqued my curiosity.
25. I felt motivated to explore content related questions.

Exploration

26. I utilized a variety of information sources to explore problems posed in this course.
27. Brainstorming and finding relevant information helped me resolve content related questions.
28. Online discussions were valuable in helping me appreciate different perspectives.
Integration

29. Combining new information helped me answer questions raised in course activities.

30. Learning activities helped me construct explanations/solutions.

31. Reflection on course content and discussions helped me understand fundamental concepts in this class.

Resolution

32. I can describe ways to test and apply the knowledge created in this course.

33. I have developed solutions to course problems that can be applied in practice.

34. I can apply the knowledge created in this course to my work or other non-class related activities.

5 point Likert-type scale

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree
APPENDIX F: ACTFL STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Communication: Communicate in Languages Other than English

**Standard 1.1:** Participants engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions

**Standard 1.2:** Participants understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics

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

Cultures: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

**Standard 2.1:** Participants demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied

**Standard 2.2:** Participants demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

Connections: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

**Standard 3.1:** Participants reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

**Standard 3.2:** Participants acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

Comparisons: Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

**Standard 4.1:** Participants demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own

**Standard 4.2:** Participants demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.
Communities: Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World

*Standard 5.1:* Participants use the language both within and beyond the school setting

*Standard 5.2:* Participants show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.
# APPENDIX G: SECOND LIFE TASK RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Follows Instructions</th>
<th>The file is labeled with first and last name. Document includes an MLA heading. All sections are present and labeled (uses template). Rubric is included as the first page.</th>
<th>Does not use template, include name, or title document with name.</th>
<th>Does not use template, include name, or title document with name.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meta</td>
<td>Includes at least two ACFTL standard and an objective for the task and extension activity that links that standard to a course learning outcome, which is clearly stated.</td>
<td>Includes at least one ACFTL standard and an objective for the task and extension activity that links that standard to a course learning outcome.</td>
<td>Does not include at least one ACFTL standard and an objective for the task or extension activity that links that standard to a course learning outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>The chat-log(s) show(s) a well developed attempt to align with the stated “meta”, work completely in Spanish, and make use of SL resources. More than adequate time is spent working towards established “meta”.</td>
<td>The chat-log(s) show(s) a well intended attempt to align with the stated “meta”, work completely in Spanish, and make use of SL resources. Adequate time is spent working towards established “meta”.</td>
<td>The chat-log(s) do(es) not show(s) a well intended attempt to align with the stated “meta”, work completely in Spanish, and make use of SL resources. Adequate time is not spent working towards established “meta”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fotos</td>
<td>Well contextualized images are embedded within the “resumen”, “discusión”, and/or the chat-logs to artfully illustrate how the student took advantage of the SL environment or other resources.</td>
<td>Contextualized images are displayed within the document that illustrate the student using the SL environment or other resources.</td>
<td>Contextualized images are not displayed within the document that illustrate the student using the SL environment or other resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5%</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-8%</td>
<td>7-6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-28%</td>
<td>27-21%</td>
<td>20-0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-4%</td>
<td>3-2%</td>
<td>1-0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resumen</td>
<td>Extensión</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student includes an excellent narrative</td>
<td>The student uses explicit evidence from their chat-logs, photos, and/or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summary about their time spent on the task</td>
<td>“resumen” to deepen their understanding of language structure, linguistic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in SL and how they attempted to achieve</td>
<td>variety, speech register, cultural differences/norms, HL customs, or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their “meta”. It’s evident that the student</td>
<td>otherwise develop their command of Spanish in a well structured extension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has made ample effort to achieve their “meta”</td>
<td>activity. This activity is explicitly connected to the established “meta”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and take advantage of SL resources.</td>
<td>and clearly illustrates the processes the student used in their analysis.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15-12%</td>
<td>30-24%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student includes a narrative summary about</td>
<td>The student refers to their chat-logs, photos, and/or “resumen” to</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>their time spent on the task in SL and how</td>
<td>deepen their understanding of language structure, linguistic variety,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>they attempted to achieve their “meta”.</td>
<td>speech register, cultural differences/norms, HL customs, or otherwise</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s evident that the student has made</td>
<td>develop their command of Spanish in a coherent extension activity. This</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some effort to achieve their “meta” and use</td>
<td>activity is somehow connected to the established “meta” and somewhat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>advantage of SL resources.</td>
<td>illustrates the processes the student used in their analysis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-9%</td>
<td>23-18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student does not include a narrative summary</td>
<td>The student does not refer to their chat-logs, photos, and/or “resumen”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about their time spent on the task in SL</td>
<td>to deepen their understanding of language structure, linguistic variety,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and how they attempted to achieve their “meta”.</td>
<td>speech register, cultural differences/norms, HL customs, or otherwise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s not evident that the student has tried</td>
<td>develop their command of Spanish in a coherent extension activity. This</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to achieve their “meta” or use advantage of</td>
<td>activity is not connected to the established “meta” and somewhat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL resources.</td>
<td>illustrates the processes the student used in their analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-0%</td>
<td>17-0%</td>
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</table>
Online Spanish for Heritage Speakers Second Life Lab Level II
University of South Florida

Description: This lab is designed in alignment with current research into using Second Life for language education to provide participants with an opportunity to engage with other speakers of Spanish in a low-risk environment (Second Life) and allow participants to extend those experiences by reflecting on and analyzing authentic conversations and contexts.

Outcomes:

8. Participants will adapt classroom content to naturalistic settings.
9. Participants will engage with Spanish culture and authentic materials.
10. Participants will create personal relationships with other speakers of Spanish, improving pragmatic awareness and motivation.
11. Participants will gain confidence and experience with using Spanish in authentic settings and in a variety of contexts.
12. Participants will identify and test linguistic forms in naturalistic settings.
13. Participants will use Spanish language creatively to interact with other speakers of Spanish.
14. Participants will become members of Hispanic communities and gain sustainable access to these communities, the Spanish language, and Hispanic cultures through Second Life.

Materials: (All of these can be found in the language lab, iTeach Lounge in EDU 252, and newer macs have been setup in my office, ALN 223, where I am happy to help you)

1. Computer that meets minimum Second Life specifications, now supporting the Oculus Rift virtual reality headset. (No netbooks, iPads or other tablets)
4. Access to Internet speeds that meet minimum Second Life specifications.

Requirements to Receive Certificate: For this lab participants are assessed on the level of completion of a variety of tasks, interactions and reflections conducted with the virtual world Second Life. These tasks will be broken into 2 categories: orientation and self-directed modules with a guided extension activity. There will be 4 total assigned tasks. Participants must complete all 4-orientation modules (you are welcome to complete them in-person with me, if you make arrangements by email) and complete all 4 tasks/extension activities with a grade of at least 70% each. Upon completion, you will receive an individualized certificate that lists some of the areas/skills/achievements you have made throughout the Lab, which will include technology proficiency in using Virtual Worlds for self-directed language learning and heritage language maintenance (this could be listed on a CV).

Orientation Modules (4 modules @ 100pts)

The orientation modules are designed to provide participants with guided, in person, orientation to the Second Life program, its features, and to provide them with resources to help them in subsequent lab activities.

1. Orientation island (teleporting, controls, interface features)
2. Avatar creation, modifying, and shopping
3. Group joining
4. Extending the SL experience

Self-directed tasks with extension activity (4 tasks @ 100 pts)

In this series of Tasks, participants will be allowed to set the goals for each task/extension combination by choosing at least one option from a list of ACTFL standards to fulfill and setting an objective to accomplish inside of SL with either other participants or other speakers of Spanish. This will also include creating a Journal document (Word format) according to the timeline on the syllabus. The student is responsible for negotiating each task with the others in Spanish and for describing for the instructor how the task/extension they designed aligns with Spanish language or cultural content, the selected standards, and their own objectives for studying Spanish. These tasks should result in at least 45 minutes of time spent in SL.

The Journal must use the provided template and include:

1. The Goal of the assignment.
2. The chat log where participants negotiated the goal in Spanish (only unedited chat-logs will be accepted, showing both user log-in and log-off and any unexpected or unsuccessful conversation).
3. Photos taken in SL of the participants achieving the goal.
4. A very brief discussion of why the student thinks the goal helps with understanding Spanish language or cultural content, the selected standards, and their own objectives.
for studying Spanish.
5. A description of how the participants achieved the goal; the **processes, challenges and rewards**.
6. Any recommendations for other participants who would undertake the same goal.
7. A full heading in the upper-left corner:
   - Name
   - Journal #
   - Name of Instructor
   - Title for your Assignment
8. The file must be saved with the student’s first name, last name, & Journal # or no credit will be given. Also, duplicate chat-logs will not be accepted without prior approval, either from other participants or from previous tasks.

**Extension Activity:**

Participants will be provided with resources and example materials on the course website to help them to apply or design a way to build on their experiences in SL. We will discuss how to go about this and work together on a few examples during the fourth module of the Lab. The extension activity should use explicit evidence from student chat-logs, photos, and/or “resumen” to deepen their understanding of language structure, linguistic variety, speech register, cultural differences/norms, HL customs, or otherwise develop their command of Spanish in a well-structured extension activity. This activity should be explicitly connected to the established “meta” and clearly illustrate the processes the student used in their analysis.

***Participants must complete all 4 tasks and 4 orientation modules by the end of the semester. They may only turn in one task per week but may choose to work ahead. It is the student’s responsibility to manage their time to complete the assignments. ***
I understand that this lab will complement my Spanish II course enrollment, including the substitution of Extension tasks for a portion of my primary course grade for credit. I understand that I must complete all requirements described in this Syllabus in order to pass the lab, and that I must complete all 4 Orientation modules in addition to completing 4 additional Tasks to meet this requirement. I understand that participation in this lab also entitles me to supplemental tutoring from the lab instructor who has provided hardware for me to use in ALN 223. I also understand that I must have access to the specified technology requirements (standard laptop or desktop, good internet, Second Life viewer, etc.) that are required to complete this course. If I do not have the appropriate materials, I agree to use the equipment provided to me in the language lab, other labs on campus, or in ALN 223. Upon completion of the Lab, I am entitled to an individualized certificate for the skills I have developed over the course of the Lab.

Name ____________________________  Date ____________________________
**Tentative Schedule:** You may work ahead, just don’t get behind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semana</th>
<th>Lunes</th>
<th>Martes</th>
<th>Miércoles</th>
<th>Jueves</th>
<th>Viernes</th>
<th>Sab</th>
<th>Dom</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation Entry Survey due</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation: Shopping/modifying avatar Online orientation quiz due</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orientation: Exploring, joining groups Avatar assignment due</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Orientation: Extending the SL experience Exploration assignment due</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Complete 1st SL Task Extension assignment(s) due</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Complete 1st SL Task</td>
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<td>Complete 1st SL Journal</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Complete 2nd SL Task 1st Extension due</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>Complete 2nd SL Journal</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Complete 2nd SL Extension 2nd Extension due</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Complete 3rd SL Task</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Complete 3rd SL Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Complete 3rd SL Extension 3rd Extension due</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Complete 4th SL Task</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Complete 4th SL Journal</td>
<td></td>
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<td>16</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete 4th SL Extension 4th Extension due Exit Survey due</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I: MODULE PROGRESSION OUTLINE

Module 1:

1. Watch: What is Second Life (español)

2. Watch: What is Second Life? (inglés)

3. Watch: A year in Second Life

4. Online orientation quiz

5. Entrance Survey

6. Download SL Viewer

7. Troubleshooting: Lowering Graphics (español)

8. SL Viewer Map New.pdf

9. Useful Islands.docx

Module 2:

Now that you have an account set-up in SL, it's time to start making sure that your personality shines through by customizing your Avatar. In this module you should:

1. Watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMrUW-UyVW8 (Links to an external site.)

2. Create your SL Avatar https://join.secondlife.com/?lang=en-US (Links to an external site.)

3. Start Customizing: changing your avatar.jpg

4. See how other folks react to your new you. Please submit some photos/screeshots of your Avatar in a Word doc or PDF and tell me a little bit about the choices you made when customizing them (Did you make them tall or short for some reason?, How do you think other Spanish speakers will react to them?, Did you choose to make them look and act like you do in real life or did you make them look a certain way for another reason?).
The narrative does not have to be longer than a couple of paragraphs and can be in either English, Spanish, or a combination (sometimes ideas are just better in one language than another, no?).

5. *Useful Islands.docx*

6. Submit your narrative and photos.

**Module 3:**

In this module assignment, you will work with a partner in SL or independently to complete a cultural scavenger hunt.

To help prepare you, please:
1. Watch: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF2VQ7WqEfl&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF2VQ7WqEfl&feature=youtu.be) (Links to an external site.)
2. Read about and visit a Spanish newcomer
group/island: [http://secondlife.com/destination/aprender-de-todas](http://secondlife.com/destination/aprender-de-todas) (Links to an external site.)
3. Make use of this list of Islands I have compiled for you: *Useful Islands.docx*
4. Browse the Destination guide, it can help you find places and people: [http://secondlife.com/destinations](http://secondlife.com/destinations) (Links to an external site.)
5. Take a look at how people are learning Spanish in SL, feel free to join the free course (MOOC): [http://secondlife.com/destination/second-life-para-docentes](http://secondlife.com/destination/second-life-para-docentes) (Links to an external site.)
6. Browse the Spanish Destination Guide (areas should have ratings to let you judge how comfortable you might be in different areas because of their content or audience they serve): [http://secondlife.com/destinations/international/spanish](http://secondlife.com/destinations/international/spanish) (Links to an external site.)
7. Enjoy some European architecture: http://secondlife.com/destination/archi21 (Links to an external site.)

8. Read about and visit a real Spanish University: http://secondlife.com/destination/universidad-de-san-martin-de-porres (Links to an external site.)

9. See what else USF is doing in SL: http://secondlife.com/destination/usf-health (Links to an external site.)

10. Set your home (the house shaped button in your SL viewer) to the USF General Island: http://maps.secondlife.com/secondlife/USF/187/128/23 (Links to an external site.)

11. Start your Scavenger Hunt!

Imagine being on a very short study abroad cruise that you can do from the comfort of your computer and that you are documenting highlights of this experience by culture. Use the spaces provided to write a small description or draw a representation of your destination. Include the name of the destination next to the corresponding country or region. Describe the how you used/interacted with the tools, features, people, etc. in SL below that (this can includespeaking with a native, shopping, touring something, etc.).

If you have trouble getting photos into the format provided in the document below, you can also add photos to a Word doc with some narrative (English, Spanish, or a combination of both). The important thing is that you get to explore and hopefully have some fun.

SL Scavenger hunt Example 2.doc
Module 4:

In this module you will be working to extend your SL experience through reflection, analysis, and critical thinking. The choice of extension activity is almost entirely up to you. I have provided some guides below to help you choose the options that are best for you, but you should consider choosing activities that either play to your strengths. Keep in mind that many of the extensions that you might choose to do not necessarily require that you write complex things in Spanish, it is acceptable to use English, Spanish, or a combination as long as you can say why the language choice is appropriate for the extension.

1. If you are really good at narrating, maybe you should use photos and chat from SL to help you to narrate your experience in Spanish

2. If you notice some unique words or ways of talking from people of different Spanish speaking countries, maybe even differences between how your text book says the language should be used and how you see people actually using it, you might choose to write a description of those differences and include some outside investigation

3. If you are mostly interested in the culture, you might choose to visit a cultural site or join a cultural group and then write about what you learned while including some other sources).

On the other hand, you might choose to extend your experience by working on areas that you feel are weakest.

4. If you could really use practice deciding where to use a feature like accent marks, you might show how you made an effort to include them in your chat log or analyze the errors you find other people making and discuss the reason for using accents in specific places (i.e., the difference between "esta" and "está", one is a demonstrative and the other is the third person singular of the verb "estar", so it would not make sense to say "Ella esta en la casa a la derecha." because the sentence would be missing a verb. But you might find that many folks do just that in their chat, so you can point out the error in a short essay and
talk about why it is an error and how you would fix it.)

5. If you struggle with starting conversations with other speakers of Spanish, you could show examples of some of the strategies you have for starting that first conversation or talk about the ways you see other people starting conversations in SL. This doesn't have to be exceptionally long, but you should show some examples and tell me why you think these are good or bad strategies.

If you have any doubts or feel like you need some help getting things started, you can email me <bjking@usf.edu> and I will get back to you pretty quickly or come by my office in ALN 223 (inside ALN 226, the office of Graduate Studies). Using Google docs can help us to work on things from a distance also.
Informed Consent to Participate in Research
Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study
IRB Study # Pro00022761

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand. We encourage you to talk with your family and friends before you decide to take part in this research study. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

Please tell the study primary investigator or study staff if you are taking part in another research study.

- **We are asking you to take part in a research study called:**

**Spanish Heritage Language Learning, Virtual Worlds, and Structured Task Design: A Social Constructivist Case Study**

The person who is in charge of this research study is Brandon King. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. He is being guided in this research by Dr. John Liontas, who is the academic advisor and primary professor to Brandon King.

The research will be conducted at the University of South Florida

**Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to:

- The purpose of this study is to describe and explain how Spanish heritage language learners engage in pedagogically structured and tailored learning of their heritage language within a virtual world, Second Life.

**Study Procedures**

If you take part in this study, you will be asked to:

- *Complete an entrance and exit questionnaire about 20-30 minutes;*
- *Complete the required coursework for the Second Life language lab (all assignments will be part of the research);*
• The study will take place during the normal duration of the semester;
• The research will be conducted at the University of South Florida during the Fall semester respectively; and
• All interactions in Second Life will be digitally recorded, either as text, audio, and/or screen capture. Participation in the study requires consent to recording of these interactions. Only the researcher, Brandon King, and his major professor Dr. John Liontas, will have access to the recordings and transcriptions. Your real life identity will be concealed by use of a pseudonym and you Second Life screen-name will not be used. This information will be stored on a secured storage device and maintained indefinitely. Should the need arise, the storage device will be securely wiped, and the information destroyed.

Total Number of Participants
Between 3-5 individuals will take part in this study at USF. A total of no more than 5 individuals will participate in the study at all sites.

Alternatives
You do not have to participate in this research study. There will be no adverse effects to the grade in your primary Spanish II course for electing not to participate; however, your instructor may require that you complete the Second Life Lab coursework to ensure continuity in your grade since this work may be substituted for some other assignments in the class.

Benefits
Participants have the opportunity to actively contribute to the development of content, strategies, and tools designed to aid Spanish Heritage Language Learners.

The potential benefits of participating in this research study include:
• The opportunity to gain access to other speakers of Spanish, Heritage Language Learners, and additional Heritage Cultural resources.
• The chance to combat the personal effects of subtractive bilingualism and gain greater command of the Spanish language.
• Access to supplemental and one-on-one instruction that is tailored to your needs as a Heritage Language Learner of Spanish.
• Free tutoring from a CRLA certified tutor with about ten years of Spanish teaching experience.
• Additional access to hardware and university resources not typically made available to undergraduate participants (i.e., newer macs in ALN 223, access to graduate student lounge, some printing privileges, support from University College Second Life staff, etc.).
Risks or Discomfort

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study. You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time.

What happens if you decide not to take part in this study?

Participants can tell the PI that they do not wish to take part in the study after their grades are final.

If you decide not to take part:

- You won’t be in trouble or lose any rights you normally have.
- Your grade won’t be affected based on your decision not to participate.
- You will still get the same services you would normally have.

You can decide after signing this informed consent document that you no longer want to participate in this study. If you decide that you no longer wish to take part in the study, please tell the study staff as soon as you can.

- If you decide to stop, you can go on getting your regular instruction.
- You will no longer be a participant in this research study.
- We will stop collecting new information about you.
- We will use the information collected prior to the revocation of your authorization. This information may already have been used or shared with other, or we may need it to complete and protect the validity of the research.

Even if you want to stay in the study, there may be reasons we need to take you out of it.

You may be taken out of the study if:

- You do not submit the required coursework.
- You withdraw from the language course.

Privacy and Confidentiality

We will keep your study records private and confidential. Certain people may need to see your study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are:

- The research team, including the Principal Investigator, study coordinator, and all other research staff.
- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study. For example, individuals who provide oversight on this study may need to look at your records. This is done to make sure that we are doing the study in the right way. They also need to make sure that we are protecting your rights and your safety.
Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the office for Human Research Protection (OHRP).

The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, staff in the USF office of Research and Innovation, USF Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, and other USF offices who oversee this research.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not include your name. We will not publish anything that would let people know who you are.

**You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints**

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, or experience an adverse event or unanticipated problem, call Brandon King at (316) 208-9725.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638.
Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please sign the form, if the following statements are true.

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

________________________________________
Signature of Person Taking Part in Study

_______________________________
Date

_______________________________
Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their participation. I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he/ she understands:

• What the study is about;
• What procedures be used;
• What the potential benefits might be; and
• What the known risks might be.

I can confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in the appropriate language. Additionally, this subject reads well enough to understand this document or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her. This subject does not have a medical/psychological problem that would compromise comprehension and therefore makes it hard to understand what is being explained and can, therefore, give legally effective informed consent. This subject is not under any type of anesthesia or analgesic that may cloud their judgment or make it hard to understand what is being explained and, therefore, can be considered competent to give informed consent.

________________________________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

_______________________________
Date

_______________________________
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent
APPENDIX K: ACTFL PROFICIENCY LEVEL DEFINITIONS

ADVANCED HIGH

Speakers at the Advanced High sublevel perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence, and competence. They are consistently able to explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They may provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely.

Advanced High speakers may demonstrate a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However, when called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language will at times break down or prove inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

ADVANCED MID

Speakers at the Advanced Mid sublevel are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as topics relating to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance.

Advanced Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future by providing a full account, with good control of aspect. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse.

Advanced Mid speakers can handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar. Communicative strategies such as circumlocution or rephrasing are often employed for this purpose. The speech of Advanced Mid speakers performing Advanced-level tasks is marked by substantial flow. Their vocabulary is fairly extensive although primarily generic in nature, except in the case of a particular area of specialization or interest. Their discourse may still reflect the oral paragraph structure of their own language rather than that of the target language.
Advanced Mid speakers contribute to conversations on a variety of familiar topics, dealt with concretely, with much accuracy, clarity and precision, and they convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. They are readily understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the quality and/or quantity of their speech will generally decline.

**ADVANCED LOW**

Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest.

Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Responses produced by Advanced Low speakers are typically not longer than a single paragraph. The speaker’s dominant language may be evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of that language. At times their discourse may be minimal for the level, marked by an irregular flow, and containing noticeable self-correction. More generally, the performance of Advanced Low speakers tends to be uneven.

Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Advanced Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. Their speech can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.
INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Intermediate High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests, and areas of competence.

Intermediate High speakers can handle a substantial number of tasks associated with the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance of all of these tasks all of the time. Intermediate High speakers can narrate and describe in all major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length, but not all the time. Typically, when Intermediate High speakers attempt to perform Advanced-level tasks, their speech exhibits one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to carry out fully the narration or description in the appropriate major time frame, an inability to maintain paragraph-length discourse, or a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary.

Intermediate High speakers can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although interference from another language may be evident (e.g., use of code-switching, false cognates, literal translations), and a pattern of gaps in communication may occur.

INTERMEDIATE MID

Speakers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture. These include personal information related to self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel, and lodging.

Intermediate Mid speakers tend to function reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions or requests for information. However, they are capable of asking a variety of questions when necessary to obtain simple information to satisfy basic needs, such as directions, prices, and services. When called on to perform functions or handle topics at the Advanced level, they provide some information but have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating time and aspect, and using communicative strategies, such as circumlocution.

Intermediate Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to produce responses typically consisting of sentences and strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. In spite of the limitations in their vocabulary and/or pronunciation and/or grammar and/or syntax, Intermediate Mid speakers are generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives.
Overall, Intermediate Mid speakers are at ease when performing Intermediate-level tasks and do so with significant quantity and quality of Intermediate-level language.

**INTERMEDIATE LOW**

Speakers at the Intermediate Low sublevel are able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to some of the concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target-language culture. These topics relate to basic personal information; for example, self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, and some immediate needs, such as ordering food and making simple purchases. At the Intermediate Low sublevel, speakers are primarily reactive and struggle to answer direct questions or requests for information. They are also able to ask a few appropriate questions. Intermediate Low speakers manage to sustain the functions of the Intermediate level, although just barely.

Intermediate Low speakers express personal meaning by combining and recombining what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors into short statements and discrete sentences. Their responses are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message. Their speech is characterized by frequent pauses, ineffective reformulations and self-corrections. Their pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax are strongly influenced by their first language. In spite of frequent misunderstandings that may require repetition or rephrasing, Intermediate Low speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors, particularly by those accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

**NOVICE HIGH**

Speakers at the Novice High sublevel are able to handle a variety of tasks pertaining to the Intermediate level but are unable to sustain performance at that level. They are able to manage successfully a number of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to a few of the predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture, such as basic personal information, basic objects, and a limited number of activities, preferences, and immediate needs. Novice High speakers respond to simple, direct questions or requests for information. They are also able to ask a few formulaic questions.

Novice High speakers are able to express personal meaning by relying heavily on learned phrases or recombinations of these and what they hear from their interlocutor. Their language consists primarily of short and sometimes incomplete sentences in the present and may be hesitant or inaccurate. On the other hand, since their language often consists of expansions of learned material and stock phrases, they may sometimes sound surprisingly fluent and accurate. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax may be strongly influenced by the first language. Frequent misunderstandings may arise but, with repetition or rephrasing, Novice High speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used to non-natives. When called on to handle a variety of topics and perform functions pertaining to the Intermediate level, a Novice High speaker can sometimes respond in intelligible sentences but will not be able to sustain sentence-level discourse.
NOVICE MID

Speakers at the Novice Mid sublevel communicate minimally by using a number of isolated words and memorized phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned. When responding to direct questions, they may say only two or three words at a time or give an occasional stock answer. They pause frequently as they search for simple vocabulary or attempt to recycle their own and their interlocutor's words. Novice Mid speakers may be understood with difficulty even by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to handle topics and perform functions associated with the Intermediate level, they frequently resort to repetition, words from their native language, or silence.

NOVICE LOW

Speakers at the Novice Low sublevel have no real functional ability and, because of their pronunciation, may be unintelligible. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they may be able to exchange greetings, give their identity, and name a number of familiar objects from their immediate environment. They are unable to perform functions or handle topics pertaining to the Intermediate level and cannot therefore participate in a true conversational exchange.