

A sociocultural case study in translation as service-learning: Shaping the professional profile of Spanish heritage language learners and understanding their sense of multiculturalism*

Estudio de caso sociocultural en traducción como aprendizaje-servicio: Moldeando el perfil profesional de aprendices de español como lengua de herencia y entendiendo su sentido de multiculturalismo

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Abstract

There is a growing demand for certifications (e.g., translation and interpretation) that validate the linguistic knowledge and professional capabilities of Spanish heritage language learners. Given the practicality of the accreditations in question, the engagement of Spanish heritage language learners in hands-on tasks that involve the surrounding community is also in the raise. Thus, this study mainly seeks to explore whether, and how the involvement in a Spanish translation course embedded in a service-learning task, shapes the professional and multicultural profile of a Spanish heritage language learner in the Midwest of the United States of America. A secondary objective of the present work is to establish any relationship between the tools (i.e., online and computerized visual resources) that were available for the participant to complete the outreach project and the way the task was approached. To achieve both aims, the obtained data was analyzed drawing upon activity theory. The results of this study suggest the multiculturalism, bilingualism, available tools, such as visual aids and specialized medical dictionaries, enabled a sense of preparation particularly corresponded to five factors. Two of these were language-related: (1) becoming aware of sociolinguistic features (i.e., formal vs. informal register), and (2) acquiring a more complex and professional jargon (i.e., medical lexicon); while the other three were embedded in translation matters. The latter implied the development of three specific techniques: (a) visiting with community members before the interpretation procedure

takes place; (b) encouraging the latter group to maintain eye contact with the professionals with whom they intended to communicate; and (c) developing the ability to convey the message without doing a word for word linguistic equivalence. The results in the type of research suggested here are foreseen to provide knowledge that could facilitate further understanding of the relevance of service-learning when teaching Spanish to heritage language learners.

Key Words: Spanish as a heritage language, community service-learning, tools, task, activity theory.

Resumen

Existe una demanda creciente de certificados que validen el conocimiento lingüístico y las habilidades profesionales de los aprendices de herencia del español, especialmente en áreas como la traducción e interpretación. Dada la practicidad de las acreditaciones en cuestión, el involucramiento de esta población lingüística en tareas que involucren a la comunidad también está al alza. Por lo tanto, este estudio principalmente explora si es que la participación en un curso de traducción en español que incluye un componente de servicio-aprendizaje forja el perfil profesional y multicultural de un aprendiz de herencia, además de explicar cómo se desarrolla tal formación. El objetivo secundario de la presente investigación es establecer una relación entre las herramientas (por ejemplo, recursos visuales computarizados y en línea), disponibles para el participante al completar el proyecto de servicio-aprendizaje y la manera en la que la tarea fue abordada. Para cumplir ambos objetivos, los datos obtenidos fueron analizados por medio de la Teoría de la Actividad. Los resultados sugieren que el involucramiento en la comunidad y las herramientas disponibles para completar la tarea, tal como recursos visuales y diccionarios médicos, dieron pie a una amplia sensación de preparación vinculada con cinco factores. Dos de estos estuvieron relacionados con elementos lingüísticos, tales como: (1) el desarrollo de una consciencia sobre características sociolingüística (tales como la diferencia de registros), y (2) la adquisición una jerga más compleja y profesional (por ejemplo, léxico médico); mientras que los otros tres tuvieron que ver con asuntos de traducción. Estos últimos dieron cabida al desarrollo de tres técnicas específicas: (a) familiarizarse con los miembros de la comunidad antes que los procesos de interpretación tengan lugar; (b) motivar a dichos miembros que mantengan contacto visual con los profesionales con los que intentan comunicarse; (c) desarrollar la habilidad de dar un mensaje sin hacer una traducción literal. Está previsto que los resultados en el tipo de investigación aquí sugerida provean conocimiento que pueda facilitar una mayor comprensión de la relevancia del aprendizaje-servicio, especialmente al enseñar a aprendices de herencia del español.

Palabras Clave: Español como lengua de herencia, aprendizaje-servicio comunitario, herramientas, tarea, teoría de la actividad.

INTRODUCTION

Heritage language learners (HLLs), who are defined as individuals that are exposed to a minority language at home from an early age (Valdés, 2001) often show (a fluctuating) command of oral proficiency of their heritage language, in this case Spanish (Blake & Zyzik, 2003). Despite this fact, this population displays some unifying similarities. For example, they are acquainted with the Hispanic culture (Colombi & Harrington, 2012). HLLs also display a growing interest to develop their linguistic and academic knowledge of the heritage language (Carreira, 2014) with the

intent to acquire specific skills (e.g., translating and interpreting). These factors have created a high demand for certifications that authenticate HLLs' professional capabilities. The courses created to fulfil the latter demand, more often than not, are embedded in a social-service component. Social service, at the same time, is defined by Bringle and Hatcher (1995: 114) as:

“...an educational experience that: (1) requires students to meet specific community needs and reflect on their service, (2) provides a contextualized setting to further understand the course content and the whole discipline, (3) fosters civic engagement among students as practitioners, and (4) bears credit”.

Social service has been suggested to be a complex element to implement in the Spanish language classroom (Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002). Despite its logistical complications, recent research strenuously suggests that the types of interactions promoted by service learning have a high positive impact on the learners' civic engagement and professional development (Boyer, 1987; Howard, Glemon & Giles, 2000; Howard, 2007; Ebacher, 2013; Knouse & Salgado-Robles, 2015). This may be due to the fact that “most students take their responsibilities far more seriously and are often more productive than those in many [...] regular courses” (Bugel, 2013: 370). The positive impact of engaging at the community level seems to be even more beneficial for HLLs of Spanish. This may be due to the fact that the latter linguistic population, more often than not, shows a certain level of bilingualism (Blake & Zyzik, 2013) and biculturalism (Colombi & Harrington, 2012). Thus, heritage language learners' (HLLs) (variable) dual language awareness, when employed in service-learning scenarios that seek to assist the Hispanic community, tend to afford deep(er) cultural connections, therefore strengthening HLLs' sense of biculturalism and belonging. In fact, some research suggests that an outreach component in the Spanish classroom ultimately contours the identity of HLLs, especially through post-hoc reflections (Bugel, 2013; Ebacher, 2013). These findings, therefore, call for the implementation of service learning opportunities in Spanish language classes, especially at the college level. Regarding this matter, research has stated that “higher education has the obligation to teach students a sense of responsibility to their community beyond their career goals and personal interests” (Boyer, 1987: 67-68). However, there is yet to be studies on the impact of social service endeavors in the heritage classroom grounded in a sociocultural framework. Adopting such standpoint, will inform educators on the particular ways that Spanish HLLs approach a service-learning task; the technics that they either adopt or develop to address arising issues, as well as the specific ways they use to interact with the community members to achieve a specific goal—in the case of this study: interpreting for Spanish monolinguals partaking in an orientation session regarding health childcare. Consequently, this knowledge would enable the development of innovative and effective ways to equip HLLs with strong multilingual

and multicultural competences, thus empowering them as skillful and civically involved future professionals. Thus, the present study seeks to build on the aforementioned findings by aiming to establish the specific way(s) in which a higher-education advanced Spanish translation course shapes an HLL professionally, especially in terms of goals and training. More specifically, from a sociocultural stance, this study explores whether, and how the involvement in a Spanish translation course embedded in a service-learning task, shapes the professional and multicultural profile of a Spanish HLL in the Midwest of the United States of America. A secondary objective of the present work is to establish any relationship between the tools (i.e., online and computerized visual resources) that were available for the participant to complete the outreach project and the way the task was approached. To fulfill these aims, the analysis presented here is rooted in Activity Theory (AT); an action-oriented scheme rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory. More specifically, AT surveys the incorporation of artifacts, in addition to figurative and tangible tools, into human activity (Lantolf, 2000). Thus, AT is applied to identify how the community (i.e., Spanish monolinguals of Kansas, US), the artifact (i.e., professional training in Spanish and translation) and the tools (i.e., online and computerized visual resources) play a role on the professional preparation of a Spanish HLL. This work showcases a correlation between the available preparation tools for the participant to engage in a health sector social-service endeavor and the manner in which the task itself is executed.

It is hypothesized that the multiculturalism and the bilingualism of the participant, a US-born college student that was raised in a Hispanic household where Spanish was primarily spoken, along with his exposure to professional courses in Spanish (such as Spanish for the professions, translation and interpretation) and the access to specific tools (such as visual aids, lexicon databases) while completing the task—a service-learning assignment— will impact the professional goals and profile of the subject. Such impact is expected to be overall positive, thus motivating the participant to develop specific skills to better serve as an interpreter in the future and to look forward to voluntarily engage in other opportunities to assist other Spanish monolinguals that are members of the community.

1. Literature review

1.1. The relevance of social service-learning opportunities in the language classroom

Extensive research substantiates the embedding of a service-learning component in the Spanish language classroom due to several observable benefits, such as: enabling deep reflections (Park, 2007; Baker, 2011); the development of critical thinking skills (Eyler & Giles, 1999); authentic interactions (Stewart, 2007; Salgado-Robles, 2014); scenarios for greater civic engagement (Howard et al. 2000; Howard, 2007; Ebacher,

2013; Knouse & Salgado-Robles, 2015); multiculturalism and bilingualism (Ebacher, 2013; Barreneche & Ramos-Flores, 2013); and the attainment of professional capabilities (Bugel, 2013). Some of these gains are further explored here by particularly reviewing the contributions of Barreneche and Ramos-Flores (2013), Bugel (2013), and Ebacher (2013) to have an overall understanding of the effects of service-learning opportunities. Additionally, the work of Lowther Pereira (2015), Petrov (2013), and Pascual y Cabo, Prada and Lowther Pereira (2016) is presented here in order to be better acquainted with the impact that partaking in outreach assignments have on HLLs of Spanish.

More specifically, Barreneche and Ramos-Flores (2013) created a database based on their examination of the curricula of over 40 public and private institutes of higher-education that offered different degrees of social-service involvement across the nation. The objective of this effort was to establish whether the outreach component was valuable in foreign language programs. Overall, these universities were classified as falling into one of the following categories: (1) mandatory outreach; or (2) tracks where social engagement and service were elective elements. These authors' observations led them to support the implementation and further development of opportunities related to community service in language classes. Aware of the little recognition that Spanish instructors often get when leading or designing an outreach project, the authors call for the establishment of:

“faculty reward systems, faculty development grants, close ties to institutional mission, administrative support, departmental support, scholarship-of-teaching resources and support, a strong and well-established office of community engagement, department faculty trained in service-learning pedagogy, etc.” (Barreneche & Ramos-Flores, 2013: 225).

The authors believe that service-learning opportunities interlinked with linguistics skills (in Spanish) would be sustainable and successful only when the aforementioned resources are fully available. Subsequently, an outreach component in language courses would ensure students' attainment of “the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a global society through [involvement] with the nation's largest linguistic minority group” (Barreneche & Ramos-Flores, 2013: 226), that is, the Hispanic community. Despite the positive impact that service learning is considered to have, both researchers acknowledge the overwhelming amount of work that is still required to facilitate administratively feasible and affordable outreach opportunities in the Spanish classroom.

Bugel's (2013) study intended to measure the impact that a process-oriented translation course had on Spanish L2 and HLL learners, while the latter served as interpreters for a group of parents that were Spanish monolinguals who lived in the

Midwestern United States. To this end, the participants were required to assist as interpreters at parent-teacher conferences, where some teaching/learning materials had been recently translated from English into Spanish. The subjects were also required to partake in a deep post-hoc meditation, given that “the epistemology of service learning is based on the assumption that knowledge is obtained in the interactive process of action and reflection” (Ebacher, 2013: 398). Bugel (2013) observed that Spanish L2 learners greatly benefited from this experience in multiple ways. More specifically, they became better prepared to perform as interpreters, as they received ample training on finding and using online resources, such as translators and dictionaries. The participants also gained hands-on experience with written and oral translation exercises. Additionally, the HLLs of Spanish seemed to have developed a deeper feeling of belonging in the Hispanic community. Based on these remarks, the author concluded that partaking in a real service situation provided the subjects with a sense of multiculturalism and with self-confidence, thus transforming their pre-professional lives (Bugel, 2013).

In line with Barreneche and Ramos-Flores (2013) and Bugel (2013), Ebacher (2013) also encourages the adoption of a language classroom that welcomes and promotes student-community encounters that affords service-learning situations. Ebacher’s rationale resides in the role that these types of interactions play in the advancement of learners’ multicultural awareness, as cultural and linguistic knowledge is interconnected. Ebacher (2013) particularly supports the establishment and maintenance of programs that follow Howard’s (2007) tripartite criteria: relevant, meaningful, and purposeful. That is, spaces and tasks that: (1) improve the quality of life of the community members; (2) have an impact on both parties; and (3) promote civic involvement. More specifically, the learners involved in Ebacher’s study were required to attend orientations in order to get better acquainted with the members of the community that were in need of linguistic assistance. The students were also asked to present brief reflections regarding their learning experiences. This meditation exercise displayed a positive attitude toward the translation endeavor from the learners’ end, as they perceived it to have strengthened their linguistic skills. Additionally, L2 learners showed an overwhelming sense of civic engagement and appreciation for having acquired knowledge related to their professions (e.g., getting to know how to carry out specific accounting procedures), as well as expanding their overall lexical repertoire. Heritage language learners, on the other hand, exhibited a more profound cultural awareness and appreciation, perceived as multiculturalism, and claimed to be grateful for being able to assist ‘[their] own’ community, which they had not realized would be in such need of help.

More specifically, in Spanish heritage language (SHL) contexts, Lowther Pereira (2015) has brought up the relevance of creating critical pedagogies in the heritage classroom, that is, a kind of instruction that reflects the dynamic interplay between

language, power, identity and ideology. Based on this observation, Lowther Pereira (2015) surveyed the way in which social-learning projects, specifically integrated in SHL teaching contexts, influence the development of sociolinguistic and sociopolitical issues. The researcher worked with 63-advanced HLLs who partook in one of the following community service prospects: “tutoring Latino school children, providing language interpretation and translation services for Latino immigrants and organizing” (Lowther Pereira, 2015: 161). All participants were required to complete two interviews and a background questionnaire, in addition to being asked to keep a journal to reflect on their interactions with the community members that they assisted. These collaborations suggested having promoted linguistic confidence among participants, in addition to enhancing their cultural understanding and awareness (Lowther Pereira, 2015).

Petrov (2013) carried out a pilot study aiming to examine the role of service-learning tasks in the heritage classroom beyond any linguistic impact. To this end, the researcher worked with HLLs enrolled in a four-credit Spanish course at a Midwestern religious college. In said university, around 80% of the Spanish majors are of Hispanic heritage. The participants engaged in assisting Spanish monolingual adults, so that the latter could become acquainted with the basic knowledge regarding the usage of computers. She observed a transformative effect on the participating subjects, given that they displayed a wider sense of identification with the Latino community, thus developing a deep sense of belonging and solidarity. Similarly, Pascual y Cabo et al. (2017) evaluated the attitudes of 42 intermediate HLLs of Spanish toward the Hispanic culture before and after engaging in community service-learning activities, such as offering Spanish classes to elementary school students. This type of service required learners to engage in five hours of instruction a week throughout nine weeks. The participants were also asked to complete a survey composed of two sections in regard to two different realms: sociolinguistic issues and language behavior. Although the service-learning component was not directly related to assisting members of the Latino community, most of the participants (96%) considered their involvement in the outreach task to be a transformative experience given that it reinforced their sense of (bicultural) belonging, in addition to gaining linguistic confidence and being exposed to a potential career option (i.e., teaching).

1.2. The impact of social service-learning opportunities embedded in Activity Theory

Drawing upon the fact that translation is a shared endeavor (Bugel, 2013) that promotes immersion “in a socioculturally authentic environment [that] best enables foreign language learners to acquire the linguistic, cultural, social, and pragmatic content” (Stewart, 2007: 86), the current research project calls for a socially-based theoretical standpoint. Thus, this investigation is rooted in Activity Theory (AT) while

seeking to expand our understanding of the impact of outreach embedded in the professionally-oriented Spanish classroom.

Similar to Sociocultural Theory, AT presupposes that cognitive development is social and cultural (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). However, AT further addresses Vygotsky's (1978) claim that "human behavior results from the integration of 'artifacts' into human 'activity'" (Lantolf, 2000: 8). Therefore, an outcome, (e.g., offering effective linguistic assistance in professional contexts) is accomplished through actions that emerge from the subject's needs (Leontyev, 1978). Subsequently, according to Lantolf and Thorne (2006), the achievement of said outcome is guided by symbolic and/or physical tools (e.g., online and computerized visual resources) and mediating artifacts (e.g., translating/interpreting techniques acquired through formal training). Thus, this goal-oriented pursuit portrays two types of curricula: the 'visual' and the 'hidden' (Blin & Appel, 2011), as seen in Engeström's (1987) scheme. The visual curriculum (upper axis) enables the observation of how 'artifacts' regulate the construction of the activity system (Oskoz & Elola, 2014) by mediating 'subjects' (i.e., learners) use of 'tools' to achieve an 'object' (i.e., bringing down linguistic barriers) to ultimately accomplish an 'outcome' (e.g., becoming efficient translators). The 'hidden' curriculum, on the other hand, reflects the "deep social structure of the activity" (Engeström, 2008: 90), thus portraying 'the division of labor' (i.e., how learners take on specific roles to achieve an outcome), 'the community' (i.e., Kansans Spanish monolinguals), and the 'rules' (i.e., the instructions embedded in the completion of the outreach project).

The presence of 'artifacts' in Engeström's (1987) hidden curriculum offers a historical reminder of the development of the activity itself (Kuutti, 1996), thus enabling the observation of the vast possibilities of actions that learners undertake to complete a task (Oskoz & Elola, 2014). When considering the varied scope of learners' approaches, Lantolf (2000) pointed out that learners in the same class might engage in the same task but not necessarily in the same ways. Therefore, further exploring formal training in translation as an 'artifact' that facilitates an 'outcome' (becoming efficient translators for professional purposes) could enable the observation of the learners' degree of involvement and the action-oriented decisions they make when completing an outreach task. This type of analysis is beneficial for HLLs, as it can further inform us on the HLL population's professional motivational forces. Specifically, the HLL's reasoning behind community engagement rooted in assisting a community that they recognize as their own. Thus, this knowledge would enable innovative and effective ways to equip HLLs with strong multilingual and multicultural competences, thus empowering them as skillful and civically-involved future professionals. The application of AT is relevant and useful given that the particularities in which learners approach a task will reveal details that will allow us to

establish service-learning assignments that better fit HLLs' professional goals, in addition to allowing them to develop a greater sense of cultural belonging, if any.

2. Present study

In order to further our knowledge social-service engagement impact on the multicultural and professional profiles of Spanish heritage language learners, the following research questions (RQs) were addressed:

- (1) How can a sense of multiculturalism shape the professional goals of a heritage language learner of Spanish?
- (2) How do artifacts (i.e., formal training in translation, in addition to other formal instruction in Spanish) shape the professional formation of a heritage language learner of Spanish?
- (3) How do available tools (e.g., tangible and intangible available resources) for the preparation and execution of the translation project shape the completion of the task itself?

3. Settings and participants

The present study took place at a large public university in Kansas where five Spanish classes are embedded in a professional setting. This quintet is divided as follows:

- Two courses interrelated to the teaching of Spanish for the professions, where learners become acquainted with professional jargon of two different arenas: Business & Health and Human Services.
- Three courses interlinked with translation: Introductory Translation, Advanced Translation and Community Translation and Interpretation.

The current study was interwoven in the last class of the sequence presented above, that is, 'Community Translation and Interpretation' (a.k.a. 'Topics in Translation and Interpretation'). Specifically, the course in question primarily aims to prepare effective and engaged Spanish-English translators. It is important to mention that by the time this study was conducted, the HLL that served as the main subject had completed one of the Spanish for the professions classes (i.e., Business & Health and Human Sciences) and all three classes concerning translation and interpretation. Thus, the results presented here took into consideration any information that the participant spontaneously offered regarding said courses, as he believed all of these courses profoundly shaped his professional goals and profile.

In regard to the participant's linguistic traits of interest, he attested to being in his last year of college while pursuing a major in medical biochemistry and a minor in

Spanish. At the time that the data was collected, he was 22 years old and he had recently completed the translation/interpretation course that served as the focus of this research project. This HLL declared to have been born in the United States of America, thus belonging to a second generation of immigrants onward. Also, the participant reportedly considered Spanish to be his first language, given his exposure to it from birth. Additionally, this HLL affirmed that he still used Spanish on a regular basis in order to communicate with his parents, as neither of them are fluent English speakers.

4. Materials

In order to collect the data used to answer the three research questions, the subject completed the following two data collection activities in the order they appear: (1) a questionnaire, (2) a face-to-face interview. These two different materials served specific purposes. On the one hand, the tangible nature of the questionnaire allowed the participant to have plenty of time to answer the questions with as much detail as possible. On the other hand, the face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee allowed the researcher (i.e., the interviewer) to make sure that the questions afforded a process of deep reflection that would eventually facilitate an elaborated and insightful analysis of the data. Additionally, this type of direct oral encounter would allow the researcher to request further details, if necessary.

The questionnaire consisted of items designed to collect information regarding the subject's linguistic background, as well as his everyday average usage of Spanish. Once the participant completed the questionnaire, he partook in a face-to-face interview, which allowed the researcher to inquire on: (1) the impact of the subject's engagement in a social service task that was part of the Spanish Translation/Interpretations class that allowed him to finally complete his minor in Spanish, and (2) the rationale behind his perceptions. More specifically, the interview questions related to three areas:

- Professional goals (e.g., What do you do to better yourself, as a Spanish speaker, so that you can employ said language in professional settings in the future?).
- Received training on translation (Could you list the techniques that you have learned when taking *Community Translation and Interpretation* to engage in translating endeavors more effectively?).
- The resources/tools available to carry out the (translation) task (e.g., did you have the chance to apply any of the techniques that you have learned in *Community Translation and Interpretation*? If so, which ones?).

It is crucial to mention that the sociocultural nature of this study conveyed a great significance of the interpretative task itself. Bearing in mind the importance of this

element, a general description of the outreach component embedded in the Spanish Translation/Interpretation course, that is, the core of this study is offered below.

4.1. The social service-learning task: serving as an interpreter in the community

The task consisted of offering interpreting services during an orientation session on state childcare licensing requirements. Said informational assembly was organized and provided by authorities of the local County Health Department. The County representatives are conscious of the popularity of this type of licensing among Hispanics, especially those in charge of taking care of their own family members in a competent way. Thus, in an effort to better serve the members of the community with limited bilingual skills, the County often incorporates skillful interpreters that provide the attendees with a synchronic presentation in Spanish. Afterwards, the interpreters also assist the attendees in conveying any questions they may have during the Q&A session.

5. Procedures

The findings presented in this research project reflect the data collected through two collection materials: a questionnaire and a post-hoc face-to-face interview. The gathered information was analyzed qualitatively, through the creation of categories which emerged from the thematic points intertwined in the participants' reflections. Additionally, Activity Theory served as the theoretical foundation to answer all three RQs. For a clearer interpretation, an explanation on how each RQ was addressed through AT is provided below.

RQ1 aimed to determine in what way a sense of multiculturalism might contribute to the professional goals established by a HLL of Spanish. The results were established by a correlation between the community (i.e., individuals with Hispanic heritage from Kansas) and the 'object'; that is, to be able to linguistically connect people that possess different language systems (i.e., English or Spanish) in a formal and professional setting. Similarly, RQ2 attempted to determine the manner in which 'artifacts' could shape the professional profile of an HLL of Spanish. This objective sought to establish and/or identify a relationship between any formal training, both in translation and in Spanish (that is, the 'artifact'), and the sense of preparation, career wise, that the participant achieved. Furthermore, RQ3 examined how the 'tools' available to the participant while performing the translation activity (i.e., online and computerized visual resources), influenced decisions he made to complete the task itself.

6. Results

6.1. RQ1: Professional goals shaped by multiculturalism: a sense of belonging to two communities

The participant declared that his ultimate professional goal is to become a medical doctor, a bilingual physician, with the hopes of working in Kansas, where he grew up. The HLL also shared that his experience as an informal mediator assisting his father (Spanish monolingual with diabetes) when visiting the doctor from an early age inspired him to set such a specific professional goal. Ultimately, the subject affirmed to have globally set up his professional goals pertaining to the health sector, as a result of growing up not only in a household where Spanish was spoken, but also, if not more importantly, in a community comprised of several members that often displayed a monolingual command of Spanish. The latter particularly created spaces and moments in which the participant would offer his help to anyone who seemed hesitant or struggling to convey a message either in impromptu and informal contexts (e.g., assisting strangers at a supermarket), or in formal settings (i.e., serving as an interpreter at a court for his family's friends).

Moreover, the participant mentioned that his secondary professional objective, which is related to the use of Spanish, is becoming able to fluently and accurately communicate with other professionals in his field that practice in Hispanic countries, such as Mexico—due to his family roots in said nation. He believes that these interactions would contribute toward his future professional growth, due to the potential of networking development. However, the subject's views on this matter were significantly different in the past. The subject claimed to have developed awareness that led him to prioritize receiving formal linguistic training after taking a lower-level profession-related class as part of his minor: Spanish for the Professions (Health and Human Services)—an intermediate course, where he first acquired some medical jargon. Furthermore, in said class, the participant came to the realization that Spanish is undoubtedly the most spoken language in the US, after English. This fact changed the subject's perception of the relevance of his bilingual skills, as he had previously taken Spanish for granted. He declared that being raised receiving daily exposure to Spanish made him perceive such type of linguistic contact as sufficient to accurately perform in both languages (Spanish and English) in the health sector upon the completion of his medical training. A secondary factor that led the subject to realize the importance of special and concrete formal instruction in Spanish was his involvement at a local clinic through an internship that he was granted. This semi-professional opportunity required the HLL to assist Spanish monolingual patients in filling-out paperwork, as well as serving as an interpreter in the medical appointments of said population. These two circumstances: taking a specialized Spanish class and serving as an interpreter at a clinic, motivated the HLL to take more courses in

Spanish that were tailored to offer professional training in specific skills: translation and interpretation.

A third factor that defined the professional goals of the participant was his awareness of his own multiculturalism. That is, the HLL appreciated the cultural knowledge that, in his eyes, he was able to develop by being a member of the Hispanic community. A specific example that the participant referred to, was his acknowledgement of some homemade remedies (i.e., *remedios caseros*) for some culturally-influenced health issues, such as *el mal de ojo* (i.e., a sort of spell), that are popular among some members of the Hispanic culture. The participant's experiences while serving as an intern at a local medical clinic made him realize that physicians often overlooked these types of concerns from their patients, thus failing to create a comfortable environment for the patients to express themselves. Therefore, the participant firmly believes that being not only a bilingual doctor, but a multicultural professional, will allow him to: better connect with his patients; avoid alienating them; and achieve more effective diagnoses.

6.2. RQ2: Professional formation: The acquisition of medical jargon and the development of techniques concerning interpreting

Due to one constantly available artifact (i.e., linguistic and professionally-inclined academic training in Spanish), the participant reported that he felt highly competent to carry out formal interpretations, particularly among physicians and Spanish monolingual patients. This perception of professional capability was particularly acquired after having completed four courses in Spanish: a class focused on the professions (i.e., Health and Human Services) and Spanish Translation I, II & III. This sense of preparation particularly corresponded to five factors. Two of these were language-related: (1) becoming aware of sociolinguistic features (i.e., formal vs. informal register), and (2) acquiring a more complex and professional jargon (i.e., medical lexicon); while the other three were embedded in translation matters. The latter implied the development of three specific techniques: (a) visiting with community members before the interpretation procedure takes place; (b) encouraging the latter group to maintain eye contact with the professionals with whom they intended to communicate; and (c) developing the ability to convey the message without doing a word for word linguistic equivalence.

During his professional formation in Spanish, the subject developed some sociolinguistic notions, such as awareness of different registers (i.e., formal vs. informal). This type of consciousness was reportedly facilitated by his exposure to some samples of medical documents, such as immunization records and birth certificates, which were reportedly used with two initial purposes: getting acquainted with specialized jargon (Spanish for the Professions class) and functioning as a base

that would exemplify the structural expectations of completing the translation of official medical papers (Spanish Translation courses). Working with this database reinforced the participant's perception of the importance of receiving formal training in Spanish. The HLL specifically commented: "It made me realize that I thought I knew Spanish, [but] there's so much more room for improvement. And so that [...] inspired me to keep on furthering my Spanish learning." In spite of the fact that he was engaged in service work and helping others, it is worth mentioning that the participant was convinced that he was in fact the beneficiary. While completing the outreach project interlinked with the Advanced Translation Course he noted that he got to further develop his linguist skills and his bilingual medical jargon.

Concerning the techniques specifically applicable to translation, the participant became aware of the importance of pre-session participation which takes place before the actual interpretation. According to the participant, in it, the interpreter establishes a connection with the members of the community seeking a mediator. More importantly, this is an opportunity for the interpreter to clarify that (s)he is just a human means of communication, thus strictly adhering to conveying the patients' original message. As such, the interpreter is required to speak in the first person when speaking on behalf of the clients/patients, as well as encouraging them to maintain eye contact with the physicians. The participant also developed a higher sense of professionalism (and responsibility) when he learned in his Topics on Translation and Interpretation class that he was obligated to disclose the confidentiality agreement he becomes subject to when accepting to serve as an interpreter. When interpreting for others during his internship at a local medical clinic, the subject reportedly had not followed these procedures. In fact, he mentioned that his previous strategy was to open up with the patients, thus sharing private and personal experiences with them. The subject, however, currently implements such practices while still serving at the same local clinic, but now as a volunteer. An additional technique that the participant learned was ways to avoid carrying out a word for word translation when interpreting for a third party, while still delivering the original message. Along these lines, the HLL also became familiar with the importance of not deviating from the original message, predominantly to avoid ethical and even legal issues.

6.3. RQ3: Approaching the task: the implications of artifacts and tools

There was a series of tools and resources that ultimately shaped the way in which the HLL approached the completion of the task: serving as an interpreter for monolinguals of Spanish interested in becoming licensed in childcare. One of the most significant tools available to the participant before and while engaging in the communitarian interpretation process was a series of PowerPoint slides that were prepared by the local County Health Department. This visual support was meant to function as an organizational guide to deliver the essential information on licensing in

childcare affairs. However, while getting acquainted with this information and its set up, the participant concluded that the informational base was too extensive and contained unnecessarily complex language. These observations prompted the HLL to suggest that the presenter shorten the presentation and lower its register, so that the audience would find it less intimidating and more appealing. The presenter agreed to implement the suggested changes. The participant believes that these modifications accounted for a fluid presentation that made the audience “feel motivated to pursue the licensing process, instead of being bombarded with terms that they otherwise would not comprehend.”

The scope of the presentation included unknown terminology for the participant, despite his familiarity with the medical field. This was mainly because of the specificity of the topic: childcare. This conceptual unawareness motivated the HLL to look for resources that would lead to his familiarization with the new jargon. More specifically, the subject made use of tangible, but unspecialized, dictionaries and online translators. The HLL believed that the latter were particularly ineffective, as many of the word-for-word equivalencies did not seem accurate to him. Thus, when facing this limitation, the participant opted to look up images corresponding to tangible objects, so that he would at least recognize the visual parallel of the terms to subsequently search for an accurate equivalency in Spanish.

Overall, the participant believed that the resources he used, and the way in which he employed them, not only allowed him to ultimately deliver an effective interpretation on behalf of the local County Health Department, but they also shaped the subsequent interpretations that he engaged in while volunteering at a local medical clinic—the same place where the subject completed his internship. Regarding this matter, the HLL stated: “When I went back to the clinic to, to interpret, it changed kind of my, my, the way I approached the situation, you know? I was more, more professional about interpreting. It helped me understand like, you know, the boundaries between the patients and the interpreter and my sole role as an interpreter.”

7. Discussion

As perceived, the results of this study are in line with the observations of Barreneche and Ramos-Flores (2013), Bugel (2013), and Ebacher (2013). More specifically, the participant of this study was well aware of one of the benefits that Barreneche and Ramos-Flores (2013) have pointed out: outreach opportunities are essential to succeed in a globalized society, given that such type of communitarian encounters enable authentic interactions with the country’s most numerous ethnic minority cohort. This was observed by the participant’s acknowledgment of the fact that Spanish accounts for the most spoken foreign language in the US, a fact that he

became aware of while taking a Spanish course on the Professions, and a reason for him to decide to pursue formal training in Spanish through a minor.

Additionally, the findings embedded in the current work resemble some features highlighted by Bugel (2013) and Ebacher (2013), such as the diverse benefits facilitated by engaging in service-learning activities. Some of these remunerations include being better prepared to offer translating/interpreting services in career settings—which contributed to professional self-confidence—, in addition to developing a (reinforced) sense of cultural belonging. The label ‘reinforced’ conveys that this cultural awareness and pride have been constant aspects in the participant’s life. However, the engagement in a service-learning class fortified the heritage language learner’s appreciation of being part of the Hispanic community. In this sense, this observation is also in line with Petrov (2013) and with Pascual y Cabo et al. (2017). Particularly, Pascual y Cabo et al. (2017) participants claimed to have developed a reinforced sense of (bicultural) belonging, thus perceiving the outreach component as a transformative experience. The latter remark proved to be true in this study. In fact, this cultural consciousness and estimation was the driving force for the participant to set his professional goals: becoming a bilingual physician to assist Spanish monolingual members of a rural sector in Kansas. Particularly, the health issues (i.e., diabetic concerns) of the participant’s father, who does not speak English, constituted one of the main incentives behind the subject’s interest in the medical field. Similarly, the incapability of his friends (and strangers) to communicate in formal (e.g., court) and informal (e.g., supermarkets) settings also became a professional inspiration. Moreover, the participant’s acknowledgment of the beliefs shared among some members of the Hispanic community in the US, such as trusting and turning to homemade remedies to combat some health-related issues, could allow him to create a welcoming medical environment, as he pointed out. Furthermore, it is presumable that the professional self-confidence achieved by the HLL was the result of the linguistic and skills-related knowledge of translation/interpretation that he acquired while receiving formal training in Spanish. This type of impact is similar to that seen in Lowther Pereira (2015), as the participants of her study also showed greater confidence after partaking in outreach activities. More specifically, the skills-related knowledge of the participant was perceivable in the three translation/interpretation strategies that he learned: holding a pre-interpretation meeting with the clients, advising the clients to maintain eye-contact with the party to whom they are interested in conveying a message—as opposed to looking at the interpreter him/herself, and expressing the original message avoiding a word-for-word translation. On the other hand, the knowledge related to linguistic elements consisted of: becoming aware of sociolinguistic matters (i.e., different registers) and a more extensive medical jargon. Regarding the sense of professional confidence, the HLL stated: ‘Not only did I offer my services and help [people] out, they helped me out too because I grew as a student. It was a confidence boost [...], it was very encouraging.’

A novel element offered by this study was the effects of the tools (understood as the available resources to prepare and deliver the interpretation service) on the way the task was approached by the HLL of Spanish. The lack of references on the effects of tools on service-learning tasks impedes the comparability of the results of this study, but opens up the floor for future projects on similar matters. As seen here, the available tools (i.e., virtual and visual means) indeed shaped the completion of the interpretation carried out by the participant. More specifically, the prompt familiarization of the subject with the visual resources that were going to be employed by the presenter (i.e., PowerPoint slides) resulted in effective advice to efficiently restructure the content of the presentation, mainly lowering the register of the ideas conveyed. An additional suggestion provided by the participant was to shorten the presentation itself, so that the audience would maintain their interest and motivation to pursue a license in childcare affairs. To ensure an effective performance, the participant also employed other abstract tools while preparing for the presentation, such as online dictionaries and translators. These action-oriented decisions, therefore, reflect a correlation between the artifacts (i.e., professional training) and the tools (i.e., tangible and abstract resources) when engaging in interpreting services. The implementation of all the aforementioned resources provided the HLL with an opportunity to apply his knowledge to a real-life situation, thus ultimately enabling a sense of professional accomplishment that continues to influence his current interpretation practices.

8. Limitations

Despite the novelty of this study, there are two meaningful limitations to keep in mind when pursuing further research on the setting of professional goals and the effects of artifacts and tools. First and foremost, the number of participants involved in this case study is significantly low. For these results to be applicable to extensive contexts and to account for generalizations on the involvement of Spanish HLLs in the service-learning arena, a higher number of subjects is indispensable. It is also advisable to have contacted the presenter, that is, the representative of the local County Health Department in charge of delivering the informational session regarding childcare matters. This kind of interaction could be telling, as the presenter could verify whether the perceptions of the participant, in regard to the efficacy of his service, were comparable to hers. It is important to mention that regardless of the limitations of this study, the results presented here, especially those that replicate/support some previous observations, will serve as a solid foundation to urge a more extensive implementation of service-learning projects in the heritage language classroom in Kansas, particularly. As this study suggests, such opportunities would professionally, culturally and linguistically empower those that often feel 'out of place' given their lack of confidence in such a major heritage language in the US such as Spanish.

CONCLUSION

This case study sheds some light on how multiculturalism, developed by experiences afforded by interpreting tasks, can play a determining role in the professional goals of a HLL—that aspires to be a bilingual physician in a rural area in Kansas. Additionally, this work offers some understanding of the heritage language learner’s professional formation evidenced by both: artifacts (i.e., linguistic and translation formal training) and tools (i.e., online and computerized visual resources) interlinked with an outreach endeavor: serving as interpreter at a medical presentation regarding licensing in childcare affairs. Specifically, the artifacts accounted for the development of linguistic knowledge (i.e., specialized lexicon) and professional skills (i.e., interpretation/translation techniques). These results, therefore, call for further implementation of service-learning endeavors particularly embedded in Spanish language and professional courses, especially in those classes with a (potential) meaningful presence of HLLs. Overall, this support is justified by the transformational learning experience reported by the participant after engaging in the outreach task presented here. More specifically, the subject defined his involvement as a life changing experience, as the following statement reveals: ‘It really further confirmed me that I can become a bilingual medical doctor in the future, and this is what I want to do with my life. [I]t’s where I feel the most comfortable and [now] I feel that I can offer my services to a maximum.’

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Questions for the interview

Professional goals

1. What are your professional goals overall?
2. What has inspired/motivated such goals?

3. What are your professional goals when it comes to Spanish?
4. What has inspired/motivated such goals?
5. What is your experience so far using Spanish in professional settings, if any?
6. What do you do to better yourself, as a Spanish speaker, so that you can employ said language in professional settings in the future?

Training in Spanish (translation)

7. If any, what was your experience when it comes to translating from English to Spanish and Spanish to English before taking *Community Translation and Interpretation*?
8. What made you decide to take *Community Translation and Interpretation*?
9. Are you planning to implement your knowledge on translating in your professional future? If so, how specifically?
10. Please list the techniques that you have learned when taking *Community Translation and Interpretation* to engage in translating endeavors more effectively:
11. How would you describe your improvement as a translator after taking *Community Translation and Interpretation*?

Resources/tools to translate

While taking *Community Translation and Interpretation*, you had to complete a project where you had to act as an interpreter within the Hispanic community. Please answer the following questions pertaining this experience:

12. Please explain in your words what the task consisted of:
13. What were the challenges you faced, if any?
14. What did you do in order to overcome these challenges? What motivated you to do this?
15. Did you have the chance to apply any of the techniques that you have learned in *Community Translation and Interpretation*? If so, which ones?
16. What would you say was the most valuable lesson from this experience? Why was this the case?
17. How did this experience compare to any former occasion in which you had had to act as a translator/interpreter?
18. Did this experience shape your professional goals for the future? If so, how?
19. Did this experience help you to become a better-equipped translator/interpreter? If so, how?

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