

## **What do they even MEME?: The implementation of a critical task in an Advanced HL course**

As the popularity of critical language awareness increases, there is a need for classroom activities that encourage students to challenge prevailing language ideologies within society. One approach to achieving this is through implementing critical tasks, which develop a critical consciousness through contextualizing language use. These tasks allow students to reflect on sociopolitical ideologies prevalent in their local communities.

Presently, we explore the outcomes of eleven heritage language students enrolled in an Advanced Spanish for Heritage Speakers course at a university in the East Coast, focusing on their completion of Torres' (2023) critical task involving meme creation. Students initially watched a video in Spanish featuring a professor discussing the societal values of Spanish in Peru versus the US as homework. During the subsequent class, they participated in a discussion exploring the differing ideologies within each context. Following that, they viewed a video featuring two young women discussing common Spanish "errors" made by native Spanish speakers (e.g., *comiste* vs. *comistes*). This exposure prompted students to share instances where they had used or encountered such "errors" in their respective communities.

The final task involved creating two memes, the first challenged prevailing linguistic ideologies of normative monolingualism or standardized Spanish and a second promoting a plurilingual ideology. Following this, students shared the memes with five individuals, recorded reactions, and wrote a discussion about their findings.

The critical task's outcomes revealed that they serve as effective tools for encouraging the interrogation of language ideologies and fostering discussions about students' internalization of such ideologies. Additionally, these tasks promote student agency as they make the choice of using so-called Spanish "errors".

### Reference

Torres, J. (2023). Critical tasks en acción in the Spanish HL classroom. *Spanish as a Heritage Language*, 3(1), 86-102.