Genre Pedagogy within Systemic Functional Linguistics: Avoiding Linguistic Hegemony in Spanish Classes in Higher Education

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to explore the Spanish variety taught in Spanish as a foreign language courses in most colleges and universities in the United States, where many Heritage Spanish students attempt to relearn and enhance their heritage language skills. The paper will be inclusive of the presence of Spanish and the state of Heritage Education in the United States. Additionally, it will examine the characteristics of American Spanish and some of the bilingual practices of Heritage speakers due to their contact with English and other Spanish varieties. The study will also explore how a genre-based curriculum within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics can accommodate HS students' home varieties and expand their repertoire so they can have access to various linguistic varieties, including the standard used to teach the language in many Spanish classrooms in the United States.

Keywords: genre, heritage, Spanish, functional linguistics, varieties

HERITAGE SPANISH EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

The term heritage language (HL) has its origins in Canada when the Ontario Heritage Language programs began in 1977 (Cummings, 2005). However, the field of heritage students and heritage language education did not arise in the United States until the 1990's (Valdes, 2005; Cummings, 2005; Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012). A heritage language, in "the context of the United States and Canada, refers to the languages spoken by immigrants and their children" (Montrul, 2012, p. 2). The number of heritage speakers (HS) in the United States has been growing at a rapid pace, especially Spanish heritage speakers. In a 2000 Census (Lynch 2003), there were "more than 35 million people who identified themselves as "Hispanic" or "Latino"; this represented a 57·9 percent increase over the 22 million documented by the 1990 census" (p. 28). Following the rising number of Hispanic or Latino immigrants that live in the United States, the US Census Bureau (2017) reported that 17.8 percent of the population of the United States, as of July 1, 2016, was of Hispanic origin. This places the United States as the second largest host of Spanish population in the world. The continuous rise in the Hispanic population in the United States have prompted an increase interest among scholars on heritage Spanish

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instruction in primary, secondary and postsecondary education (Zentella, 2002, 2005; Lynch, 2003; Carreira, 2012; Ducar, 2008).

The research on heritage Spanish education has evolved since it started in the 1990's when the focus was on remedial courses to correct the deficiency in heritage Spanish student's linguistic varieties (Valdes-Fallis, 1997). The research studies conducted since the twentieth century were more pedagogically oriented, and scholars in the field have been concerned about the characteristics and profiles of HS students as they attempt to re-earn their heritage language in formal classroom settings (Montrul, 2012). The following three areas that are related to the state of heritage Spanish education in the United States that will be addressed in this research study: heritage Spanish students vs. foreign language students 'academic needs, Heritage Spanish students' diverse linguistic profiles and proficiency levels and, linguistic hegemony in the language classrooms. In addition, the genre-based approach within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics will be explored as the most pedagogically sound venue to teach heritage Spanish students at the post-secondary level.

Presence of the Spanish language in the United States

The Spanish language has been present in the United States from the moment "Juan Ponce León, the first European set foot in what is modern-day United States, christened his landing site *La Florida* or the "*-flowery one-*" (Carreria, 2013, p. 104). Since then, many events have had a great influence on the influx of Latino immigrants to the United States. Many Mexicans, for instance, made the choice to remain in the United States after the Guadalupe Treaty was signed, while others decided to go back to the territory that is known as the country Mexico today. Another big wave of immigration from Mexico to the United States occurred more than two decades ago with the 'Braceros Program', which "was signed on July 23, 1942, establishing the Mexican government as recruiters and the U.S. government as distributors of cheap and expendable labor (Hines, 2006, p. 2). In addition to these immigration waves, we had two more big movements that triggered immigration from Latin American countries, such as the Cuban Revolution in the 1960's, followed by the "Marielitos" [exiles who left from Cuba's Mariel Harbor] in 1980 and the "Balseros" [rafters] in the 1990s" (Hines, 2006 p. 2). The influx of Latin American immigrants to the United States has continued to grow following the 1990's wave of immigrants from Cuba. Some have entered the country using the official immigration channels; while others arrived without appropriate and certifiable documentations. According to Carreria (2013), most of the Latino population migrated from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. However, there is also representation of immigrants from Colombia, Guatemala and Chile among others. Even though Spanish speakers can communicate with other speakers from other countries, many linguistic varieties become more pronounced from generation to generation.

Some of the linguistic varieties of the Spanish in the United States are explored in the following section.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LINGUISTIC VARIETIES OF AMERICAN-SPANISH

Heritage Spanish students speak a wide range of varieties that are characterized by their ethnic background, their social class, and, the region in the United States where they reside. Carter (2005), in his article 'Spanish in the United States', argues that 'variation in the Spanish of the United States is due to the results of a founder effect, later immigration from across the Spanish diaspora, and sociolinguistic variables such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age and gender" (p. 4). Some of the linguistic varieties are presented below:

Mexican American Spanish

 Hispanics of Mexican origin are the largest Spanish speaking population in the United States. There were 33.7 million Hispanics of Mexican descent in 2012 living in the United States (Barrera, Lopez, 2013). Some of the most salient characteristics of the Mexican American Spanish (Lipski, 2008) are the use of a subject pronoun after infinitives, such as *'después de yo regresar'* (after returning), instead of the standard Spanish - *'después de regresar'*. It is also common to use the verbs 'ser' and 'estar' interchangeably. These two verbs mean 'to be' in Spanish, but they are used in different contexts. In addition, the Mexican American speech attaches the indirect object pronoun to imperatives. For example, *ándale, órale* (go, it is fine), *cómale* (to eat); *pásele* (go ahead) respectively.

Puerto Rican and Dominican American Spanish

Puerto Rican Spanish is characterized by the pronounciation of 'r' as 'h' (Delgado-Diaz and Galarza, 2015). Words like '*carro*' (car) would be pronounced as '*caho*', '*perro*' (dog) as ' *peho'*. In addition, in standard Spanish, we invert the subject pronouns in questions; however, this is not the case with Puerto Rican Spanish. For instance, *¿Cuándo tú vas*? (When are you going?), is usually inverted in standard Spanish (*¿Cuándo vas tú*?). Also, Puerto Rican and Cuban Spanish aspirates the final syllable 's' in words like 'este' (this)' ehte'. This is also a characteristic of Dominican Spanish. However, Dominicans completely erased the's' from the word, which then becomes 'ete' (this) (Terrel, 1977). It is also common for Dominicans to add '*se'* instead of '*s'* to form the plural of nouns. For example, *casa-cásase* (house(s)), *mujer-mujérese* (woman/women) (Lipsky, 2008, p. 137). Some scholars (Bullock, Toribio, Amengual, 2014) have also found examples of the addition of a "non-etymological s" (p.20), in the speech of vernacular Dominican Spanish and provide the following examples:

> una ba[s]tata fri[s]ta (a fried sweet potato), and con mis cua[s]tro hijas (with my four daughters) (p. 20).

Cuban American Spanish

Most Cubans have settled in the Miami area; where Spanish has slowly become the recognized lingua franca. There were two big waves of Cuban migration to the United States; the first one took place when Fidel Castro assumed the political leadership of Cuba in 1961. The number of Cubans who entered the United States during the sixties and early seventies reached 168,000; all of whom were admitted as political and legal refugees. The second big wave of Cuban immigrants occurred in 1980, when over

125,000 Cubans arrived at Key West Florida. (Shull, 2014). The latter wave of immigrants was comparatively less-educated and belonged to a lower social class than the first arrivals. Therefore, the quality of their linguistic utterances was different from the ones who settled in the sixties and seventies. Eventually, the Cuban Spanish mixed with other Spanish dialects as well as English. There are distinct features that characterized the Cuban dialect from the speech of other immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean.

One of the characteristics of Cuban Spanish is the use of más (more) before negative words such as *nunca* (never), *nadie* (nobody) and *nada* (nothing). Therefore, it is common to hear expressions such as *más nunca*, *más nadie, más nada* (Lipsky, 2008, p.112). Younger generations of Cubans, regardless of culture or sociocultural background, tend to change the syllable-final 'r' to 'l' in words like *muerta* (dead) to *muelta*, *puerta* (door) to *puelta*.

According to Lipsky (2008, p.114), "younger Cuban Americans of all socioeconomic backgrounds tend to glottalize or geminate preconsonantal /r/ and /l/, not only in the pan-Cuban porque > pocque (because), but across the Spanish lexicon". Some scholars (Bullock et. all, 2014; Lipsky, 2008) concluded that young Cuban Americans, and Caribbean Spanish speakers tend to omit the 'l' if they have not had formal education in Spanish.

The American Spanish is very diverse and it has been affected by other linguistic phenomena due to contact with the English language, which is the standard and dominant language in the United States. The linguistic diversity and other linguistic practices, such as Spanglish, calques, Anglicisms that characterize the speech of HS speakers becomes a challenge when these heritage students try to re-learn or become more proficiency in Spanish in a classroom setting. This challenge, the clashing of the standard Spanish variety used in the classroom and the HS student's linguistic varieties, is explored in the following section.

American-Spanish: Heritage Spanish speaker's bilingual practices

When two languages remain in contact for long periods, it is common that both languages can be affected by linguistic phenomena such as Spanglish, code switching, borrowing, anglicisms and calques among others. Spanish is the second language most spoken in the United States, and it is normal to see many Spanish words and expressions in the media, television shows, advertisements and businesses.

Spanglish. In a study about whether Spanglish is the third language of the Southern United States, Lipsky (2004) explored the controversies surrounding the definition of the term, as well as the literary and linguistic correctness of this practice by English/Spanish bilinguals. The use of Spanglish has been strongly criticized by some scholars (Echeverria,1987; Tio,1954). Tio, in a newspaper article published in 1948, referred to Spanglish as "esta nueva lengua se llamara "El Espanglish" (np). This is translated as "this new language is called Spanglish". Tio (1954) expreses in the same article "No creo en el latín ni en el bilingüismo. El latín es una lengua muerta. El bilingüismo, dos lenguas muertas" (np). This is translated as "I do not believe in Latin nor bilingualism. Latin is a

dead language. And bilingualism, two dead languages". On the other hand, Stavans (2006) explored the use of Spanglish in the United States and stated that it as "a verbal code which is in no doubt a major cultural force in the English-speaking world on this side of the Atlantic Ocean today, spoken by millions of people in the process of defining their identity" (p.9). Stavans (2006) reported some examples of Spanglish such as, "a) I must have done algo malo, you know, b) La pelota se le iba in between the knees, c) I was still in escuela phimahia, d) Truth is, no me acuehdo" (p.11). Overall, Spanglish is a very controversial phenomenon that has many admirers, haters, and a few that take a more neutral position (Alcala, 2009). The term Spanglish has also been used to describe other bilingual practices such as code-switching, borrowing and calques (Lipsky, 2004).

Code switching. Code switching is a linguistic feature used by bilinguals who live in contact with two languages at the same time. It is one of the most common features of bilingual speakers. We can define code switching as the "alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent" (Poplack, 1980, p. 583). Two seminal studies in the sociolinguistic field explored code switching among Spanish-English bilinguals in the Southwest (Silvia-Corvalán, 1983). Both studies concluded that code switching was part of most conversations among proficient Spanish-English bilinguals. However, Carvalho (2012) reported that "it is frequently perceived by both insiders and outsiders as indicative of disfluency or an inability to speak only one language at a time" (p.130).

Silva-Corvalán, (1983) analyzed the Spanish and English used by eight Chicano adolescents, and she made the distinction between code switching, which she associated with proficient bilinguals as one of the characteristics of interacting with members of their communities. On the other hand, code shifting was used as a strategy to compensate for a deficiency, or grammatical errors, in either standard Spanish or standard English. Regardless of how code-switching is perceived, it is part of the Spanish varieties of many Spanish heritage speakers, who may feel proud of this linguistic phenomenon and see it as an identity marker (Lipsky, 2005) that needs to be considered when designing the methodological approach that best serves the needs of the heritage population.

Borrowings and calques. "Calques are translations from English, the source language, to Spanish, the recipient language" (Sanchez Fajardo, 2016, p.37) Borrowing from English to Spanish is very common in the United States, but due to some sociolinguistic factors, the influence of English on Spanish is more prominent than the other way around. (Lipski ,2013, p. 227) provides examples such as 'soñar de' (to dream of), instead of soñar con, (to dream of), or the use of 'back' in expressions such as 'call back', which is translated as llama para atrás, which is pronounced 'llamar patrás'. The use of 'back' can also be seen with verbs such as 'devolver patras' (to give back) and 'pagar pa'tras (to pay back). Expressions with the word 'patrás' have been part of the linguistic varieties of HS speakers in the United States, who see this process as an extension of their repertoire, which is not common of the linguistic varieties of Spanish that have not been in contact with the English language.

Anglicisms. Los anglicismos son palabras o modos de expresión propios u originarios de la lengua inglesa pero que son empleados comúnmente en el idioma español. (Cáseres-

Ramírez, 2018, p. 1) In English this means "Anglicisms are words or ways of expression particular of the English language but adopted jointly into the Spanish language. Anglicisms are loans from the English language that can be classified into two categories. "A necessary loan is an Anglicism which is adopted to refer to an object or a concept already lexicalized in the recipient language, in order to express it in a more fashionable and attractive way" (Furiassi et. al., 2012, p.10). Moreno Fernandez, 2018, in his dictionary of Spanish-English Anglicisms, provides some examples such as 'alrandon', (randomly), antifrís (antifreeze), apologia (apology) and ampayar (to umpire), (p. 38). Another challenge presented by the wide diversity of HS student's profiles, that will be explored in this study, is the Spanish linguistic varieties in the United States based on the speaker's country of origin.

The Spanish linguistic varieties students bring with them contributes to the challenge of teaching Spanish to heritage speakers whose Spanish is further influenced by other linguistic phenomena caused by the contact with the English language. The problem worsens when HS student's linguistic varieties clash with the linguistic variety used in the classroom at the college/university level in the United States, where "speakers of Peninsular Spanish have higher prestige than speakers of Latin American Spanish, particular varieties of both Peninsular and Latin American Spanish are more highly regarded than others" (Valdes et. al, 2003, p.9). The Peninsular or Iberian variety is spoken by people who live in central and northern Spain, and according to the study by Valdes et. al (2003), it is considered most prestigious than other varieties in Spain and Latin America. In the next section, linguistic hegemony in many Spanish departments in the United States will be examined.

LINGUISTIC HEGEMONY IN SPANISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Linguistic hegemony takes place when "linguistic minorities will believe in and participate in the subjugation of the minority language to the dominant, to the point where just the dominant language remains" (Suarez, 2002, p. 514). It is a common practice to place HS and foreign language students in the same classes where the standard variety of Spanish is taught. According to Valdes et. al. (2003), the standard Spanish language is usually peninsular Spanish, spoken in the northern and central part of Spain. Some of the reasons why some Spanish varieties are more valued over others, have to do with power or position with the departments, and the political stance of Spanish speaking countries (Valdes et all., 2003). Even within Latin American countries, those countries with more citizens of European descent, were considered to speak more prestigious varieties than countries in the Caribbean. Expanding on the use of the standard Spanish in classroom settings, Mrak (2011) conceded that since the academic variety of Spanish is taught in foreign language classes, there is a need for a Spanish as a heritage language track "where the home variety provides the students' first approach into the language" (p. 161).

However, the practice of accepting a peninsular variety of Spanish stigmatizes and diminishes the value of the Spanish and cultural background many HS students bring to

the classroom (Pascual y Cabo & Prada, 2018). Thus, some Spanish professors "frequently have little understanding of bilingualism and bilingual individuals, contact varieties of language, and factors influencing the retention or abandonment of heritage languages" (Valdés, Fishman, Chávez, & Pérez, 2008, p. 5). Having professors who acknowledge and respect students' linguistic varieties and cultural backgrounds is necessary if we want HS students to be successful in re-learning their heritage language. Hence, it is important to use a methodological approach where students can be exposed to different linguistic and cultural discourses, even those that been discredited for including Anglicisms, borrowed words, and code-switching (Otheguy, Garcia, and Reid, 2018). Many of the linguistic varieties HS students bring with them to the classroom may be appropriate in some cultural contexts and we should use those varieties as a starting point to move on to other linguistic varieties used in various formal and informal settings.

The Standard vs. Variety

After over two decades of teaching standard Spanish to a diversity of college students in the United States classrooms, I have come to the summation that the standard vs. variety dichotomy poses a challenge in Spanish as a foreign or heritage language education in the United States. This observation is aligned with the studies by Garatea Grau, (2006) which posit that standard Spanish "representa una variedad diastrática (o social) y diafásica (o estilística) connotada positivamente, resultado de un largo proceso histórico que ha llevado a que los hablantes le reconozcan ese valor" (p. 148). This expression is translated in English to mean the following: "it represents a social and stylistic variety which is viewed positively by Spanish speakers, as the result of long historical process that has granted value and prestige to such Spanish variety". Additionally, the La Real Academia Española, translated in English to mean "Royal Academy of the Spanish language", recommended that there should be norms that regulate the correct Spanish variety used by educated scholars, and that the variety should be taught in schools (DPA, RAE, 2005). Some HS students taking college/university Spanish classes sometimes feel they speak a non-standard Spanish variety and are ashamed to participate or speak the language in class (Hancok, 2002). According to Villa (1996), some of the traditional programs "assume that the students' heritage language is an impure mixture of English loanwords, archaic usages, neologisms, imperfect morphology and syntax, among other failures, all of which must be eradicated" (p.1). Other scholars have argued that HS students' linguistic varieties should not be labelled as inappropriate or non-standard; instead, HS students should be exposed to "a formal variety of Spanish and expect it to be used in academic work" (Potowski, 2010, p. 4). Valdes (1978) has argued in favor of showing students how their linguistic varieties are appropriate and accepted in various contexts and, how language changes depending on the situation. Valdes's studies also revealed that a "comprehensive language program is needed wherein students are made aware of regional differences and encourage not to change those aspects of their speech which are accepted in educated speakers of the same region" (p.106). A program such as the one proposed by Valdes, emphasizes various types of registers that are adequate and appropriate for use with learners of Spanish language based on any of the following modalities of communication: spontaneous, friendly, formal or informal cultural context.

The Comprehensive program suggested by Valdes (1978) was a call to replace the normative approaches that emphasized the standard variety; which was the subject as opposed to the means of instruction.

HS students' linguistic varieties is just one of the issues that needs consideration when teaching this population. The differences between HS and foreign language students need to be considered in order to evaluate pedagogical and andragogical approaches and resource addressed in order to evaluate teaching and learning approaches, materials and other classroom resources to teach mixed classes, with heritage and foreign language students.

Heritage Spanish speaker's linguistic varieties are characterized by bilingual practices caused by the contact of Spanish, the heritage language, and English, the dominant language.

Effects of Spanish linguistic hegemony in post-secondary language courses

The prevalence of 'standard varieties' in Spanish courses can have negative consequences on Heritage Spanish students' identities and in some cases, it can lead to a complete switch to the dominant language, which in the context of the United States is English, and the eradication of the heritage language. In addition, by accepting the academic variety as prestigious and others as lacking, leads to stigmatization of other Spanish varieties which are considered nonstandard, and the heritage Spanish speakers of those varieties, may feel their home language is being ostracized, unacceptable, and it does not add to their professional capital. Achugar and Pesoa (2009) conducted a study on the Spanish standard vs. variety at the Bilingual Graduate Writing Program at the university of Texas, and found that the academic or standard Spanish is given more value than to other varieties spoken in the region. Heritage Spanish students' linguistic varieties should be the entry point to learn other dialects that may be appropriate depending on the sociocultural context of the text, or the conversation.

One of the approaches that helps fight against linguistic hegemony in Foreign Language classes in the United States is the Genre Based Approach (GBA) within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This approach is explored in the next sections. Several scholars (Hyland, 2003; Colombi, 2009; Yasuda, 2011) in the field of HS education have advocated for the use of a genre-based approach within the context of Systemic Functional linguistics as a viable methodological solution to meet the needs of HS students. The positive research outcomes of the afore-mentioned scholars, and my twenty years of experience teaching mixed classes of Spanish as a foreign language within college/university settings; the use of a genre-based approach, grounded on Systemic Functional Linguistics is the best option to meet the academic and emotional needs of heritage Spanish students at the post-secondary educational level. An in-depth exploration of Systemic Functional Linguistics and Genre-Based approaches will be detailed in the next sections.

GENRE-BASED SCHOOLS

The study of genre theory and its application to heritage language education and second and foreign language has been the focus of research among language teaching scholars in the past decade. There are three different schools of genre studies, and each one differs in how genre is defined and how they approach genre analysis. The three schools are the New Rhetoric, The English for Specific Purposes, and Systemic Functional Linguistics. An examination of these three schools is important to justify the selection of the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach to genre analysis over the other two.

The New Rhetoric Approach (NRA) School genre approach

The NRA School emerged in 1984 (Artemeva, 2004), after the product-based and process-based approaches to writing. Some scholars, Cooper & Holzman (1989), Miller (1984) and Bawarshi (2000) determined that product and process based approaches "failed to account for how social contexts influence meaning and affect the way a writer approaches a writing task (the process) and what he/she writes (the product)" (Artemeva, 2004, p.5). Therefore, a new interest and focus on the social aspects of writing emerged, and a reconceptualization of genre studies developed based on the seminal article, 'Genre as Social Action 'by Carolyn Miller (1984). Miller emphasized that "a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action, it is used to accomplish" (p. 151). The emphasis on the genre as a social action gave birth to the NRA school. The NRA school focusses on the social aspects to study and analyze genres. However, it does not study other text elements involved in the process of communication (Hyland, 2003). The NRA school explores the situation within the context in which the genre is employed, but it does not analyze the linguistic features that make meaning and communication possible which is one of the areas HS students need to study in order to develop literary skills.

THE ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) GENRE APPROACH

ESP is a name used to teach English in different fields of study, such as English for engineers, health care professionals, social work, and business among others. Proponents of this school of thought argued that the ESP genre-based approach was successful in developing literacy skills and "detailing the formal characteristics of genres while focusing less on the specialized functions of texts and their surrounding social context" (Hyon, 1996, p. 695). In addition, the ESP approach examines specific discipline genres like the research article. It also pays more attention to the formal aspects of language as opposed to the functionality of the language expressed within the text. Even though the ESP approach places some emphasis on the linguistics of the language, it "lacks a systematic model of language and [an] extensive use of a stratified, meta-functional grammar" (Hyland, 2002, p. 115). The ESP approach will not fulfill the needs of HS students, not just for the specificity of the genres it studies, but also because HS students need to have a more detailed focus on the registers used within the genre and the meta-functions of the language used to communicate.

SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS (SFL) GENRE-BASED PEDAGOGY (GBP)

 SFL-GBP is based on the work of Michael Halliday's (1978) Systemic Functional Linguistics which is broader in scope than the other two genre schools previously examined, with respect to the analysis of the genre and the definition of what constitutes a genre. Grounded on Halliday's SFL, several educational linguists (Martin, 1985; Christie, 2005) introduced a genre-based approach to the Australian English language curriculum during the 1980's and 1990's. The interest at the time, was not language itself but more a social equity concern. The driving force for the functional approach was to help underprivileged students at the primary and secondary schools who were not prepared to write the academic genres the curriculum demanded. The goal of the new model was to provide the means and resources necessary for those students who spoke a language other than English in their homes. Deriwanka (2012) stated the main goal would be for students " to develop their understandings of how language functions to achieve a range of purposes that are critical to success in school. This includes reading, understanding, and writing texts that describe, narrate, analyse, explain, recount, argue, review, and so on" (p. 128). Deriwanka describes (2012) describes how such model would be different than traditional approaches.

A functional model describes how language varies from context to context. It shows, for example:

- how the language of mathematics differs from the language of history;

- how the language we use when talking to close friends differs from giving a formal oral presentation to an unfamiliar audience;

- how spoken language differs from written language;

- how the language choices we make in writing a narrative differ from those we make when writing a scientific explanation. (p. 130)

SFL GBP examines genres in formal and informal situations, within the academic and workplace settings. This approach helps to unpack the linguistics used in any defined situational contexts in terms of semantics, lexico-grammatical features, morphology as well as the phonology of the language (Colombi, 2009). Language is always influenced by the cultural context, and the culture context is realized by the language. A graphic representation of this interaction is pictured below.
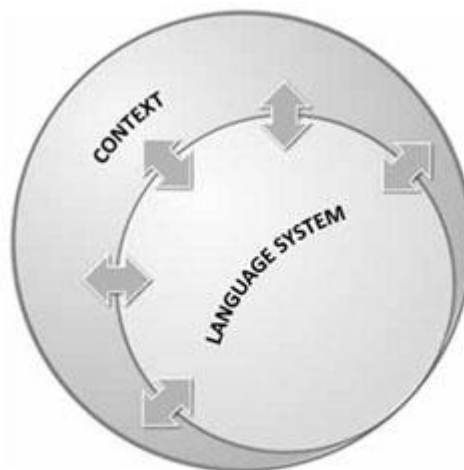
Figure 1: The language system in a dynamic relationship with the context

This dynamic relationship between context and language is what determines the linguistic variety of the text, either written or spoken, and not by the Spanish professor.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Genre based pedagogy grounded on Systemic Functional Linguistics provides linguistic and pedagogical foundations to teach Spanish without ostracizing heritage students' local varieties while expanding the linguistic repertoire of academic dialects through the study of genres. It is important to maintain heritage languages, and adopting a hegemonic approach can only disempower the heritage speaker by devaluing their home Spanish dialects. Heritage speakers need to see their home languages as an important asset that adds to their professional capital and not as a deficient variety that needs to be repaired.

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