

## **Teaching SHL in secondary schools: An antiracist, decolonial and culturally responsive curriculum proposal**

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this workshop is to contribute to this body of research and scholarship around best instructional practices for Spanish heritage language learners in secondary schools by presenting how SFL teachers can help students recognize and validate their transcultural identity by means of a transdisciplinary, antiracist, critical and culturally responsive curriculum.

### **Proposal (workshop)**

When I came to teach to the US in 2006 my students were immigrant Latino students from all Latin American countries. Although they all shared the same language and culture in a general sense, they had different ways of expressing, celebrating, and experiencing that language and culture. As Latina, a mother, and a teacher, I was committed to creating learning experiences that would contribute to develop a sense of community and belonging, validate their transcultural identity and foster their success. That is why I became the lead teacher for the Spanish Heritage Language teachers. Together, we designed and implemented three levels of the Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SHS) Program. This is an inclusive, transdisciplinary, translanguaging and critical and culturally responsive curriculum by which students develop and validate their new transcultural identity.

As the leader of the SHL teachers, I coordinated our monthly meetings, conducted staff development workshops, prepared curriculum, and pacing guides and other materials for teachers, communicated weekly with them, to develop opportunities for change in our students. After six years of teaching and coordinating the SHS program, I explored how students had changed their perception of themselves, their motivation for learning, improved their language skills and altered their plans for pursuing a college degree. The data revealed that through the SHS program, the students develop a value support system that helps them challenge racism, sexism, and social injustice from peers, family, and community members.

The purpose of this workshop is to present and share this innovating and unique program which has been recognized as a student-centered exemplary program by ACTFL *The Language Educator* magazine in its March/April 2015 volume. It has also endured to this day since its implementation in 2007 despite budgetary cuts and changes in administration.

### **Learning Objectives**

The participants will:

- distinguish the components of each level of the program
- identify the scope and sequence of the program
- identify assessment strategies, materials, and resources.