

“I want to help end linguistic discrimination”: Community-based global learning in an upper-level Spanish class

Community-based learning, a high-impact practice for heritage and other learners, creates learning experiences for students outside classrooms. It can develop students' critical language awareness, i.e., their ability to push back against ideologies of linguistic inferiority (Lowther Pereira, 2022). Community-based global learning (CBGL) or community experiences that target “understand[ing] global citizenship, positionality, power, structure, and social responsibility in a global context” (Hartman et al., 2018, p. 21) touts similar goals while going beyond linguistic questions.

Each student in a “Spanish in the US” course partnered with a Spanish speaker from the International Healthcare Professionals Program (IHPP) for a language and cultural exchange. The leader of IHPP and the professor designed weekly conversations based on principles of mutual learning, in which partners shared their experiences and practiced their language skills, with each partner in the role of tutor *and* tutee. Students (n=10) wrote critical reflections during the semester and completed the Global Engagement Survey (GES; Reynolds et al., 2021) to measure components of CBGL at the beginning and end of the semester. Most scores on the GES increased from beginning to end of the semester; however, scores of cultural adaptability decreased. Students often gave language-related examples, such as the quote in the title of this presentation, in response to the GES' open-ended questions, demonstrating growth in critical language awareness and “a propensity to *act* in making linguistic (and other) decisions in everyday life” (Serafini, 2022, p. 91).

This study is innovative in assessing learners' “propensity to act” in addition to their reflections. Results, including qualitative analyses of reflections, will be discussed vis-a-vis heritage language education and critical language awareness. Audience members will learn about the development of the intercultural exchange and how we assessed it through written reflections and the GES, to be able to apply those ideas to their own contexts.