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Concluding Remarks

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All the chapters in this volume have intended to corroborate our initial view of the relationship between the Multiliteracies framework *Learning by Design* and heritage language (HL) education as "a match made in heaven" (Chap. 1). On the one hand, the last few decades of research on heritage languages in the United States and elsewhere have resulted in a more accurate understanding of issues related to linguistics, sociolinguistics, educational linguistics, and language acquisition (see, e.g., Wiley et al. 2014; Montrul 2016; Pascual y Cabo 2016; Kagan et al. 2017). In the field of HL pedagogy in particular, special emphasis has been placed on promoting sociolinguistic awareness, stimulating involvement in diverse literacy practices, expanding students' linguistic repertoires, and getting them more engaged in experiential and/or service learning in order to increase their commitment to the community. On the other hand, these goals seem to be very similar to those of the Multiliteracies framework, a pedagogical approach that has recently come of age since it was first presented by the New London Group in 1996. Some of the

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main principles of this approach are (a) the integration of "formal"/academic learning and "informal"/personal learning as a way to reflect the new realities that all learners experience in their everyday lives; (b) the development of curricular and pedagogical resources that may be more related to the learners' personal, social, and cultural backgrounds; and (c) the opportunities for learners to interpret and create forms and meanings from an extensive variety of oral, written, visual, audiovisual, and digital texts.

As noted in Chap. 1 of this book, we strongly believe that the theoretical and practical bases of the Multiliteracies framework in its more recent version—*Learning by Design*—may be quite beneficial for all of us involved in HL education: learners, instructors, program developers or administrators, materials designers, and teacher educators. In this regard, the contributors to this volume have made a special effort to go beyond anecdotal accounts of pedagogical interventions in confined or experimental settings, and provide instead complete descriptions of pedagogical, curricular, and professional applications of the knowledge and tasks associated with *Learning by Design*. In what follows, I will briefly highlight some of the key features connecting the chapters in this book which could eventually have a transformational effect on the teaching of Spanish as a heritage language (SHL) in the United States.

- *Incorporation of multimodal instructional resources.* Working with a wide variety of texts and genres, the projects presented in this volume have intended to enrich the possibilities and experiences of both learners and instructors of SHL. From films, music, literary works, biographies, documentaries, and scientific publications, among other options (Chaps. 2, 3, and 4), to digital storytelling, written reflections, self-generated questions, and life story narratives (Chaps. 4, 5, 6, and 7), the resources included in this book should encourage the learners' active development of their Spanish skills through the analysis and understanding of multiple social and cultural meanings. The multimodal resources in most of the projects are not only relevant to the learners' life, academic experience, and community, but also important for successful critical reflection, conceptualizations, and application in real-life contexts.

- *New directions in assessment.* The incorporation of multimodal resources in HL education should be followed by the implementation of assessment options that go beyond the traditional language test or, as Parra points out, "punitive/reward end-of-program measures" (this volume, xxx). In line with the position taken by the Multiliteracies framework and recent research in HL education (see, e.g., Carreira 2012; Beaudrie 2016; Nik Ilieva and Clark-Gareca 2016), the authors in this project have proposed a range of assessment tasks to account for heritage language learners' (HLLs) diverse abilities and needs. For example, Parra and her colleagues (Chap. 2) combined "mini quizzes" on specific information coming from classroom discussions or presentations of content with essays, creative written assignments, oral presentations, and reading reports; Zapata (Chap. 3) had her students develop individual e-Portfolios with personal reflections and multimodal narratives, among other materials; Martínez and San Martín (Chap. 4) designed a digital illness narrative project as the culmination of their capstone course in Sociolinguistics and Latino Health; and Ruggiero (Chap. 5) developed a multimodal journal for the HLLs in her service learning course to include digital storytelling, written reflections, and self-generated questions for critical enquiry. Finally, assignments for the undergraduate course for pre-service instructors prepared by Grosso Richins and Hansen-Thomas (Chap. 7) consisted of, among others, online journal entries and oral reflections, design of lesson plans, participation in technology-mediated simulations of parent-teacher conferences, group presentations, and the development of a multimedia product.
- *Curricular integration of the specifics of individual and group identities.* As important as offering learners a wide variety of materials for both instruction and assessment, the projects in this book suggest many options to personalize tasks and activities in relation to the learners' implicit/explicit knowledge of the Spanish language, and experiences with Spanish-speaking communities on a personal and academic level. First, the authors provide extensive details about the personal and academic backgrounds of the participants, as well as about the institutional settings where the pedagogical and/or curricular interventions are implemented. Second and more important, all the projects take into careful consideration these backgrounds in order to establish connections

between what is known by students and what is new as an integral part of the instructional sequence either in SHL at all levels (Chaps. 2, 3, 4, and 5) or in HL teacher preparation/education courses, seminars, workshops, and so on (Chaps. 6, 7, and 8).

- *A framework for collaboration and transformation*. Along with a deeper understanding of individual backgrounds, the tasks and activities in this book actively promote the collaborative construction of knowledge, both as an integral part of the pedagogical sequence and as a crucial cognitive tool. While collaboration may be a more obvious dimension of the *Learning by Design* approach applied to SHL courses at all levels, this book has also drawn attention to the value of collaboration from the first steps of the professional development of instructors working with HLLs. For example, the activities in Chap. 7 for pre-service bilingual teachers of Spanish to become more aware of their HL on the personal and professional level involved interviews with Spanish-speaking parents, classroom oral presentations and discussions, simulations and role-plays, and collaborative lesson planning. For its part, all the examples included in Chap. 8 to illustrate the pedagogical stages of HL teacher preparation activities were based not only on the notions of learners' collaborative construction of knowledge (Kalantzis et al. 2016), but also on the critical importance of interaction between instructors so they can successfully internalize the different types of concepts and knowledges outlined by sociocultural theory applied to L2/HL teacher education.
- *A pedagogy for agency and critical enquiry/thinking*. In the same way that the field of HL education now emphasizes critical reflection about the linguistic and cultural repertoires of HLLs, the Multiliteracies approach also considers critical analysis and reflection as essential for learners to (a) develop critical stances with regard to any type of text or genre and (b) become agents of social change based on their awareness of, as Parra notes, "language and cultural ideologies that [learners] might have experienced [and] the power relations that are established through linguistic exchanges in the different communities in which they participate" (this volume, xxx).

Working together on this edited volume has allowed us to become much more aware of our own critical voice as members of an important professional community within HL education. It has also provided us with a much deeper understanding of the multiple and complex conditions and circumstances for SHL pedagogy throughout the United States. And for this we thank our contributors again.

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