

# HERITAGE LANGUAGE LEARNING SYMPOSIUM

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

February 24 - 25, 2021

10:00am - 3:00 pm EST



Organizers:

Dr. Javier García León and Dr. Paloma Fernández Sánchez

Department of Languages and Culture Studies

Wednesday Feb 24	
10:00 - 10:10 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Opening Remarks - Dr. Michèle Bissière, Chair, Department of Languages and Culture Studies.</li></ul>
10:10 - 12:00 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Research Presentation: <b><i>Subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement in heritage and L2 learners of Spanish.</i></b> By: <a href="#">Dr. Irma Alarcón.</a></li></ul>
1:00- 3:00 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Workshop: <b>When Spanish is Not a Foreign Language: Pedagogical Considerations for Teaching Spanish to U.S. Spanish Heritage Speakers.</b> By: <a href="#">Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado.</a></li></ul>
Thursday Feb 25	
10:00 -10:10 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Opening Remarks - Dr. Nancy Gutierrez, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.</li></ul>
10:10 - 12:00 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Research Presentation: <b><i>Translanguaging in context: Spanish heritage peer-to-peer literacy practices for equitable pedagogies.</i></b> By: <a href="#">Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado.</a></li></ul>
1:00- 3:00 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Workshop in Spanish: <b>Ni como a hablantes nativos ni como a de segunda lengua: ¿Cómo enseñar gramática y escritura a hablantes de herencia del español?</b> By: <a href="#">Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado.</a></li></ul>
5:00- 6:30 EST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Zoom Table: <b>UNC Charlotte students' needs and perceptions towards Spanish</b> (In collaboration with student groups).</li></ul>

## Description:

The symposium offers the possibility to learn about current research on heritage language learning as well as to get practical tools to teach Spanish to U.S. Spanish Heritage Speakers. We have invited two prominent scholars who have been engaged in the field of Heritage Language Education. The Presenters will share their research and knowledge with UNC Charlotte faculty,

graduate and undergraduate students as well as with attendees from other institutions. This event will hold research presentations in the morning and workshops in the afternoon where attendees will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from the invited experts. The symposium will close with a round table where scholars, language instructors, and students at UNC Charlotte will share their experiences.

The Heritage Language Learning Symposium is a virtual event sponsored by the UNC Charlotte Chancellor's Diversity Grant and the CLAS Alumni Council Fall Faculty Grant. It is also supported by the Languages and Culture Studies Department and the Spanish program.

### **Goals:**

This symposium has four primary goals: 1) to increase understanding of and knowledge about (Spanish) heritage speakers on the American context, 2) to reflect on how heritage students' pedagogical needs are different from those of second-language learners, 3) to provide Spanish language instructors with pedagogical tools to better teach Spanish to U.S. Spanish Heritage Speakers, and 3) to strengthen bilingual/heritage language education practices by connecting scholars, language instructors, and students at UNC Charlotte.

### **Presenters:**

#### **Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado - University of Denver, Colorado**

Dr. Reznicek-Parrado directs the Spanish for Heritage/Bilingual Speakers Program and is Teaching Assistant Professor of Spanish in the Department of Spanish Language, Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Denver. Since joining DU in the Fall of 2018, she has led curricular efforts there to develop courses for Spanish heritage speakers—students who have personal, familial or community connections to the Spanish language and are interested in furthering their unique linguistic skills in Spanish as part of their academic trajectory. Lina is an educator and researcher at the intersection of Spanish Sociolinguistics and Education, and is interested in issues around bilingual/heritage language education and teacher training, academic language and literacy for linguistically diverse student communities and topics surrounding Spanish in the US.

#### **Dr. Irma Alarcón, Wake Forest University**

Dr. Alarcón received her PhD in Hispanic Linguistics from Indiana University. She now teaches at Wake Forest University, where her courses include Psycholinguistics & Language Acquisition, TESOL Linguistics, Language & Society, and Introduction to Hispanic Linguistics, as well as Spanish grammar courses for both English-speaking learners and heritage speakers. Her research has focused on theoretical issues surrounding the role of linguistic variables, such as noun gender and morphology, on the acquisition of Spanish gender agreement. Dr. Alarcón's most recent publication is a study of the processing of gender by heritage and L2 learners (Borealis, 2020).

### **Abstracts:**

Research presentation (Wednesday, February 24th, 10:00-12:00 EST)

**Subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement in heritage and L2 learners of Spanish.**

**By: Dr. Irma Alarcón, Wake Forest University**

In this study, oral discourse was used to explore subject-verb (SV) and noun-adjective (NAdj) agreement in advanced heritage and L2 learners of Spanish. There were three goals: The first was to explore whether age of acquisition accounts for differences in agreement performance, fluency, and complexity in oral production. A second objective was to consider whether NAdj or SV agreement accuracy is associated with similarities and/or differences between the L1 and L2. And the third was to see if the asymmetrical result found in Arabic heritage speakers (Albirini et al., 2013), that NAdj is more difficult than SV agreement, is also found in heritage and L2 learners of Spanish. Although both groups displayed high agreement accuracy scores, only the heritage learners performed at or close to ceiling. In addition, the L2 learners spoke significantly more slowly than the heritage and native speakers, who displayed similar speech rates. Explanations accounting for the differences in speech rates and agreement accuracy include age of acquisition, syntactic distance, and task effects. Results indicate that the integrated knowledge needed for native-like performance in SV and NAdj agreement in extended oral production is more easily attained by heritage than by L2 learners.

Research presentation (Thursday, February 25th, 10:00-12:00 am EST)

**Translanguaging in context: Spanish heritage peer-to-peer literacy practices for equitable pedagogies. By: Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado - University of Denver, Colorado**

The present study informs heritage language pedagogical frameworks in light of equitable instruction—the need to shift the literacy practices of school to reflect the range of everyday, translingual literacy practices that heritage speakers already mobilize in service of their learning. I illustrate what Kalantzis et. al (2015) refer to as “belonging” in literacy learning: the ability to connect at a deep personal level in a classroom context where one’s practices with literacy are intentionally and explicitly reflected. To that end, I present a qualitative analysis of the translingual academic literacy practices of a group of six Spanish heritage language students who work as academic peer tutors in a Spanish for Heritage Speakers Program at a large public university. The analysis demonstrates that heritage peer tutors mobilize translingual practices with the two overarching goals of supporting their tutees’ academic literacy and building community, illustrating the importance of a student-led academic community and highlighting the extent to which heritage student translanguaging literacy practices already respond to the academic literacy demands of school (Martínez, 2010). Results are key in understanding how to transform academic spaces into opportunities to belong in literacy learning specifically for heritage students of Spanish.

**Workshops:**

Workshop #1 (Wednesday, February 24th, 1:00-3:00 pm EST)

**When Spanish is Not a Foreign Language: Pedagogical Considerations for Teaching Spanish to U.S. Spanish Heritage Speakers By: Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado - University of Denver, Colorado**

This workshop will explore the unique sociolinguistic context surrounding Spanish in the U.S.—a language spoken by more than 40 million people across the nation (US Census Bureau, 2019). Importantly, participants will consider the pedagogical implications of such context for the millions of students who study Spanish as a heritage language; that is, Spanish students who have a unique relationship to the language due to early familial, national and/or community ties to a Spanish-speaking cultural group. We will explore such questions as, why do heritage students

want to study the language of their heritage? Why should we teach heritage speakers differently? How are heritage students' pedagogical needs different than those of second-language learners? How is teaching Spanish to heritage speakers ultimately a social justice issue? The workshop will be designed in such a way where participants can interact and engage in conversation with the presenter and with each other.

Workshop #2 in Spanish (Thursday, February 25th, 1:00-3:00 pm EST)

**Ni como a hablantes nativos ni como a de segunda lengua: ¿Cómo enseñar gramática y escritura a hablantes de herencia del español? By: Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado - University of Denver, Colorado**

El presente taller considerará algunas implicaciones pedagógicas de la enseñanza del español a hablantes de herencia, es decir, a estudiantes que dominan el idioma a cierto nivel (ya sea a nivel oral o escrito) gracias a la exposición lingüística al español que han tenido desde una edad temprana a través de sus familias y/o comunidades en el contexto de Estados Unidos. Específicamente, consideraremos las implicaciones a nivel de la gramática y la escritura, y, en última instancia, de la (re)conceptualización curricular necesaria para este grupo importante de estudiantes de lengua. Después de considerar el perfil sociolingüístico general de los estudiantes de herencia y plantearnos por qué es relevante este grupo de estudiantes dentro del campo de la enseñanza del español en el contexto universitario, exploraremos cuestiones tales como, ¿cómo enseñar gramática a estudiantes que ya dominan estructuras básicas en su expresión oral? ¿Cómo apoyar el desarrollo de la escritura académica en estudiantes que no han sido generalmente expuestos a contextos formales de lectoescritura en español? El taller proporcionará consideraciones pedagógicas además de estrategias específicas que aprovechen al máximo los repertorios lingüísticos únicos de las y los estudiantes de herencia del español en el contexto de Estados Unidos.