languages

MDPI

Article

Strengthening Writing Voices and Identities: Creative Writing, Digital Tools and Artmaking for Spanish Heritage Courses

María Luisa Parra

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA; parra@fas.harvard.edu

Abstract: This paper presents an analysis of poems, digital art, and accompanying analytical essays authored by four college students taking an advanced Spanish as heritage language. This paper highlights the ways in which creative writing, along with digital tools for artmaking, can enhance the teaching of language literacy to heritage learners. It proposes that creative writing opens up simultaneously meaningful and transformative experiences for students: they engage with the performativity of creative writing, use their voices beyond the constraints of specific genre conventions, engage with critical language awareness exercises, and become motivated to use their writing in order to reach out to the wider Spanish-speaking communities outside the classroom. Digital technologies played a key role in the creative process, as they provided a range of artistic tools and flexibilities that enhanced and complemented the power of the written word. The paper aims to contribute to the pedagogy of Spanish heritage courses and to expand the notions of literacy and writing under which we work in the SHL classroom.

Keywords: Spanish heritage; pedagogy of writing; creative writing; artmaking; digital tools

check for updates

Citation: Parra, María Luisa. 2021. Strengthening Writing Voices and Identities: Creative Writing, Digital Tools and Artmaking for Spanish Heritage Courses. *Languages* 6: 117. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages6030117

Academic Editors: Idoia Elola and Raychel Vasseur

Received: 1 April 2021
Accepted: 16 June 2021
Published: 6 July 2021

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Copyright: © 2021 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

Literacy has long been a primary area of interest and concern in Spanish-as-heritage-language (SHL) classes (Aparicio 1983; Beaudrie et al. 2014; Colombi 2015; Valdés 1978; Villa 2004, among many others). Latinx students often lack access to formal education in Spanish throughout their school years, resulting in limited possibilities to fully engage and participate as writers in Spanish-speaking academic and non-academic communities.

Recent pedagogical models for teaching writing to Spanish heritage learners (SHLs) have emphasized the importance of providing scaffolded instruction where they are introduced to the conventions that conform to the stylistic spectrum from spontaneous conversational speech to formal written discourse (Beaudrie et al. 2014; Burgo 2020; Chevalier 2004; Ignatieva and Colombi 2014; Mrak 2020; Potowski 2005). Understanding that mastery of grammar and spelling is not enough to gain literacy knowledge (Chevalier 2004, p. 5) and to engage in literacy behavior (Villa 2004, following Heath 1991), proposals for teaching writing were developed within the systemic functional approach (Colombi 2015; Ignatieva and Colombi 2014) highlighting the many possibilities for meaning making that language offers as a semiotic system. The main goal of this framework is to expand students' familiarity with the conventions of various written genres (Beaudrie et al. 2014; Burgo 2020; Chevalier 2004; Mrak 2020; Parra et al. 2018). Nevertheless, the definitions of 'genre'—as what structures texts in specific ways—have been problematized as they "vary quite considerably in terms of their degree of stabilization, fixity and homogenization" (Fairclough 2003, p. 66). Some, though not all, genres require specific and precise conventions, and not all can be complied with as they are part of complex and situated social actions and interactions (Fairclough 2003).

As the SHL teaching field continues to prioritize the strengthening of Latinxs' ethnolinguistic identities (Carreira 2004; Martínez 2016; Parra 2016; Parra et al. 2018; Sánchez-Muñoz 2016) and critical language awareness (CLA) is at the center of the SHL "signature

pedagogy" (Beaudrie et al. 2020; Parra 2014), educators have become interested in pedagogical frameworks that enhance students' writing voices beyond specific genre conventions to allow them to build their literacy capabilities and become active participants of wider communities of practice.

As part of these efforts, writing narratives and essays about meaningful topics—mainly personal and lived experiences around issues of language, identity, culture, and belonging—has become a central writing pedagogy in SHL classes (Burgo 2020; Loureiro-Rodriguez 2013; Martínez 2005; Reznicek-Parrado 2014) in line with proposals from the field of second language acquisition (i.e., Pavlenko and Lantolf 2000) and current English composition frameworks (i.e., Royster 2005; Yoder Miller 2005).

On the other hand, poetry, according to Bishop (1997), the genre for "the stuff of the self"(p. 262), although already suggested as a powerful pedagogical experience for SHL classes (Durán 2015; Mkhitarian 2019; Parra 2017), has just started to be fully explored as a resource for strengthening students' writing voices along with their critical language awareness and ethnolinguistic identity (see Lima, forthcoming). Poetry, as a major literary genre, offers many possibilities for its expression—epic, lyrical, narrative, satirical, prose poetry, and blackout poetry—all of which are part of the Spanish-speaking world's history and culture, including in Latinx communities. Latinx writers have used poetry to express the many facets of their immigration experiences and their lives in the 'betwixt and between' of their countries and heritages of origin and the American experience (see https://www.poetryfoundation.org/collections/144542/us-latinx-voices-in-poetry to explore a list of Latinx poets. Accessed 5 June 2021.)

It is in this spirit of exploration and in line with the objectives of this special issue that this paper seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge around SHL writing pedagogy by sharing a creative writing experience with poetry in an advanced college SHL course. The exploration also includes the role that digital technologies can play in such creative writing exercises to enhance and complement the power of the written word. Digital technologies (DTs) have become a central part of the writing teaching toolkit for L2 and SHL instructors (Blake and Guillén 2020; Chen 2013; Elola and Oskoz 2015, 2017; Henshaw 2016a, 2016b; Oskoz and Elola 2020). Aligned with previous proposals to redefine literacy as "multiliteracies" (New London Group 1996; Kalantzis and Cope 2005; Kalantzis et al. 2016), DTs have continued to broaden and transform our understandings of literacy as "social practices that are fluid, sociocultural, multimodal, and dynamic" (Chen 2013, p. 143). Technology and DTs have also expanded the possibilities for teaching through different platforms where better integration of authentic texts and up-to-date resources is possible, and synchronous and asynchronous modalities can be combined, all of which facilitates meeting students' different learning styles and promoting interest and engagement in the class (Henshaw 2016a, p. 283).

DTs provide students with endless sources and a broad range of affordances for meaning making in and beyond the classroom (Martínez and San Martín 2018). Research has shown that among the many benefits that technology and DTs contribute to language and heritage classrooms are: improved spelling, lexical, compositional, and editing skills, diminished anxiety, and allowing for self-paced options (see Henshaw 2016a, 2016b for a review). In particular, digital storytelling has opened up new possibilities for engaging SHL with prior knowledge and community experiences to critically analyze situations of inequity, for example, issues related to health services in their families and communities (Martínez and San Martín 2018).

Through the content analysis of poems and accompanying analytical essays by four college students, I aim to show that creative writing assignments provide students with important and transformative learning experiences. They open up opportunities for them to: (a) work with literacy and language writing skills in flexible and sophisticated ways; (b) engage with the performative force of writing (Owens 1993), allowing them to embrace different positions and voices as authors (Tavalin 1995); and (c) strengthen a sense of connectedness with their classmates (Rovai 2002) and broader communities, needed more

than ever in the environment imposed by the global pandemic (Lomicka 2020). Finally, I demonstrate that students draw from the different affordances that design and DTs provide to make their poetry part of multimodal texts with deeper layers of meaning whose creation is only possible through the combination of words, images, and sounds.

The article is divided into the following parts. First, I provide a brief description of the components of the online course the creative writing assignments were part of. This description is important to show how students draw from content, critical discussions, and interactions with each other as inspiration and resources for their poems. I then present the theoretical underpinnings guiding the writing pedagogy of the course. In this section, I also provide an overview of the course's different writing assignments and the DTs that were used. Next, I present the analysis of the main aspects of the four poems, the accompanying analytical essays, and the artwork that two students used to craft their projects. Finally, I discuss the main findings and advocate for the inclusion of creative writing assignments, and creativity in general, both as part of SHL signature pedagogy (Parra 2014) and as a way to invite teachers to critically reflect on the notions of literacy and writing under which we work in the SHL classroom.

2. Spanish 49H: An Advanced Online Spanish Heritage Course

Spanish 49H is an advanced Spanish course designed for Latinx students at a private northeast four-year university. Its main goal is to provide a space to critically engage with questions around their cultural heritage and ethnolinguistic identity as they expand their oral and writing linguistic repertoires. The class meets twice a week for 75 min each session for 14 weeks. Because of the pandemic, the fall 2020 course was redesigned to meet the demands of the online new teaching–learning environment, primarily using two platforms: Zoom, for class meetings, and Canvas, for course content and assignment submission and revision. In the Zoom classroom, screen sharing and the chat feature successfully supported class dynamics, and students got to know each other further through the breakout rooms.

The course content draws from an interdisciplinary perspective within the humanities and Latinx studies (Martínez and San Martín 2018; Parra 2016, 2021a; Potowski 2012; Torres et al. 2017) and is organized in five modules that aim to take students on a linguistic, cultural, and historical journey around the Spanish-speaking world. Special emphasis is put on the ways in which the many historical, social, and cultural encounters that have shaped the Spanish-speaking world have led to the linguistic and the cultural innovations that the Latinx youth engage with in the 21st century.

Aligned with critical, border, and translanguaging pedagogies (Freire 2005; García and Li 2014; Giroux 1991; Prada, forthcoming, 2019), the course seeks to provide students with a range of opportunities to engage with: an appreciation of the richness of their cultural heritage, the sociolinguistics of the Spanish language, and critical reflections behind the complex historical and socio-political processes and mechanisms that have led to the status quo and that maintain it today (Leeman and Serafini 2016; Navarrete 2020; Rosaldo 1993; Valdés et al. 2008; Villa and del Valle 2015).

SPAN49H and Digital Tools

The content of each of the five modules—clusters of multimodal and multimedia materials—is organized in several Canvas pages allowing for "seamless integration" of the materials (Henshaw 2016a, p. 283). Each page follows a "routes of learning" (Bezemer and Kress 2017) with specific "entry points" and "reading paths" (Kress 2004) designed by the teacher who uses a narrative to join together each set of multimodal ensembles (Serafini 2014) within the page.

Following previous work (Parra 2013; Parra et al. 2018), each cluster of multimodal and multimedia materials was intended to be a springboard to: (a) provide students with myriad multimodal resources to explore and interrogate the way in which national, historical, and cultural narratives about the "Latino imaginary" (Flores 2000) have been articulated through written language, visual images, music, and design features (Serafini

2014); and (b) engage students in what *Learning by Design* authors (i.e., Kalantzis et al. 2016, p. 80) have called "epistemic moves," that is, the cognitive process that students engage with when building new knowledge. Such moves are: (1) experiencing the known and the new; (2) conceptualizing by naming or with theory; (3) analyzing critically; and (4) applying creatively.

These moves were prompted by the guiding questions and activities designed by the teacher to accompany each (multimodal/multimedia) text, and also by the continuous dialogue among students who shared their answers and perspectives. Such dialogue—built sometimes in the main room, sometimes in the breakout rooms—enabled students to draw upon each other's ideas "to construct, build on and revise their own interpretations" (Serafini 2014, p. 418). This kind of instruction encourages students to use their Spanish as metalanguage, enabling them to take "theoretical distance" (Kalantzis et al. 2016, p. 160; New London Group 1996, p. 87) from the various texts, as they analyze them through their own critical lenses and with their own words (Kern 2004). .

3. Writing in SPAN 49H

A central pedagogical component of SPAN49H is providing students with a space and outlets to transform their new linguistic and cultural critical understanding to an act of self-reflection that allows them to "perform" their new perspectives and to "[bring] into existence ideas and social practices that do not exist already" (Sleeter and McLaren 1995, p. 20). Writing is one of these outlets, and making art is another. Following current trends in the field (for an overview, see Mrak 2020), SPAN 49H assumes a pedagogical approach to writing that results from a combination of process and post-process proposals, the latter allowing teacher and students to move beyond formulaic genre conventions and permitting a flexible definition of genres, open to reinterpretation and mixing for specific purposes (Fairclough 2003, p. 65). This combination of approaches allows for the inclusion of two types of writing assignments to initiate students in the "cumulative and infinite process of writing" (Royster 2005, p. 36).

On the one hand, taking advantage of the bidirectional transfer of literacy skills in Spanish and English that has been documented by research (Elola and Mikulski 2013; Martínez 2007; Schleppegrell and Colombi 1997; Spicer-Escalante 2005), some SPAN49H writing assignments were centered around written genres that require students to use specific conventions and formulas for their crafting. For example, they were encouraged to use a variety of textual connectors and grammatical metaphors, characteristic of academic registers, when writing formal emails and introductory letters, descriptions, and short essays. We include these exercises since students are interested in learning such conventions (Chase 1988) as part of social and institutional expectations they have or will encounter.

On the other hand, following Royster's (2005, p. 35) suggestion that "product-centered pedagogy stifles growth," and aiming to provide opportunities where students could "find their own pathway to expression, creating their own rhetorical space" (Spicer-Escalante 2005, p. 244), SPAN 49H also includes creative writing assignments: (1) an essay on family diversity, (2) a short story, (3) a self-portrait, and (4) poetry. These assignments aim to be spaces to "facilitate the formation of self and voice—not by deterministic frames for authentication and not by romantic illusions of the writer's life, but by multimodal, multivocal exploration of text and craft" (Royster 2005, p. 37). The goal is to build self-trust that, according to writer Brenda Ueland, is "one of the very most important things in writing" (Ueland [1938] 2014, p. 6).

The combination of these two types of written assignments—genre-specific and creative—fosters in students an awareness of what Kastman Breuch (2002, p. 133) reminded us is the complex nature of writing: a public, interpretive, and situated social activity. Writing requires us to understand our own circumstances as authors, within the specific sites of production from which we write, and we need to define our message according to our audience as sites of reception. Always dialogic in nature, the act of writing responds to specific situations rather than to foundational principles or rules (Kastman

Breuch 2002, p. 138). In this regard, the two types of writing exercises are meant to be spaces where students learn to situate themselves and assume the praxis of their own writing act from different positions as authors. They would then engage with writing as a "performance" (Owens 1993, p. 165) where, as authors, they have the option to decide whether to abide by the requirements and constraints of specific writing contexts or to contest the status quo (Leeman and Serafini 2016) in creative ways.

3.1. Writing Assignments and Digital Tools

Several digital tools were used in class for the written assignments, each tool offering different pedagogical possibilities. For example, individual assignments were done in Word and uploaded to the learning management system Canvas for revision and feedback by the professor. Other assignments were collaborative. Some were done during class time and others as homework. Canvas Collaborations, for example, helped build collective lists of vocabulary from a specific text, and a set of short responses to concrete questions that students could share and analyze briefly during class time. Google slides allowed for both asynchronous tasks and synchronous group discussion. For instance, when discussing some topics on art, representation, and food, the teacher created a Google slideshow open to the whole group. Students worked individually from home on their own slides selecting their images and writing corresponding texts. However, in doing so, and since all students had access to the same slideshow, they were simultaneously contributing to a group presentation. Interactive projects such as this one gave students access to each other's work and foster a sense of community through sharing, exploration, and dialogue. Jamboard—a digital interactive whiteboard—and Padlet—an online common board to post notes—were used for very specific purposes, the former as an optional space for students to share their version of baroque poetry, and the latter to build a Day of the Dead *ofrenda*.

3.2. When Writing Meets (Digital) Artmaking

As mentioned, artmaking activities gave students a second outlet through which they could "redesign" (New London Group 1996) and "apply creatively" (Kalantzis et al. 2016) their new perspectives and knowledge around the meaningful topics discussed in class. As a central and successful part of this author's pedagogy for Spanish L2 and SHL (Parra 2013; Parra et al. 2018) making art was part of SPAN 49H in two ways: as an optional complement to some writing assignments—an essay on family diversity, a short story, and a self-portrait—and as the center of the course's final project (to be described in the next section).

Because research has shown that students' performance is influenced by their understanding and expertise with digital tools (DTs) (Oskoz and Elola 2016; Zapata 2018), and in order to avoid any type of exclusion, students were given the freedom to choose and use any (digital) tool they wanted to create their art—either because they were familiar with it or because they wanted to experiment with it. The most used DT was Adobe Photoshop. Interestingly enough, some students preferred to use paper, pencil, colored pencils, and acrylics instead of the digital options.

3.3. Poetry as a Creative Final Project

The final project for SPAN49H requires students to make an art object that reflects what they have learned about their own Spanish throughout the semester. The definition of "art object" is broad and could include any form of artistic expression: drawings, paintings, digital images, poetry, songs, objects, videos. Assuming that "everybody is talented, original and has something important to say" (Ueland [1938] 2014, p. 5), the art object needs to be accompanied by an analytic essay in Spanish that (a) describes in detail the art object and (b) explains its meaning in relation to notions explored in class: linguistic ideologies, (ethnolinguistic) identity, cultural heritage, belonging, border experiences, communities of practice. Although this essay could be considered academic in nature, it is a flexible interpretation of that genre: students explain their art object and its meaning

while weaving in their personal story. Students are given some *lineamientos* (guidelines) to follow in their essays regarding approximate word count and expectations that they include new Spanish words and use a variety of phrases and discourse connectors. However, there is no predetermined vocabulary they must use. They can choose which new words and connectors best suit the messages and meanings they want to convey.

In the fall 2020 semester, four students decided to write poems as their "art objects." Students had many models of poetry throughout the course: poetry and song lyrics were presented from the beginning of the course in Module 1 when students explored the breadth of Baroque art in New Spain. Excerpts of poems by Góngora, Quevedo, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz were read and analyzed. Students explored some of the main characteristics of Baroque poetry: the evoking of strong and opposite emotions and the overabundance of stylistic devices such as metaphors, hyperboles, and antitheses. After doing a basic analysis of the content and structure of these poems, students wrote their own Baroque-style poems on the topic of their choice. Poems were posted on a "Baroque Jamboard." Later in the same module, we worked with the popular YouTube song "¡Qué difícil es hablar el español!" by the Colombian brothers Juan Andrés Ospina y Nicolás Ospina which highlights the several meanings that the same word can have across different Spanish speaking countries. In Module 2, students worked with the lyrics of the song "Latino América" by Calle 13. The lyrics were analyzed in terms of their references to historical events that, according to the authors, are central to Latin American identity. Students also identified the different rhetorical resources used by the songwriters, such as metaphors, personification, and imagery (see Parra 2021a, for a description of the work with this song). In Module 3, students were exposed to the Mexican popular poetry form *Calaveritas literarias*, written for the Day of the Dead. Rhythm and rhyme were highlighted. Some students wrote Calaveritas for the Day of the Dead Padlet ofrenda. Lastly, in Module 4, students explored the poetry of Chicano author Antonio Burciaga and Puerto Rican writer Tato Laviera. The analysis of these poems revolved around themes of belonging, identity, and the struggles of living 'betwixt and between' along with the hopes for new possibilities in the future. In both of these poems, Spanish and English translanguaging takes center stage. Interestingly enough, Burciaga's poem starts with a verse that emulates Sor Juana's first verse in "Hombres necios" which gives students the opportunity to see how texts can be reinterpreted and assigned new meaning over time and at different sites of reception. In this case, they saw how a poem written by a Mexican nun from the colonial era was reinterpreted by a Chicano writer from the U.S.-Mexico border.

4. Analysis of Poems

In what follows, I first present a general analysis of four poems written by four students (names are pseudonyms) along with their accompanying essays and the digital images and a video that are part of two of the projects (the four poems can be found in Appendix A). I then discuss the main highlights of the analysis regarding the different locations students chose to write from, the affordances that the language itself provided to students to craft their texts, and the additional possibilities that Photoshop and a video offered to add layers of meanings to students' writing projects.

Poem 1 by Jesús. The title of this first poem is *El árbol* ('The Tree'). In the accompanying essay, Jesús explains that he used the "metaphor" (although it is really an analogy) of the tree to talk about the *harmonía* ('harmony') between what he sees as two simultaneous properties of the Spanish language: its static and dynamic natures. For him, these opposite forces give the Spanish language its beauty. Jesús explains that metaphors, similes, and analogies are the *elementos fundamentales* ('fundamental elements') of his poem. In his essay, he explains that the tree roots and trunk represent the main structure of the language, the branches its varieties, and the leaves represent *nosotros* ('we'/'us'), the speakers. Jesús also explains that his choice of verbs and adjectives is essential to his poem as they helped him to connect the trunk, branches, and leaves through *los procesos y las relaciones* ('processes and relations'). For example, in the line "*a pesar de esto, las hojas y las ramas siguen perteneciendo*

al tronco estático" ('despite this, the leaves and branches still belong to the static trunk'), the verb *pertenecer* ('to belong') establishes what the student calls *una relación filial* ('a filial relationship') between these three elements. He continues to explain that the use of adjectives such as *perenne* ('perennial') and *voluble* ('flexible') are *crucial* ('crucial') as they give *una gran cantidad de imaginería* ('a great amount of imagery') to his poem. Jesús explicates that, at the end, the poem and its metaphors, similes, and analogies, are about himself: *En la metáfora, yo soy la hoja voluble, el español híbrido que hablo 'Spanglish' es la rama, el tronco central es el español, y las raíces son mis orígenes mexicanos* ('In the metaphor, I am the flexible leaf, the hybrid Spanish that I speak 'Spanglish' is the branch, the central trunk is Spanish, and the roots are my Mexican origins'). At the end of his essay, Jesús offers the reader a powerful fact: that his aesthetic ideas come from his relationship with his own education. He explains that, coming from a small town in Mexico with no schools, he finds it paradoxical that he now is studying at a prestigious American university. He writes: *Hay un cierto tipo de belleza que nomás se encuentra en la paradoja* ('There is a certain type of beauty that you can only find in the paradox'). He concludes his essay: *Que bonita es la vida y sus contradicciones tan bellas* ('How beautiful is life with its beautiful contradictions').

Besides the figurative language, Jesús used to share his view of the Spanish language as a living being—beautiful, complex, and ever-changing—he added an interesting detail by placing the poem in the middle of the page, creating the form of a tree with the different lengths of the lines (see Appendix A). Although the student does not make it explicit, the poem can be read from top to bottom or bottom to top. It starts and ends with the same line: *la lengua del español es un árbol* ('the Spanish language is a tree').

Jesús locates himself as an observer, contemplator, and describer of the beauty and complexity of the Spanish language. He presents his own views to the audience, his teacher and classmates. He is not in the poem itself. However, he uses the essay to make this connection and become part of the poem. For example, he writes that *las hojas representan a nosotros los hispanohablantes* ('the leaves represent us Spanish speakers'). He also uses the essay to explain that the relationship between language and his identity is at the core of the poem: *aunque las hojas representan a todos los hispanohablantes, las hojas más bien me representan a mí* ('although the leaves represent all the Spanish speakers, the leaves rather represent me').

Poem 2 by Carlos. In his poem, Carlos also draws from the affordances of language, this time rhyme and irony, to craft a poem—almost a narrative—entitled *¡Que*[1] *lindo el español!* ('How fun is the Spanish language!'). Similar to Jesús' poem, Carlos' refers to the beauty of the variants of the Spanish language but adds the dimension of confusion that such variants create among speakers from different countries and generations. Drawing from his own lived experiences, the poem tells the story of a Spanish-speaking boy who lives in the U.S. and participates in confusing exchanges with other Spanish speakers including his teacher, his grandfather, and his parents from two different Latin American countries (Guatemala and El Salvador).

Carlos chose three pairs of Spanish words to represent well-known examples of lexical differences between Spanish speakers in the U.S. and Latin America: *Librería/biblioteca* ('bookstore'/'library'); *troka/camión* ('truck'); and *chipote/gordo* (*niño*, 'boy'). The first instance of confusion happens between the boy and his teacher when he asks for permission to go to the *librería*. (In Latin America, *librería* refers to bookstore. However, in the U.S., the word is sometimes used by second generation speakers as a calque for 'library'.) The teacher responded with a request for clarification: *Adrían, te refieres a la biblioteca?, su profesora contestaba* ('Adrían, do you mean 'biblioteca?' his teacher asked'). Such a question prompted the boy to stay quiet in confusion: *Y Adríán confundido, solo se callaba*. (And Adrían, confused, fell silent').

The next exchange in the poem is between the boy and his grandfather. This time, the confusion comes from the word *troka* ('truck'), used by the boy. The grandfather, confused, says: "*¿Mijo de que hablas? ¿Que es una troka? ¿Hablas del camión?*" ('My boy, what are you talking about? What is a 'troka,' Do you mean camion?'), which again confused the boy:

Todo confundido, Adrían se calló ('All confused, Adrián kept quiet'). The poem continues with a third confusing exchange between the boy, the mother, and the father around the word *chipote* (*niño*, 'boy'). When the boy gets home, very confused after the exchanges with his teacher and grandfather, his mother greets him: *Hola chipote, cómo estas*? ('Hi, my boy, how are you?'). To the child's question about the meaning of *chipote*, the mother responds: *Quiere desir 'niño', la mamá de Adrían contestó* ('It means 'child,' the mother answered.'). However, then his father intervenes: *'¿Niño?' el papá de Adrían preguntó. Eso se refiere a ser gordo de donde yo soy!* ("Boy?' Adrián's father asked, that means 'fat' where I am from.'). The poem ends with the following lines:

> *Finalmente, entendio Adrían que esto es lo maravilloso de este lenguaje de comunicación*
> *Talvez hablamos palabritas diferentes, y hablamos u oimos con confusión*
> *¡Pero al fin del día, todavía se entiende la intención!*
> 'Finally, Adrian understood that this is the wonderful thing about this language of communication
> Maybe we say different little words, and we speak or hear with confusion
> But at the end of the day, the intention is still understood!'

As mentioned, in this poem, Carlos also draws from the affordances of language to create rhymes—*preguntaba* ('asked'), *se callaba* ('fell silent'—the verb is conjugated in imperfect tense), *camión* ('truck'), *se calló* ('fell silent'—the verb is conjugated in simple past), *contestó* ('answered'), *preguntó* ('asked'), *de donde yo soy* ('where I am from'), *comunicación* ('communication'), *confusión* ('confusion'), and *intención* ('intention')—and a sense of irony. The irony, however, is generated not in the poem itself but by the combination and contrast between the title and the content of the poem. The title *¡Qué lindo el español!* clearly contrasts with the communication difficulties that Adrián encounters with his teacher, grandfather, and parents. Nevertheless, the end of the poem appeals to a higher-level awareness: the recognition of the intention to communicate despite differences and difficulties.

In this poem/story, Carlos situates himself as both the narrator and the main character—he is Adrián. He tells a story full of emotion and meaning for a Spanish-speaking U.S.-born boy. In his essay, Carlos explains that he wrote his poem thinking about reaching out to an audience beyond his classmates: young first-generation Spanish-speaking children who could identify with Adrián's situation. Carlos wanted to send them a message to make them feel *cómodos expresando sus ideas y emociones en español, algo que yo me siento capaz de hacer gracias a esta clase* ('comfortable expressing their ideas and emotions in Spanish, as I feel capable of doing thanks to this class').

Poem 3 by Carmen. The analysis of the third poem includes the connection between the title, the poem, and a digital image. The poem's title is *Rompecabezas* ('Puzzle'), and the content is related to the complexity of the identities of those growing up and living between two countries, cultures, and languages. Carmen states: "*el tema de la identidad no es nada fácil*" ('the issue of identity is not easy at all'). To give meaning to this complexity, she relied on her Spanish and English translanguaging capabilities, intercalating lines and verses in the two languages. The poem starts: "I am Mexican American, Soy México Americana." She then added lines connected with the preposition *pero* ('but') to build her poem with oppositions:

> *"I was born in the toiling fields of California*
> *But my heart belongs to the blazing sun of Mexico.*
> *Mis padres nacieron en las tierras calientes de México*
> *Pero nací y crecí en las playas acogedoras de California."*
> 'My parents were born in the hot lands of Mexico
> But I was born in the welcoming beaches of California'

The Spanish-English translanguaging that structures the whole poem could be read as another opposition but also as an attempt by Carmen to integrate her own border experiences as a child of immigrants born in California. Nevertheless, she locates herself

in a position of rebellion and resistance that speaks to two *ejércitos* ('armies') and two 'other/you'—Mexico and U.S.—that seem to not understand her borderlands life: *Soy aquella guerrera luchando en una batalla contra dos ejércitos/ Pero no morderé mi lengua. Mi lengua guiará las palabras para decirte. Quien soy* ('I am that warrior fighting a battle against two armies / But I will not bite my tongue. My tongue will guide the words to tell you. Who I am').

She finishes her poem by stating that she refuses to conform to a liminal space and reclaims her own right to decide who she wants to be: "I reclaim and embrace the power /Reclamo el poder / Of deciding who I am/De decidir quien soy/I am Mexican American /Soy México Americana."[2]

Carmen wrote in her essay that she also decided to accompany the poem with an image because *las imágenes pueden transmitir un mensaje que las palabras tratan de explicar pero no pueden* ('images can convey a message that words try to explain but cannot'). At the same time, she reflects on the importance of language—the poem—to fully understand the image. The digital image (see Appendix A) is a collage divided in two: the Mexican and the U.S. side, represented by both flags. Under each flag, there are pictures of her Mexican family and U.S. friends, respectively. At the center of the collage, there is a picture of Carmen with her nuclear family taken at her quinceañera. The detail connecting the image with the poem is the title *Rompecabezas*; the collage is, in fact, a puzzle. The lines of the puzzle pieces can be seen through the collage pictures, giving the illusion that the collage is made of puzzle pieces. Such an image directly relates to what the student presents as her puzzling border-lived experiences.[3]

Poem 4 by Riley. The last poem consists of the lyrics of a song titled *Cuidador* ('Keeper'). Riley decided to accompany her poem/lyrics with music and a video. To understand the significance of this project, some context is needed. In a previous assignment the student—with Mexican family roots—shared her own feelings of doubt about calling herself a Latina and of being an "impostor" because she did not learn Spanish at home—she learned it in Spain. She also acknowledged her own privileges as a white woman. In that essay, she wondered if she could be "*conquistadora y conquistada*" at the same time.

In the first line of her final essay, Riley explains that her project—the song and video—was inspired by a conversation she had with her grandfather during Thanksgiving. She traveled from the city where her university is to her hometown in California for the holidays. In that conversation, the student shared with her grandfather that her Spanish class had sparked in her an interest in connecting with her Mexican roots within her. She also shared with him her feelings of confusion and bifurcation that prevented her from feeling Latina enough to consider herself suited to safeguard and pass along the family history and traditions.

The grandfather responded by sharing with her a box full of family pictures, letters, immigration papers, and even an Aztec dance suit that was handmade by her Mexican great-grandfather, the founder of a Mexican cultural center in Los Angeles. The student was so moved by what she found in the box that she writes: *Esta es la primera vez que ví tantas cosas de nuestra familia, y de repente me sentía más emocionada de lo que había sentido por mucho tiempo* ('This was the first time I've seen so many things about our family, and suddenly I felt more emotional than I had in a long time). She continues: *Después de compartir esta experiencia tan memorable y preciosa con mi abuelo, supe que tenia que escribir una canción que capturara el sentimiento de ese momento para que nunca se me olvidara* ('After sharing this very memorable and precious experience with my grandfather, I knew that I had to write a song that captured the feeling of that moment so that I would never forget it').

Then she explains that she chose the title *Cuidador* ('Keeper') inspired by all the things she found in the box and by the role that she now wants to play as *nieta, descendiente, y recipiente de esta historia tan larga y rica* ('granddaughter, descendent, and recipient of this long and rich history.'). The student situates herself now in a position that reaffirms her own personal story as a member of what she now understands as a Chicano family and its history. She ends her poem with a verse where she identifies her own heart with the

traditional Mexican instrument, *la marimba*, and a clear commitment to embrace her family history and heritage:

Late el corazón como marimba
Tradiciones de antigüedad
La historia de mi familia es la mía
Y eso no se me olvidará.
'The heart beats like a marimba
Traditions of antiquity
My family's story is mine
And that I will not forget.'

The video has as soundtrack Riley's voice singing the lyrics accompanied by her guitar while the video presents a series of pictures of the several things she found in the box: family pictures, pamphlets, posters, and objects. With the use of video, she adds movement into her narrative and gives the effect of a journey of discovery of a rich and precious family history. She added some captions for the viewer to understand what the objects in the pictures were, and she ended the video with a photo of herself with her grandfather, both smiling.

5. Discussion

The analysis of the poems showed that the four students used the creative assignment as an opportunity to engage with meaningful topics—their own lived experiences and affects—through the many affordances that the Spanish language provides: descriptions, similes, analogies, rhyme, irony, humor, oppositions, metaphors, and translanguaging. All of these affordances were identified in the poetry and song lyric models studied in class. Through their poetry, students "performed" different writer roles (Owens 1993): as observers and perspective sharers; narrators and participants in a story; rebels and freedom fighters; and as vindicators and keepers of family traditions.

All of the students communicated complex issues and emotions through different semiotic resources (Serafini 2014, p. 413), starting with language itself. Besides the many rhetorical devices students used in their poems and song, they also used language as a tool for a metalinguistic analysis of their own work (Kern 2004) in the accompanying essays.

The analysis showed that the structure of the assignment—art object plus analytical essay—along with the freedom to choose linguistic and multimodal resources, allowed students to put together complex webs of "semiotic chainings" (Kress 2004, 2010; Stein 2008) by linking and weaving in the poems' titles with their content and structure along with the content of the essays. In Jesús' case, the visual presentation of the poem on the page was also a link in the semiotic chain, as well as the digital image in Carmen's work and the video in Riley's.

Moreover, the choices students made within the language and with the use of DTs allowed them to relate to and communicate feelings and ideas from different times and spaces (a bygone time in a hometown in Mexico, childhood home and school, the border, a distant migration story from Mexico to California) (Serafini 2015, p. 412). However, through the poems, digital images, song, and video, students made "readable," "audible," and "visible" the present "punctuated moment of semiosis" (Kress 2000 cited in Bezemer and Kress 2017) that demonstrated their new awareness and critical understandings (Serafini 2015, p. 416) about the meaning of the Spanish language in their lives and about their own identities as Spanish speakers at that particular moment.

Students' awareness of the audience is also important to highlight: it played a role in determining their location and the content and form of their poems. For example, Jesús explained that: [. . .] *sabiendo que la audiencia que iba a leer mi poema tiene un entendimiento profundo del español, tuve la libertad de usar frases y expresiones más abstractas, dándole más complejidad a mi poema* ('Knowing that the audience that was going to read my poem has a deep understanding of Spanish, I was free to use more abstract phrases and expressions, adding more complexity to my poem.').

Carlos also took into account the audience in the class when considering the topic of his poem: Definitivamente pensé en el público que asistiría a mi presentación y de hecho elegí mi tema porque sabia que era un tema que la mayoría de nuestra clase podía relacionarse ('I definitely thought of the audience that would attend my presentation and actually chose my topic because I knew it was a topic that most of our class could relate to'). He then went a step further and considered an important audience beyond the class: hice mi poema con la esperanza de que cualquier latino de primera generación pudiera leerlo y reírse del poema y al menos relacionarse con una de las líneas ('I made my poem in the hope that any first-generation Latino could read it and laugh at the poem and at least relate to one of the lines'). He added that he tried to emulate Dr. Seuss' playful rhyme style to make the poem more enjoyable, especially for Latinx children (see Appendix A).

Carmen also hoped to reach out to the broader Mexican American community to convince people to *reclamar su poder de decidir quiénes son, un poder que solo uno mismo tiene* ('to claim their power to decide who they are, a power that only oneself has'). She also mentioned that her new understandings about language and translanguaging at the border will be important to help her community when she becomes a doctor.

Finally, Riley did not specify an audience for her song and video beyond the classroom and professor, but she recognized herself as the audience of the many instances in class when her classmates shared their own stories, cultures, and lived experiences. She wrote: *Me siento muy agradecida de haber conocido a tradiciones de otras culturas y estudiantes mientras exploraba la mía. Gracias a esta clase, me he conectado más con mis raíces chicanas* ('I am very grateful to have learned about traditions from other cultures and students while exploring my own. Thanks to this class, I have connected more with my Chicano roots').

6. Final Remarks

The main goal of this article was to show the benefits of including creative writing, and poetry in particular, for advancing and strengthening literacy and writing capabilities in Latinx students, along with developing their author voices. I hope to have shown that there is still a pedagogical world related to creativity to explore and to draw from to enrich our Spanish heritage classes. Students' final creative projects speak to the benefits of a multiliteracies-based curriculum that includes:

1. Interdisciplinary and humanities content that engages students with the richness and complexities of the history of the Spanish-speaking world and Latinx communities (Martínez and San Martín 2018; Parra 2016; Parra et al. 2018; Potowski 2012; Torres et al. 2017). As Parra (2021b, p. 61) explained elsewhere and the poems' analysis suggests, such a curriculum enhances the possibilities of: (a) identifying with the narratives of Latinx authors; (b) expressing the plurality of their lived experiences; and (c) re-appropriating the past in order to better understand the present and project to the future (Lionnet 1989).
2. Written, multimodal, and multimedia texts as models and digital technologies as resources for a myriad of meaning-making possibilities for students' projects. As Jewitt (2008) proposed, multimodal and multimedia texts expand on traditional forms of literacies while providing models for multiple-literacies projects that build on stories based on and arising from young people's lives and experiences and cultural forms of representation.
3. A pedagogy of writing that centers on meaningful topics (Loureiro-Rodriguez 2013) and combines process and post-process approaches (Martínez 2005; Mrak 2020). The analyses of the poems and essays underscore, once more, the benefits of incorporating flexible definitions of "genre" as staged and goal-oriented (Fairclough 2003; Xerri 2012). The craft and reshaping of a text—academic and creative—have to do with purpose and audience (Kress 2010, p. 132), more than with the application of formulaic conventions.
4. Poetry. Alone or combined with digital tools, poetry reading and interpretation, as well as its crafting, become a rich linguistic and learning experience (Durán 2015;

Lima, forthcoming; Royster 2005; Xerri 2012). Poetry also allows for engaging with the performative dimension of the act of writing, fostering students' awareness of: (a) the different locations they can take on as authors; (b) the effective and affective power their words can have to convey and project new understandings about the role of the Spanish language in their lives; and (c) the possibilities to imagine—and hopefully enact—reaching out to broader audiences and communities beyond the classroom. This awareness is a transformative learning experience that, at least in the four poems analyzed here, seems to have empowered students' writing voices and identities.

5. Creative assignments. The analysis of the four poems showed that creativity strengthened students' writing voices within their own rhetorical spaces (Spicer-Escalante 2005, p. 244) while allowing them to connect with deep affective issues and questions of ethnolinguistic identity that were expressed in creative ways. It is important to note that just because assignments are creative does not mean that they are easy. Crafting a poem—or a digital image or video—implies important conceptual and linguistic challenges. However, students happily engaged and wrestled with them. As Jesús wrote in his essay: *Debido a esta libertad creativa, el proceso de escribir este poema fue divertido y placentero[. . .]. Al mismo tiempo, aunque este proyecto fue vivificante, eso no quiere decir que fue fácil* ('Given the creative freedom, the process of writing this poem was fun and enjoyable[. . .]. At the same time, even when it was an energizing project, this does not mean that it was easy'). Carlos also wrote: [. . .] *decidí escribir un poema, una actividad que nunca hago ni siquiera cuando escribo en inglés y que siempre he querido probar* ('[. . .] I decided to write a poem, an activity that I have never done even in English but that I have always wanted to try'). He explains that writing a poem simulating Dr. Seuss' rhythm and rhyme scheme was not an easy task: *Este detalle fue muy difícil para implementar porque costo mucho a tiempos encontrar palabras que pudieran comunicar el mensaje que quiera comunicar en esa línea y que también siguieran la estética de la rima, pero pienso que valió la pena* ('This detail was really difficult to implement because it took me a long time to find the words I needed to convey the message and that also followed the aesthetics and rhyme, but I think it was worth it').

Needless to say, we must be aware of the fact that creative writing classes and workshops can also be spaces that, as Morales Kearns suggests (Morales Kearns 2009, p. 793), can "gag" students voices, as they can encourage competitiveness and normative stances, all of which results in counterproductive and alienating process for students (Ibid., p. 790). However, including creative writing—with its many positive and constructive aspects—as a central part of the pedagogy in SHL classes offers ample possibilities to engage students with writing as a social act in a "perpetual state of flux" (Royster 2005, p. 29) and as a transformative learning experience, as the analyzed poems showed. In this regard, it is worth mentioning important academic efforts that are being made to invite high school and college students to engage in creative writing. Such is the case of the student writing contest organized each year by the National Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language (NSSHL) and the Creative Latinx Journal *Palabras con alas* (https://www.palabrasconalas.online/ Accessed 1 April 2021).

How to assess such creative exercises and learning experiences is always a complicated question as teachers have to take into consideration the specific goals of each course and institutional expectations (Chase 1988; Parra et al. 2018). However, I believe that, as educators, the final goal of our courses is not only to provide students with resources for writing a particular text well in a given genre as expected, along with corresponding grades. We also need to provide them with spaces to engage with the performativity of writing "in freedom" (Freire 2005). We need to foster their self-confidence by letting them know that as teachers we *listen* to their writing voices (Ueland [1938] 2014, p. 6). We also need to provide them with opportunities to integrate into their writing assignments the use of digital technologies. They can be effective enhancers of students' creativity and voices as

they "become" writers (Royster 2005, p. 29) and creators in and for their future personal and professional communities.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Acknowledgments: I want to thank Adalberto Parra for his support and encouragement for writing this paper and Ana Laura Santamaría Placencia for her insightful comments about the analysis of the poems and essays.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Poem 1. *El árbol*, Adopted with permission from Juan Saucedo Ochoa.

El Árbol

La lengua del español es un árbol

Sus raíces robustas lo mantienen bien fundado

su tronco largo forma una base firme y permanente

sus ramas nunca dejan de crecer, son infinitas como las estrellas

creciendo y creciendo de ellas salen las hojas

en color, tamaño y textura estas hojas son distintas

verdes, rojas, grandes, chicas, gruesas, lisas

las hojas no son fijas, cambian y cambian con el tiempo

las hojas se seguirán transformando y la ramas seguirán creciendo

este ciclo nunca para, es interminable como la esencia del universo

a pesar de esto, las hojas y las ramas siguen perteneciendo al tronco estático

así como el ADN es el origen del humano,

el tronco es el origen de las hojas y ramas constantemente cambiantes

un árbol simultáneamente perenne y voluble

la lengua del español es un árbol.

Poem 2. *¡Que lindo el español!* by Adopted with permission from Kevin Barrera.

Desde que era pequeño, Adrían sabía que era diferente
Su manera de hablar lo distinguía como una estrella en su frente
Habalaba el español, como hijo de hispanos
Y también el ingles, como un americano

Pero habían palabras en español que él no sabía
¡Y tal vez las decia incorrectas, pero todavía se entendían!
Cuando en la clase, el siempre preguntaba,
"¿Perdón profesora, puedo ir a la librería?"
"¿Adrían, te refieres a la biblioteca?", su profesora contestaba
Y Adrían, confundido, solo se callaba

En el camino para su casa, los errores de Adrían continuaron
Tratando de conversar le pregunto a su abuelo, "Oye pa, que piensas de esa troka"
Su abuelo, confundido, se puso el dedo enfrente de la boca
Deapues le contesto, "¿Mijo de que hablas? ¿Que es una troka? ¿Hablas del camión?"
Todo confundido, Adrían se calló
No podía esperar llegar a casa, para hablar con su mamá de todo lo que oyo

Cuando Adrían llegó a casa, su confusión continuaba
Ahora para hablar con su papá, quien es de Guatemala
Y también con su mamá, quien es de El Salvador
"¿Hola cipote como estas?", la mamá de Adrían comenzó
"¿Porque lo llamas gordo?" el papá de Adrían respondió
"¿Que es un cipote?", Adrían preguntó
"Quiere desir niño", la mamá de Adrían contestó
"¿Nino?", el papá de Adrían preguntó,
"Eso se refiere a ser gordo de donde yo soy!"

Todavia un poco confundido, Adrían finalmente entendió
Que ni su mama ni su papa podían hablar correctamante el "español"
Que ni su maestra ni su abuelo hablaban correctamente el "español"
Y que en realidad, nadie puede hablar correctamente el "español"

Finalmente, entendio Adrían que esto es lo maravilloso de este lenguaje de comunicación
Talvez hablamos palabritas diferentes, y hablamos u oimos con confusión
¡Pero al fin del día, todavía se entiende la intención!

Poem 3. *Rompecabezas.* Adopted with permission from Karen Fernández (2021). Copyright 2021 Copyright Karen Fernández.

I am Mexican American,
Soy México Americana.

I am asked where I am from,
But how do I answer
I was born in the toiling fields of California,
But my heart belongs to the blazing sun of Mexico.
Me preguntan de donde soy
Pero cómo respondo
Mis padres nacieron en las tierras calientes de México,
Pero nací y crecí en las playas acogedoras de California.

I am asked which language I am more fluent in,
But how do I answer
I attended English-only classes
And played with my Anglo friends at school.
Me preguntan qué lengua hablo más fluidamente,
Pero cómo respondo
Solo se habla español en casa
Y jugaba con mis vecinos hispanohablantes.

Depende quien, por qué, cuándo y dónde
Me preguntan
Para saber cómo responder.

I am Mexican American,
Soy México Americana.

There is no single word to describe the feeling of
Being Mexican American
Living on the border
This is but a label
That does not have the gravitational pull
To yield me to one side or the other
It has left me feeling in-betwixt

Pero no morderé mi lengua
Mi lengua guiará las palabras para decirte
Quien soy
Soy aquella quien tu llamaste y sigues llamando traidora
Soy aquella artista que pinta fuera de su celda
Soy aquella guerrera
Luchando en una batalla contra dos ejércitos

My identity is fluid
Like the waters of a river
Moving the rocks and sediments
Until to the sea they arrive
Como los vientos de Santa Ana

Llevándole un te quiero
De un enamorado a otro

A veces me siento un poco más mexicana
Cuando toca el mariachi,
Escucho las baladas de Juan Gabriel,
Veo el arte de Frida Kahlo,
Cuando me pongo los vestidos de colores vibrantes
Parecidos a aquellos de los Aztecas.

Sometimes I feel a bit more American
When I hear the musical artistry of Beyonce and Aerosmith
When I hear the fireworks crackling on the 4th
When I see people protesting for human rights
Wearing the pride and power of my feminist sisters.

I am Mexican American,
Soy México Americana.

I am told I cannot be warrior and conqueror
I must choose a side
Si soy guerrera,
¿Por qué no regreso a la madre patria?
If I am conqueror,
Am I a traitor to my culture, to my family?

I choose not to live in liminality
No soy partido neutral
I choose not to fall in between the cracks
Of a border that straddles two countries
And let you decide
Who I am
Who I should be
Who I can be

I reclaim and embrace the power
Reclamo el poder
Of deciding who I am
De decidir quien soy

I am Mexican American,
Soy México Americana.

Rompecabezas. Image reproduced with permission of author, Karen Fernández, 2021.

Poem 4. *Cuidador* // Keeper. Adopted with permission from Ryen Díaz.

Cada dia que no me siento verdad
Diciendo que soy parte de la comunidad
Recuerdo que los otros no deciden
Recuerdo que es mi identidad

Aunque sea que estoy confundida
Hay una cosa que sé con seguridad
La artista que soy es por la herencia
Un regalo de generaciones atrás

A pesar de ambas culturas
Soy latina y no cambiará
La historia de familia es la mía
Una transmito (I pass on) con Felicidad

Late el corazón como marimba
Tradiciones de antigüedad
La historia de familia es la mía
La historia de familia es la mía
Y eso no se me olvidará

Notes

1 The text I quote in Spanish is the original version used by students. Orthography is not normalized.

2 The phrases in English and Spanish are all originally written by the student. There is no translation here by the author.

3 This poem won a prize in the 8th National Symposium on the Spanish as Heritage Language, organized by the Institute for Language Education in Transcultural Context (ILETC), The Graduate Center, CUNY, on 13 May and 14 May 2021.

References

Aparicio, Francis. 1983. Teaching Spanish to the Native Speaker at the College Level. *Hispania* 66: 232–39. [CrossRef]

Beaudrie, Sara, Angélica Amezcua, and Sergio Loza. 2020. Critical language awareness in the heritage language classroom: Design, implementation, and evaluation of a curricular intervention. *International Multilingual Research Journal*. [CrossRef]

Beaudrie, Sara, Cynthia Ducar, and Kim Potowski. 2014. *Heritage Language Teaching: Research and Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Bezemer, Jeff, and Gunther Kress. 2017. Continuity and change: Semiotic relations across multimodal texts in surgical education. *Text&Talk* 37: 509–30.

Bishop, Wendy. 1997. Poetry as a therapeutic process: Realigning art and the unconscious. In *Teaching Lives: Essays and Stories*. Logan: Utah State University Press, pp. 252–63.
Blake, Robert, and Gabriel Guillén. 2020. Brave New Digital Classroom. In *Technology and Foreign Language Learning*, 3rd ed. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. First published in 2008.
Burgo, Clara. 2020. Writing Strategies to Develop Literacy Skills for Advanced Spanish Heritage Language Learner. *SCOLT Dimension* 2020: 97–107.
Carreira, María. 2004. Seeking explanatory adequacy: A dual approach to understanding the term 'heritage language learner'. *Heritage Language Journal* 2: 1–25. [CrossRef]
Chase, Geoffrey. 1988. Accommodation, resistance, and the politics of students writing. *College Composition and Communication* 39: 13–22. [CrossRef]
Chen, Hsin-I. 2013. Identity practices of multilingual writers in social networking spaces. *Language Learning & Technology* 17: 143–70.
Chevalier, Joan F. 2004. Heritage language literacy: Theory and practice. *Heritage Language Journal* 2: 1–19. Available online: http://www.heritagelanguages.org (accessed on 20 June 2021). [CrossRef]
Colombi, M. Cecilia. 2015. Academic and cultural literacy for heritage speakers of Spanish: A case study of Latin@ students in California. *Linguistics and Education* 32: 5–15. [CrossRef]
Durán, Leah Gordon. 2015. Audience awareness and the writing development of young bilingual children. Doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, TX, USA.
Elola, Idoia, and Ana Oskoz. 2015. Toward Online and Hybrid Courses. In *The Routledge Handbook in Hispanic Applied Linguistics*. Edited by Manel Lacorte. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 221–37.
Elola, Idoia, and Ana Oskoz. 2017. Writing with 21st century social tools in the L2 classroom: New literacies, genres, and writing practices. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 36: 52–60. [CrossRef]
Elola, Idoia, and Ariana M. Mikulski. 2013. Revisions in Real Time: Spanish Heritage Language Learners' Writing Processes in English and Spanish. *Foreign Language Annals* 46: 646–60. [CrossRef]
Fairclough, Norman. 2003. *Analyzing Discourse*. Textual analysis for social research. London: Routledge.
Fernández, Karen. 2021. *Rompecabezas*. Paper presented at The 8th National Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language, New York, NY, USA, May 13–15. Organized by the Institute for Language Education in Transcultural Context (ILETC), The Graduate Center, CUNY.
Flores, Juan. 2000. *From Bomba to Hip-Hop*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Freire, Paulo. 2005. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th anniversary. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos. London: Continuum.
García, Ofelia, and Wei Li. 2014. *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism & Education*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
Giroux, Henry A. 1991. Postmodernism as border pedagogy. In *Postmodernism, Feminism, and Cultural Politics: Redrawing Educational Boundaries*. Edited by Henry A. Giroux. Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 217–56.
Heath, Shirley Brice. 1991. The Sense of Being Literate: Historical and Cross-Cultural Features. In *Handbook of Reading Research*. Edited by Rebecca Barr, Michael L. Kamil, Peter B. Mosenthal and P. David Pearson. New York: Longman, vol. II, pp. 3–25.
Henshaw, Florencia. 2016a. Online Courses for Heritage Learners: Best Practices and Lessons Learned. In *Advances in Spanish as a Heritage Language*. Edited by D. Pascual y Cabo. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 281–98.
Henshaw, Florencia. 2016b. Technology-Enhanced Heritage Language Instruction: Best Tools and Best Practices. In *Innovative Strategies for Heritage Language Teaching: A Practical Guide for the Classroom*. Edited by Sara Beaudrie and Marta Fairclough. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, pp. 237–53.
Ignatieva, Natalia, and M. Cecilia Colombi. 2014. *El lenguaje académico en México y en los Estados Unidos: Un análisis sistémico Funcional*. Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
Jewitt, Carey. 2008. *Technology, Literacy and Learning: A Multimodal Approach*. London: Routledge.
Kalantzis, Mary, and Bill Cope. 2005. *Learning by Design*. Melbourne: Common Ground.
Kalantzis, Mary, Bill Cope, Eveline Chan, and Leanne Dalley-Trim. 2016. *Literacies*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kastman Breuch, Lee-Ann M. 2002. Post-Process Pedagogy: A Philosophical Exercise. *JAC* 22: 119–150.
Kern, Richard. 2004. Literacy and advanced foreign language learning: Rethinking the curriculum. In *Advanced Foreign Language Learning: A Challenge to College Programs*. Edited by Heidi Byrnes and Hiram H. Maxim. Heinle: Boston, vol. 1, pp. 2–18.
Kress, Gunter. 2000. Text as the punctuation of semiosis: Pulling at some threads. In *Intertextuality and the Media: From Genre to Everyday Life*. Edited by Ulrike Meinhof and Jonathon Smith. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 132–54.
Kress, Gunther. 2004. Reading images: Multimodality, representation and new media. *Information Design Journal Document Design*. 12: 110–19. [CrossRef]
Kress, Gunther. 2010. *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. Abingdon: Routledge.
Leeman, Jennifer, and Ellen Serafini. 2016. Sociolinguistics for heritage language educators and students: A model for critical translingual competence. In *Innovative Strategies for Heritage Language Teaching: A Practical Guide for the Classroom*. Edited by Marta Fairclough and Sara Beaudrie. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, pp. 56–79.
Lima, Rossy. Forthcoming. El uso de la escritura creativa para el desarrollo de la lecto-escritura en hablantes de español como lengua de herencia: Un acercamiento práctico. In *El español como lengua de herencia*. Edited by Diego Pascual y Cabo and Julio Torres. London: Routledge Press.
Lionnet, Françoise. 1989. *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Lomicka, Lara. 2020. Creating and Sustaining Virtual Communities. *Foreign Language Annals*. Summer. Available online: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/flan.12456 (accessed on 2 July 2020).

Loureiro-Rodriguez, Verónica. 2013. Meaningful writing in the heritage language class: A case study of heritage learners of Spanish in Canada. *L2 Journal* 5. Available online: http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3mp064qx (accessed on 27 February 2021).

Martínez, Glenn, and Karim San Martín. 2018. Language and Power in a Medical Spanish for Heritage Learners Program: A Learning by Design Perspective. In *Multiliteracies Pedagogy and Language Learning. Teaching Spanish to Heritage Speakers*. Edited by Gabriela Zapata and Manel Lacorte. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 107–28.

Martínez, Glenn. 2005. Genres and Genre Chains: Post-Process Perspectives on HL Writing. *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 24: 79–90.

Martínez, Glenn. 2007. Writing Back and Forth: The Interplay of Form and Situation in Heritage Language Composition. *Language Teaching Research* 11: 31–41. [CrossRef]

Martínez, Glenn. 2016. Goals and beyond in Heritage Language Education: From Competencies to Capabilities. In *Innovative Strategies for Heritage Language Teaching: A Practical Guide for the Classroom*. Edited by Sara Beaudrie and Marta Fairclough. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, pp. 39–55.

Mkhitarian, Elizabeth. 2019. While I make a poem, I am being made by poetry. Creative writing in heritage language instruction. In *Western Armenian in the 21st Century: Challenges and New Approaches*. Edited by Barlow Der Matossian and Bedross Der Mugrdechian. Freso: California State University Press, pp. 131–43.

Morales Kearns, Rosalie. 2009. Voice of Authority: Theorizing Creative Wring Pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication* 60: 790–807.

Mrak, Ariana. 2020. Developing Writing in Spanish Heritage Language Learners: An Integrated Process Approach. *SCOLT Dimension* 2020: 82–96.

Navarrete, Federico. 2020. La blanquitud y la blancura, cumbre del racismo mexicano. *Revista de la Universidad de México*. Dossier Racismo. Available online: https://www.revistadelauniversidad.mx/articles/ca12bb18-2c40-40dc-add6-b0acd62fafbd/la-blanquitud-y-la-blancura-cumbre-del-racismo-mexicano (accessed on 23 February 2021).

New London Group. 1996. A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures. *Harvard Educational Review* 66: 60–92. [CrossRef]

Oskoz, Ana, and Idoia Elola. 2016. Digital stories: Bringing multimodal texts to the Spanish writing classroom. *ReCALL* 28: 326–42. [CrossRef]

Oskoz, Ana, and Idoia Elola. 2020. *Digital L2 Writing Literacies*. London: Equinox Press.

Owens, Derek. 1993. Composing as the voicing of multiple fictions. In *Into the Field*. Edited by Anne Ruggles Gere. New York: Modern Language Association of America, pp. 159–75.

Parra, María Luisa. 2013. Expanding Language and Cultural Competence in Advanced Heritage- and Foreign-Language Learners through Community Engagement and work with the Arts. *Heritage Language Journal* 10: 115–42. [CrossRef]

Parra, María Luisa. 2014. Strengthening our teacher community: Consolidating a 'signature pedagogy' for the teaching of Spanish as heritage language. In *Rethinking Heritage Language Education*. Edited by Peter P. Trifonas and Themistoklis Aravossitas. The Cambridge Education Research Series; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 213–136.

Parra, María Luisa. 2016. Understanding Identity among Spanish Heritage Learners: An Interdisciplinary Endeavor. In *Advances in Spanish as a Heritage Language*. Diego Pascual y Cabo. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 177–204.

Parra, María Luisa. 2017. Beyond academic language: Creative writing for empowering heritage identities. Paper presented at 10th Heritage Language Research Institute, University of Illinois at Urbana, Champaign, IL, USA, May 22–25.

Parra, María Luisa, Araceli Otero, Rosa Flores, and Marguerite Lavellé. 2018. Designing a Comprehensive Course for Advanced Spanish Heritage Learners: Contributions from the Multiliteracies Framework. In *Multiliteracies Pedagogy and Language Learning. Teaching Spanish to Heritage Speakers*. Edited by G. Zapata and M. Lacorte. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 27–66.

Parra, María Luisa. 2021a. La literacidad múltiple en el aprendizaje del español como lengua de herencia. In *El español como lengua de herencia*. Edited by Diego Pascual y Cabo and Julio Torres. New York: Routledge Press, pp. 97–110.

Parra, María Luisa. 2021b. *La enseñanza del español a la juventud latina*. Madrid: Arco Libros/La Muralla.

Pavlenko, Aneta, and James P. Lantolf. 2000. Second language learning as participation and the (re)construction of selves. In *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*. Edited by James P. Lantolf. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 155–77.

Potowski, Kim. 2012. Identity and heritage learners: Moving beyond essentializations. In *Spanish as a Heritage Language in the United States. The State of the Field*. Edited by Sara María Beaudrie y and Marta Fairclough. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, pp. 179–202.

Potowski, Kim. 2005. *Fundamentos de la enseñanza del español a hispanohablantes en los EE.UU. [Foundations of the teaching of Spanish to Spanish speakers in the U.S.]*. Madrid: Arco Libros.

Prada, Josh. 2019. Exploring the role of translanguaging in linguistic ideological and attitudinal reconfigurations in the Spanish classroom for heritage speakers. *Classroom Discourse* 10: 306–22. [CrossRef]

Prada, Josh. Forthcoming. Translanguaging thining y el español como lengua de herencia. In *El español como lengua de herencia*. Edited by Diego Pascual y Cabo and Julio Torres. London: Routledge Press.

Reznicek-Parrado, M. Lina. 2014. The personal essay and academic writing proficiency in Spanish heritage language development. *Arizona Working Papers in SLA & Teaching* 21: 71–83.

Rosaldo, Renato. 1993. *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis: With a New Introduction*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Rovai, Alfred P. 2002. Building sense of community at a distance. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 3: 1–16. [CrossRef]

Royster, Brent. 2005. Inspiration, creativity, and crisis: The Romantic myth of the writer meets the postmodern classroom. In *Power and Identity in the Creative Writing Classroom*. Edited by Anna Leahy. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp. 26–38.

Sánchez-Muñoz, Ana. 2016. Heritage language healing? Learners' attitudes and damage control in a heritage language classroom. In *Advances in Spanish as a Heritage Language*. Edited by Diego Pascual y Cabo. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 205–20.

Schleppegrell, Mary J., and María Cecilia Colombi. 1997. Text Organization by Bilingual Writers. *Written Communication* 14: 481–503. [CrossRef]

Serafini, Frank. 2014. *Reading the Visual: An Introduction to Teaching Multimodal Literacy*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Serafini, Frank. 2015. Multimodal Literacy: From Theories to Practices. *Language Arts* 92: 412–23.

Sleeter, Christine E., and Peter McLaren. 1995. *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy, and the Politics of Difference*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Spicer-Escalante, María. 2005. Writing in Two Languages/Living in Two Worlds: A Rhetorical Analysis of Mexican-American Written Discourse. In *Latino Language and Literacy in Ethnolinguistic Chicago*. Edited by Marcia Farr. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 217–44.

Stein, Pippa. 2008. *Multimodal Pedagogies in Diverse Classrooms: Representation, Rights and Resources*. London: Routledge.

Tavalin, Fern. 1995. Context for Creativity: Listening to Voices, Allowing a Pause. *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 29: 133–42. [CrossRef]

Torres, Julio, Diego Pascual, and John Beusterien. 2017. What's next? Heritage language learners shape news paths in Spanish teaching. *Hispania* 100: 271–76. [CrossRef]

Ueland, Brenda. 2014. *If You Want to Write*, 1st ed. Floyd: Sublime Books. First published 1938.

Valdés, Guadalupe, Sonia V. González, Dania López García, and Patricio Márquez. 2008. Ideologies of monolingualism: The challenges of maintaining non-English languages through educational institutions. In *Heritage Language Acquisition: A New Field Emerging*. Edited by Donna M. Brinton and Olga Kagan. New York: Routledge, pp. 107–30.

Valdés, Guadalupe. 1978. A comprehensive approach to the teaching of Spanish to bilingual Spanish-speaking students. *The Modern Language Journal* 62: 102–10.

Villa, Daniel. 2004. No nos dejaremos: Writing in Spanish as an Act of Resistance. In *Latino/a Discourses on Language, Identity & Literacy Education*. Edited by Michelle Hall Kells, Valerie Balester and Victor Villanueva. Portsmouth: Heinemann, pp. 85–95.

Villa, Laura, and J. José del Valle. 2015. The Politics of Spanish in the World. In *The Routledge Handbook in Hispanic Applied Linguistics*. Edited by Manel Lacorte. London: Routledge, pp. 571–87.

Xerri, Daniel. 2012. Poetry Teaching and Multimodality: Theory into Practice. *Creative Education* 3: 507–12. [CrossRef]

Yoder Miller, Evie. 2005. Reinventing Writing Classrooms: The Combination of Creating and Composing. In *Power and Identity in the Creative Writing Classroom*. Edited by Anna Leahy. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp. 39–48.

Zapata, Gabriela. 2018. The Role of Digital, Learning by Design Instructional Materials in the Development of Spanish Heritage Learners' Literacy Skills. In *Multiliteracies Pedagogy and Language Learning. Teaching Spanish to Heritage Speakers*. Edited by Gabriela Zapata and Manel Lacorte. London: Palgrave, pp. 67–106.