

Title: “Le nom es el nombre or the last name?” Translanguage Awareness in a French Class for Spanish Speakers

Abstract: Based on emerging studies and classroom experience, the presentation will explore the challenges and benefits of using Spanish as language of instruction in an A1-level French class, with a focus on the qualitative experience of Heritage speakers and students formally educated in Spanish.

Presentation proposal:

The presentation draws on personal experience teaching French with Spanish as co-language of instruction with majority-Hispanic classes as well as the emergence of a Spanish-centered approach to Romance language instruction at Hispanic-serving institutions primarily in California (Martinez 2014) and more recently in Texas.

Exploring the advantages and difficulties of using Spanish as a “gateway language” (Donato 2018) alongside French in A1-level classes, the presentation will share the experiences of students enrolled in these classes who fall under various categories, including Heritage speakers and bilinguals.

The presentation will use interviews conducted with current and former students to explore the concept of translanguage awareness, drawing on students’ existing proficiency in and use of English, Spanish, and Spanglish to become more conscious of how French is already embedded in and related to their expanding linguistic repertoires.

Learning objectives:

- To understand how heritage knowledge can be valorized through study of French and other Romance languages
- To explore how pattern recognition and comparison can improve students’ language awareness and linguistic confidence
- To address the difficulties of making Spanish the language of instruction in an English-dominated Hispanic-serving institution

Works Cited:

Donato, C. (2018). Polyglots, Multilinguals, and Translanguagers: Spanish as a Gateway Language. *Hispania*, 100(5), 285–287. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hpn.2018.0069>.

Martinez Abadia, J. M. (2014). *French for Spanish speakers: A contrastive study of English monolingual, bilingual, and plurilingual adult learners of French*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.