

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND PROGRAM ARTICULATION  
IN U.S. TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER TRAINING

by

Julio Fernández Cordero Ciller

---

Copyright © Julio Fernández Cordero Ciller 2019

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2019

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
GRADUATE COLLEGE

As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Julio Fernández-Cordero Ciller, titled Language Proficiency and Language Program Articulation in U.S. Translator and Interpreter Training: Perspectives from Stakeholders and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

*Sonia Colina*

*Dr. Sonia Colina*

Date: August 2, 2019

*Antxon Olarra*

*Dr. Antxon Olarra*

Date: August 2, 2019

*Beatrice C. Dupuy*

*Dr. Beatrice C. Dupuy*

Date: August 2, 2019

*Manel Lacorte*

*Dr. Manel Lacorte*

Date: August 2, 2019

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

*Sonia Colina*

*Dr. Sonia Colina*  
Dissertation Committee Chair  
Department of Spanish & Portuguese

Date: August 2, 2019

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	7
ABSTRACT	8
CHAPTER 1. LITERATURE REVIEW	10
1.1. Introduction	10
1.2. Literature Review	13
1.2.1. Language Proficiency and Translator/Interpreter Education	13
1.2.1.1. Language Proficiency in Translator Competence Models	13
1.2.1.2. Language Proficiency in Translation Teaching	16
1.2.2. Language Proficiency in Translator/Interpreter Programs	21
1.2.3. Translation and Interpreting Programs in the US	24
1.2.3.1. Current Status of T&I Programs in Language Departments	24
1.2.3.2. Articulation in Language Departments	26
1.2.4. Language Proficiency Standards and Program Evaluation in Applied Linguistics	31
1.2.4.1. Language Proficiency and Standards in Second and Heritage Language Education	31
1.2.4.2. Program Evaluation	34
1.2.4.3. A Utilization-Focused Approach to Program Evaluation and Articulation	36
1.3. The Study	40
1.3.1. Purpose of the Study	40
1.3.2. Research Questions and Structure of the Dissertation	42
CHAPTER 2. METHODS AND PARTICIPANTS	45
2.1. Description of the Study	45
2.2. Participants	46
2.2.1. Programs	46
2.2.1.1. Program A	47
2.2.1.1.1. Undergraduate Translation Program	49
2.2.1.1.2. Graduate Program	51
2.2.1.2. Program B	53
2.2.1.2.1. Undergraduate Spanish Program and Certificate	53
2.2.1.2.2. Graduate Program	55
2.2.1.3. Program C	56
2.2.1.4. Program D	58
2.2.1.5. Program E	60
2.2.1.5.1. Undergraduate Program and Certificate	61

2.2.1.5.2. Graduate Certificate and Master’s Degree	62
2.2.1.6. Programs: Main Similarities and Differences	63
2.2.2. Subject Group	65
2.3. Data Collection	68
2.3.1. Research Methods	68
2.3.2. Research Instruments	70
2.3.2.1. Questionnaires	70
2.3.2.2. Interviews	71
2.3.2.3. Focus Groups	73
2.4. Data Analysis	74
<b>CHAPTER 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: GRADUATE STUDENTS</b>	<b>78</b>
3.1. Quantitative Results	78
3.1.1. Language Preparedness	78
3.1.2. Language Development	80
3.1.3. Interim Discussion	81
3.2. Qualitative Results	84
3.2.1. Language Preparedness	84
3.2.1.1. Feelings of Insecurity	85
3.2.1.1.1. Domain-Specific/Specialized Language Proficiency	86
3.2.1.1.2. Directionality and Dominant Language	88
3.2.1.2. Unbalanced Proficiency Requirements	91
3.2.1.2.1. Admission Requirements	91
3.2.2. Language Development	97
3.2.2.1. Translational Directionality of Programs	100
3.2.2.2. Language-Related Courses and Language Teaching	103
3.2.3. Interim Discussion	107
3.3. Discussion	111
<b>CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS</b>	<b>117</b>
4.1. Quantitative Results	117
4.1.1. Language Preparedness	117
4.1.2. Language Development	119
4.1.3. Interim Discussion	121
4.2. Qualitative Results	122
4.2.1. Language Preparedness	122
4.2.1.1. Previous Language Preparation	126
4.2.1.1.1. Highschool	126

4.2.1.1.2. University Courses	128
4.2.1.2. Challenges	130
4.2.1.2.1. Second Language Students	130
4.2.1.2.1.1. Speaking	130
4.2.1.2.1.2. Spanish as the Medium of Instruction	131
4.2.1.2.1.3. Translating	132
4.2.1.2.2. Heritage Students	132
4.2.1.2.2.1. Domain-Specific Knowledge	132
4.2.1.2.2.2. Grammatical Competence	134
4.2.1.2.2.3. English Skills	136
4.2.2. Language Development	137
4.2.2.1. Linguistic Expectations & Perceived Language Gains	138
4.2.2.2. Language-Oriented Training and Translation Practice	144
4.2.2.3. Course Articulation	147
4.2.2.4. Feedback	151
4.2.2.5. Prerequisites & Proficiency Tests	153
4.2.3. Interim Discussion	156
4.3. Discussion	159
<b>CHAPTER 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: ADMINISTRATORS AND INSTRUCTORS</b>	<b>164</b>
5.1. Quantitative Results	164
5.1.1. Language Preparedness	164
5.1.2. Language Development	166
5.2. Qualitative Data	166
5.2.1. Language Preparedness	166
5.2.1.1. Graduate Level	166
5.2.1.2. Undergraduate Level	168
5.2.1.3. Overall Themes	172
5.2.1.3.1. Admission/Proficiency Requirements	172
5.2.1.3.2. Course Prerequisites	177
5.2.1.3.3. Directionality	181
5.2.1.3.4. Student Needs and Profiles	185
5.2.1.3.4.1. Informal Interviews	187
5.2.1.3.4.2. Language Profile Questionnaires	188
5.2.2 Language Development	190
5.2.2.1. Graduate Level	190
5.2.2.2. Undergraduate Level	193
5.2.2.3. Overall Themes	196

5.2.2.3.1. Attention to Language Deficiencies	196
5.2.2.3.2. Proficiency and Outcomes Assessment	199
5.2.2.3.3. Program Development	202
5.3. General Discussion	204
CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION	210
6.1. Introduction	210
6.2. Summary of Findings	210
6.2.1. Graduate Students	210
6.2.2. Undergraduate Students	213
6.2.3. Administrators and Instructional Staff	215
6.3. General Discussion	217
6.3.1. Proficiency Requirements, Directionality, and Loyalty to Professional Norms	218
6.3.2. Program Articulation	220
6.4. Limitations of the Study	222
6.5. Conclusion	224
6.6. Recommendations	225
APPENDIX A – SURVEY FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND INSTRUCTORS	234
APPENDIX B – SURVEY FOR STUDENTS	239
APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS	249
APPENDIX D – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS	251
APPENDIX E – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS	253
REFERENCES	256

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Distribution of programs and degrees offered	47
Table 2. Descriptive table of program A	48
Table 3. Descriptive table of program B	53
Table 4. Descriptive table of program C	56
Table 5. Descriptive table of program D	58
Table 6. Descriptive table of program E	60
Table 7. Distribution of overall students interviewed in focus groups per program	66
Table 8. Distribution of students who participated in the study	67
Table 9. Number of instructional staff and administrators by program	67
Table 10. Graduate students' responses on language preparedness	80
Table 11. Graduate students' responses on language development	81
Table 12. Undergraduate students' responses on language preparedness	119
Table 13. Undergraduate students' responses on language development	121
Table 14. Topics that emerged on language preparedness in undergraduate focus groups	125
Table 15. Topics that emerged on language development in undergraduate focus groups	138
Table 16. Teaching staff responses on language preparedness	165
Table 17. Summary of themes identified by stakeholder group	211

## ABSTRACT

Language or linguistic proficiency plays an essential role in the field of translator and interpreter education. A certain level of proficiency is usually required for admission to translation and interpreting (henceforth, T&I) courses and programs. This means that students are expected to demonstrate a certain level of second language (L2) proficiency before enrolling in T&I classes. Students can often do this by completing specific language courses or through written or oral samples. At the program level, these course requirements establish a logical sequence in which students must develop their linguistic knowledge or acquire certain language skills before starting their T&I training. Thus, the articulation between T&I and language programs in departments that house them becomes of significant importance. Additionally, in the case of Spanish T&I programs, students' acquisitional profiles play an important role, as these students frequently come from different linguistic backgrounds and language programs within the same departments, such as second language or heritage language programs, yet they share the same curriculum in T&I. This dissertation examines the current state of articulation, language preparedness and language development in U.S. T&I programs by collecting program information (through websites, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups) and studying the perceptions of stakeholders (program administrators/coordinators, instructional staff and students) at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative data) are used to examine the following components: i) established course prerequisites at the undergraduate level; ii) the proficiency/admission requirements used in T&I programs at the graduate level; iii) whether stakeholders perceive a mismatch between the students' expected level of proficiency and the actual students' level of proficiency; iv) how introductory translation/interpreting courses align with the current level of proficiency of students; and v) how students' language needs are addressed in these programs. The results of this dissertation show that stakeholders at the graduate and undergraduate level feel that there is a mismatch between the level of proficiency expected in the translation/interpreting courses and the actual level of proficiency of students. This difference is much more notable in the case of undergraduate students. Also, stakeholders perceive that translation/interpreting courses develop students' proficiency across undergraduate and graduate programs. However, current program practices and beliefs of administrators and instructors do not always contribute to successful language experiences in terms of aligning students' actual proficiency and addressing their language needs throughout the analyzed programs. At the graduate level, stakeholders (instructors and students in particular) are critical of the proficiency requirements in place and inconsistencies are found the perspectives of administrators and instructors. The assumption that translator training is not about language teaching still prevails in the minds of some graduate administrators, unveiling issues of programs' identity and reputation and loyalty to "professional norms." The *unidirectionality* of graduate programs is also seen as a problematic factor for stakeholders. At the undergraduate level, there exists a lack of articulation between prerequisite courses and

introductory courses to translation and interpreting. The two main causes for the lack of articulation may stem from the lack of alignment of prerequisite courses with proficiency guidelines and the unrealistic expectations that are sometimes set in undergraduate T&I degrees. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that more attention to language deficiencies is necessary in certain programs. Finally, some recommendations are provided in terms of program design and delivery. These recommendations are based on best practices found in language program development/evaluation: i) T&I courses should ensure that they have a clear mission and specific learning outcomes available; ii) T&I programs should have a written plan for development and courses should be sequenced considering the actual level of proficiency of students (CEA Standards, 2019); iii) T&I program administrators should listen more carefully to their students to understand their needs (Milleret & Silveira, 2009); iv) instructors should choose texts that match students' proficiency; v) instructors should integrate more scaffolded practices in the translation/interpreting curriculum; and vi) administrators and instructors should work collaboratively in reviewing/assessing the course and program learning outcomes so that they are aligned with the students' needs and expectations. All in all, T&I administrators should not disregard current practices within the field of second language acquisition and applied linguistics in relation to ongoing evaluation practices in language programs (Norris et al., 2009; Norris & Davis, 2015; among others), as they would help improve the experiences of stakeholders and the overall quality of their educational programs.

## CHAPTER 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.1. Introduction

Developing language proficiency is one of the objectives of foreign and second language programs. Language educators strive to enhance students' skills in a foreign or second language and prepare them for specialized language-related fields such as linguistics, literature, cultural studies, or translation and interpreting. To access specialized courses in these disciplines, students are often required to complete specific language courses as a prerequisite. Thus, the linguistic preparation of students in prerequisite courses is crucial when students start taking introductory courses in specialized language-related fields. On a broader sense, the alignment between prerequisite language courses, specialized language-related courses, and the program articulation (the relationship between associated programs or program levels) are factors that play an important role in the language preparedness of students and their progress throughout the program.

It is commonplace to state that translator training should only occur after language acquisition is complete (D. Bowen, 1989; M. Bowen, 1989; Labrum, 1991) and that language acquisition should not be the goal of translator training. Yet, this appears to be more of a prescriptivist statement than an accurate depiction of reality as undergraduate students in translation courses are often still developing their skills in their second language (henceforth L2) or heritage language. Language departments often require specific language courses to make sure that students are linguistically ready to take translation courses, yet it is not known how successful those language prerequisites are for determining linguistic proficiency for translation

instruction nor how translation programs deal with the entry linguistic preparation of their students at the program level.

The issue of language preparedness for translation education becomes more challenging for language departments with significant numbers of heritage speakers. Heritage speakers are different from L2 speakers not only in their linguistic competence and abilities, but also in that heritage speakers possess a personal and cultural connection to their heritage language and its community (Gironzetti & Belpoliti, 2018). For this reason, some authors argue that standardized instruments used to measure L2 proficiency may not be applicable to heritage speakers since L2 speakers and heritage speakers differ in terms of linguistic proficiency patterns (Fairclough, 2012; Valdés, 1995).

Due to the recent growth of the T&I industry in the U.S., an increasing number of language departments are developing programs to prepare specialized professionals (Cabrera, 2017), including new and revamped T&I educational programs in the U.S. (Hague, Melby, & Zheng, 2011; Jiménez-Crespo, 2014). Moreover, the Modern Languages Association (MLA) reports (2007, 2009) emphasize that in foreign language (FL) departments, “the language major should be structured to produce a specific outcome: educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence” (as cited in Hertel & Dings, 2014, p. 547); that is, the ability to operate in different languages and cultures. The MLA suggests the inclusion of more T&I courses and programs in the undergraduate foreign language curriculum as one way to achieve this outcome, thus emphasizing the importance of T&I in the FL curriculum.

T&I programs are often embedded within language departments and are rarely offered as standalone programs (Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019). Thus, most students enter T&I

programs after (or while) going through language programs. As mentioned above, language programs often require students to complete specific language courses (frequently, intermediate/advanced grammar or writing courses) to enter T&I courses. Therefore, the transition, alignment, and articulation between language courses and T&I courses is crucial in at least two respects (Cabrera, 2017): (i) language preparedness: students' previous experience in language courses and the level of proficiency they acquire; and (ii) program articulation: T&I programs in the US are not established as autonomous entities, rather they are part of language departments and thus of larger educational structures.

Thus, the main purpose of this dissertation is to study the language preparedness and the language development of students in T&I courses/programs considering the perceptions of stakeholders (i.e., students, instructional staff and administrators) within the broader context of program articulation and administration in language departments. Thus, this dissertation examines whether there is articulation and alignment between undergraduate language courses set as prerequisite in T&I programs and the introductory T&I courses through the perspectives of T&I stakeholders.

In the following section, I provide a literature review that summarizes the role of language proficiency in translation/interpreter education focusing on two related areas: language proficiency in translator competence models, and language proficiency in translator/interpreter teaching. Furthermore, the current status of T&I programs in the U.S. together with some case studies published in the field of translation studies that look at T&I from a program perspective are reviewed discussing two important aspects: the growth of T&I programs in the U.S. and the

reasons for this increase in numbers, and the need for program articulation in language departments between language programs and T&I programs.

## 1.2. Literature Review

### 1.2.1. Language Proficiency and Translator/Interpreter Education

#### 1.2.1.1. Language Proficiency in Translator Competence Models

Within the field of translator and interpreter education, language or linguistic proficiency plays a crucial role because language proficiency—despite lack of agreement as to what it should be—is required for admission to translation and interpreting courses and programs (Colina, 2002; Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019) and because linguistic proficiency figures prominently in recent models of translator competence (Cao, 1996; Colina, 2003; Kelly, 2005; PACTE, 2008; among others). Although there exists no consensus on a definition of translator competence (henceforth, TC), the number and the type of sub-competences, or the terminology used (language proficiency may be referred to by different terms in each TC model such as language competence, bilingual competence, and communicative competence), it is uncontroversial that language proficiency is one of the fundamental subcomponents of TC.

The TC model proposed by PACTE (2008) consists of five subcompetences: i) bilingual subcompetence (procedural knowledge required to communicate in two languages: pragmatic, sociolinguistic, textual, grammatical, and lexical knowledge); ii) extra-linguistic subcompetence (declarative knowledge about the world and field-specific knowledge); iii) knowledge about translation subcompetence (declarative knowledge about translation and aspects of the profession, such as translation units, processes, methods, procedures, job market, translation

briefs); iv) instrumental subcompetence (procedural knowledge related to the use of documentation resources, information and communication technologies, such as dictionaries, grammars, and electronic corpora); and v) strategic subcompetence (procedural knowledge to guarantee the efficiency of the translation process and to solve problems encountered). Thus, in PACTE's (2008) TC model, language proficiency would be part of their bilingual competence category.

In Kelly's (2005) view, TC is a macrocompetence that encompasses different capacities, skills, knowledge, and attitudes that professional translators possess and which are involved in translation as an expert activity. Following Kelly's definition of TC, this macrocompetence encompasses several areas of competence that translators should possess: communicative and textual competence; cultural and intercultural competence; subject area competence; professional and instrumental competence; attitudinal or psychophysiological competence; interpersonal competence; and strategic competence (Kelly, 2005). Following Kelly's model, an essential part of "communicative competence" would be language proficiency.

Cao (1996) distinguishes among three main components within translation competence in a halfway point between PACTE's (2008) and Kelly's (2005) multicomponential approaches: i) translational language competence; ii) translational knowledge structures; and iii) translational strategic competence. For this author, *translational language competence* includes the following competences: 1) organizational competence (*grammatical* and *textual*); and 2) pragmatic competence (*illocutionary* and *sociolinguistic*). *Translational knowledge structures* includes general knowledge (knowledge about the world), special knowledge (technical knowledge in a specialized field), and literary knowledge (poetic, cultural history, literary studies, etc.) Finally,

*translational strategic competence* has to do with the mental processing and synthesizing ability to integrate the components of translational language competence and knowledge structures in contextualized translational activities.

Of the different models of translation competence (Cao, 1996; Kelly, 2005; PACTE, 2008), Cao's model is arguably the one with the strongest connection to second language acquisition for two main reasons. First, this author builds her model from Bachman's (1991) model of communicative language competence. Second, Cao draws upon the field of second language acquisition to build her model, applying the different stages of language acquisition to translation proficiency. Thus, in Cao's (1996) model, translation proficiency follows a developmental path as well. Colina (2003), supporting Cao's (1996) model, proposes introducing the element of context to better understand the concept of TC, as context is going to be an essential part of the performance and assessment of translation tasks (Angelelli & Jacobson, 2009). For Colina (2003), translation is therefore *a type of communicative interaction* where "[the translator] is responsible for the interpretation of source text (ST) meaning, which involves the negotiation and expression of meaning in accordance with task specifications, translational conventions and target language conventions" (Colina 2003, pp. 30-31).

Language proficiency is further included in additional models of translator competence (González-Davies, 2004; Kiraly, 1995; Neubert, 2000; Pym, 2003). This suggests that research on translator competence views language readiness as a *sine qua non* to develop translation competence(s), situating linguistic proficiency as one of the pillars of translator training. Yet, despite general agreement on the essential role of language proficiency/language competence on TC models, the specifics of language proficiency and language teaching in translator training

remains controversial. The next section explores this aspect in detail as well as the relationship between translator/interpreter training and second language acquisition (henceforth, SLA).

#### 1.2.1.2. Language Proficiency in Translation Teaching

The role of language teaching in translator training has generated a fruitful debate in the literature (Cao, 1996; Colina, 2002; Colina & Lafford, 2017; Li, 2001, 2007; Malmkjær, 1998; among others). Indeed, translator programs traditionally neglected the language teaching component mostly under the assumption that translator education should occur after language acquisition is complete (D. Bowen, 1989; M. Bowen, 1989; Labrum, 1991). In this regard, statements such as “translation classes must strive to minimize this interface between the two [language study and translation practice] and shorten it in order to focus on translation as such” (Dollerup, 1994, p. 121) were common in the late 80s and early 90s. This assumption also had as a consequence that some translator trainers and teachers ignored or even “exclude(d) language learners from their classes” (Colina, 2002).

Nowadays, the relationship between language teaching and translation/interpreting, often referred to as “not entirely positive” (Colina, 2002) and “difficult” (Gasca-Jiménez, 2017), remains a topic of interest. Some authors argue for the benefits of integrating translation as a pedagogical tool or a “fifth skill” in the second language classroom (Colina & Lafford, 2017) and in the heritage language classroom (Beaudrie, 2009; Gasca-Jiménez, 2017; González-Davies, 2002; 2012; Valdés, 2003; among others). Despite the importance of these publications, this study does not focus on examining the benefits of using translation in the L2 and the heritage language classroom, but rather on examining the role of language preparedness

(whether students are proficient enough to benefit from instruction) and language development (whether students develop their language proficiency) in T&I programs. Thus, it is pertinent that we discuss the relationship between translator/interpreter training and second language acquisition in the last decades.

At the beginning of the 90s and in the 2000s, a few authors argued in favor of applying models of SLA to translator training (Colina, 2002, 2003, 2006; Kiraly 1990, 1995, 2000). What these studies have in common is that they see “translation is a special form of communicative language use and therefore a unique form of second language education” (Colina, 2006, p. 215). A very influential acquisitionist model to translator training was initially brought up by Kiraly (1990, 1995, 2000), who theorized his model considering the *acquisition-learning* distinction from the field of SLA, together with the notion of communicative competence (Bachman, 1991). Under Kiraly’s (1990) view, students must be provided with opportunities to acquire and to learn the language in translator education, as these students are on a developmental path towards the acquisition of communicative competence (p. 214). Therefore, a translator needs to acquire communicative competence and the “integration of language competences in overall translation competence links translation skills instruction to foreign language teaching” (Kiraly, 1995, p. 26).

Following Kiraly (1990, 1995, 2000), Colina (2003) argues that the goal of translation teaching is to facilitate the acquisition of (communicative) translational competence. This is defined as “the ability to interact appropriately and adequately as an active participant in communicative translation tasks” (Kiraly, 1990, p. 215) and a special type of competence that requires “interlingual and intercultural communicative competence in addition to separate

communicative competences in L1 and L2” (Colina, 2003, p. 30; emphasis mine). As this definition suggests, language teaching is bound to have an influence on translator training, as most students in translation programs are required to take language courses and they are exposed to specific notions of language learning and translating. In other words, as Colina argues (2002), language teaching may be responsible for the general concept of translation that students bring to the classroom.

In the last decades, the interplay between SLA and translator/interpreter training has not been entirely positive. The interface of SLA with translator/interpreting training has been neglected by translator trainers and practitioners, as they have persisted on the use of dichotomous terms such as language students vs. translation students, language learning vs. translation learning, or native vs. non-native language (Colina & Lafford, 2017). Consequently, translator/interpreter trainers and professionals have not considered second language acquisition relevant or related to the goals of T&I education. In fact, the areas of overlap between SLA and translator/interpreter training “have been minimized by prescriptivist and over-simplistic approaches” (Colina & Lafford, 2017, p. 112).

In this regard, Colina (2006) states that neglecting the connection between second language acquisition and translator training is an erroneous view that reflects two main “prescriptivist” notions: that translator/interpreter training should only start once language acquisition is complete, and that translators should always translate into their native language. Colina (2006) argues that these views do not mirror the reality of practitioners in the field of translation/interpretation because translating into the nonnative language is a regular practice in countries with large communities of immigrants (Campbell, 1998). In addition, in the case of

heritage speakers, directionality may be difficult to establish as it is not always clear what the L1 is. Finally, translation into the nonnative language is a regular practice in countries where there are not enough professionals working into primary languages (Colina, 2006).

Moreover, another reason why translator/interpreter training has often overlooked its liaison with SLA is “an overgeneralization based on oversimplified views of language acquisition and bilingualism” (Colina, 2006, p. 207). In this regard, the concept of native speaker, as was originally conceived by cognitive linguistics, seems controversial in the context of translation, because “it cannot be easily transferred to many translation situations” (Colina, 2006, p. 217). For instance, Clyne et al. (1997) pointed out that the native vs. non-native distinction has little significance in the context of a multicultural country like Australia. Similarly, Colina (2006) also identifies that native vs. non-native distinction to be problematic when considering heritage speakers in the U.S. since these speakers are sometimes regarded as “native speakers” in linguistic research. Thus, following the directionality “norm”, if heritage speakers translate into their heritage or “native” language, they might not produce the “expected” optimal results argued by translation professionals as these speakers have not been exposed to formal registers and their textual competence is rather limited (Colina, 2006, p. 217).

Additionally, the above notion of “native speaker” frequently referred to in T&I is problematic from a linguistic point of view in that it presumes that “language acquisition is static, leaving no room for attrition” (Colina, 2006, p. 217). If first language attrition occurs, the practice of translating into the second language might be more advantageous, especially if this is the language used in education and in the profession. Furthermore, this notion of native speaker is problematic because it does not allow for different contexts of use and register and “native

speaker competence does not entail native level competence in all registers and all discourse and text types” (Colina, 2006, p. 217). Moreover, Colina (2006) argues for the relevance of second language acquisition to translation education, in support of Marmaramidou (1996), because when practitioners translate into the L1, by reading the source text, second language comprehension gets activated. This means that using the L2 as a source language cannot be used as a justification to neglect the role of proficiency since comprehending the source text requires the use of many language skills related to communicative competence.

In sum, under the prescriptivist views held by some professionals in the field of T&I, L2 proficiency may not present an issue if translation is carried out into the L1. In this scenario, knowledge of the L2 may be somewhat less crucial for the translation practice. Yet, this traditional assumption is seen by a number of researchers and teachers alike as “inadequate and descriptively inaccurate” (Colina & Angelelli, 2015b, p. 114). Furthermore, many T&I courses/programs focus on the practice of translation into the L2. Thus, for all the reasons discussed above, the second language is always going to have a decisive role in translator training, regardless of native language and directionality (Colina, 2006). Neglecting this connection does not bode well for stakeholders in T&I programs but especially for those students who may take translation courses while they are on a developmental path towards their second/heritage language. Along these lines, some authors have argued that “balanced proficiency in translators is more of a prescriptivist myth than a descriptive fact” (Colina, 2015, p. 171) as translation students’ language proficiency is frequently inadequate for their programs of study and can be the source of translation difficulties (Colina, 2015; Li, 2012; Malmkjær, 1998).

### 1.2.2. Language Proficiency in Translator/Interpreter Programs

Advanced language proficiency is often cited as a central issue in translator and interpreter training (Colina, 2006; Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019; among others). Research on translation pedagogy often considers language competence as a starting point from which students can develop translation and interpreting skills effectively (Colina & Angelelli, 2015; Kiraly, 2000; Mellinger, 2017; Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019). This crucial role of language can also be observed in T&I educational programs. Language or linguistic proficiency is consistently set as a prerequisite to access translation and interpreting courses. This means that students are expected to demonstrate a certain level of L2 proficiency before enrolling in T&I classes. Students can often do this by completing specific language courses (Hague et al., 2011; Hubert, 2017; Van Wyke, 2017). This establishes a logical sequence in which students must develop their linguistic knowledge or must acquire certain language skills before starting their T&I training. This sequence is also necessitated because many T&I programs in the U.S. are mostly found in foreign language departments and do not function as standalone programs (Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019).

While linguistic proficiency in T&I graduate programs tends to be assessed differently, adequate linguistic proficiency is also a necessary element of articulation. Students are expected to demonstrate a high level of language proficiency often by submitting oral and/or written samples, both in their L1 and their L2, or students might be interviewed by graduate directors to ensure that they have a certain degree of proficiency in the language (Hague et al., 2011). In the case of international students, they are also required to submit their scores in TOEFL or IELTS tests to show that they have an adequate level of English proficiency (Hague et al., 2011).

A few authors have provided descriptive accounts of prerequisite language courses in current translation courses/programs in the U.S. at the curricular level (Hague et al., 2011; Hubert, 2017; Van Wyke, 2017). For example, Hague et al. (2011) lay out the entrance requirements of 44 translator programs in the U.S. These authors find that students are required to take an entrance exam in more than half of 35 institutions that offer translation degrees or certificates. Of those institutions that have an entrance examination in place, four use a translation test, and the rest of the examination formats were based on proficiency exams in two languages, such as written grammar tests, oral proficiency interviews, or a pair of monolingual essays.

Van Wyke (2017) describes the requirements that students need to fulfill in order to access the undergraduate certificate in translation studies at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis. In this case, students need to complete two English writing courses in order to be able to take courses in the certificate and they also need to show that they have a minimum command of two languages, besides completing an introductory translation workshop. Hubert (2017) describes the introductory undergraduate course on Spanish-to-English translation at Washington State University where the prerequisite for registering consists of studying a foreign language for two years at this university. Furthermore, this author, based on impressionistic accounts, observed that heritage speakers do not perceive that the introductory course on Spanish-to-English translation at Washington State University meets their needs in the same way that it meets the needs of second language learners.

The topic of language readiness also comes up in the literature on program assessment. For example, Li (2002) conducted a needs analysis in order to examine the perceptions of

translation students at the Department of Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Language teaching was one of the themes that stood out in the evaluation process. In fact, most of the students surveyed in this study were disappointed because the current curriculum did not introduce a strong element of language training. Thus, they believed that language training should be a major component in the translation courses of the program. In a follow-up study, Li (2007) carries out another needs analysis in which he seeks to find out the views and experiences of recent graduates from their translation program. Former students' comments suggest that there is a need to foster language learning in that specific translator training program, particularly at the undergraduate level. Participants felt insecure about the use of their second language and wished to have had a language learning component in the program.

Finally, language readiness has also been addressed from a curricular perspective. Along these lines, Angelelli & Degueldre (2002) discuss the benefits of implementing bridge language-enhancement courses before starting a specific T&I graduate program. These language-intensive bridge courses were offered in Spanish and French at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and were "simultaneously conceived as Superior-level language courses and as introductory courses in the skills of translation and interpreting" (Angelelli & Degueldre, 2002, p. 78). The main purpose of the authors who designed these courses was to increase the language proficiency level of students who had been accepted in a T&I M.A. program, so that the M.A. program could better meet their linguistic needs. The curriculum of these bridge-courses was established in two main stages. In the first stage, the authors conducted a needs assessment in order to set the curricular objectives, and in the second stage, the authors implemented the bridge courses making recurrent changes for 8 years to address the needs of the

students. As reported by the authors, these bridge language courses were a success from both a financial and administrative point of view, “since students who would otherwise have been denied admission to the M.A. program were accepted, and they graduated” (Angelelli & Degueldre, 2002, p. 93).

These case studies show concrete, context-specific examples of how administrators can develop program assessment procedures (Li, 2002, 2007) and programmatic strategies (Angelelli & Degueldre, 2002) that address language readiness in T&I programs. They also provide further evidence that language proficiency is an essential component that T&I programs should address.

### 1.2.3. Translation and Interpreting Programs in the US

#### 1.2.3.1. Current Status of T&I Programs in Language Departments

Translation and interpreting education in the U.S. has experienced a significant rise in the last decade. Universities, community colleges, professional associations and organizations are increasingly offering more and more degrees, courses, and seminars (Jiménez-Crespo, 2014) for various reasons.

The first one is the growth of the translation/interpreting U.S. industry (Cabrera, 2017). More than 50 million Spanish speakers currently live in the U.S. and other language communities are developing across the country as well. In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau (2015) reported that around 350 languages are spoken in the U.S. This increase in numbers generates a demand for translators and interpreters in this country. For instance, New York recognizes that around 140 languages are spoken in the city and “reports of the New Jersey Department of Justice indicate that interpreters for 83 languages were needed by the courts in 2010-2011”

(Jiménez-Crespo, 2014, p. 37). The increase in non-English speakers translates in greater demand for translators and interpreters in the U.S. and in turn for an increase in T&I educational programs in the U.S. (Hague et al., 2011) and the revamping of those T&I programs that already exist (Jiménez-Crespo, 2014). Hague et al. (2011) reviewed 44 T&I educational programs in the U.S., of which 12 offered a translation degree (12 programs) or a certificate (23 programs). 5 institutions offered translation-related doctoral degrees (5 institutions); 11 master's degrees; 16 had some kind of master's or graduate certificates in translation; 8 had bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, or both; and 13 offered undergraduate certificates. These numbers reflect a significant representation of T&I programs in the U.S.

According to Jiménez-Crespo (2014), a second reason for the increase in T&I programs is a decline in enrollments in foreign language departments in the U.S., noted in the MLA's 2018 report (Looney & Lusin, 2018). In this regard, the MLA's 2007 report state that "the language major should be structured to produce a specific outcome: educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence" (as cited in Hertel & Dings, 2014, p. 547); that is, the ability to operate in different languages and cultures. Thus, the importance of T&I is reclaimed in the foreign language curriculum by the MLA reports (2007, 2009), advocating for the inclusion of more T&I courses and programs in the undergraduate foreign language curriculum.

Jiménez-Crespo (2014) also argues that this increase in T&I programs also reflects the "crisis in foreign language and literature departments around the nation" (p. 38), as T&I courses/programs can be used by foreign language departments to recruit more students and increase their enrollment rates. Nowadays, T&I courses, tracks and certificates seem an appealing option for undergraduate students, but also for graduate students that look to improve

their future job opportunities. In this sense, language departments in the U.S. resort to housing T&I courses/degrees with a view to improve their enrollment rates and for marketability reasons.

In sum, as a result of the need for more translators and interpreters in the U.S. industry and recent MLA reports, more and more foreign language departments offer T&I courses, concentrations, certificates and programs nowadays. A consequence of this is that translation/interpreting programs may coexist in modern language departments with linguistics and/or literature/cultural studies tracks highlighting issues of language preparedness and program articulation.

#### 1.2.3.2. Articulation in Language Departments

Articulation in language departments is an unresolved issue that remains a topic of interest currently (Lange, 1997; Lord & Isabelli-García, 2014). Since T&I programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in the U.S. are often embedded in language departments, the articulation between T&I and language programs in departments that house them becomes of significant importance. Articulation is defined by Lange (1988) as “the interrelationship and continuity of contents, curriculum, instruction, and evaluation within programs which focus on the progress of the student in learning both to comprehend and communicate in a second language” (p. 10). The concept of articulation can therefore be simplified as the relationship between associated programs or program levels.

Various authors believe that articulation requires pedagogical dispositions, on the part of administrators, that focus on student learning and the development of a curriculum that explicitly communicates the learning outcomes to the students (Braband, 2008; Warner & Picard, 2013).

The establishment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) is one of the first steps that administrators should take for successful curriculum delivery. When program and course learning outcomes are available to program stakeholders, better practices in terms of program delivery are achievable since all stakeholders know what the program and course expectations are. However, program administrators should also consider how these SLOs are aligned and sequenced across the courses of the program to ensure scaffolded student learning, and consequently, program articulation.

A very important aspect of this articulation is the linguistic proficiency necessary for enrollment in translation and interpreting courses/programs, often in the form of language prerequisites, written or oral samples, and interviews (Hague et al., 2011). Additionally, in the case of Spanish T&I programs, students' acquisitional profiles play an important role, as students frequently come from different linguistic backgrounds and language programs within the same department (e.g., second language or heritage language programs), but they will share curriculum and courses in T&I.

A crucial issue that must be considered with regard to T&I programs located in institutions with large immigrant populations is the linguistic needs of heritage learners (Colina, 2006). Many students or practitioners of translation or interpreting are heritage speakers as this area appeals to them for professional and personal reasons (Carreira, 2014). In the case of Spanish programs, heritage speakers are becoming more and more visible (Beaudrie & Ducar, 2012; Lacorte & Suárez-García, 2014) and institutions may offer a language track specifically tailored to their needs.

This means that T&I courses may potentially serve different student profiles that come from language programs that do not share the same objectives and student learning outcomes (SLOs), i.e., heritage programs and L2 programs. It is important to note that heritage speakers are different from L2 speakers not only in their linguistic competence and abilities, but also in that heritage speakers possess a personal and cultural connection to their heritage language and its community (Gironzetti & Belpoliti, 2018). The presence of (at least) two very distinct student profiles in T&I classrooms sometimes coming from these two different language courses/programs makes it more challenging to control and address the linguistic readiness or proficiency at the administrative level. Heritage and L2 courses/programs are, in theory, designed to cater to the needs of their stakeholders which in turn translates into independent program objectives. When these students enter T&I courses, this difference in linguistic readiness may become a challenge if there is no alignment among programs, as second-language learners and heritage students might display asymmetries with regard to their linguistic knowledge and proficiency.

A further challenge related to aligning language and T&I programs stems from the concept of linguistic proficiency and its assessment, especially with regard to heritage speakers. Generally, language proficiency is defined as an individual's skill to perform in a given language, and it is often evaluated through the application of a proficiency test (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992). This test might measure the degree with which a person can use a language in terms of productive skills (writing, speaking) and/or receptive skills (listening and reading). Carter and Nunan (2001) define proficiency as the ability to use the second language for communicative purposes. In this regard, the goal of second/foreign language teaching is to foster the attainment

of proficiency in a second language. However, the definition of linguistic proficiency in heritage language education is more complex. Some authors argue that instruments used to measure L2 proficiency may not be applicable to heritage speakers as both groups differ in terms of linguistic proficiency patterns (Fairclough, 2012; Valdés, 1995). For example, Fairclough (2012) mentions that L2 and heritage speakers differ in terms of the pace of grammatical development, the type of knowledge they resort to when assigned a task, and the presence of asymmetries when it comes to errors in specific language skills.

Since the existence of linguistic proficiency requirements (e.g., completing undergraduate prerequisite courses or submitting an oral or written sample) does not necessarily mean that students are linguistically ready for specific courses in translation and interpreting, the matter acquires further significance. This is particularly true if language courses are not specifically aligned with language proficiency guidelines (The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), The Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR), etc.), if there are no mechanisms in place within language courses to assess the student learning outcomes (SLOs), if the SLOs are not explicitly described in the language curriculum, or if the writing/oral samples or exams are not mapped to any language proficiency guidelines, which may also result in subjective judgement calls on the part of graders. Therefore, both undergraduate and graduate students might enter translation and interpreting courses with unbalanced proficiency levels and diverse linguistic needs. As mentioned above, program articulation becomes crucial in this regard, as the lack of linguistic preparation of students will affect students' successful performance in T&I courses (Colina, 2015; Li, 2001, 2012; Malmkjær, 1998). Furthermore,

language-readiness criteria must be considered and made explicit as they are the basis for the T&I curriculum.

The previous discussion of the relationship between T&I programs and language teaching brings up two important issues. The first one concerns how to improve language proficiency in T&I courses. If students in T&I programs do not start with an adequate level of proficiency, it is important to focus on pedagogical practices that develop T&I students' linguistic competence while they also acquire their professional competences. Current T&I competence models include linguistic proficiency and consider it fundamental basis for the acquisition of professional skills (Cao, 1996; Colina, 2006; Colina & Angelelli, 2015; Kiraly, 2005). The second issue has to do with the adequate articulation between language-focused courses and T&I courses. If prerequisites to enroll in T&I courses in language programs consist of intermediate/advanced language courses in the language track (L2 or heritage), both the language and the T&I program must collaborate to make sure that students have the necessary level of proficiency for the T&I curriculum. The T&I curriculum must take into account the objectively measured language competence of students. The present work focuses on the topic of language competence by obtaining information about how programs measure language competence and by examining the perceptions and experiences of T&I programs' stakeholders about student language preparedness, or to put it in a simpler way, their transition from the language courses to the professional ones. The next section explores relevant areas of second language acquisition and applied linguistics to this study, mainly language/linguistic proficiency and standards in SLA and heritage language education; language program evaluation; and utilization-based approaches to program evaluation and articulation.

#### 1.2.4. Language Proficiency Standards and Program Evaluation in Applied Linguistics

##### 1.2.4.1. Language Proficiency and Standards in Second and Heritage Language Education

From a programmatic perspective, the use of proficiency guidelines (ACTFL), program standards (such as the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) Standards), and other program evaluation practices (e.g., Norris et al., 2009), are important considerations for programs and program administrators, since they might help improve program articulation practices and the delivery of the program.

The ACTFL proficiency guidelines have been useful for establishing different degrees of proficiency. These guidelines were adapted from the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) to be used at the college and university level (ACTFL, 2002) and have been successfully used to assess Spanish heritage language (Alonso, 1997; Martin, Swender, & Rivera-Martinez, 2013). Meanwhile, other authors suggest that the ACTFL proficiency guidelines should be modified in order to better address the characteristics of heritage languages (Valdés, 1989).

Recently, ACTFL has recognized that HL and L2 learners are two separate, very distinct groups. This differentiation led them to create a set of guidelines called “Heritage Languages-Special Interest Groups Guidelines.” However, these guidelines are not directly related to proficiency standards but rather to the development of good practices in heritage language programming. More concretely, their objectives are (i) to raise concerns of the heritage language teaching community of ACTFL and serve as an intermediary between the ACTFL membership and the Title VI National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC); (ii) to create a network and a forum for teachers, students and administrators; (iii) to foster the teaching and learning of heritage languages and cultures in the U.S.; (iv) to share both research and

teaching practices of heritage languages; and (v) to promote collaboration in curricular design, teacher training, assessment, program development, and supervision. These guidelines for heritage speakers are a good starting point to identify and promote best practices within heritage language education, yet more research is needed regarding assessment and evaluation of programs (Beaudrie, 2016; Son, 2017).

In contrast to heritage language education, accreditation standards (such as the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) Standards) and program evaluation manuals (Alderson & Beretta, 1992; Allen, 2004; Davis & McKay, 2018; Davis, Norris, Malone, McKay, & Son, 2018; Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005; Lynch, 1996, 2003; Norris, Davis, Sinicrope, & Watanabe, 2009) serve as valuable resources in foreign or second language education to guide the programmatic practices of language programs and any educational environment. The CEA Standards (2019) and a recent study conducted by Watanabe et al. (2009) bring to light the main components and standards that are subject to evaluation in language programs.

The Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) has established a set of standards to ensure that students experience quality education across different English programs, which affect the following components of a program: mission statement, curriculum, faculty, facilities, administrative and fiscal capacity, student services, recruiting, length and structure of the program, student achievements, student complaints; and program development, planning and review, or in other words, all the components of an English language program that, through a process of regular self-assessment and peer-evaluation, need to be met in order to become accredited by the CEA.

Similarly, Watanabe et al. (2009) found that, according to the perceptions of administrators/professors from different FL college programs in the U.S., the main components of FL college programs that are (or should be) subject to evaluation are (a) program's fit in the institution and community; (b) program's mission; (c) student learning progress and outcomes (SLOs); (d) curricular articulation across courses and sequences in the program; (e) course syllabi, materials, and textbooks; (f) teaching, administration, and other aspects of job performance; (g) student needs and language learning backgrounds; and (h) other specific programs.

Overall, the CEA Standards (2019) and Watanabe et al.'s (2009) findings, unveil common components or aspects that should be evaluated on an ongoing basis in language programs. At the curricular level, the alignment and articulation of courses is emphasized by both CEA Standards (2019) and Watanabe et al.'s (2009) results.

As stated before, the concept of articulation is also one of the factors that remains of great importance in the case of undergraduate translation and/or interpreting courses, tracks, and certificates since these are frequently embedded within language programs in the U.S. and specific language courses are set up as prerequisites for entering T&I undergraduate courses. From a linguistic perspective, it is assumed that by completing these prerequisite courses, students will be ready to enter translation courses. However, the insufficient linguistic competence of students in T&I courses might cause students to struggle or experience difficulties if the expected language proficiency in translation/interpreting courses does not match the current linguistic needs of students. Thus, it seems crucial to review the current body of literature and research on program evaluation, especially in language programs, as this might shed light on

finding best practices that can be applied in T&I programs to address the needs of distinct student profiles in the T&I classroom. The next section is devoted to the role of program evaluation and provides some background of the field.

#### 1.2.4.2. Program Evaluation

Research in the field of second or foreign language program standards and program development has increased during the last two decades (Norris, 2016). Recent publications in the area of language program development predominantly center around the inclusion of ongoing evaluation processes as a key factor for the success and worth of language programs (Ecke & Ganz, 2014; Lord, 2014; Norris, 2016; Pfeiffer & Byrnes, 2009; Sasayama, 2015; Watanabe, Norris, & González-Lloret, 2009; among others). According to this view, language programs, like any other educational programs, need to be evaluated on a regular basis regardless of the objective for the evaluation, be it an internal search for program improvement or an external demand to justify program funding. These evaluation practices allow educators to interpret, improve, and guarantee the quality, value and effectiveness of a program's delivery as well as its outcomes (Patton, 2008). In the case of heritage language programs, there is a gap in research with regard to assessment and evaluation of programs (Beaudrie, 2016; Son, 2017), and there are no program standards that guide the practices of heritage language programs.

Furthermore, program standards are practically non-existent in T&I programs. For this reason, Colina and Angelelli (2015b) argue for the need for more research studies in fields like certification and standards since these guidelines would provide a more valid and reliable foundation for T&I pedagogy. These authors also state that teachers and scholars are interested in

finding ways “to create reasonable outcomes and evaluation methods for a variety of student profiles” (p. 114). Given the fact that most of the students or practitioners of translation in the U.S. are heritage and second language learners with language learning needs, it is of paramount importance to incorporate language proficiency in program standards for translation programs. Moreover, ensuring that T&I courses meet the needs of both, heritage language learners and L2 learners should be essential. As noted by Hubert (2017), heritage language learners and second language learners are not equally satisfied with how courses meet their needs. Although there are no unifying standards for U.S. T&I programs, these previous descriptions point to a need to introduce more program evaluation practices in translation/interpreting training to understand the needs of heritage language learners and second language learners.

Despite the lack of field-specific educational standards, program evaluation practices can still be useful to educational programs and therefore to T&I (Norris, 2016). More specifically, the concept of articulation (i.e., the relationship between associated programs or program levels) is crucial. For T&I programs that are embedded in foreign language departments, this means that in order to successfully conceive the program, administrators must take into account a larger programmatic context: the T&I program is one piece in an educational structure. Thus, programming should take into account the larger program in which it is embedded.

When it comes to the language readiness of students, administrators should be aware of the linguistic backgrounds and proficiency of incoming students in order to design the curriculum. This could be potentially challenging for T&I programs in foreign language departments for a number of reasons. For example, it may be the case that the prerequisite language courses may not have stated objectives that are useful in the identification of students’

proficiency, or courses may have stated proficiency-related objectives but it is unknown whether or not these are met. Similarly, students may come from two different language tracks (heritage, L2), and both prerequisite language courses differ in their proficiency objectives. These possible scenarios exemplify complex programmatic situations that require that language and T&I programs communicate and collaborate in order to design robust programs that enhance student success. For this reason, this study follows a utilization-focused approach to program evaluation and articulation.

#### 1.2.4.3. A Utilization-Focused Approach to Program Evaluation and Articulation

Most of the current research on program development is based on utilization-focused approach (Patton, 1997): an adaptable and flexible approach suitable for all evaluative purposes (Pierce, 2012). It is based on the premise that “an evaluation should be judged on its usefulness to its intended users” (Patton, 1997). A number of published collections of evaluation based on utilization-focused approaches include evaluations for curriculum development, program redirection, program assessment, and outcomes evaluation (Norris et al., 2009). Needs analysis is the starting point for developing useful evaluation practices (Watanabe et al., 2009) and is the process of identifying and evaluating needs and is being used in U.S. college FL education to “acquire initial understandings about program evaluation and to inform subsequent efforts at resource development and dissemination” (Watanabe et al., 2009, p. 9).

When it comes to translation, recent publications (Colina & Angelelli, 2015; Hague et al., 2011) suggest that there should be a generally agreed consensus on basic standards for professional accreditation to be applied in translator training programs in the U.S. These

standards could be helpful to establish student learning outcomes at a programmatic and at a course level. Ultimately, these would potentially inform and guide curricular decisions in translation and interpreting programs. Although these programmatic standards are nonexistent yet, important accounts in the form of creating unified assessment practices (Adab, 2000) and empirically-based pedagogical frameworks (Colina, 2003) have been advantageous, especially considering the interaction between translator training and language training. Within the field of program evaluation, these are important aspects that should be considered to ensure both, horizontal and vertical articulation in the curriculum (Lange, 1982; Wilson, 1988; among others). Whereas horizontal articulation focuses on the same outcomes, teaching strategies, and evaluation within the same course level (Wilson, 1988), vertical articulation refers to the direction of the curriculum between different levels (Lange, 1982). A lack of unifying practices in terms of translation pedagogy and assessment might result in frustration on the part of students who take several translation/interpreting courses in the program with different instructors. Therefore, it would be important for translation/interpreting programs to maintain a certain level of coherence regarding assessment practices (Adab, 2000) and instructional practices (Colina, 2003).

To ensure horizontal articulation and facilitate curricular decisions among instructional staff in university translation programs, Adab (2000) suggests the need of implementing a standardized assessment framework in translation programs. This author also argues for the importance of defining clear objectives for translation courses and paying attention to the development of students' language proficiency in translation courses. This way, this author insists on the need of using a framework to assess the translated text that should "combine the

need to assess the development of language skills, which may seem to require a linguistic approach to the teaching of translation, with a wider awareness of aspects of text linguistic and functional approaches” (p. 217). Thus, according to Adab (2000), L2 development or acquisition is seen as a natural byproduct or consequence of implementing this framework that should not be overlooked by translator trainers in their feedback and in their approach to teaching translation (p. 218).

Furthermore, from a pedagogical perspective, Colina (2003) also offers a framework for teaching translation and developing materials to scaffold student learning. This framework includes a set of pre-translation activities, a reading comprehension section helping to make up for difficulties in comprehension and lack of domain-specific terminology, and language exercises that focus on smaller units of translation, language use, and well-known linguistic problems (p. 48). These pre-translation activities proposed by Colina (2003) are valuable tools that translator programs should adapt to better serve students with language deficiencies, better scaffold their learning throughout the courses and to ensure programmatic articulation.

Considering the previous accounts, articulation (both horizontal and vertical) is thus crucial for pedagogical approaches (Colina, 2003) and assessment practices (Adab, 2000) within utilization-focused approaches. Both types of articulation should be part of programmatic standards in translator/interpreter training to ensure alignment within same-level courses (though similar instructional strategies, feedback techniques/tools and outcomes) and across different courses (fostering smooth transitions between courses and avoiding content overlap). These authors agree on the importance of focusing on students’ linguistic needs and their progress through feedback (Adab, 2000) and instruction (Colina, 2003). However, it remains unknown

whether consistent practices regarding assessment and instruction are found across and within translation/interpreting programs. This study indirectly contributes to fill a research gap in this regard as well, since it will unveil how language deficiencies are addressed through instruction and feedback in translation/interpreting programs.

Overall, this study aims at examining the role of language proficiency within T&I programs following a utilization-focused approach to program evaluation. This is relevant for translation and interpreting training because important theoretical accounts regarding the interaction between language teaching and translator/interpreting training have been provided, but there is still a gap at investigating the interplay between these fields in real practice. There is little research about the language preparedness of students when they enter translation/interpreting programs and how current T&I programs contribute to students' language enhancement. For this reason, this dissertation analyzes this interaction through the examination of objective data gathered through questionnaires, interviews and websites and the perceptions of T&I stakeholders in regards to five different factors: (i) the established course prerequisites at the undergraduate level; (ii) the proficiency/admission requirements used in T&I programs at the graduate level; (iii) whether stakeholders perceive a mismatch between the students' expected level of proficiency and the actual students' level of proficiency; (iv) how introductory translation/interpreting courses align with the current level of proficiency of students; (v) how students' language needs are addressed in these programs. More specifically I look at how current practices approach the different needs of heritage and L2 learners.

These are important factors to examine across different translation translation/interpreting programs since T&I undergraduate and graduate programs use different ways to assess language

proficiency (Hague et al., 2011). Furthermore, at the undergraduate level, students are often required to complete language courses to enter T&I courses. Moreover, some authors have argued that the inadequate language proficiency of translation students seem to slow down their progress in translator training programs (Colina, 2002; Li, 2012; Malmkjær, 1998; among others) and that the language teaching component should be emphasized in the curriculum. Finally, some authors have explicitly noted that heritage language learners and second language learners have different needs that are not fully satisfied in translation courses (Hubert, 2017). Therefore, this dissertation investigates the perceptions of T&I stakeholders in the hope of drawing conclusions that help translation/interpreting programs find ways to improve their practices at the level of program articulation and program delivery.

### 1.3. The Study

#### 1.3.1. Purpose of the Study

It is undeniable that the relationship between language teaching, language proficiency, and T&I pedagogy remains a topic of interest these days (Colina & Angelelli, 2015b; Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019). Yet, to my knowledge, there are no studies that examine the articulation between proficiency requirements (e.g., prerequisite courses at the undergraduate level and other admission procedures used at the graduate level) and introductory translation/interpreting courses. This dissertation aims to fill this gap by examining descriptive data (collected through questionnaires, interviews, and websites) and the perceptions of translation/interpreting stakeholders (students, administrators, and instructional staff) on the language preparedness of students, their language needs, and their expectations. It also contributes to a more thorough

understanding of how translation/interpreting course/programmatic practices impact the students' linguistic needs and how these are addressed in both undergraduate and graduate programs, that is, how students' language development is managed throughout the courses of translation/interpreting programs.

Thus, the purpose of this dissertation is to describe the current state of articulation in U.S. T&I programs by collecting program information (through programs' websites, questionnaires, and interviews) and studying the perceptions of T&I stakeholders (program administrators/coordinators, instructional staff and students) regarding language course prerequisites (or other proficiency measures at the graduate level) and the language preparedness and language development of students throughout the T&I courses/programs. This is especially relevant now as there is a growing number of T&I programs in the U.S. that admit these types of second language and heritage students. Thus, this study will describe alignment practices between T&I and language programs in order to draw conclusions that serve future best practices in program administration and delivery. This dissertation focuses on examining the practices of T&I Spanish programs/concentrations.

The main motivation of this project is to study the perspectives of translation and/or interpreting stakeholders (program administrators, instructional staff, and students) in regards to students' expected language proficiency vs. students' actual language proficiency when entering T&I programs and linguistic proficiency gains after completing translation/interpreting courses of the program. For this study, both qualitative and quantitative data are gathered and analyzed to triangulate the data and better understand the perceptions of stakeholders. The quantitative data comes from questionnaires with relational analog scales (Llamas & Watt, 2014), i.e., slide bars

where the participants have to move a bar toward one extreme or the other. The qualitative data were collected from individual interviews held with administrators and instructional staff and focus groups held with undergraduate and graduate students. Relevant information about the programs was also gathered from the programs' websites.

To my knowledge, there exist no empirical studies that explore the perceptions of T&I stakeholders on the linguistic readiness, linguistic gains of students, and other program practices across different undergraduate and graduate T&I programs in the U.S. Therefore, this study contributes to a better understanding of what students expect from programs and how current T&I program practices address the needs of their students. The present study bridges the language teaching and translator/interpreter education fields because it addresses how current practices used in the field of language program evaluation could be applied in T&I programs to ensure that the curriculum addresses the linguistic needs of their students.

### 1.3.2. Research Questions and Structure of the Dissertation

The first part of the dissertation deals with the perceptions of students enrolled in graduate and undergraduate translation and/or interpreting courses in the U.S. in relation to their language preparedness and their language gains in the programs. It aims to answer the following research questions:

- a) Do undergraduate and graduate students perceive a mismatch between the expected Spanish proficiency to enter a translation/interpreting program and the actual proficiency of students that enter the program?

- b) Do undergraduate and graduate students perceive a mismatch between the expected English proficiency to enter a translation/interpreting program and the actual proficiency of students that enter the program?
- c) What factors influence the perceived language preparedness of students when they enter translation/interpreting program?
- d) Do students expect to improve their language proficiency in Spanish in translation and/or interpreting courses programs?
- e) Do students expect to improve their language proficiency in English in the translation and/or interpreting courses/programs?
- f) What factors influence the perceived linguistic gains of students throughout these translation and/or interpreting courses?

The second part of the present dissertation explores the perspectives of program directors or coordinators and the instructional staff of translation and/or interpreting programs in the U.S. in relation to the linguistic profiles, the linguistic readiness, and linguistic gains of students in these programs. More specifically, this second part aims to answer the following questions:

- g) Do program directors/coordinators and instructional staff perceive a mismatch between the expected Spanish proficiency to enter a translation/interpreting program and the actual proficiency of students that enter the program?
- h) Do program directors/coordinators and instructional staff perceive a mismatch between the expected English proficiency to enter a translation/interpreting program and the actual proficiency of students that enter the program?

- i) How do program directors/coordinators and instructional staff identify the different linguistic profiles of the students? What is their perception regarding the needs of heritage language learners and second language learners?
- j) What programmatic and instructional practices contribute to addressing the linguistic needs of these students and their language development?

In Chapter 2, I will describe the methodology of the study. I provide information about the five programs that took part in this study and that I gathered data from. The names of the programs will not be revealed to keep the confidentiality of the participants, but general information about each of the programs will be provided in terms of their goals, admission requirements, number of program directors and/or coordinators, number of professors, estimated number of students, and the general linguistic profiles of the students enrolled. Also, I will present pertinent information in relation to the participants, the research methods, the research tools used (surveys, interviews, and focus groups), and the approach to data analysis. In Chapters 3 and 4, I present and discuss the data obtained from the responses of graduate students and undergraduate students respectively by answering research questions (a), (b) (c), (d), (e) and (f). In Chapter 5, I present and analyze the data obtained from administrators and instructional staff by answering research questions (g), (h), (i), and (j). In Chapter 6, I discuss the results found in previous chapters drawing general conclusions at a programmatic level. Furthermore, I provide programmatic and pedagogical implications/suggestions as well as indications for further research.

## CHAPTER 2. METHODS AND PARTICIPANTS

### 2.1. Description of the Study

This study uses mixed methods for data collection to approach the research questions of this study. A concurrent triangulation design was used (Creswell & Clark, 2011) since quantitative and qualitative data were collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then merged (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the quantitative data gathered from relational analog scales included in the online surveys were used to test (i) whether T&I stakeholders perceive a mismatch between the ideal proficiency necessary to enter T&I programs and the average perceived proficiency of students who enter T&I programs, and (ii) whether T&I stakeholders expect or perceive overall proficiency gains after finishing T&I courses. The qualitative data gathered from interviews and focus groups explored the main factors related to language preparedness and language development for T&I stakeholders from five U.S. T&I programs. The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was to confirm the quantitative measures with the qualitative experiences of participants.

The perspectives from three main groups of participants (administrators, instructors, and students) were considered in this study, and specific questions were addressed for each group of participants. The researcher used a qualitative descriptive design to provide a comprehensive summary of the perspectives of each group of stakeholders', identifying the main emergent themes (Corbin & Strauss, 1989) across different programs through the use of multiple data sources (websites, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups). The overall purpose of the research questions was to collect as much data as possible on the different aspects that affect the

linguistic preparation of students in T&I programs and the students' language development throughout the program. Ultimately, the research questions intended to examine articulation in language departments.

In the fall of 2018, different program directors and faculty members from several T&I programs across the U.S. were initially contacted via email, getting a fruitful response from five institutions. Some descriptive information about the programs was gathered from the programs' websites, as well as from other data collection tools (questionnaires and interviews). These descriptive data refers to the program's entrance/exit requirements, credit hours, number of courses, number of students and instructors, etc. This information is provided to better understand the nature of these programs. Specific information of each of the programs that participated in this study is presented below (section 2.2.1. Programs).

## 2.2. Participants

### 2.2.1. Programs

Five institutions granted me permission to collect the data from their programs. These five institutions are located in different regions of the U.S.: the Midwest, the Northeast, the West Coast, the Southwest, and Southeast. These universities offer a variety of T&I courses, degrees, or concentrations. For the purpose of my research questions, the scope of the study was delimited to T&I courses or programs that are housed within Spanish departments or that offer concentrations in Spanish. The names of these institutions will not be revealed in order to keep their confidentiality. Thus, I will refer to these T&I programs as Programs A, B, C, D, and E, although most of these programs offer several T&I degrees (see *Table 1* below).

A description of each of these programs is provided in this section. Some information was gathered from the program's websites and also reported by the administrators/instructional staff of these five institutions. The following information will be included in the descriptions of the programs to better understand the overall structure of these programs: (i) entrance requirements/prerequisites for admission; (ii) program requirements (credit hours, courses, specialization, etc.); (iii) program objectives; (iv) exit requirements; (v) number of instructional staff; and (vi) number of students and profiles (second-language students and heritage speakers).

Table 1. Distribution of programs and degrees offered

<i>Program</i>	<i>Degrees</i>
Program A	-Undergraduate translation program -On-site and online M.A. program in translation
Program B	-Undergraduate Spanish major/minor (elective translation courses) -Undergraduate translation certificate -M.A. program in translation
Program C	-Undergraduate Spanish major/minor (elective T&I courses) -Certificate in T&I
Program D	-Undergraduate Spanish program (concentration in T&I)
Program E	-Undergraduate Spanish major/minor (elective T&I courses) -Undergraduate certificate in translation -Graduate certificate in translation -M.A. program in translation

#### 2.2.1.1. Program A

Program A offers an undergraduate program in translation and a graduate program in translation. It is housed at a public research university in the Midwest of the U.S. The undergraduate degree is a pre-professional translation program, whereas the graduate program is a professional translation program. Both programs offer different language concentrations, including Spanish. The graduate program is offered in two different modalities: face-to-face and online. Some relevant information about each of these degrees is provided below. A summary of some descriptive data from Program A is summarized below (see *Table 2*).

Table 2. Descriptive table of Program A

	<b>Prog. A: Undergraduate</b>	<b>Prog. A: Graduate</b>
<b>Entrance Requirements</b>	Language proficiency test	- Oral samples L1 & L2 - Written sample in L2 - TOEFL or IELTS (Specific scores as departmental requirements)
<b>Requirements</b>	120 credit hours	36 credit hours
<b>Exit Requirement</b>	-ACTFL OPI -ACTFL WPT (internal measures)	- Case study/project
<b>Number of staff</b>	10-11(~3 in Spanish)	On-site: 10-13 (2 in Spanish) Online: 5-10
<b>Number of students</b>	~50 (~25 in Spanish)	On-site: 45-50 (~15 in Spanish) Online: 6 (3 in Spanish)

#### 2.2.1.1.1. Undergraduate Translation Program

##### *Entrance requirements*

Before starting the program, students must take a language proficiency test in order to place them in the appropriate language courses. There is no specific level of Spanish proficiency required when entering the program, so students can start from beginner Spanish courses and obtain a degree in translation.

##### *Requirements*

All students are required to take a total of 120 credit hours to complete the undergraduate translation degree. During the first two years, there are some core translation courses that are common for the different language concentrations. However, before taking specific Spanish-English translation courses in their third year, students must complete an intermediate-level Spanish course. During the last two years of the program, students take two translation practice courses where they translate texts from the source language into English, as stated in the program learning outcomes.

##### *Program Objectives*

In the undergraduate program, the students are acquainted with the basics of translation theory, developing their translation and their language skills simultaneously. The students are also required to minor in a relevant field related to translation. Most of these students minor in a field related to business, paralegal studies, or international relations. After completing the undergraduate translation program, the students should be prepared to get into the graduate degree offered at the same institution and that would be the professional terminal degree.

##### *Exit requirements*

All students who finish the undergraduate program take the computerized ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT), but there is not a specific level of proficiency that they need to demonstrate coming out of the program. Therefore, these OPI and WPT are used as internal measures for the program but are not established as a requirement for graduation. The overall proficiency level of students at the end of the program ranges from intermediate-high to advanced-low range, but the breakdown by language was not specified. After completing the undergraduate translation program, students should be prepared to be admitted to the graduate degree offered at the same institution, which would be the professional terminal degree.

*Number of instructional staff*

Regarding numbers of instructional staff, there are approximately 10 or 11 faculty who are actively teaching every other semester across the different language concentrations of the undergraduate program. In the case of Spanish, there are three Spanish faculty and graduate teaching assistants who usually get to teach some of the core translation courses and/or practice translation courses as well.

*Number of students*

Across the whole undergraduate translation program, there are approximately 50 students among all language concentrations and about half of these students are in the Spanish track. Approximately, 90% of the students in the undergraduate program are second language learners and 10% of the students are heritage speakers. Also, there are heritage speakers in the Spanish translation track while this student profile is not common in the other language concentrations.

#### 2.2.1.1.2. Graduate Program

##### *Entrance requirements*

Students are required to submit oral samples in both languages (source and target) and written samples in their second language to be admitted into the program. Additionally, international students must submit a written sample in English and obtain specific scores in the TOEFL or IELTS tests as departmental requirements.

##### *Requirements*

Students are required to take 36 semester hours of coursework to successfully complete the graduate degree. There are core courses common to all language concentrations. Students also need to take three courses on different domains that are specific for each language concentration, and one practice course also addressed for each of the language pairs.

##### *Program objectives*

In the face-to-face program, the goal is that after graduation, students can work as translators in any field, localizing websites, newspapers, managing projects, using computer applications, translating medical records, or even working in courts or schools. In this way, upon completing the program, students will have gained a range of skills throughout the courses in the program that prepare them for their future jobs. The online graduate program was recently founded to provide stakeholders with the flexibility of an online experience. Several faculty who attended the ATA conferences became aware of this issue and that is the main reason they started to offer this program in an online format as well. The main motivation of the online program is to attract people who are working in the language industry and who are interested in getting a graduate degree in translation.

### *Exit requirements*

Students are required to complete a case study or project under the supervision of one of their professors in their last semester.

### *Number of instructional staff*

In the onsite program, there are around 10 to 13 professors teaching at the graduate level. Usually there are 2 Spanish faculty who teach the specific courses of the Spanish concentration. In the online program, there are around 5 to 10 instructors altogether who get to teach every semester. This number may vary depending on which courses are offered. Generally, in any given semester, there are usually three or four courses offered, and there are always two cohorts of students.

### *Number of students*

In the face-to-face graduate program, there are approximately 45 to 50 students enrolled. This number encompasses the two current cohorts of students across all the languages. Of these students, about 15 of them are in the Spanish concentration. In the case of Spanish, often around half or a third of the M.A. students are heritage speakers. Sometimes they might be international students who travel directly from Spanish-speaking countries to study in the program. In the online program, the first cohort was made up of 6 students across all languages, including 3 students in Spanish. All of these students are second language learners, and there were no heritage language learners enrolled in the online program in the spring of 2019. Although it seems that one of the targets of the online program is to appeal to this audience, this purpose has not been accomplished so far.

### 2.2.1.2. Program B

Program B offers an undergraduate program in Spanish, an undergraduate certificate in Spanish<math>\leftrightarrow</math>English translation, and a graduate program in translation. It is housed at a public research university in the Northeast of the U.S.

The overall objective of the translation program in this institution is to create top-notch or outstanding translation education at different levels. The outcomes for the major, the certificate, and the graduate program are different, as expressed by the different jobs that students find. A summary of some descriptive data from Program B is summarized below (see *Table 3*).

Table 3. Descriptive table of Program B

	<b>Prog. B: Undergraduate Certificate</b>	<b>Prog. B: Graduate Program</b>
<b>Entrance Requirements</b>	Writing & translation course	TOEFL or IELTS Written statement
<b>Requirements</b>	20 credit hours	36 credit hours
<b>Exit Requirement</b>	None	Translation exam
<b>Number of staff</b>	~3	~1
<b>Number of students</b>	~30	12-15

#### 2.2.1.2.1. Undergraduate Spanish Program and Certificate

### *Entrance requirements*

There is a prerequisite course that has a writing element and an introductory component to translation for students who want to complete the undergraduate certificate. Students who minor in Spanish and who are interested in taking the subsequent translation courses of the certificate must also take this prerequisite course. Members of the community can also apply for the undergraduate certificate.

### *Requirements*

In the past, the program used to have a major specializing in translation, and there were three tracks available for students: translation, linguistics, and literature. Although the undergraduate translation major does not exist anymore, the students can still take translation courses that count towards their Spanish major and/or the undergraduate certificate. The undergraduate certificate entails 20 credit hours and requires the completion of an internship.

### *Exit requirement*

All students who finish the undergraduate program in Spanish are required to take the ACTFL OPI.

### *Number of instructional staff*

The director of the program usually teaches most of the translation courses but there is also a lecturer who has been recently hired to teach some of these courses. Sometimes, graduate assistants get to teach some of the undergraduate translation courses.

### *Number of students*

In terms of enrollment of students, the first translation courses of the sequence tend to have more students whereas the advanced translation courses (cross-listed with the graduate program) tend

to have less students. Students do not have to declare that they are in the certificate until they have completed all the required courses. There are people from the community that are certificate-seeking and also undergraduate students that take these courses as part of their program of study in Spanish. Although it is not possible to know how many students are enrolled in the certificate, the estimate is that out of 30 students enrolled in the certificate, 20 are second language speakers of Spanish and 10 are heritage Spanish speakers.

#### 2.2.1.2.2. Graduate Program

The students enrolled in the graduate program degree usually get “*the best jobs*”, whereas the undergraduates tend to get different types of careers. Also, those students who are English dominant and Spanish is their second language, tend to find jobs in translation management.

##### *Entrance requirements*

To be admitted into the graduate program, students are required to demonstrate competency in both English and Spanish. International students must get a specific score in the TOEFL exam, as part of the university’s admission requirements. They also must submit a written statement in which they lay out their motivation to pursue this master’s degree.

##### *Exit requirements*

After completing the graduate degree coursework, students need to take a comprehensive exam with three sections. In this exam, students are required to translate two texts from Spanish into English and one text from English into Spanish.

##### *Number of instructional staff*

The director of the program usually teaches most of the courses at the graduate level.

*Number of students*

In the graduate program in Spanish translation, there are around 12 to 15 students enrolled. Some of the students in the program are Spanish heritage learners but exact numbers were not reported.

2.2.1.3. Program C

Program C offers an undergraduate program in Spanish and a certificate in Translation and Interpretation. It is housed at a public research university on the U.S. West Coast. A summary of some descriptive data from Program C is summarized below (see *Table 4*).

Table 4. Descriptive table of Program C

	<b>Prog. C: Undergraduate</b>
<b>Entrance Requirements</b>	Advanced grammar course
<b>Requirements</b>	15 credits
<b>Exit Requirement</b>	None
<b>Number of staff</b>	2
<b>Number of students</b>	~20

*Entrance requirements*

According to the program's website information, prospective students for the certificate are suggested to have "bilingual competence" in Spanish and in English. The students interested in

taking the certificate need to demonstrate proficiency in both languages (Spanish and English) by completing specific writing and advanced grammar courses. The courses of the certificate also count towards the Spanish major, and some graduate students may take translation and/or interpreting courses as electives. The certificate is also open for students from the community.

#### *Requirements*

Students must take 5 courses (15 credits) consisting of three translation courses and two interpreting courses in order to get the undergraduate certificate in translation and interpreting. In the past, there were translation courses in the department that focused mostly on literary translation, but the program was restructured by two faculty who were interested in skills set for the job market.

#### *Program Objectives*

No information on goals or program learning outcomes was found on the website. Lecturers indicated that the goal of the certificate is to provide students with a comprehensive view of the profession. They also mentioned that the directionality of the program used to be Spanish into English, but that there is an effort underway to balance directionality.

#### *Number of instructional staff*

The director of the program does not teach any courses in the program. The teaching load goes to two lecturers who teach the T&I courses in the program. One of the instructors is in charge of the translation courses and the other instructor teaches the interpreting courses.

#### *Number of students*

It is not possible to determine the number of students who are taking the certificate because they do not declare it until they have already taken the required courses. The estimate is that

approximately 20 students might be taking the courses towards the completion of the certificate. Around 90% of the students who are enrolled in the T&I courses are heritage speakers, whereas 10% are second language learners.

#### 2.2.1.4. Program D

Program D offers an undergraduate Spanish program with a concentration in Translation and Interpreting. It is housed at a public research university in the U.S. Southwest. A summary of some descriptive data from Program D is summarized below (see *Table 5*).

Table 5. Descriptive table of Program D

	<b>Prog. D: Undergraduate</b>
<b>Entrance Requirements</b>	Intermediate language course
<b>Requirements</b>	Minor: 21 credit hours Major: 42 credit hours
<b>Exit Requirement</b>	None
<b>Number of staff</b>	4
<b>Number of students</b>	~120

#### *Entrance requirements*

Students are required to take a specific intermediate Spanish course for second language learners or a specific intermediate Spanish course for heritage language learners in order to enroll in the

courses in the T&I program. Prospective students are expected to be highly proficient in Spanish and English before taking the first course of the program.

#### *Requirements*

The students who decide to pursue the Spanish translation track in this institution, must complete 21 credits. These credits correspond to seven courses: one introductory course to T&I, two translation courses and four interpreting courses. The overall Spanish major with the T&I concentration consists of 42 credits.

#### *Program Objectives*

Among other objectives, the T&I major in Spanish addresses a growing need for professionally trained cross-cultural communicators in the legal and healthcare sectors. The program also has a linguistics component, so that students develop their knowledge on how language works, the nature and structure of language, and aspects of linguistics relevant to the development of translation competence.

#### *Exit requirements*

The program does not have any exit requirements but offers internships for students in healthcare and legal institutions.

#### *Number of instructional staff*

There are four instructors who were currently teaching translation and interpreting courses, as of Spring 2019. The director of the program usually teaches some of the courses in the program but was on sabbatical when this information was gathered.

#### *Number of students*

There were approximately 120 students enrolled in the translation track, as of Spring 2019. Students are required to take a specific intermediate Spanish course for second language learners and a specific intermediate Spanish course for heritage language learners in order to enroll in the courses in the T&I program. Although the program does not gather data in terms of the distribution of second language learners and heritage language learners, the estimate is that around 80-85% of the students enrolled in the T&I courses are heritage speakers and the remaining 15-20% are second language learners.

#### 2.2.1.5. Program E

Program E offers an undergraduate Spanish program, an undergraduate certificate in translation, a graduate certificate in translation, and a master's degree in Spanish translation. It also offers interpreting courses. It is housed at a public research university in the Southeast of the U.S. A summary of some descriptive data from program E is summarized below (see *Table 6*).

Table 6. Descriptive table of Program E

	<b>Prog. E: Undergraduate</b>	<b>Prog. E: Graduate</b>
<b>Entrance Requirements</b>	Advanced grammar & writing course	- Oral Interview - Written Essay in Spanish - TOEFL or IELTS
<b>Requirements</b>	12 credit hours	Certificate: 12 credit hours M.A.: 30 credit hours
<b>Exit Requirement</b>	Simulated oral OPI (majors)	Best Translation Submission
<b>Number of staff</b>	4	10-12 (5-6 Spanish)
<b>Number of students</b>	~100 (~45 in Spanish)	Certificate: 10 (3 in Spanish) M.A.: 10 in Spanish

#### 2.2.1.5.1. Undergraduate Program and Certificate

##### *Entrance requirements*

Students must complete specific language courses on advanced grammar and/or writing, or Spanish for heritage speakers in order to take the first course of the sequence.

##### *Requirements*

This university also offers an undergraduate certificate that consists of four translation courses (12 credits): one introductory course and three translation practice courses. Undergraduate students can take translation and/or interpreting courses that count towards their major.

##### *Program Objectives*

The main goal of the program is the development of students' translation skills. The undergraduate certificate is offered in several languages, including Spanish. It is recommended for students majoring in different languages. The certificate may complement a major in any field, and is especially recommended for majors and minors in French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, international studies, or international business.

##### *Exit requirements*

All students who finish their major have to do a simulated oral proficiency interview (OPI) in Spanish. In general, the level of proficiency of students who finish the undergraduate major is mostly around Advanced Low for non-native speakers and a few might be at the Intermediate-Low or Intermediate Mid. Native speakers range from Advanced Mid, Advanced High, Superior and sometimes even Distinguished, according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

##### *Number of instructional staff*

Four Spanish faculty usually teach the undergraduate courses.

*Number of students*

At the undergraduate level, there are over 100 students: approximately 60 students in the first introductory course (common to all language pairs) and around 45 in the Spanish translation practice courses overall, with around 15 students in each of the translation practice courses.

2.2.1.5.2. Graduate Certificate and Master's Degree

*Entrance requirements*

The students are required to hold a phone or a Skype interview with the graduate director to be admitted to the program, and they need to submit a writing essay in Spanish. Those who are international students need to submit their TOEFL scores as well, as part of the university's graduate admission requirements.

*Requirements*

The main difference between the Spanish M.A. and the graduate certificate is related to the amount of exposure to the practice of translation. The graduate certificate consists of 12 credits (four graduate courses) whereas the M.A. which consists of 10 courses (30 credits). Also, the graduate certificate in translation is offered in different language concentrations, including Spanish.

*Program Objectives*

The purpose of the graduate translation program is to provide students with opportunities to translate at an advanced level within different domains including creative texts but also very practical texts or domains, such as legal, medical and scientific translation. These are domains

that students and potential professionals can actually use in the community for employment. Therefore, the main goal of the program is to train students who will be successful translators. These students will develop the research skills that they need to function as independent translators throughout the courses of the program.

#### *Exit requirements*

After completing the courses of the M.A. program, besides the comprehension examination, students are required to submit their best translation by the time they graduate. Based on a rubric, a group of faculty members determines whether the translation is satisfactory, unsatisfactory or outstanding.

#### *Number of instructional staff*

There are approximately 10 to 12 professors who teach translation courses. In general, out of those, 5 or 6 teach in the Spanish track specifically.

#### *Number of students*

In terms of numbers of students, in the Spanish M.A. there are around 18 students enrolled, out of which 10 are in the translation concentration. In the graduate certificate, there are 10 students enrolled considering all the different languages, out of which 3 are in the Spanish concentration. At the graduate level, approximately 25% of the students are heritage speakers.

#### 2.2.1.6. Programs: Main Similarities and Differences

All of the programs that took part in this study are housed in language departments. Of all the programs examined, Undergraduate Program A is probably the most unique since it is the only undergraduate translation degree where students complete a higher number of credits (120).

Also, this is the only program that does not offer interpreting courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Regarding language offerings, Program A and Program E offer graduate and undergraduate degrees (A) and graduate and undergraduate certificates (E) in different language pairs, including Spanish. In contrast, Programs B, C, and D focus exclusively on Spanish, as well as the M.A. degree offered by Program E.

Programs C and D share some similarities because they have a higher population of heritage speakers in contrast to Programs A, B and E where the number of second language learners is higher. The other similarity observed between Programs C and D is in relation to their course offerings: both programs offer translation and interpreting courses as part of the same certificate (C) or concentration (D). However, the T&I concentration in (D) consists of 21 credits (3 translation and 4 interpreting courses) and the T&I certificate in (C) consists of 15 credits (3 translation and 2 interpreting courses). Program E offers an undergraduate certificate in translation where students are required to take 12 credits whereas the undergraduate certificate in Program B consists of 20 credits.

Finally, regarding entrance requirements, in all undergraduate programs there are specific required courses established as prerequisites (in Program A, there is no proficiency requirement to enter the program but a specific course is required for translation practice courses). Finally, Programs C and D do not have any exit requirements in place, whereas in the other programs (A, B and E) some proficiency measures are used at the undergraduate level and other outcomes measures are used at the graduate level.

### 2.2.2. Subject Group

Overall, three different groups of stakeholders participated in this study: students, administrators, and instructional staff. All the students who participated in the study were enrolled or had taken translation or interpreting courses before. Graduate and undergraduate students were grouped separately due the fact that graduate students had to fulfill different proficiency requirements and that the linguistic background of graduate students was very heterogeneous. In contrast, administrators and instructors were grouped together because they were asked the same questions in relation to their perceptions on students' language preparedness and development and to their instructional practices. Only a few questions related to program practices (e.g., students enrolled, program objectives, entrance requirements, and exit requirements) were directed to administrators.

In the case of undergraduate students, it was possible to categorize two balanced groups of participants: second language learners and heritage students. Participants who reported starting to learn Spanish in formal educational contexts in or after adolescence were considered second language speakers. Participants who reported being exposed to both English and Spanish since birth and those who reported being exposed to Spanish since birth and later to English during infancy were categorized as heritage speakers of Spanish (Kelleher, 2010; Valdés, 2000a, 2000b).

Regarding administrators and instructional staff, most of them were teaching in the program when the data was gathered or had recently taught T&I courses. In a few cases, administrators were not currently teaching in the program because they were retired ( $n = 1$ ), on sabbatical leave ( $n = 2$ ), or because they had a teaching reduction ( $n = 1$ ) when they were

interviewed. In the case of the undergraduate programs from Programs A and E, the responses were gathered from former administrators.

Across the different programs, a total of 129 stakeholders participated in individual interviews and the focus groups: 102 students, 9 administrators, and 18 instructional staff. Regarding the on-line questionnaires, across the different programs, 135 stakeholders completed the online surveys: 109 students, 6 administrators, and 20 instructional staff. This disparity in numbers might be due to the fact that not all the stakeholders who completed in the online surveys participated in the individual interviews and focus groups, and vice versa. Table 7 shows the distribution of students interviewed per program. Table 8 displays the distribution of students who participated in the study. Table 9 lists the number of administrators and instructional staff, job titles, and administrative positions.

Table 7. Distribution of overall students interviewed in focus groups per program

<i>Program</i>	<i>Number of students interviewed</i>
Program A	13
Program B	15
Program C	14
Program D	39
Program E	21
Total	102

Table 8. Distribution of students who participated in the study

<i>Data collection tool</i>	<i>Graduate students</i>	<i>Undergraduate students</i>		<i>Total</i>
		L2	Heritage	
<i>Focus groups</i>	8	44	50	102
<i>Questionnaires</i>	13	52	44	109

Table 9. Number of instructional staff and administrators interviewed per program.

<i>Program</i>	<i>Staff (teaching and administrative)</i>	<i>Administrative Positions</i>
Program A	- 6 TT - 2 Instructors	- 1 Director (comprehensive program) - 1 Coordinator (undergraduate program) - 1 Face-to-face graduate coordinator - 1 Online graduate coordinator
Program B	- 1 TT - 1 Lecturer (Ph.D. holder) - 4 Instructors	- 1 Director
Program C	- 1 TT - 2 Lecturers (Ph.D. and M.A. holders)	- 1 Director
Program D	- 1 TT (M.A. holder) - 2 Lecturers (Ph.D. and M.A. holders) - 1 Instructor	- 1 Director
Program E	- 6 TT	- 1 Graduate director - 1 Undergraduate coordinator
Total	27	9

## 2.3. Data Collection

### 2.3.1. Research Methods

Mixed methods—quantitative and qualitative methods—were employed in order to answer the research questions of the study. Many authors (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Clark, 2011; among others) have argued for combining methods from these two paradigms in research, especially within the field of language program evaluation and/or development (Lynch, 1996). More recently, some authors have claimed that a utilization-focused evaluation approach should employ a mixed-methodological approach, as using data of quantitative and qualitative data “provide the richest perspective on program phenomena” (McKay & Davis, 2018, p. 38). In this line, Allen (2004), following Denzin’s concept of triangulation (1970) as different measures that lead to the same conclusion, advocates its use, as it facilitates the validation of data. Therefore, the data that was gathered to answer the research questions of this dissertation is both quantitative and qualitative.

The data were collected onsite during the fall of 2018 and the spring of 2019. The researcher traveled to five different institutions where the T&I programs were housed. Each visit lasted one week on average, which resulted in enough time to survey the available hours and arrange meetings with the different stakeholders who voluntarily agreed to participate in the individual interviews and the focus groups. The interviews and focus groups were recorded with a Sony Stereo Digital Voice Recorder (ICD-UX560). The individual interviews were between 45 and 120 minutes long depending on the quantity of information they provided. The focus groups lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, depending on the number of students participating in each focus group and the quantity of information they provided.

Generally, the number of participants in the focus groups held with undergraduate and graduate students ranged from 2 to 6 participants. All students enrolled in translation and/or interpreting courses received an email sent by their program coordinator or professor. This email contained the following information: a paragraph describing the present study, a link to Questionnaire B (students' questionnaire), and an invitation to contact the researcher if they were interested in participating further in the focus groups. The focus groups were adapted considering the courses in which students were registered, although sometimes students enrolled in different courses would participate together in the same focus group. During the focus groups, the researcher took notes that allowed him to trace back which participant said what.

The qualitative data from the administrators and instructional staff was gathered from face-to-face interviews. Before visiting each institution, an email was sent to administrators and instructional staff including the following information: a paragraph describing the present study, a link to Questionnaire A, and an invitation to participate in the individual interviews. During the individual interviews with administrators, the researcher followed the set of questions found in Appendix C, whereas the set of questions found in Appendix D was followed with the instructional staff.

The quantitative data was gathered from the relational analog scales included in two questionnaires: one addressed to program administrators and instructional staff and one addressed to undergraduate and graduate students. The qualitative data was gathered from individual interviews held with program administrators and instructional staff and from focus groups held with graduate and undergraduate students.

### 2.3.2. Research Instruments

The following research instruments were used to answer the research questions of this study:

- Online questionnaire A addressed to administrators and instructors (Appendix A)
- Online questionnaire B addressed to undergraduate and graduate students (Appendix B)
- Interview questions addressed to administrators (Appendix C)
- Interview questions addressed to instructional staff (Appendix D)
- Focus groups questions addressed to undergraduate and graduate students (Appendix E)

Three main research tools (questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews) were used to elicit responses from the stakeholders. These tools are commonly used within the field of language program evaluation (Davis & McKay, 2018). The motivation for the use of each of these research tools is explained below.

#### 2.3.2.1. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are useful tools that provide information about a program (Kim & Davis, 2018). Among other advantages, questionnaires are quick to design, easy to administer, and allow administrators to collect data from a large pool of respondents. Questionnaires are “the best option to shed light on what a large group thinks about programmatic issues” (Kim & Davis, 2018, p. 70). In addition to these advantages, the main reason behind the use of questionnaires in this study was to get quantitative data and be able to conduct statistical analysis of the data, as pointed out by Kim & Davis (2018).

The questionnaires of this study were designed using Qualtrics. They were distributed online among the stakeholders (program administrators, instructional staff, and students) via email. Questionnaire A aims to compare the perspectives of program directors and instructional staff regarding the expected proficiency level of students (both in Spanish and English) compared to the actual level of proficiency of students who enter the program (both in Spanish and English) through relational analog scales. In addition, it included a yes/no question related to their perception of students' language development throughout the program.

Questionnaire B is further divided into two blocks. The first one is an adaptation of Birdsong, Gerken, and Amengual (2012). The original questionnaire was created with support from the Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning at the University of Texas at Austin to better understand the profiles of speakers in diverse settings with diverse backgrounds. Therefore, the adapted questionnaire used for this study was designed to reveal the language experience and history of participants. The second block of the questionnaire aims to compare participants' perspectives on the ideal proficiency level to enter the program (both in Spanish and English) compared to the actual level of proficiency of students who enter the program (both in Spanish and English) by means of relational analog scales. Also, through these relational analog scales, participants rate their own current language proficiency in both English and Spanish, and the proficiency that they expected to achieve at the end of the program, in both English and Spanish.

#### 2.3.2.2. Interviews

Interviews are “an effective tool for evaluation since they allow to collect the perceptions of those most knowledgeable about the program—staff, students, and other invested stakeholders—” (Méndez-Seijas, Zalbidea, & Vallejos, 2018, p. 57). In fact, with interviews, participants disclose their beliefs, points of view, and perceptions of the educational processes happening within the program (Kvale 1996; Patton 1990, as cited in Méndez-Seijas, Zalbidea and Vallejos, 2018). Among the different types of interviews that might be used in program evaluation, the standardized open-ended interview was chosen as the most suitable type as it enhanced comparability of information across respondents (Méndez-Seijas, Zalbidea, & Vallejos, 2018).

The interview questions addressed to program directors included questions related to the following aspects: (a) their academic background, (b) their teaching experience, (c) the proficiency requirements of the program, (d) their perceptions regarding language proficiency requirements, (e) their perceptions on the linguistic readiness of students at the beginning of the program and the linguistic gains throughout the program, (f) the identification of different linguistic profiles in the program and their perceptions regarding their needs, and (g) other program-related issues that might influence the way that the needs of the students are addressed in the courses and in the program as a whole.

The interview questions addressed to instructional staff included questions related to: (a) their academic background, (b) their teaching experience, (c) course prerequisites or proficiency requirements, (d) their perceptions regarding language proficiency requirements, (e) their perceptions on the linguistic readiness of students in their courses, and the linguistic gains throughout these courses, (f) the identification of different linguistic profiles of students in the

courses and their perceptions regarding their needs, and (g) other course-related issues that might influence the way that the needs of the students are addressed.

#### 2.3.2.3. Focus Groups

Focus groups have been used widely within the field of language program evaluation and program development (e.g. Lynch, 1996, 2000). Gruden-Schuck, Allen, and Larson (2004) define a focus group as “a particular type of group discussion or group interview that elicits information on a given issue from a carefully selected group of individuals” (as cited in Bryfonski, 2018, p. 47). Participants in the focus groups were predominantly selected considering the courses in which they were enrolled. Throughout the focus groups, the researcher followed the protocol described in Milleret and Silveira (2009), especially in terms of the procedures and the type of guided questions that these authors used for their evaluation project. Within program evaluation, focus groups “are well suited to provide information complex processes within programs and why things are happening the way they are” (Bryfonski, 2018, p. 49).

The focus groups questions addressed to students included questions related to: (a) their background, (b) their field of study, (c) the prerequisite courses they took, (d) their language learning experiences in the T&I classroom, (e) the type of feedback they get in these courses, (f) their linguistic readiness when they started the first T&I courses of the program, (g) their linguistic development, (h) their perceived language proficiency in Spanish and English, and (i) their overall learning experiences in the courses and in the program.

## 2.4. Data Analysis

The results for each group of participants (i.e., (i) graduate students, (ii) undergraduate students, and (iii) administrators and instructional staff) were analyzed separately. Following the concurrent triangulation design of the study, the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately but the results from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were discussed altogether to merge conclusions and triangulate the data.

Regarding graduate students, the lower number of participants (13 graduate students completed the questionnaires and 8 graduate students participated in the focus groups) did not make it possible to further divide them into groups. Thus, the quantitative data from this population was treated as one group. One further aspect that makes this group different from that of undergraduate students is that it includes five native speakers of English, one native speaker of Spanish who was raised monolingual, one native speaker of Spanish who was born in a Spanish-speaking country but immigrated to the U.S. at the age of 10, and one native speaker of Italian. This is perhaps due to the fact that graduate programs are more likely to attract international students with linguistic profiles different from those found in undergraduate programs.

As mentioned above, in the case of undergraduate students, the information obtained from the questionnaire responses and the focus groups about the students' linguistic background and onset of acquisition were used to classify undergraduate students in two different categories: heritage speakers of Spanish and second language speakers of Spanish.

The results from administrators and instructional staff were analyzed together as a group for the quantitative and qualitative analysis since both groups were asked the same questions

about their beliefs about students' language preparedness, language development, and course/instructional practices. Some program-specific themes (mainly related to outcomes assessment measures and program development) were primarily analyzed considering the perspectives of administrators, although if instructors were involved in administrative decisions, their opinions were considered as well.

R software was used to conduct statistical analyses on the numerical data gathered from the relational analog scales included in the online questionnaires. For each stakeholder group (instructional staff and administrators, undergraduate students, and graduate students), analyses were run in order to answer specific research questions. These research questions are considered to provide overall perspectives from the point of view of stakeholders in T&I programs across the same educational system. The results from the qualitative data seek to unveil a general tendency that is not program specific. Thus, responses were not further divided by program. With regard to the instructional staff and administrators group, in order to answer the question of whether they perceive a mismatch between the proficiency (in English and Spanish) expected of students entering a translation program and the actual proficiency of students entering the program, a two-way repeated measures ANOVA with *proficiency* (expected proficiency, actual proficiency) and *language* (English, Spanish) as within-subjects factors was carried out. For undergraduate students, I first set out to answer whether they perceive the same mismatch between the expected proficiency and the actual proficiency of students entering the translation program. In order to answer this question, a three-way mixed ANOVA was run with *group* (heritage, L2) as a between subject factor and *proficiency* (expected proficiency, actual proficiency) and *language* (English, Spanish) as within-subjects factors. Second, in order to

investigate whether undergraduate students expect to advance in their proficiency, a three-way mixed ANOVAs was run with *group* (heritage, L2) as a between subject factor and *proficiency* (current proficiency, expected proficiency by the end of the program) and *language* (English, Spanish) as within-subjects factors. Finally, the data from graduate students were used to answer the same two questions addressed in the undergraduate analysis. For the first question, a two-way repeated measures ANOVA was run with *language* (English, Spanish) and *proficiency* (expected proficiency, actual proficiency) as the within-subjects factors. For the second question, another two-way repeated measures ANOVA was run with *language* (English, Spanish) and *proficiency* (current proficiency, expected proficiency by the end of the program) as within-subjects factors.

With regard to qualitative data, the recordings were transcribed with the help of Descript. This is an automatic transcription software that was useful to prepare a first draft to work with. However, the researcher had to listen to the recordings several times and edit the transcriptions to make sure that the information was accurate and that each one of the participants was correctly identified in the focus groups. Once the transcriptions were completed, all the files were downloaded as Word documents. Due to the large number of participants, in the qualitative analysis they were identified with numbers instead of fictitious names. As mentioned above, undergraduate students were further categorized into two groups: second language (L2) and heritage (HS).

A descriptive/interpretive approach was followed for the coding of the qualitative data, identifying themes that emerged in the responses of stakeholders (Corbin & Strauss, 1989). The software NVivo (Nvivo 12 Mac) was used to facilitate the analysis of qualitative data. The word documents with the transcriptions were transferred to NVivo creating four different files

according to the four groups of the study: (1) graduate students; (2) undergraduate students (L2, HS); (3) administrators; and (4) instructional staff. Different codes were created for each of these groups taking into account the main recurrent themes that emerged in the responses of the participants in the individual interviews and the focus groups.

## CHAPTER 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: GRADUATE STUDENTS

### 3.1. Quantitative Results

Answers from all 13 participants were included in the statistical analysis of graduate students' responses. Due to the small sample size and the disparities in group size [Heritage ( $n = 3$ ); L1 Spanish ( $n = 2$ ); L1 English ( $n = 7$ ); L1 Italian ( $n = 1$ )], the graduate student group was treated as a single experimental group with no distinction in linguistic profile. Table 10 and Table 11 show the descriptive statistics of students' responses broken down by the linguistic profile. In both tables, mean scores are based on a 0 to 100 scale. Table 10 shows the language preparedness data (mean and standard deviation) which describes students' perceptions with regard to proficiency in their program of study, including *expected proficiency* (the proficiency level they think would be ideal to enter the program) and *average perceived proficiency* (the estimated average proficiency of their class) for each language (English, Spanish). Table 11 displays the language development data (mean and standard deviation) from students' perceptions of their own proficiency which includes their *current proficiency* (the proficiency they currently think they have), their *future proficiency* (the proficiency level they expect to have when they complete the T&I program) and *expected gains* (calculated score resulting from the subtraction of current proficiency from future proficiency) for both languages (English, Spanish).

#### 3.1.1. Language Preparedness

The first question I seek to answer is whether graduate students perceive a mismatch between the proficiency level they think would be ideal to enter the program and the actual proficiency of

students entering the translation program. In order to answer this question, responses were submitted to a two-way repeated measures  $(2) \times (2)$  analysis of variance (ANOVA) with *proficiency* (expected, average) and *language* (English, Spanish) as within-subjects factors. The ANOVA reveals a main effect of *language*,  $F(1,12) = 26.01$ ;  $p < .05$ , but no main effect of *proficiency*,  $F(1,12) = 3.13$ ;  $p > .05$ . The interaction between both factors was significant,  $F(1,12) = 9.6$ ;  $p < .05$ . In order to explore this interaction, I carried out four pairwise comparisons. In each one of these,  $p$  values are corrected following a Bonferroni adjustment ( $.05/4 = .0125$ ). This is done throughout the quantitative analyses. Students as a group do not perceive a mismatch between the *expected* and *average* proficiency neither for Spanish,  $t(12) = 2.21$ ;  $p > .0125$  [.046], nor for English,  $t(12) = 0.88$ ;  $p > .0125$  [.39]. Furthermore, they indicate that while the *expected* proficiency for English and Spanish should not differ,  $t(12) = 2.47$ ;  $p > .0125$ , the group average in their T&I classes demonstrates more proficiency in English than in Spanish,  $t(12) = 5.94$ ;  $p < .0125$ . These data suggest that graduate participants, as a group, believe that students who enter the program do not present a significantly lower level of proficiency than what they assume would be an ideal proficiency level to enter the program. However, not surprisingly, they acknowledge that T&I students display a higher level of English proficiency when compared to Spanish.

Table 10. Graduate students' responses on proficiency (expected proficiency, average perceived proficiency) means and standard deviation per language and student profile group

	Expected Proficiency Spanish	Average Proficiency Spanish	Expected Proficiency English	Average Proficiency English
Heritage	88.3 (10.4)	58.6 (28.7)	93.3 (11.5)	83.3 (20.8)
L1 English	79.4 (12.1)	76.5 (8.9)	87.8 (2.4)	89.8 (3.7)
L1 Spanish	85 (7)	57.5 (10.6)	90 (0)	82.5 (3.5)
L1 Italian	90	80	100	90
All responses	83.1 (10.7)	69.7 (16.7)	90.3 (6.2)	87.2 (9.6)

### 3.1.2. Language Development

The second question explores whether graduate students expect to increase their proficiency during the program. To answer this question, responses were submitted to a two-way repeated measures  $(2) \times (2)$  ANOVA with *proficiency* (current, future) and *language* (English, Spanish) as within-subjects factors. The ANOVA reveals main effects of *language*,  $F(1,12) = 7.05$ ;  $p < .05$ , and *proficiency*,  $F(1,12) = 13.61$ ;  $p < .05$ . The interaction between both factors was not significant,  $F(1,12) = 2.61$ ;  $p > .05$ . Upon closer examination, as a group, graduate students do not expect to increase their proficiency in English ( $t(12) = -2.223$ ;  $p > .0125$ ) while they expect to improve their proficiency in Spanish ( $t(12) = -3.03$ ;  $p < .0125$ ). A further look at the descriptive statistics can be used to observe patterns within groups. The data suggest that

heritage speakers of Spanish appear to expect to improve their proficiency in Spanish more than in English. This is also true for the L1 English group who display virtually no expectations to develop their English proficiency. L1 Spanish speakers, on the other hand, expect to improve their proficiency in English more than in Spanish, and the L1 Italian speaker anticipates to learn no Spanish at all, but expects a marginal improvement in English.

Table 11. Graduate students' responses on language development (current proficiency, future proficiency, expected gains) means and standard deviation per language and student profile group

	Current Spanish Proficiency	Future Spanish Proficiency	Expected Spanish Gains	Current English Proficiency	Future English Proficiency	Expected English Gains
Heritage	86.3 (12.8)	94.3 (8.1)	8 (6.2)	92.6 (10.2)	95.6 (5.8)	3 (4.3)
L1 English	78.8 (15.4)	85.4 (9.2)	6.5 (8.8)	99.7 (0.7)	99.8 (0.4)	0.1 (0.4)
L1 Spanish	90 (14.1)	95 (7)	5 (7)	80 (0)	90 (0)	10 (0)
L1 Italian	90	90	0	98	100	2
All responses	83.1 (13.7)	89.3 (8.8)	6.1 (7.3)	94.9 (8.4)	97.3 (4.4)	2.4 (4)

### 3.1.3. Interim Discussion

The qualitative explorations indicate that, with regard to *group proficiency*, graduate students, as a group, do not perceive a mismatch between the *expected* and *average* proficiency neither for Spanish nor for English. Furthermore, they believe that the *expected* level to enter their graduate

program should be comparable in English and Spanish. However, there are differences when it comes to the perceived *average* proficiency in their classes. The data suggest that students' perceived *average* level of proficiency in English is higher than in Spanish. In addition, the results from *language development* reveal that graduate students expect to increase their proficiency in both languages, with more expected gains in Spanish than in English.

A closer look at the data reveals differences among groups. These data need to be approached with care as the lack of a significant number of participants makes it difficult to draw reliable conclusions. Yet, when comparing participant groups, the data appears to show interesting trends. Concerning *language preparedness*, the perceptions of the *heritage* and the *L1 Spanish* groups are much more unbalanced; they notice uneven levels of Spanish proficiency in their programs if we look at the results on the perceived *expected* level of Spanish proficiency and the perceived *average* level of Spanish. However, the L1 English group is the only group that only perceives slight differences, meaning that their perception of the *average* Spanish proficiency of students is close to the *expected* Spanish proficiency in their programs. A possible explanation for this might be found in the directionality of the program. Most of the participants from the L1 group belong to a program where they exclusively translate into English; as a consequence, some of the participants of this group might be less (self-)conscious of possible unbalanced Spanish proficiencies and/or might not pay as much attention to the Spanish proficiency of students as they do for English proficiency.

Regarding language development (*expected gains*), we can observe that participant groups show asymmetries when it comes to how much they expect to increase their linguistic proficiency in each language. The *heritage* and L1 English group both appear to expect more

proficiency gains in Spanish than in English, with the L1 English group showing an expected marginal gain in English of 0.1%. Meanwhile, the L1 Spanish group appears to expect more proficiency gains in English. Finally, the L1 Italian speaker, indicates 0% expected proficiency gains in Spanish and 2% for English.

These results demonstrate that whatever it is that participants understand by proficiency in Spanish, they expect to increase it during their program of study. Despite professional views that the goal of translation classes is not to develop language proficiency, graduate students expect to improve their language proficiency. This means that students expectations or goals do not fully coincide with those of professionals and instructors. Furthermore, their linguistic background appears to hint at differences with respect to how much they expect to gain in each language, but the lack of available data makes it difficult to draw conclusions. Moreover, not unexpectedly, the graduate students in this study, as a group, indicate that the average level of proficiency in Spanish appears to be lower than that of English.

In order to reach a better and more thorough understanding of these quantitative responses, the qualitative results gathered from focus groups held with 8 participants are presented in the next section. The qualitative results will be divided into two sections. First, I will present the qualitative results concerning the *language preparedness* of participants by exploring the main themes identified in their responses. Second, I will display the qualitative results regarding their perceptions on *language development* and the main themes that emerged in the responses of graduate students.

## 3.2. Qualitative Results

### 3.2.1. Language Preparedness

Eight graduate students participated in the focus groups. Out of these, five were L2 speakers of Spanish (born and raised in the U.S.), one was a Spanish-speaker who was born and raised in a monolingual environment (L1 Spanish), one was a Spanish-speaker who was born in a Spanish-speaking country but immigrated to the U.S. when s/he was 10 years old (heritage Spanish student), and another participant (L1 Italian) was an L2 learner of English and L3 learner of Spanish.

When asked about their perceptions on language preparedness, the qualitative responses from the L1 English participants reveal that T&I students are better prepared in terms of their English proficiency than in Spanish. Similarly, a heritage speaker of Spanish (Participant 7) reports that heritage speakers and native speakers of Spanish are prepared, whereas English speakers seem to struggle more with their Spanish proficiency. An example of responses of Participants 2, 3, and 5 (L2 speakers of Spanish, A) and Participant 7 (heritage speaker of Spanish, E), is in (1).

(1)

(a) *Their English is probably not like way beyond our Spanish but probably significantly...* (Participant 2A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *It's noticeably better, definitely* (Participant 3A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(c) *Yeah, certainly... somewhat better* (Participant 2A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(d) *I'd say everyone's more around C1 to C2 for English. In Spanish, I would say, on the ACTFL scale, we have probably upper-intermediate Spanish speakers all the way through Superior or B1 through C2 (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)*

(e) *Native speakers of Spanish and heritage speakers... they definitely have a higher level of Spanish than a natural English speaker would have, and I see those English speakers whose second language is Spanish... I see them struggle (Participant 7E, Spanish heritage speaker)*

These qualitative results confirm the quantitative findings on *perceived proficiency* (expected vs. average) of students. As could be expected, participants acknowledge that T&I students have a better overall command of English than in Spanish. In order to better understand the factors that affect the language preparedness of participants, the qualitative data was further analyzed according to the main themes identified in the focus groups. The main themes identified in the graduate students' responses with regard to their language preparedness were coded as feelings of insecurity and unbalanced proficiency requirements. These two themes do not present distinct categories found in the qualitative data but rather interconnected topics that participants brought up during focus groups. This is discussed next.

#### 3.2.1.1. Feelings of Insecurity

The first theme involves participants' reactions to language-related issues in T&I courses. Students mentioned preparation, scaffolding, proficiency, directionality, and domain-specific knowledge as issues that, in one way or another, have acted as obstacles in their learning process.

Two main subthemes were identified within the theme *feelings of insecurity*: domain-specific/specialized language proficiency, and directionality and dominant language.

#### 3.2.1.1.1. Domain-Specific/Specialized Language Proficiency

One of the main concerns of students has to do with the lack of domain-specific knowledge. Some graduate students even make explicit distinctions between this factor and language proficiency. This distinction between language proficiency and domain-specific knowledge has been pointed out in the literature (Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez, 2019). In fact, these authors argue that domain-specific knowledge can be seen as one of the main challenges for students in T&I classrooms.

For example, Participant 1C, an L2 speaker of Spanish enrolled in an elective course reports that taking an elective interpreting course was difficult and challenging. This participant also expresses that s/he did not feel prepared when s/he started taking this interpreting course because the terminology used in the interpretation course was too advanced. Students enrolled in the same interpreting course, which required interpreting in both directions (Spanish-English, English-Spanish), reported that they were required to interpret texts full of domain-specific terms and idioms, without receiving previous guidance. This was identified as a real challenge especially by those students who did not take translation courses before entering the interpreting course. In this regard, Participant 1C, mentions that it would be more appropriate to start with more daily life vocabulary and scaffold it a little bit more.

(2) *That's the most difficult piece that I don't have any familiarity with... and when I hear it... I am completely lost...* (Participant 1C, L2 speaker of Spanish)

In example (2), Participant 1C refers to specific activities where s/he is required to interpret from Spanish into English. The first text that students had to interpret in this interpreting course was about acupuncture. Thus, this participant, agreeing with the other participants from the focus group, states that s/he felt frustrated because s/he did not have the vocabulary and could not comprehend “*anything at all.*” In this case, participants from this focus group emphasized how they could not comprehend the Spanish texts provided in class because the level of the texts was higher than what they expected. For this reason, they expressed that they would feel comfortable starting with texts that were more reasonable to their proficiency level and with more guided practice at the beginning of their interpreting course.

In Program A, Participant 3A, who previously reported feeling a bit anxious about their Spanish proficiency, also reports that entering the program was challenging due to a lack of domain-specific knowledge, not only in Spanish but also in English (her native language): “*It was a conceptual lacking.*” This participant also reported that there were certain topics that s/he did not understand in English. Since the practice translation courses in this program are specialized in domain-specific areas, the lack of domain-specific knowledge in English was particularly challenging when comprehending texts in Spanish and translating them into English. In this regard, Participant 4A (L1 speaker of Spanish) also stated that s/he struggled with specific terminology in English. S/he reported that s/he did not feel prepared in English because the

register was very high in the translation courses and for this reason, sometimes it was difficult for them to express their ideas in English in class (see example (3)).

(3) *I'm afraid sometimes that my classmates.... It's not that I don't understand them, but they will not understand* (Participant 4A, Spanish native speaker)

Furthermore, this participant admitted that this was a feeling that she experienced at the beginning of the program because the medium of instruction was mostly English. In this regard, she expressed that professors in the program were lenient with her because after communicating her frustration to professors, they let her participate in Spanish in the classroom. As it will be discussed below, this participant also alluded to the unidirectionality of this program, as another factor that made this participant feel uncomfortable. This same idea was confirmed by other participants who express their dissatisfaction about the directionality of the program.

#### 3.2.1.1.2. Directionality and Dominant Language

The directionality was identified as one of the main concerns for graduate students from Program A. Participants reported that the program was not advertised as unidirectional and that translating exclusively into English is not what they expected from the program. Two second language learners of Spanish who were finishing their last semester in Program A, reported that they felt a little bit *worried* and *anxious* in relation to their level of Spanish proficiency before starting the program, as noted in (4).

(4)

(a) *With language proficiency I was.... I mean, I was worried a little bit but I thought it was like normal, you know... it wasn't any more than the normal amount to be worried. I knew I'd be qualified... if they accept you, it can't be that bad* (Participant 2A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *I got a little bit of anxiety I guess... but it wasn't enough to make me feel bad or like deterred or anything* (Participant 3A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

These participants feel that their Spanish proficiency was insufficient when they entered the program as seen in (4). However, they do not show a very strong opinion because they feel that being accepted into this program already provides them with some certain guarantee of success. In fact, some participants from the same program specifically say that students from this program are frequently reminded how selective this program is. This is an issue that was identified among certain administrators from the same program as well, so it will be further explored in Chapter 5.

When asked about their language preparedness, these two participants, as well as other participants from the same program, allude to the *unidirectionality* of the program. In this regard, an international student who was born in a Spanish-speaking country (Participant 4), showed a much more critical attitude towards exclusively translating from Spanish into English. This participant even felt very insecure and even *panicked* at the beginning of the program because s/he realized that s/he would be translating into English throughout the courses of the program, as observed in (5).

(5) *I really panicked the first semester, because I understood that we would translate into English only... and that being that the name of the program is [...]. So. my thoughts were that we would go into Spanish most of the time, but we rarely go into Spanish* (Participant 4A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

For this participant, translating exclusively into English appeared to be a challenge. This participant stated clearly that s/he would go back to her country of origin and that s/he would work translating in both directions. This was one of the recurrent themes identified in the responses of graduate participants on their language preparedness at the beginning of the program.

Overall, it appears that there are several language-related issues that hinder student performance in T&I classrooms. Some graduate students (both L2 speakers and Spanish native speakers) feel insecure about their language proficiency at the beginning of translation/interpreting courses. These participants mention preparation, scaffolding, proficiency, directionality, and domain-specific knowledge as important concerns that impacted their learning process. Lack of domain-specific knowledge and directionality are two subthemes identified where participants show more critical attitudes. Lack of domain-specific knowledge (both in English and Spanish) definitely appears to influence students' experience in the classroom across different programs, whereas the directionality of the program was identified as problematic among graduate students from Program A; students report that the program was not advertised as such. Directionality also seems to have an effect on their perception of graduate students towards their *language development* in T&I courses. For this reason, the issue of directionality will be discussed in detail later on.

All in all, the responses above show that many graduate students were allowed to take courses they felt they were not prepared for, and the transition was difficult due to insufficient language knowledge and sometimes the lack of scaffolding practices. Some participants exhibit second/foreign language anxiety which may affect the way students approach the T&I classroom. Thus, T&I programs or courses should try to find ways to overcome the feelings of insecurity reported by these students. For instance, T&I should explicitly state the expected level of proficiency needed for the program or courses. They should also overtly express in their website the translational directionality the students will be working with, and instructional staff should provide scaffolded practices to address the language gaps of students.

#### 3.2.1.2. Unbalanced Proficiency Requirements

The second main theme that emerged in the focus groups discussions when students were asked about their language preparedness is unbalanced proficiency requirements.

##### 3.2.1.2.1. Admission Requirements

In Program A, those graduate students who were born in the U.S. reported that they did not have to take a test to prove their proficiency in English or Spanish to enter the program. However, these students report that there are some heritage and native speakers of Spanish enrolled in this graduate program as well and that those students were required to take the TOEFL exam. For this reason, graduate students in this program specifically observe a *lack of balance in terms of the admission requirements*.

Participants 5A and 6A were critical of the admission requirements imposed by their graduate program, as shown in (6) and (7). Participant 6A is an international student from a non-Spanish speaking country. According to these participants, submitting an oral sample is not an effective tool to measure Spanish proficiency. At the same time, they raised the issue of fairness. They reported that there should be other ways to better screen participants in terms of their Spanish proficiency. They explicitly mentioned the *Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera* (DELE), ACTFL exams (Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)), or some sort of Skype interview. The example found in (6) shows the views of Participant 5A, an L2 speaker of Spanish, and Participant 6A, an L3 speaker of Spanish.

(6)

(a) *I did not have to take the TOEFL and no Spanish proficiency exam was required which I think it's interesting... It's an interesting imbalance that occurs in this program... There are native speakers of Spanish in the program and there are native speakers of English, but the native speakers of English don't have to take a Spanish proficiency test* (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *If there are students who are forced to get a TOEFL score, we should be forced to equally have the same measure of Spanish. I think that the audio sample is definitely not an organic accurate tool* (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(c) *They wanted it to be organic but I doubt that it is...* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)

Demonstrating proficiency in English with TOEFL or IELTS scores is one of the *departmental requirements* for international students in this program, as expressed in the website of the program. According to the responses of graduate students from this program, they seem to understand that this is a department requirement as well. Conversely, if this was a university requirement, the program should state that clearly in their website and should communicate this difference (departmental vs. university requirement) clearly to students. In any case, the fact that no Spanish proficiency exam is required for English speakers seem to be regarded as not fair by Participant 5A, a second language speaker of Spanish, and Participant 6A, an L3 learner of Spanish. An important point made by Participant 5A, was that s/he notices different levels of Spanish proficiency in the classroom. S/he added that, if a proficiency test was in place, those differences would be less abrupt (see example (8)).

*(8) It's unfair, right? That their proficiency is tested but that ours isn't... They have all of these steps to make sure they have enough proficiency to be here, but we can kind of just show up, right? We have the English proficiency. It's like "great, you're a native English speaker, done" and that's not... it's not really a fair system... And I think it creates further imbalances of different levels of language proficiency (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)*

Even though Participants 5A and 6A reported feeling prepared in regards to their Spanish proficiency, they were aware of important differences when comparing their Spanish proficiency with the proficiency of other students in the program. As expressed by these participants, submitting an audio sample is not an efficient way to assess someone's proficiency in a language for several reasons. For example, students can read directly from a script, students can get around

sounding native-like or more proficient, students can rehearse the text too many times, and students can even pay tutors to record their texts for them. For this reason, Participant 5 and Participant 6 reported that all graduate students from this program would agree with having some sort of test to demonstrate a certain level of Spanish proficiency, but especially Spanish native speakers.

On this subject, Participant 4A, a Spanish native speaker, stated that it is not fair that there is no Spanish proficiency exam to enter the program, agreeing on the point made by Participants 5A and 6A. At the same time, this participant believes that administrators must have their reasons—of which s/he is not aware—for not administering a test. The account of this participant is found in (9).

*(9) This exam would be useful just to make sure that people coming into the program can actually make it through... that they would be a good fit within the program (Participant 4A, Spanish native speaker).*

In this regard, Participant 6A also brought up a previous experience of a student who had to drop the program due to low Spanish proficiency. When s/he was reporting this experience, Participant 6 reflected that the selection/admission process of the graduate program might not be effective enough, even though some administrators of the program keep constantly repeating that they select the best of the best students (10).

*(10) And the point is that... we're told continuously how selective this program is and how there's so many people that try and get in, and only like eight or seven are selected every year... So, when I hear of somebody that's not that proficient and even needs to drop*

*out because they're not understanding enough of what they need to understand, makes me think that the selection process must have something wrong because I don't think that... [h/she] was okay and they picked [him/her] anyway, not because there was nobody better out there... but because a recording and a writing sample that you can produce at home is not an organic proof for your proficiency* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)

Similarly, in Program E, Participant 7E, a heritage speaker of Spanish reports that in most of the classes, around 70-80% of the students “*are native speakers of Spanish and heritage speakers.*” This participant in particular reported that s/he did not have to submit any samples to enter the master’s degree because s/he had completed previous coursework that counted toward the degree. S/he only had to take a Spanish test to prove that s/he had the level of proficiency required to take advanced level courses. S/he further noted that many times s/he sees second language speakers struggle in the program when they translate into Spanish, as seen in (11).

(11) *They struggle maybe because they were accepted into the program without making sure that they have the level necessary for the master’s...* (Participant 7E, heritage Spanish speaker).

It may seem that this contradicts the results on *language preparedness* from the quantitative analysis, that is, the fact that the mismatch between expected and average proficiency was not statistically significant. Although this might not coincide with the overall responses from graduate students, the response from this heritage speaker coincides with the behavior observed within the group of heritage speakers. This means that if we only take into consideration the quantitative responses on *language preparedness* in Spanish from the group of

heritage speakers, the same pattern is observed in this qualitative response. Heritage speakers do perceive an important mismatch between the *expected* Spanish proficiency (88.3) and the *average* Spanish proficiency (58.6), as observed in Table 10.

Overall, all the participating graduate students were critical about the lack of balance in the admission requirements and agree that there should be a way for these programs to screen the Spanish language proficiency of prospective graduate students more efficiently. Participants acknowledged that they are aware of other options that can test language proficiency (Skype interviews, OPI, WPT, etc.) more effectively than submitting a writing sample and a recording because these are pieces that students can prepare with as much time as they want and with as much help as they need. Most importantly, participants indicated that the level of Spanish is not homogeneous in their classes and that not all students are as prepared as they should be. Although the quantitative analysis for *language preparedness* was not found to be statistically significant considering the responses from graduate students as a group, some graduate students in the focus groups reported not feeling prepared in Spanish at an individual level, and some also observed differences in regards to the Spanish proficiency of students. In Program E, graduate students detect these imbalances in the classroom when they translate/interpret into Spanish and Program A, they identify unbalanced Spanish proficiencies, mainly through group work. All in all, these findings suggest that there are no clear/explicit criteria on language proficiency (in Programs A, C and E) nor for directionality (in Program A). These and other factors related to the way participants regard linguistic gains and opportunities for language development in the translation/interpreting courses are discussed in the following section.

### 3.2.2. Language Development

The quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires reveals that as a group, graduate students expect to increase their proficiency in both English and Spanish. In addition, the significant effect of language indicates that they expect to increase their proficiency in Spanish more so than in English. However, the L1 Spanish speakers expect to improve their proficiency in English more than in Spanish, and the L1 Italian speaker only expects a marginal improvement in English but no increase in Spanish.

In this section, the overall qualitative results from the theme *language development* are discussed. The main themes identified in the graduate students' responses with regard to their language development were labeled with these codes: (i) translational directionality of programs and (ii) language related courses and language teaching.

As previously stated, in Program A, the graduate students reported that they translate mainly from Spanish into English. Some participants see directionality closely connected with their language development and expect greater gains in the language they are translating into. In general, all participants from this program (with one exception) believe that their Spanish proficiency has improved. However, they expected to translate more into Spanish and that's why probably some students refer to *minimal* or *marginal* improvements in Spanish. For instance, Participant 3 expressed that [s/he] "*would like to think that that [his/her] written proficiency has improved*". This participant acknowledged that s/he had few opportunities in the program to write and translate into Spanish. In this regard, there are other participants who expressed that their proficiency in Spanish has improved minimally because they rarely translated into Spanish, as seen in (12).

(12)

(a) *I feel like I can still produce what I would need to if I needed to write anything in Spanish. You definitely learn vocabulary and we see phrases that are used all the time, so you'll learn like common and useful structures, devices, words, and false cognates... that helps for sure. I'd say minimally, but definitely some improvement* (Participant 2A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *Only in those few cases when we translated into Spanish. In the sense that, because we're paying such close attention when we do translations into Spanish.... And because we've been reading very high-level specialized texts from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries... in those areas, maybe marginal improvement* (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(c) *To be honest, being in the program has helped me with the reading and writing elements of it, but it hasn't focused too much on conversational elements. I think just being more familiar with the Spanish text that we go through has helped* (Participant 8A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

Only one participant noticed a decrease in his/her Spanish proficiency, especially in oral and written skills. Before entering the program, this participant used to take courses that were taught in Spanish and s/he used Spanish much more often. S/he thinks that this is why s/he does not necessarily perceive improvements in their language proficiency. Similarly, Participant 3 does not feel that their oral proficiency has improved either. The accounts from Participants 6A and 3A are found in (13a) and (13b), respectively.

(13)

(a) *The decrease in proficiency happened more on the production side... So, to me this program, I don't feel like it has made me improve [sic]. Of course, like the knowledge of the language to a certain point, you need to pay attention to how this preposition is used in this text to mean something different than usual. But overall, I don't feel I had any improvement just because I am using Spanish less and I am not producing it as much*  
(Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *Oral proficiency, not really, because I haven't practiced it so much. It's getting rusty*  
(Participant 3A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

It makes sense that these participants have these perceptions, as all of them recognize that they have been mostly reading in Spanish in the courses of the translation program but they have not been translating texts into Spanish. Yet, in terms of writing, all of the participants except for one (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish) believe that their Spanish proficiency has increased after taking T&I courses.

When it comes to the experience of second-language speakers of English born in Spanish-speaking countries, Participant 4A believes that their domain-specific knowledge in Spanish has improved, as observed in (14a). On his/her part, Participant 7E, a heritage speaker of Spanish, indicated that his/her language proficiency in Spanish has definitely increased throughout the graduate program, as can be observed in (14b).

(14)

(a) *The classes are very technical, so I acquire not only new technical vocabulary, but I make better use of my register in different scenarios* (Participant 4A, Spanish native speaker)

(b) *I would say that it changed in an interesting way, because for so many years, since I moved to the U.S., I've been so focused on learning English that I just stopped speaking Spanish that much and I stopped reading books in Spanish. So, once I started taking translation classes, I started feeling like, 'oh maybe I was a little bit stunted in my Spanish learning, and now I have to like level up'* (Participant 7E, Spanish heritage speaker)

In terms of English proficiency, both Participants 4A and 7E believed that their proficiency has improved as well, since they had to become familiar with academic English (Participant 4A) and because being exposed to English texts and analyzing them for translation has improved her English proficiency (Participant 7E).

The qualitative responses of graduate students (with the exception of one participant) indicate that they experience language proficiency gains in the translation/interpreting courses. Two main themes emerged when these participants were asked about their perceptions on language development: translational directionality of programs and language-related courses and language teaching. These are two factors that were identified to be influential in their linguistic gains and their language proficiency development.

### 3.2.2.1. Translational Directionality of Programs

The translational directionality of the program is a language development-related theme that came out throughout the different focus groups with students of one specific program. It seems that all participants from program A argue that the program should be bidirectional in order to address the linguistic needs of native/heritage speakers of Spanish and native speakers of English. In this regard, Participant 5 refers to directionality as a *huge complaint* that students

from this program have. Also, s/he mentions another interesting factor: that the information regarding the unidirectionality of the program was not available in the website of the program when s/he applied for the program (see example 15).

*(15) Directionality is actually a huge complaint that we have from the native speakers who come from different countries who don't necessarily know that... because the program is not advertised as just being into English (Participant 5A, L1 English)*

Similarly, Participant 6A, an L2 speaker of Spanish and English, agrees with the previous participant. S/he states that, as a program solely based in the U.S., it is understandable that people would translate more into English, but at the same time, it would be nice to take into consideration that this institution receive students from different cultures and some of these students will go back to their countries of origin, as seen in (16).

*(16) Americans would better their Spanish and Spanish-speaking people would actually have an experience of what they would actually do outside of class... because then, of course, like you normally translate into your native language, and here they're translating into their second always (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)*

In line with this, Participant 4A acknowledges that s/he will go back to their country of origin where s/he will have to translate both ways. For this participant, translating only into English “*is something that [s/he] had to struggle the whole program*”. Similarly, Participant 3A, a second language speaker of Spanish, acknowledges that s/he would like to do more English into Spanish because “*if we are going to work as freelance translators, realistically we probably*

*are going to do both... it would be at least helpful in some degree*". In this regard, Participant 6A, the only participant who did not perceive improvements in his/her Spanish, stated that the program should be bidirectional, as observed in (17).

(17) *I think that could be a way of fixing the problem... to make the program bidirectional... Just using both languages would definitely help both sides* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)

In this line, participants reported that, if they were to translate into Spanish, second language speakers could improve their proficiency in Spanish. At the same time, those native speakers of Spanish and heritage speakers who return to their countries of origin would benefit, as the native Spanish speaker express that s/he will work translating bidirectionally after finishing the program. The same holds true for second language speakers who are aware that they might end up working as freelance translators—translating Spanish-English and English-Spanish texts—in their future jobs. For these reasons, if the program was bidirectional, all students could produce texts in Spanish, improving their writing and their research skills, as reported by Participant 6A in (18).

(18) *We're not getting better in Spanish because we're not practicing it... if we had to translate into Spanish, then that's a moment for you to learn Spanish because then you have to write in Spanish and research how to do it* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)

Finally, the remaining graduate students (Participant 1C and participant 7E) enrolled in interpreting and translation courses respectively, reported that, in their courses, there is a balance in terms of the directionality of the translations and interpretations they are assigned. These participants specifically expressed that working in the two languages is “*useful*” and “*beneficial*” for all students: Spanish heritage and native speakers, and L2 learners of Spanish. Therefore, according to these students, the bidirectionality used in their courses seem to benefit students from different linguistic backgrounds in the translation/interpreting classroom.

Overall, the one-way directionality of one program was identified as an obstacle for its graduate students for three main reasons. First, second/third language speakers of Spanish could not improve their proficiency in Spanish as much as they could or as much as they expected. Second, second/third language speakers of Spanish perceive that a one-way directional program does not address their own needs (if they work as freelance translators in the future) and the needs of heritage speakers and native speakers of Spanish. Third, native speakers of Spanish and heritage speakers expressed that they will probably translate in both directions in their future jobs. Along these lines, second language speakers reported that more language-related coursework and more language teaching integrated in translation courses would be beneficial for enhancing their language skills in Spanish. This is discussed in the next section, around the theme entitled “Language related courses and language teaching”.

#### 3.2.2.2. Language-Related Courses and Language Teaching

Another theme related to language development that emerged during the focus groups was the need for more practice and more language related courses. In one of the programs, this is very

much linked to the issue of the unbalanced translational directionality of the program discussed before.

In this program, participants reported that there is an emphasis on computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and that several core courses focusing on the use of these tools are offered. Participants stated that it would be beneficial to have more translation practice or language-oriented courses offered as core courses instead (Participant 5A) or as electives (Participant 4A) and make some of those computer-assisted translation courses elective. The accounts of these participants are found in (19).

(19)

(a) *We spent basically three semesters working with CAT tools where we could do more translation courses... Since this is a master's in translation, not a master's in CAT tools or technology... that could be more effective* (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *So, it would be nice to offer, maybe not the same practice courses but some electives into Spanish... So maybe they could include more practice courses for the people who are going to their countries... So, I don't think that I'm going to need these CAT tools courses, because what I'm going to do when I go back home is going to be mostly practice* (Participant 4A, Spanish native speaker)

Participant 3A also reported that during their first semester, students had to take a grammar class in English. In this regard, since some of the students of the program are English speakers, s/he pointed out that it would be more beneficial for them to be able to take a similar course for Spanish to improve their research and writing skills in this language. This participant also stated that s/he would like to have more grammar classes or have more grammar

incorporated in the translation courses. Participant 2A agreed with Participant 3A, as observed below in (20).

(20)

(a) *I think all of us have the conceptual level, but I think when it gets to specific situations, you're like... this could be subjunctive... for me, it could be subjunctive, I'm not sure... So, having maybe a little bit more on the level of "okay, let's review subjunctive, let's review when you would use this..." would be nice* (Participant 3A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *If there were a course like that, it would be awesome* (Participant 2A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(c) *And I would have definitely appreciated that more than... kind of sitting in class and learning more about English grammar, which I've learned all my life* (Participant 3A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

Some participants explicitly stated that having additional language courses in Spanish or translation practice courses in Spanish would be beneficial, because they do not have that element incorporated into the translation program. These participants also refer to the well-known professional recommendation (espoused by their program) that translation students should know their languages well before embarking in translator/interpreter education. Yet, this is an assumption, as applicants do not take language proficiency tests (21).

(21)

(a) *The assumption is that you know the language so well that you're not supposed to need any more language teaching at least in this program. That's what taken for granted* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish)

(b) *And I think it's to a degree an erroneous assumption, right? I don't think everyone is as well prepared as they should be, I think. I think it's that imbalance that we discussed earlier. Language deficiencies are never addressed in the classroom. It's always in group work... It's just whoever has the highest proficiency in the group or is the best editor deals with that.... but it's never addressed in the class* (Participant 5A, L2 speaker of Spanish)

(c) *It's just group work, because every once in a while, we get assigned a translation that we need to do in groups... So, you know, we have 2,000 words, you do a thousand, I do a thousand and then we get together... and then I can see that.... "Oh, you didn't really understand well that one thing, so we need to retranslate it, or like, you didn't understand the entire paragraph"* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish).

As language deficiencies are not addressed in the classroom, many times, the students observe these language deficiencies in the students' translations. In this regard, Participants 3A, 5A, and 6A agree with the fact that more opportunities to practice their Spanish would be beneficial for all the students. This could be addressed in the program if they offered more language-oriented or translation practice courses., as expressed by Participant 6A in (22).

(22) *There could have been some core classes to take that could have been like language-oriented or even just about translation... that would have better served us* (Participant 6A, L3 speaker of Spanish).

Participants 5A and 6A agree with the point made by Participant 3A in (20). An initial course focusing on Spanish writing and grammar might appeal to them as second or third language speakers of Spanish. These participants hold the same opinion; at the program level, there should be different core courses that address the linguistic needs of all the students. Likewise, these participants seem to disagree with the assumption that “language teaching” is not needed in the program.

Similarly, it is not odd that Participants 2A and 3A, who reported being a little anxious and worried with regard to their proficiency in Spanish at the beginning of the program, agree on the need for more practice-oriented classes where they could translate into Spanish, improve their grammar and their overall language proficiency.

Overall, as most of the participants suggested, offering more practice courses, especially translation courses into Spanish, could be a way of providing a balance in the program and matching the expectations of all the students. Should that not be possible, Participant 6A suggested that they could alternate the directionality of the translations per week, or work half of the semester on translating into English and the other half, translating into Spanish.

### 3.2.3. Interim Discussion

The data about graduate students’ perceptions served to identify several themes connected to language preparedness, including feelings of insecurity and unbalanced proficiency requirements, and language development, including translational directionality of programs and language-related courses and language teaching.

First, concerning language preparedness, some participants reported feeling anxiety and nervousness at the beginning of the program. The lack of language preparedness is due to several factors. Some second language speakers of Spanish expressed that they felt a bit nervous and anxious regarding their proficiency in Spanish. Also, other second language speakers and one heritage speaker from the same program stated that their program does not explicitly state on their website the translational directionality of the courses of the program. The one-way translational directionality is seen as a problematic factor for the students enrolled in one of the programs, as they expected to translate into Spanish as well. Furthermore, very much related to the one-way directionality issue is the language of instruction. As reported by one participant, the medium of instruction was set in one language exclusively at the beginning of the program, and this student felt anxious to share their ideas.

In a different program, the lack of scaffolded practice was the factor affecting the language unpreparedness of one of the participants, as s/he felt lost trying to interpret texts that were not aligned with their current language proficiency. These interpreting courses did not offer enough scaffolded practice for students, making this participant (and other students from the same focus group) feel unprepared and frustrated. They felt that the level of texts that they work with have much specialized terminology (domain-specific knowledge) and are not adequate for their current level of proficiency. This domain-specific knowledge was precisely another theme that emerged in the responses of the participants and that is connected to the theme “feelings of insecurity.” The lack of domain-specific knowledge in Spanish and English at the beginning of translation programs was reported to be challenging for all participants, regardless of their linguistic profile. Although some of the participants distinguished between “language

proficiency” and “domain-specific knowledge,” high-register terminology is definitely one of the most frequently mentioned topics when asked about language preparedness.

The second theme that was identified in relation to the language preparedness of participants was unbalanced *proficiency requirements*. The proficiency requirements that are in place in one of the programs are seen as inefficient, unbalanced and unfair by some of the participants, because those who were not born in the U.S. are required to take an English-proficiency test, whereas no Spanish-proficiency test is required. In this program, participants also report that submitting an oral statement is not an effective tool to measure Spanish proficiency. This is not seen as a reliable tool as it creates unbalanced levels of Spanish proficiency in the T&I classroom that could be mitigated with more organic ways to screen prospective students. The same holds true for participants from other program who explicitly reported disparities in the level of Spanish proficiency of the students enrolled in her program. For this reason, participants mentioned the need and the importance of measuring the Spanish proficiency of participants using more effective tools, as the lack of proficiency might even make that students drop the program, as reported by one of the participants.

Language development is an important concern for graduate students in T&I programs. While all of the participants (with one exception) perceive that their language proficiency has improved as a result of taking T&I courses, some state that they have experienced minimal improvement. With regard to language proficiency development, the most recurrent themes were translational directionality of programs and language-related courses and language teaching.

One of the main aspects that seem to influence these perceptions on language development is the translational directionality of the programs. Indeed, translational

directionality plays an essential role for graduate students in their language preparedness (as mentioned above), but also in their language development. In fact, the students in this study feel that there are some contradictions and erroneous assumptions in terms of directionality. There still exists the assumption that students should only translate into their native language, but, at the same time, in these translation courses, almost half of the students come from Spanish-speaking countries or are heritage speakers, and still, these students are asked to translate into English. The presence of these Spanish-speaking students in the classroom challenges the notion that translation should only occur into the L1. If there are international students who will go back to their countries of origin, this makes the “one-way” translational directionality even more problematic, since some of these participants stated they will be translating in both directions in their future jobs. This means that the outcomes of the program do not align with the reality that many of these international students will face in their future jobs. For these participants, as well as for non-international students, program A does not seem to communicate explicitly to students its “unidirectionality” when they apply for admission. Thus, the program is not fully meeting the expectations of students who expected practice translating from Spanish into English and vice versa and those who expected greater improvement in their Spanish through regular translation practice into Spanish. Most of the participants acknowledge that after graduating, they might end up translating into their second language as well, so they will finish the program without that experience. Again, for these students, the student learning outcomes do not seem to match the needs of the U.S. market, which is problematic. Also, the presence of Spanish-speaking students in these programs who are translating into English exclusively is reported by second/third language speakers of Spanish as “problematic” since

Spanish-speaking students are not translating into their stronger language. In contrast, in those programs where there is a balance and students translate/interpret in both directions, the controversial issues detected in one-way directional programs do not exist. Indeed, as reported by some of the participants, translating in both directions benefits all students since second language learners of Spanish could improve their Spanish and L1 Spanish students would feel less anxious and would have a more “realistic” experience.

Given the one-way directionality of one of the programs, it is not surprising that another prominent theme identified in the responses of participants was language related courses and language teaching. Translating exclusively (or predominantly) into English is clearly not advantageous for students if they expect to improve their proficiency in Spanish and if they secure jobs after completing their degree where they are required to translate bidirectionally. Therefore, more opportunities for language development were demanded by the students in the focus groups, especially in regards to Spanish “translation-practice courses” and “language-related courses.” The lack of experience translating into Spanish is seen as an issue by the students, which is precisely why they request more opportunities to practice Spanish in the translation classroom (translating into Spanish) in addition to other academic opportunities (Spanish-language courses, Spanish translation-practice courses). Overall, these were suggestions made by student participants from one program in order to address the linguistic needs of all students, to match their expectations, and to better prepare them for their future jobs.

### 3.3. Discussion

All in all, the quantitative and qualitative results point in the same direction. All groups of participants (second/third language speakers of Spanish, Spanish heritage speakers, and Spanish native speakers) perceive slight differences in the level of English proficiency of Spanish native and heritage speakers and significantly unbalanced Spanish proficiency among L2 Spanish learners and heritage speakers. The main factors that seem to affect language preparedness of graduate students are related to feelings of insecurity, foreign language anxiety, insufficient domain-specific knowledge, lack of scaffolded practices, and unbalanced proficiency requirements.

The effect of anxiety in language learning has been extensively researched in the second/foreign language classroom (Cheng, Horwitz, & Shallert, 1999; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Pappamihel, 2002; Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999). However, research on anxiety in the translation/interpreting training contexts has been rather scarce. Two recent exceptions are case studies conducted in Hong Kong and included in Yan, Pan, and Wang (2018a, 2018b). The first study (Yan, Pan, & Wang, 2018a) looked at the factors that were responsible for enhancing anxiety in a translation task such as “fear of being evaluated” and “general apprehension of writing in English.” Both factors were in line with previous SLA findings on second/foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). The second study (Yan, Pan, & Wang, 2018b) looked at the same topic in connection with interpreting tasks. The results reveal that foreign language anxiety significantly correlates with students’ willingness to use the language and with students’ scores on tests: the higher the foreign language anxiety the students feel, the least willing they are to communicate, and the lower foreign language anxiety the students feel, the higher their scores in the final exams and in the overall course. In the present

study, participants were asked whether they felt prepared in terms of language proficiency. Their responses unveil language-related elements that are likely related to general, in-class pedagogical practices. Participants mention unpreparedness, lack of scaffolding, and that they do not possess domain-specific knowledge. These are aspects that have to do with language but that have also been addressed in the literature of translation pedagogy. For instance, Colina (2003b) introduced a model of empirically-based translation pedagogy, advocating for the use of pre-translation activities (including specific sections on reading comprehension and language-focused exercises) that might be adapted depending on the acquisition stages of the students. This could help students who reported struggling or feeling lost, such as participant 1 who expressed that s/he was frustrated at the beginning and throughout the course due to unrealistic course expectations and lack of guidance.

This last point is also related to the second theme identified in the results: *domain-specific knowledge*. Domain-specific knowledge has been recently discussed by Mellinger & Gasca-Jiménez (2019), who focus on the challenges it poses for heritage speakers in the interpreting classroom. The results of this study show that domain-specific knowledge is indeed a challenge for students in the translation and interpreting classroom, whether they are second language learners or heritage speakers. Lack of previous exposure to translation also seems to affect the preparedness of students in translation programs, suggesting the need for a transition between undergraduate language studies and graduate programs. Similarly, giving beginning students highly specialized texts to interpret beyond their current language proficiency and with no previous preparation makes them feel not ready and frustrated. For this reason, some participants mentioned the need for more scaffolded practices; instructional staff should choose

texts that are better aligned with the current students' level of proficiency and progressively increase their difficulty.

Finally, some participants were critical towards the entrance requirements of the programs, especially in one of the programs where students are required to submit oral and written samples. In one of the programs where almost half of the graduate students come from Spanish-speaking countries, it is stated on the website of the translation program, as a *departmental requirement* that international students submit their TOEFL scores before entering the program. However, English-speakers do not need to take any proficiency test. This was an issue raised by three different groups of learners (L2 speakers of Spanish, L3 speaker of Spanish, and L1 speaker of Spanish). Even if they translate exclusively into Spanish, some participants are aware of imbalances in terms of Spanish proficiency levels. When discussing their perceptions on language proficiency, participants reported that, through group work, sometimes they can detect proficiency issues for some second language learners of Spanish.

With regard to language development, the quantitative and qualitative data also point in the same direction. All graduate students (with one exception) perceive that their language proficiency improved after taking T&I courses. Second language speakers of Spanish perceive that their language proficiency has improved marginally, even in those cases where they have not been translating into Spanish. However, the expectations of some of the participants were not completely satisfied, as they did not have opportunities to translate into Spanish in one of the programs. Spanish heritage speakers felt that their overall Spanish proficiency improved throughout the translation courses. The Spanish native and heritage speakers also point to linguistic development, especially in their domain-specific knowledge in Spanish. Finally,

regarding English proficiency gains, the L3 speaker of Spanish perceived that their English proficiency improved minimally, the Spanish native speaker reported important improvements in their English proficiency (more than in Spanish), whereas the heritage speaker felt that their Spanish proficiency had improved more than her English proficiency. L1 English speakers did not necessarily feel that their proficiency improved and they explicitly referred to an improvement in terms of domain-specific knowledge.

The main themes found that are related to the language development of students in the program are translational directionality of programs, translation practice, language related courses, and language teaching. With regard to directionality, the majority of the students' translations are carried out into English, which is against the expectations of many graduate students of the program who might be Spanish-speakers going back to their home countries or second language (and third) speakers of Spanish who might end up translating in both directions and did not have the opportunity to do so and to improve their Spanish proficiency. If the assumption of the program is that students should be translating into their native language (as reported by participant 6), this does not hold true for Spanish speakers accepted in these types of programs. Another theme has to do with having more translation practice, language related courses and language teaching embedded in the program. In one of the programs, there is a significant emphasis on the use of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools but this does not seem very appealing for all the students. Instead, they would prefer to have more language-oriented courses. In addition, language teaching is not necessarily a component of translation practice courses because it is assumed that students have the linguistic proficiency that is needed to be in the courses, but this is not always the case.

In sum, the results presented in this chapter show that some traditional beliefs regarding directionality and language teaching prevail in T&I programs. These results seem to coincide with the prescriptivist notions and professional norms identified by Colina (2006). Some scholars have pointed at these views as one of the reasons for the long-standing separation between language teaching/second language acquisition and translation studies (Colina, 2006; Colina & Lafford, 2017; among others). The qualitative and quantitative data presented in this chapter confirms the observation previously reported by other translation scholars and teachers that expecting students to be fully bilingual (D. Bowen, 1989; M. Bowen, 1989; Labrum, 1991) when they start translator education is not realistic and does not attend to the linguistic needs and expectations of different student populations that enroll in graduate translation and interpreting courses. In fact, the results from graduate students show that they expect to improve their language proficiency through translation classes despite professional views that the goal of translation classes is not to develop language proficiency. This means that student expectations are not aligned with the views of some administrators or instructors. At the same time, the admission procedures in place in graduate programs are seen by graduate students as unfair as they create further proficiency imbalances in the T&I courses. Similarly, no clear criteria exist in terms of the language proficiency needed to enter the program. For these reasons, the graduate students in our study agree that translator & interpreting programs should employ other measures to screen prospective students in their programs, especially when assessing the level of Spanish proficiency. By relying on existing (or self-developed) tools that measure the language proficiency of students, the admissions' decisions will be less based on estimations and/or judgmental calls but rather on more valid and reliable criteria.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

### 4.1. Quantitative Results

Answers from 96 participants were included in the statistical analysis of undergraduate students' responses. Participants were further divided according to their linguistic profile [Heritage ( $n = 44$ ); L2 ( $n = 52$ )]. Table 12 and Table 13 show the descriptive statistics of students' responses broken down by their linguistic profile. Table 12 shows the data (mean and standard deviation) regarding students' perceptions with regard to the language proficiency of their peers (in their program of study), including *expected proficiency* (the proficiency level they think would be ideal to enter the program) and *average proficiency* (the perceived average proficiency of their class) for each language (English, Spanish). Table 13 displays the data (mean and standard deviation) from students' perceptions of their own proficiency which includes their *current proficiency* (the proficiency they currently believe they have), their *future proficiency* (the proficiency level they expect to have when they complete the T&I program), and *expected gains* (calculated score resulting from the difference between current proficiency and future proficiency) for both languages (English, Spanish).

#### 4.1.1. Language Preparedness

The first statistical exploration focuses on whether undergraduate students perceive a mismatch between the proficiency level they think would be ideal to enter the program and the current (perceived) proficiency of students entering the translation program. In order to answer this question, I submitted participants' responses to a mixed-design  $2 \times (2) \times (2)$  ANOVA with *group*

(heritage, L2) as the between-subjects factor, and *proficiency* (expected, average) and *language* (English, Spanish) the within-subjects factors. The ANOVA revealed significant main effects of *proficiency*,  $F(1,94) = 8.73$ ;  $p < .05$ , and *language*,  $F(1,94) = 122.40$ ;  $p < .05$ , but no main effects of *group*,  $F(1,94) = 0.85$ ;  $p > .05$ . There were two significant two-way interactions (proficiency-language,  $F(1,94) = 50.82$ ;  $p < .05$ ; group-language,  $F(1,94) = 8.65$ ;  $p < .05$ ), but there was no significant interaction between proficiency-group,  $F(1,94) = 0.41$ ;  $p > .05$ , and no three-way interaction,  $F(1,94) = 0.92$ ;  $p > .05$ .

In order to explore these interactions, I further divided the data as a function of language. First, a post hoc analysis was carried out on responses provided for Spanish proficiency, and then a second post hoc analysis was done for responses on English proficiency. Spanish proficiency data were submitted to a mixed-design ANOVA  $2 \times (2)$  with *proficiency* (expected, average) as a within-subjects factor, and *group* (heritage, L2) as the between-subjects factor. The ANOVA indicated main effects of *group*,  $F(1,94) = 4.72$ ;  $p < .05$ , and *proficiency*,  $F(1,94) = 42.43$ ;  $p > .05$ . The interaction between both factors was not significant,  $F(1,94) = 1.11$ ;  $p > .05$ . The analysis suggests that undergraduate participants, as a group, appear to perceive a difference between the expected proficiency to enter a T&I program and the actual proficiency of students. Moreover, the difference between *expected* and *average* proficiency is smaller in the heritage than in the L2 group.

The second post hoc analysis was carried out on answers provided for English only. The data were analyzed using the same statistical design and factors as the previous analysis. This time, the ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of *proficiency*,  $F(1,94) = 5.85$ ;  $p < .05$ , but there was no significant main effect of *group*,  $F(1,94) = 0.38$ ;  $p > .05$ , and there was no

significant interaction between both factors  $F(1,94) = 0.02; p > .05$ . These results indicate that both groups of participants believe that English proficiency in their T&I programs is higher than the level expected for such programs.

Table 12. Undergraduate students' responses on proficiency (expected proficiency, average proficiency) means and standard deviation per language and student profile group

	Expected Proficiency Spanish	Average Proficiency Spanish	Expected Proficiency English	Average Proficiency English
Heritage Spanish speakers	74.9 (14.6)	67.1 (13.7)	80.6 (14.9)	83.6 (16.9)
L2 speakers of Spanish	70.1 (16)	59.3 (18)	82.2 (12.6)	85.5 (15.3)
All responses	72.3 (15.5)	62.8 (16.6)	81.5 (13.7)	84.6 (16)

#### 4.1.2. Language Development

The second statistical exploration seeks to unveil whether undergraduate students expect to increase their proficiency during their T&I studies. Participants' responses were submitted to a mixed-design  $2 \times (2) \times (2)$  ANOVA with *group* (heritage, L2) as the between-subjects factor, and *proficiency* (current, future) and *language* (English, Spanish) the within-subjects factors. The ANOVA yielded significant main effects of *proficiency*,  $F(1,94) = 180.38; p < .05$ , and *language*,  $F(1,94) = 174.53; p < .05$ , and *group*,  $F(1,94) = 8.96; p < .05$ . Only two two-way interactions were significant (language-group,  $F(1,94) = 87.33; p < .05$ ; language-proficiency,  $F(1,94) =$

99.34;  $p < .05$ ; but not proficiency-group,  $F(1,94) = 0.02$ ;  $p > .05$ ). There was also a significant three-way interaction,  $F(1,94) = 30.21$ ;  $p < .05$ .

To explore this interaction, the data was further divided as a function of language (English, Spanish). Responses to Spanish proficiency (current, future) from both groups (heritage, L2) were explored in a first post hoc analysis. The data on English proficiency were examined in a second analysis. Spanish proficiency data were submitted to a mixed-design ANOVA  $2 \times (2)$  with *proficiency* (current, future) as a within-subjects factor, and *group* (heritage, L2) as the between-subjects factor. The ANOVA indicated main effects of *group*,  $F(1,94) = 46.37$ ;  $p < .05$ , and *proficiency*,  $F(1,94) = 193.49$ ;  $p < .05$ , and a significant interaction of both factors,  $F(1,94) = 7.26$ ;  $p < .05$ . Further pairwise comparisons reveal that both groups differ with regard to their self-reported current,  $t(91.77) = 7.02$ ;  $p < .0125$ , and future proficiency,  $t(90.73) = 5.93$ ;  $p < .0125$ . Most importantly, the difference between current and future proficiency was significant for both heritage students,  $t(43) = 8$ ;  $p < .0125$ , and L2 students,  $t(51) = 11.80$ ;  $p < .0125$ .

The analysis of the English data yielded significant main effects of *group*,  $F(1,94) = 6.42$ ;  $p < .05$ , and *proficiency*,  $F(1,94) = 38.30$ ;  $p < .05$ , and a significant interaction of both factors,  $F(1,94) = 21.36$ ;  $p < .05$ . Further pairwise comparisons indicate that heritage and L2 students differed with regard to their current self-reported proficiency score,  $t(72.88) = 3.30$ ;  $p < .0125$ , but not in regards to their expected future English proficiency when they finish the T&I program,  $t(67.9) = 1.21$ ;  $p > .0125$ . Furthermore, the heritage group displays differences between their current and future expected English proficiency,  $t(43) = 5.41$ ;  $p < .0125$ , while the L2 group does not,  $t(51) = 2.13$ ;  $p > .0125$ .

Table 13. Undergraduate students' responses on language development (current proficiency, future proficiency, expected gains) means and standard deviation per language and student profile group

	Current Spanish Proficiency	Future Spanish Proficiency	Expected Spanish Gains	Current English Proficiency	Future English Proficiency	Expected English Gains
Heritage Spanish speakers	82 (11.3)	92.8 (9.5)	10.8 (9)	88.7 (13.6)	95.2 (11.6)	6.5 (7.9)
L2 speakers of Spanish	62.5 (15.7)	78.6 (13.7)	16.1 (9.8)	96.7 (9.1)	97.6 (6.9)	0.9 (3.1)
All responses	71.4 (16.8)	85.1 (13.8)	13.7 (9.7)	93 (12)	96.5 (9.3)	3.4 (6.4)

#### 4.1.3. Interim Discussion

The quantitative explorations indicate that both the heritage and the L2 group perceive that the average Spanish proficiency of students in their classes is lower than the expected proficiency. However, when it comes to English, both groups of students agree that the perceived average English proficiency of students is higher than what would be ideal to enter the program. Moreover, both groups expect proficiency gains in Spanish by the time they finish the program. When it comes to English, participants in the heritage group also expect proficiency gains in this language while the L2 group does not.

Both groups also differ when it comes to their self-reported current and future Spanish proficiency as well as in their current English proficiency, which appears to relate to their linguistic profile. Heritage speakers indicate a higher proficiency score for Spanish than L2

speakers both in their current and future proficiency categories, but heritage speakers appear to indicate a lower proficiency in English than the L2 group.

It seems from the quantitative analyses that undergraduate students have very clear perceptions and expectations when it comes to proficiency in their T&I programs. The data displays a clear pattern in which asymmetries in linguistic readiness are manifested. A consequence of this is that an instructor may have two linguistically diverse groups of students in the same classroom who expect to improve their competence in Spanish. Additionally, the heritage group may also expect to improve their English proficiency. In order to better understand these results, I interviewed undergraduate students in T&I programs to obtain qualitative answers.

## 4.2. Qualitative Results

### 4.2.1. Language Preparedness

As observed in the quantitative responses of undergraduate students, there seems to be a mismatch between the expected level of Spanish proficiency and the perceived current level of Spanish proficiency of students in introductory courses to translation and interpreting. In this section, I report on the themes identified in responses on language preparedness from 94 subjects who participated in the focus groups [second language learners ( $n = 44$ ) and heritage speakers ( $n = 50$ )]. The discussion of the qualitative data regarding language preparedness led to responses focusing on previous training in high school and university settings as well as on specific language areas students felt they were struggling with.

The data reveals explicit evidence that several L2 students perceive linguistic proficiency differences among second-language learners when they enroll in T&I courses as can be observed in (23a). Moreover, L2 participants' awareness of language (un)preparedness is much more critical when these are advanced courses where students are expected to have a certain level of proficiency, as can be seen in (23b). This participant is particularly aware of different proficiencies in the translation classroom and she refers to both, high-school experiences, and prerequisite language courses as "responsible" for the language unpreparedness of students in translation practice courses.

(23)

(a) *I think it really shows when you're in these higher level classes... I would consider myself fairly proficient in speaking, but there are other people who are not native speakers who are not proficient at all... (Participant 47, D).*

(b) *In my [translation course], one of my professors said "we kind of expect like a basic level proficiency... that's a given..." and that doesn't always happen, especially because everybody's high-school experience is so vastly different... and [they] try to fill in those gaps with the prerequisites, but even that's not always... (Participant 10, A)*

Similarly, other second-language participants show awareness of proficiency differences between heritage and L2 students (24).

(24)

(a) *I feel like there's still some people including myself who make errors...then there's some people who are like native speakers who are like perfect. [They] don't make mistakes at all ever. So there's a big difference* (Participant 22, B)

(b) *When I took that course I was actually one of two non-native speakers, everyone else in the class was native. So like it was impossible to understand what was going on. So I felt not at all prepared* (Participant 21, B)

When it comes to heritage speakers, it must be noted that this student group was heterogeneous in terms of language experience. Yet, when asked whether there are students with varying proficiencies in the same classes, most agree that this is the case without referring specifically to either heritage or second language speakers (25a, b). Some even indicate that linguistic unpreparedness has led some students to abandon the program (25c).

(25)

(a) *We are all in different levels and you can really tell... there are some students who struggle...* (Participant 65, D)

(b) *Teachers assume we are all the same level when we're not... I feel they should care more about [their] students... so they can be successful in their career because they just assume that we all know the same things and we don't* (Participant 51, D)

(c) *Some people dropped the program because they felt that they were not at the level that they should be* (Participant 76, D)

Table 14. Topics that emerged on language preparedness in undergraduate focus groups as a function of student group and language

<i>Participant Group</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Previous Language Preparation Issues</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
L2 students	Spanish	- High school - Previous university courses	- Speaking - Spanish as the medium of instruction - Translating
Heritage students	Spanish	- Previous university courses	- Domain-specific knowledge - Grammatical competence
	English		- Insecurity

So far, it is clear that a substantial number of both second language and heritage students perceive differences in linguistic proficiency when they start taking T&I courses. Upon closer examination of the qualitative data, heritage and second language students appeared to differ with respect to the themes brought up in regards to language preparedness. These can be observed in Table 14. When it comes to previous linguistic preparation, L2 students identified high school and previous university experiences as not completely satisfactory. Meanwhile, heritage students only mentioned previous university experiences. With regard to the areas where they felt unprepared when they enrolled in T&I courses, L2 students brought up speaking skills, the medium of instruction (used in previous courses), and translating, and heritage students brought up domain-specific knowledge and grammatical knowledge for English. Next, I

illustrate and comment on the results for each section: previous language preparation and the areas where students felt unprepared (challenges).

#### 4.2.1.1. Previous Language Preparation

##### 4.2.1.1.1. Highschool

Overall, across all the T&I programs, one main theme that influences the language preparedness of second language learners is their *high-school experience*. Many L2 learners who participated in this study reported that they did not feel prepared when they started taking courses in the translation/interpreting program and alluded to their high school language preparation. This theme was observed predominantly in the responses of L2 learners from program A where students may start taking translation courses without previous knowledge of the second language, but it also surfaced in the data from L2 learners from other programs (e.g., Programs D and E).

Some participants reported that they were not confident in their T&I courses because of their previous preparation in high school. Some said that they were afraid to speak and to make mistakes in their language and translation courses (Participant 9A, 15A) or did not feel comfortable because they had a gap year before starting the translation courses (Participant 11). Other participants, enrolled in interpreting courses, alluded to their unsuccessful previous preparation in terms of speaking (Participant 67D, 92E). An example of the accounts of some of these participants can be found in (26):

(26)

(b) *My high school was not rigorous and it only offered three classes of Spanish. I noticed a gap... there was definitely a gap between high school and college* (Participant 15, A)

(c) *In high school you're not challenged to speak Spanish outside of class* (Participant 67, D)

(d) *We focus a lot on reading and writing... that's mainly what I've done since high school* (Participant 92, E)

In contrast to these responses, other L2 learners such as Participants 13A, 14A, or 19B stated that they had good learning experiences in their high school and that these experiences made them enhance their Spanish skills, and consequently, they felt prepared for translation courses. This points to the unevenness of the linguistic proficiency of students enrolled in the undergraduate programs selected for this study.

(27)

(a) *My high school had a really rigorous good language program that really helped... so, I felt prepared* (Participant 13A)

(b) *I took AP Spanish in high school and it was really rigorous, so I think I was really well prepared* (Participant 14A)

(c) *I feel like I still have a good base from high school* (Participant 19B)

High school language experience is an influential factor in the language preparedness of students. This preparation issue was a theme that emerged in the responses of undergraduate

students from programs with and without prerequisite language courses. This suggests that unsuccessful previous learning experiences cause feelings of insecurity in many students when they get to translation/interpreting courses.

#### 4.2.1.1.2. University Courses

The lack of preparation in previous courses established as prerequisites for translation/interpreting courses or tracks was a common pattern observed in the comments of second language and heritage students taking translation and interpreting courses in different undergraduate programs. In the case of second language learners, the data regarding previous college courses presented here suggests deficient or incomplete program articulation between language and translation courses (28a). For example, some participants experienced a mismatch between the level of Spanish proficiency expected in introductory translation courses and their level when they entered these courses (28b,c).

(28)

(a) *When I took my first translation class last semester... I was not prepared for that whatsoever...* (Participant 89E)

(b) *I didn't feel very prepared by the classes I took here* (Participant 47D)

(c) *I didn't really have a very structured class environment. So, I didn't feel as prepared as I should* (Participant 17B)

In one of the programs, some L2 participants also reported that the disconnect is much greater between prerequisite courses and translation courses than between prerequisite courses

and interpreting courses. In this regard, some participants made suggestions for improving course articulation (29).

(29)

(a) *I feel like with the interpreting class there's not really that much of a jump.... In translation, the jump between [name of prerequisite course] and the translation classes is huge... and it's a difficult change... (Participant 89E)*

(b) *I think [previous professors] should make sure that they're following certain guidelines... especially when these are crucial classes to go into the next level... when you get to [name of the translation course]... it's been kind of a struggle having such variation in the lower ones (Participant 84E)*

In the case of heritage students, some of them stated that the huge emphasis that they noticed in introductory translation courses as far as accents, vocabulary and advanced grammatical structures, made them feel unprepared because these were topics that were not addressed or overtly covered in the prerequisite language courses that they had to take. Somehow, they felt that they would have needed more language courses that focused on these aspects.

(30)

(a) *Going into Spanish translation, I could say that I was absolutely not as prepared as I thought I would because of my lack of understanding of where the accents go...in my previous classes, they didn't require you to know that... and now, it's giving me some trouble (Participant 43C)*

(b) *The class I had before didn't help me... accents... those were things that were not reviewed by my previous teacher* (Participant 41C)

As demonstrated above, the progress from prerequisite language courses to translation courses is not smooth for many heritage and second language students in different programs. This causes students to feel underprepared when they start their T&I studies, sometimes because they are expected to know or to have mastered certain aspects that were not reviewed in previous courses.

#### 4.2.1.2. Challenges

##### 4.2.1.2.1. Second Language Students

##### 4.2.1.2.1.1. Speaking

A common challenge reported by second language speakers of Spanish enrolled in translation and interpreting courses is that they felt much more prepared in terms of their writing skills than speaking. Some students attributed this to a lack of experience in practicing their speaking skills in previous Spanish courses.

(31)

(a) *In reading and writing I'm probably better* (Participant 14A)

(b) *I think they prepared me better writing-wise than speaking. I feel much more confident in writing* (Participant 18B)

(c) *Writing-wise I feel very strong, but speaking is kind of hard...* (Participant 19B)

(d) *I didn't feel that confident. I can read and write Spanish very well, but I have not had enough experience speaking it* (Participant 102E)

#### 4.2.1.2.1.2. Spanish as the Medium of Instruction

In other comments, some students indicated that some second language students felt that a possible reason to explain their lack of preparedness when starting translation and interpreting courses is the language used as a medium of instruction. Students reported that in previous language courses they had taken English was used as the medium of instruction while Spanish was used exclusively as the language of instruction in the translation classroom (32).

(32)

(a) *For one of my previous Spanish, classes, we spoke a lot in English, so it was hard to get into the first translation course, using Spanish* (Participant 45D)

(b) *I did not feel confident coming into my translation courses... from my experience with Spanish courses at the university, the professors don't require you to speak Spanish in the classroom. So when you're not constantly submerged around that language, it makes it difficult for you to transition into a class where it's only Spanish* (Participant 101E)

(c) *Going into a classroom where the majority of the class speaks Spanish and 95% of it is taught in Spanish... It can be a little daunting and a little tricky sometimes* (Participant 102E)

#### 4.2.1.2.1.3. Translating

A general pattern observed throughout the responses of the students was that there is a significant disconnect between the previous language courses they took and the translation courses. For some students, starting to translate without that previous practice was challenging. For instance, Participants 25B and 20B explicitly reported that being introduced to translation early in the curriculum would have been beneficial for them.

(33)

(a) *I had a lot more trouble just because, I had never really translated anything*  
(Participant 25B)

(b) *I feel like in the previous course there wasn't much of an introduction to translation and now we're suddenly jumping into that.... it would have been good to have a little bit more of that in the previous course as well* (Participant 20B)

Overall, it appears that the linguistic underpreparedness of second language learners led them to be challenged in the T&I classroom and to feel unprepared. More specifically, students reported difficulties in using their spoken L2, in comprehending Spanish as a medium of instruction, and in translating.

#### 4.2.1.2.2. Heritage Students

##### 4.2.1.2.2.1. Domain-Specific Knowledge

One of the main themes identified with respect to the effects of language unpreparedness of heritage speakers in introductory translation and interpreting courses is the lack of

domain-specific terminology. Although many heritage speakers stated that they felt comfortable in terms of their overall Spanish proficiency, the lack of awareness of technical terms was sometimes difficult and made them feel underprepared. Most of these students make distinctions between language proficiency and technical language, terminology, and technical words or terms. An example of responses of heritage speakers is shown below in (34a-c).

(34)

(a) *It's terminology I'm not that familiar with, so I think that's the most difficult aspect* (Participant 96E)

(b) *I did not feel prepared just because we learned very technical words and because I wasn't used to that language on a daily basis...* (Participant 62D)

(c) *I was prepared in terms of language... but not technical language* (Participant 71D)

Heritage speakers reported feeling unprepared in some interpreting courses because the vocabulary used in the texts was too specific and those were technical terms that they had never heard before. Particularly, Participant 31C (and the remaining heritage speakers from the same focus group) reported that they felt discouraged in her interpreting course because students were not guided by the professor and consequently, the lack of domain-specific knowledge prevented them from interpreting the texts successfully.

(35) *In our first interpretation, I felt frustrated... I couldn't find the words...* (Participant 31C)

Unlike the above, heritage speakers enrolled in another interpreting course (in a different program) did not express any feelings of unpreparedness. In fact, they felt confident and well qualified. This finding highlights the heterogeneity of the heritage speaker group, and probably the use of more scaffolded practices on the part of their instructor.

(36)

(a) *I felt confident because I speak the language at home and I've known the language since birth, so I didn't feel too nervous about that* (Participant 100E)

(b) *I think I was prepared* (Participant 90E)

The lack of domain-specific terminology or vocabulary seems to be a challenging factor for heritage speakers in introductory translation courses across different programs. Most heritage speakers made an explicit distinction between overall language proficiency and technical language (or domain-specific language), as most of them feel comfortable with speaking the language.

#### 4.2.1.2.2.2. Grammatical Competence

Although “domain-specific knowledge” was one of the themes related to the language (un)preparedness of heritage speakers, other heritage speakers, also allude to their grammatical competence. For example, some heritage speakers reported that they did not feel necessarily prepared in translation courses because they still think that they need to work on specific aspects of the language and develop their linguistic competence. However, in interpreting courses, they

felt much more prepared as they felt more comfortable with their speaking skills than with their writing skills. These were general comments found across different translation/interpreting programs.

(37)

(a) *My issue has always been like accent marks and rules* (Participant 91E)

(b) *La interpretación se me hace más o menos bien pero cuando entré en las clases de traducción no me sentía preparado para nada porque era mucha gramática y no conocía la gramática bien... pero sabía hablarlo* (Participant 32C)

*[Interpretation is relatively easy but when I started the translation courses I didn't feel prepared at all. There was a lot of grammar and I didn't know the grammar rules well... but I felt comfortable speaking it]* (Participant 32C)

(c) *Lo hablo muy bien pero hay veces que sí que cometo mis errores en la gramática un poco, no bastante... pero siento que sí que necesito todavía llegar a lo que tiene que ser un español perfecto en la escritura...* (Participant 31C)

*[I speak Spanish very well but sometimes I make grammar mistakes...not many... but I still feel that I need to work on my written Spanish]* (Participant 31C)

(d) *With my English I felt okay, but with my Spanish I felt like I needed more practice with the vocabulary... like, with higher registers and grammar too... the accents were really hard for me* (Participant 75D)

#### 4.2.1.2.2.3. English Skills

When it comes to preparedness in English, a few participants felt insecure about their English in introductory translation and interpreting courses. This issue came out among participants from program D where they practice translation and interpreting in both directions. In some cases, they reported that they feel more comfortable when translating into Spanish (Participant 59D) and participating in Spanish (Participant 78D). Others felt more confident with their English skills than with Spanish (Participants 33C and 35C).

(38)

(a) *I felt really good about my Spanish. I think I was more scared of my English... for me, it was harder to translate from Spanish to English (Participant 59D)*

(b) *I'm still really insecure about my English. So I feel that's a big part.... I would probably keep to myself if I want to participate or something. I'll just participate in Spanish (Participant 78D)*

(c) *I thought I was stronger in Spanish, but then I realized that I knew more English than Spanish (Participant 33C)*

(d) *I realized that my English is a lot better than my Spanish (Participant 35C)*

In some cases, English proficiency seems to be a hurdle for some students when they have to translate/interpret into English, and they feel insecure to participate in the classroom in English or if they are required to interpret Spanish texts into English. Although the quantitative results reveal that the average of English proficiency is higher than the expected level of English

proficiency, some heritage speakers still do not feel prepared in regards to their English skills, and that is probably why they expect to improve their English proficiency, as the quantitative results show. These interpretations align with previous depictions of heritage speakers as a very heterogeneous collective that may display different linguistic needs depending on their background. Overall, as shown above, the transition between language and T&I courses is not smooth for many heritage and L2 students, as there are grammatical aspects of the language or skills that are not emphasized enough in prerequisite courses. For this reason, students struggle as they have to learn how to deal with these issues while following the pace of the T&I courses.

#### 4.2.2. Language Development

The quantitative results revealed that both second language and heritage students expect to improve their Spanish proficiency throughout translation/interpreting courses. When students were asked about their perceptions on language development, second language students indicated that they expected that translation/interpreting courses would help them improve their Spanish proficiency. On the other hand, heritage students felt that translation courses help them improve their language proficiency, not only in Spanish but also in English. Overall, students perceive that their Spanish proficiency has improved after completing T&I courses. During the focus groups, there were several themes related to language development that emerged in conversations. A summary of these themes is illustrated in Table 15. These themes were parallel for both groups of students. Next, I will review and comment on each of them and provide examples from both student groups.

Table 15. Themes discussed by each group of students in regards to language development

<i>L2 Students</i>	<i>Heritage Students</i>
Linguistic Expectations & Perceived Language Gains	Linguistic Expectations & Perceived Language Gains
Language-Oriented & Translation Practice Courses	Opportunities for practice in T&I Courses
Course Articulation	Course Articulation
Feedback	Feedback
Prerequisites & Proficiency Tests	Prerequisites & Proficiency Tests

#### 4.2.2.1. Linguistic Expectations & Perceived Language Gains

##### *Linguistic expectations*

Improving language proficiency seems to be one of the reasons why second-language students enroll in translation/interpreting courses. Some of these participants see these translation courses as a “review” of their previous knowledge of the language, as a way to consolidate what they already know or because they simply want to continue learning languages. Some participants also saw translation courses as a way to continue learning Spanish, practice their reading and writing skills, or improve their overall language and translation skills. Even for those students who enroll in translation for marketability/professional reasons, they still want to learn the language and improve their proficiency. A sample of responses from second-language learners from is provided below:

(39)

(a) *I think that's the goal for everybody going into it... I think that's definitely the intent*

(Participant 87E)

(b) *The overall goal was, yes, to get better at Spanish and to attain more proficiency, for sure* (Participant 9A)

(c) *Yeah. I also prefer Spanish classes that focus on composition, reading and writing instead of speaking* (Participant 21B)

(d) *I wanted to continue to nurture that ability... I want to become a physician someday and I'd like to continue practicing it. So, to me, it made sense for me to have a translation background* (Participant 67D)

Similarly, with regard to interpreting courses, second language learners (Programs D and E) also enroll in these interpreting courses because they see them as a means of improving their proficiency. They see interpreting courses as an opportunity to be immersed in the language within the classroom and improve their fluency and listening skills. For many of them, they are also interested in interpreting as a career, or they simply want to acquire interpreting skills and continue enhancing their language skills.

(40)

(a) *I felt like having more practice with listening to the language constantly and being in a class where other people are forced to speak the language would allow me to be more fluent in the language* (Participant 102E)

(b) *I did think this program would improve my proficiency but I enrolled in it because I was interested in interpreting as a career* (Participant 80D)

(c) *I would say yeah, improving my proficiency in Spanish and also with this interpreting course... it kind of applies to what I want to do is career (Participant 93E)*

The same trend is found in heritage students as most agree that improving their language proficiency is definitely one of the reasons why they decide to enroll in translation/interpreting courses. Some state that they enroll in translation courses to enhance their Spanish and English skills, either because they see the advantages of speaking two languages or because they want to maintain their Spanish. An example of responses that reflect their expectations is displayed in (41a-d).

(41)

(a) *That's a big reason... I wanted to become better at both languages really, but mainly Spanish (Participant 50D)*

(b) *Yes, to improve my Spanish proficiency and to learn more vocabulary (Participant 57D)*

(c) *I wanted to see how much more I could learn and how much more I could help people who need it actually (Participant 59D)*

(d) *I wanted to like maintain my Spanish and to reacquire it in a way because I didn't feel as strong in Spanish as I would like (Participant 62D)*

Other heritage participants expressed that translating and interpreting is something that they have been doing their whole life, so enrolling in these courses was the way to become academically proficient or to learn how to do it professionally. Some explicitly mentioned that

translation and interpreting was definitely a more appealing option for them than literature and linguistics courses. In fact, Participant 65D expressed that she expected these translation and interpreting courses to be more useful in order to improve both languages.

(42)

(a) *I've been doing it my whole life so I might get like academically proficient in it so that I can actually pursue a career out of it* (Participant 53D)

(b) *Since we were small, we started being translators for our parents. So it was good to expand on that and actually learn the correct way to do it* (Participant 60D)

(c) *I didn't really like the other options that we had... but it was also to improve my language, I would say* (Participant 61D)

(d) *Between the three options that I had, I thought T&I was going to be more useful in helping to improve my Spanish and English* (Participant 65D)

From looking at the responses above, it becomes clear that both heritage and second language participants enrolled in translation/interpreting courses expect to improve their proficiency in Spanish. In addition, these expectations were at times related to their future professional careers.

#### *Perceived linguistic gains*

When asked about the areas where they could observe linguistic improvement, the responses are varied. Some L2 speakers reported improvement in writing, reading, and vocabulary skills

(Participant 58D), while others reported that the translation classes helped them understand better how grammar works with both in English and Spanish (Participant 11A). Other participants such as Participant 56D highlighted the development of domain-specific knowledge. Some examples of comments from other participants show similar trends in terms of language proficiency developments.

(43)

(a) *So yeah, I think I have specially improved a lot since then... and I think it's the aspect of reading and writing... (Participant 19B)*

(b) *[The translation courses] were useful in technical aspects, grammar and writing (Participant 42C)*

(c) *I think it helped with grammar a lot with like... when to use subjunctive and not, they reviewed that in [translation course] and in my courses now, so I think it has definitely helped (Participant 98E)*

(d) *I'd say my writing has improved a lot (Participant 20B)*

(e) *I think from [...] to [...] my proficiency is definitely gotten higher (Participant 25B)*

Regarding interpreting courses, second language participants from Program E perceived improvements in their overall language proficiency, especially in terms of grammar, listening comprehension, pronunciation, and speaking skills.

(44)

(a) *I would say that my Spanish proficiency has improved. I've improved a lot in Spanish with kind of interpreting meanings behind the words* (Participant 94E)

(b) *I'd say the interpreting course helped more with my listening skills* (Participant 101E)

(c) *The interpreting course has helped me with, not only grammar, but also my speaking and my pronunciation* (Participant 102E)

Heritage students also mentioned specific areas of linguistic improvement. For instance, Participant 53D reported that a translation course is helping her refine her Spanish and that she feels better prepared to work in a professional setting. Some participants expressed that these translation courses have been really useful in developing their overall proficiency in Spanish (Participant 63D).

Other participants feel that their proficiency improves in both English and Spanish because they these courses help them learn the differences between both languages or they learn new vocabulary in English (e.g., Participants 52D, 66D, 91E), because they have improved their vocabulary in Spanish (Participants 28B, 55D) or their grammar in Spanish has improved (Participant 62D, 100E). Some participants specifically mentioned that translation courses helped them improve their writing and speaking for professional settings. These courses also helped them learn to use the language in higher registers (Participants 72D, 74D). For instance, Participant 62D mentioned that they learned to write words correctly using accent marks and making sure that they are using the right articles. Participant 64D reported that translation courses were useful to learn specific terminology related to legal or medical domains, but also

for her everyday Spanish as well. Examples of some of these comments and other responses are shown below.

(45)

(a) *I think my proficiency increased with [translation course] just because we did go over like a variety of topics... when I speak Spanish, it's generally limited to speaking with family... but we're translating like cooking documents or like comic books... like just a whole wide variety— so that definitely helped increase my vocabulary* (Participant 28B)

(b) *The fact that teachers are expecting me to speak a certain way makes me want to speak more professionally or formally when speaking toward them* (Participant 82D)

(c) *I feel more confident about it, definitely. Before I was very timid to even say or write something, because I would second guess myself... especially in Spanish* (Participant 79D)

The data in this subsection indicates that one of the goals for both second language and heritage students is to improve their proficiency when entering a T&I course or program. Moreover, they are able to pinpoint improvements in specific skills as a result of their T&I studies.

#### 4.2.2.2. Language-Oriented Training and Translation Practice

Some undergraduate second language students of Spanish expect to improve proficiency in both languages through increased opportunities for translation practice in a range of fields and in both directionalities (into and out of the dominant language). Furthermore, they demand more language-enhancement courses where they could have more opportunities to review Spanish

grammar (P9A), language workshops (P12A) or more resources in general to improve their language skills (P89E).

(46)

(a) *So, what I'm craving now is I guess another sort of grammar class or something...I think that would be awesome* (Participant 9A)

(b) *I think there should be like some sort of resource or something or maybe like time you can schedule.... like language workshops* (Participant 12A)

(e) *I feel like there's so much more that I can learn but I'm kind of stuck based on the resources that we have here* (Participant 89E)

Some second language learners also mentioned that introductory translation/interpreting courses did not have a very strong emphasis on translation/interpreting practice, contrary to what they expected. Sometimes, their overall experiences in translation practice courses is somewhat negative because they expected to have more hands-on experiences.

(47)

(a) *I honestly expected it to be more like active practicing in translating and interpreting* (Participant 54D)

(d) *In [name of the introductory course]... there wasn't a lot of actual translation, it was a very different structure, not what I expected* (Participant 67D)

(c) *I always saw myself wanting more of practice and less of the theory* (Participant 10A)

(d) *I would have liked to have more translation practice, actual hands-on practice*  
(Participant 11A)

On their part, heritage speakers stated that T&I programs could better address their language needs by offering more opportunities for practice in translation/interpreting courses (48a-c), offering courses on different domains of translation/interpreting (48d), and offering different translation and interpreting tracks (48e).

(48)

(a) *We need more practice... I think there should be more translation courses...*  
(Participant 66D)

(b) *There should be like opportunities to practice or shadow an interpreter to get the experience and give you a better idea of what you're aiming for...*(Participant 55D)

(c) *We focus too much on the theory and not so much on applying what we're learning and actually practicing* (Participant 70D)

(d) *Maybe we could have more advanced courses... that focus on specific areas, on medical, legal* (Participant 39C)

(e) *We could have basic courses and then more specific courses... I don't have interest in interpreting... I'm bad at it... I would use that time to practice translation...* (Participant 41C)

As seen above, it is clear that second language and heritage students perceive that they should spend more time practicing their language skills in translation and interpreting courses.

Moreover, second language students also demand more language-related resources. All of these responses point to the same direction: students seek to have more opportunities to practice their Spanish skills, and consequently, improve their Spanish proficiency. Furthermore, there seems to be some lack of practice in translation courses that may lead to overlap or repetition. The next theme also was identified in the responses of different participants across different programs: course articulation.

#### 4.2.2.3. Course Articulation

Students report lack of articulation between courses, namely introductory courses focused on topics that were not relevant for the rest of the program or did not provide enough practice to prepare them for more advanced courses. L2 and heritage students refer to an overlap when it comes to language and transition courses as well as within translation courses. Thus, program coordinators should pay more attention to curriculum design and delivery, especially to ensure an accurate transition between courses.

(49)

(a) *I think having the university kind of like coordinate Spanish classes better to have less overlap* (Participant 18B)

(b) *I don't think we were prepared the way we should have been prepared for our [translation courses]* (Participant 87, E)

Similarly, other students notice an abrupt transition between the introductory interpreting courses and advanced courses and suggested adding another course as well as improving the

communication between instructors in the program. For instance, Participants 61D, 62D, and 63D agree with the fact that the expectations in one of the advanced courses are really high, and that the previous courses did not prepare them well.

(50)

(a) *I guess like on the beginners like courses like they maybe they could do a better job teaching the content, like for example this semester I'm struggling with like symbols and stuff because they never taught us anything last semester... So it's like how do you expect us to do all this?* (Participant 61D)

(b) *I do believe that there needs to be some sort of beginners and then the medium one and the advanced like a better transition between... a way better transition and way better... with instructors.... just a better way to do that* (Participant 62D)

(c) *It's kind of hard when there's a switch between instructors and you have to get used to like their teaching methods... and so like these classes, I think it's kind of hard.... for one of them, it's like definitely a lot harder, I think... just because we're expected to do other things that we had never really experienced yet. I feel like there's a lot more that we should have prepared for before taking this course, adding like an intermediate and then advanced... they should do something* (Participant 63D)

These and other participants also noticed an overlap with regard to the content that they are exposed to. More specifically, students expressed that they are required to read the same book chapters in different courses, which prevents them from having more practical experiences in the classroom. This could be avoided with more communication among the program coordinator and instructors to ensure that the courses are well-articulated.

(51)

(a) *And many of the assignments that [the professor] gives us, we've already completed them. Why do I have to reread this chapter all over again? There's no need* (Participant 62D)

(b) *It is really repetitive. too repetitive... and also, a little bit of wasting our time. I think that this program has a lot of potential but it can be administered in a more effective way* (Participant 69D)

(c) *I feel like they kind of dwindled a lot of our spirits... you go into the classroom and it's just like you don't want to be there... or like some of the materials are very repetitive* (Participant 70D)

(d) *I think that maybe they should structure the classes differently... in the two classes I'm taking we've read the same chapters for both of them. So then we're just basically going over the same stuff, the same theory in both classes, but we're not getting enough practice* (Participant 82D)

Other students also refer to a lack of a uniform terminology used by instructors throughout the same program. Data from the focus groups also revealed programmatic challenges related to shared glossaries (Participant 64D) and course syllabi (Participant 65D). These are recommendations made by participants from one program. These suggestions would contribute to unified practices and a better transition and alignment between courses.

(52)

(a) *There is no agreement between instructors and we are given different vocabulary... They think that theirs is the best one. I think there should be agreement in terms of the vocabulary that they are going to teach us and that we should use* (Participant 66D)

(b) *The program should have specific glossaries and professors should work together to create a master content* (Participant 64D)

(c) *I think that instead of every professor creating his/her own syllabus, they should work together, so when you go to a different class, they accept the same thing and they have the same content* (Participant 65D)

(d) *The program is really monotonous... there is not a structure* (Participant 64D)

(e) *There's a big gap between those courses and I think there's a big gap in communication as far as within the department and the people that teach these classes... It's kind of not fair to us...It's like some teachers wanting to stay at this level, but then the other ones like trying to go all the way like crazy* (Participant 63D)

Overall, at a program/departmental level, participants from one program (D) reported deficient communication between instructors, which causes instructor expectations that do not correspond to the students' actual proficiency and discontent on the part of students as they do not feel that the program met their expectations.

This reported lack of articulation between courses with regard to language proficiency and translation practice will require that professors fill in those gaps through language instruction and feedback. The next theme "feedback" discusses the students' overall perceptions about feedback.

#### 4.2.2.4. Feedback

Feedback is essential for learners, especially in cases in which course articulation may be lacking. Focus group data indicate that feedback availability varies across programs. Both second language learners and heritage speakers reported insufficient feedback and support in some programs (C, D).

(53)

(a) *I have no idea what I'm doing wrong. it would be nice for professors that are doing something as specific as translating and interpreting... I'm assuming that the professors that are teaching this course, they know what they're talking about. And I think it would be helpful if one of the professors can see that you're doing something wrong... to be like "hey, here's something... this could help you, like you don't even have to turn it in".*

(Participant 54D)

(b) *It is just hard to really figure out that particular area that she said you need to fix because she doesn't necessarily tell us exactly where it's at... and we can't really pull it out ourselves because we think it's right... (Participant 48D)*

(c) *You start to correct your own mistakes and read things in a different way... in the interpretation course, we really do not get that much feedback... (Participant 33C)*

This contrasts with the experiences of other students who admit that explicit corrections to their language mistakes was extremely useful in their translation courses.

(54)

(a) *I think that's one of the most important things in this area. The more I read the more I learn... And also, you learn by all the mistakes... I have learned of all the mistakes that I used to have because I was given feedback on my grammar in the translation courses* (Participant 32C)

(b) *I knew how to put the stress marks, but I didn't know why... but thanks to these classes I know why... and now in my cell phone, I write them myself... and I think they have helped me to be aware of my mistakes...* (Participant 38C)

As an example, we can observe variability within programs in responses from students in program E. Here, students report receiving extensive feedback in some courses but not in others.

(55)

(a) *The difference that I've noticed in these classes... the interpreting class and in the translation class, which I get one is written and one is oral, is also ridiculous... as far as how harshly you're graded for grammar mistakes and stuff. Translation, they make it seem like the world is ending if you make one little mistake, which I get that it's serious in some forms of translation... but they should still be helping you because when it comes down to it, we're not professional translators yet* (Participant 89, E)

(b) *I think when we get to higher levels, they're like... "okay, you already know this". So, we're not going to ever talk about it. We're never going to discuss it... it's a whole other life...they still let you know that you mess up. but they won't be like "hey, let's figure out what the problem is".... It's just hit or miss with the professors...* (Participant 87, E)

All in all, second language and heritage speakers in the programs analyzed here have both successful and unsuccessful experiences concerning receiving feedback. Sometimes they

feel that these experiences are useful for them to improve their language skills, and when they are not as effective, it is usually due to unreasonably high expectations on the part of administrators and professors, lack of overall feedback in translation assignments, and lack of explicit attention given to their linguistic needs.

#### 4.2.2.5. Prerequisites & Proficiency Tests

Focus group participants discussed the topic of the assessment of language proficiency. There is general agreement among all the participants across different programs that pre- and post-proficiency tests are needed. Participants indicated that proficiency measurements would be useful for them to check how their proficiency improved throughout the courses in the program.

(56)

*(a) I would definitely like to know like how my language has grown and my proficiency has improved. So I would definitely be interested in taking a test at the beginning and end. That would be really helpful (Participant 13A)*

*(b) I think a proficiency test would be an excellent idea...You see different levels of expertise there and it's something that you need to pay attention too because it's a little scary... A lot of the people with language barriers rely on interpreters and translators and all of that and if people just keep passing the classes and get the certificate or whatever. I mean... what kind of help these people are going to continue to get? Which is pretty scary... (Participant 97E)*

*(c) It'll be used for personal growth and personal satisfaction of knowing where you started it and where you're ending or heading (Participant 100E)*

Participants also reported that it would be good to have some way of assessing proficiency before entering the translation/interpreting courses, and they explicitly stated that this should be necessary to be admitted into their programs.

(57)

(a) *There should be some kind of like standard... and I don't think it should be just a test...maybe it should be oral, maybe it should be written, whatever, like you can choose... but there probably should be something that's at least assessing* (Participant 42C)

(b) *The language is the basis... If you don't have a certain level... it's like building a house with no foundation* (Participant 64D)

(c) *For the certificate program, they used to have a test that you had to take but I think they got rid of that. So maybe bring something back like that* (Participant 39C)

Other participants state that there should be a level system in translation/interpreting courses, so that students could be placed in the appropriate course according to their level of proficiency. For this reason, a test would be beneficial to determine that level and place students accordingly. Also, they mention that it would be useful to diagnose those areas in which students need help and to know what their strengths are.

(58)

(a) *I think that they should administer like other tests that can also help your proficiency and from those exams... Determine exactly where the student should be placed instead of having them take some classes that they might not even need at all* (Participant 48D)

(b) *Yes, I agree with him. Like there should be like a test that can be used to see where the student can be placed or to see where the student needs help* (Participant 44D)

(c) *It could be a good thing to have a test to see how they're all doing and you can place them into different levels of translation* (Participant 17B)

In this regard, Participant 20B expressed that this proficiency test would be useful as well and explicitly mentioned that there should be more courses in the program that track second language speakers and heritage speakers separately to avoid such unbalanced proficiencies in the introductory translation course.

(59) *I know like within the department itself, when the classes are like... at the 100 level they start out as native and non-native speakers.... I don't know at what point that then the two groups combined. So I feel like maybe it would help to have that for a little bit longer because I guess professors shouldn't assume that students are suddenly comfortable to be in an environment with non-native and native speakers because they are maybe at different levels* (Participant 20B)

All in all, second language learners agree that a proficiency test before and after completing translation/interpreting courses would be beneficial. Some participants explicitly refer to an admission test for translation courses, or at least measure students' proficiency somehow to ensure their success in the program. The possibility to have students placed in translation/interpreting courses according to their level of proficiency was also discussed by some participants.

#### 4.2.3. Interim Discussion

The data about undergraduate students' perceptions served to identify several themes connected to language preparedness of L2 speakers (high school experiences and preparation in previous courses) and language preparedness of heritage speakers (domain-specific knowledge, grammatical/linguistic competence, and preparation in previous courses).

One common theme found in the perceptions of L2 speakers and heritage speakers was linguistic preparation in previous courses. In the case of L2 speakers, it mainly related to two factors: the medium of instruction used in previous courses and the huge emphasis given to writing skills. L2 speakers feel less prepared in terms of their speaking skills but more comfortable with their writing skills. In contrast, heritage speakers generally feel much better prepared in terms of their speaking skills than with their writing skills. More specifically, some heritage speakers stated that previous courses did not cover the rules for using the Spanish accent marks, so they did not feel prepared in translation courses.

For L2 speakers of Spanish, the other themes that emerged in their perceptions on language preparedness are high school experiences and awareness of different proficiencies. This group of participants expresses both positive and negative previous experiences in high school that are influential in their translation courses. In addition, L2 speakers seem to be particularly aware of unbalanced levels of Spanish proficiency within the group of L2 speakers in the translation classroom, also due to mixed student populations of native and heritage speakers of Spanish and L2 speakers of Spanish.

Domain-specific knowledge, grammatical/linguistic competence, and English proficiency are the remaining factors connected to heritage speakers' language preparedness. Heritage

speakers specifically raise concerns on their lack of domain-specific terminology in introductory translation/interpreting courses. They also express that their lack of grammatical/linguistic competence made them feel unprepared and insecure in translation courses. Furthermore, regarding English proficiency, some heritage speakers reported feeling prepared, while others mentioned that they felt insecure about their English or more comfortable in Spanish than in English.

When it comes to language development, both heritage and L2 speakers of Spanish perceived that their proficiency improved in translation/interpreting courses. Whereas L2 speakers perceive linguistic gains in terms of grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and pronunciation in Spanish after taking translation/interpreting courses, heritage speakers perceive gains regarding their academic register and their English proficiency.

The qualitative data on the perceptions of heritage speakers and L2 speakers highlighted similar themes, with some slight differences: the expectations and motivations of students who enter T&I programs, language-oriented and translation practice courses/opportunities for practice, course articulation, addressing linguistic needs through feedback, and language prerequisites and proficiency tests.

Improving language proficiency seems to be one of the reasons why both heritage speakers and L2 learners enroll in translation/interpreting courses. Some of the L2 speakers see translation courses as a way to review their previous knowledge of the language, and some heritage speakers perceive these translation/interpreting courses as useful to maintain or reacquire their Spanish. Some participants of both groups also reported that translation courses were more appealing to them than other options such as linguistics or literature courses to

continue learning both languages. Heritage speakers also express that they expected to be comfortable with translation/interpreting courses because they feel that they have been managing the two languages for their whole life.

In general, both L2 and heritage speakers expect their programs to provide them with more opportunities for practice. Some L2 speakers specifically refer to more language courses or workshops, as they would like to practice their Spanish writing, whereas heritage speakers explicitly refer to a lack of practice in translation/interpreting courses. Some participants also feel that specialized translation/interpreting would better serve their interests. Finally, some participants also argue that those programs that offer translation/interpreting courses should offer separate tracks, with one in translation and one in interpreting.

Some L2 speakers and heritage speakers from one program also stated that there was not a smooth transition between an introductory course to translation/interpreting and the following translation courses because they did not have enough opportunities to practice in the introductory course. Some of the participants expressed that in the introductory course, it would have been useful to start translating general texts to improve the transition between courses. All in all, some participants from one of the programs explicitly mentioned that more effective communication between professors, a better coordination of classes, and a more efficient administration of the program would be necessary to meet the needs of the students.

Some participants do not feel that their language needs have been completely addressed in translation/interpreting courses. In one of the programs, both second language learners and heritage learners lamented insufficient feedback in their introductory course. Participants also expressed that professors assume that students have already mastered grammar rules or the use of

accent marks in Spanish, such that these aspects are not necessarily addressed through instruction or feedback. Students think that language deficiencies should be addressed in the classroom, at least providing a short review, especially if there is a significant number of students who struggle.

Finally, participants agree that a pre- and a post-proficiency test before and after completing translation/interpreting courses would be useful to monitor their progress in the program. Some participants also explicitly stated that measuring the proficiency of students before starting translation courses would be useful in order to assess their strengths and weaknesses, and consequently, students could be advised to take specific courses to enhance those areas where they still struggle. Similarly, participants also believe that being proficient in Spanish and English is essential to perform future jobs as translators or interpreters. For this reason, having a tool in place that measures the proficiency of students at the end of translation/interpreting courses in place would be essential.

#### 4.3. Discussion

Overall, the quantitative and qualitative results point in the same direction. Both the L2 Spanish group and the heritage Spanish groups of participants perceive that the average English proficiency of students is higher than the expected English proficiency. However, a significantly unbalanced Spanish proficiency is perceived among L2 Spanish speakers and heritage speakers.

The main factor that seems to affect language preparedness of heritage speakers is previous course preparation, in particular domain-specific knowledge and grammatical/linguistic competence. For L2 speakers, these factors are high school experiences and preparation in

previous courses. With regard to high school experiences, some authors have explicitly examined the transition from high school to university for students, describing it as one of the main causes of anxiety among first-year university students (Lowe & Cook, 2003). Rhodes and Pufahl (2014) recently examined the role of Spanish teaching in U.S. schools and they found that there has not been an increase in the number of intensive language programs in high schools. These authors argue that this type of immersion model would be beneficial to achieve better language learning proficiency outcomes (p. 13). In our study, the quality of education in high school Spanish classes was perceived as not beneficial for some students because they did not have professors who were fluent in Spanish. However, high school preparation is not the only factor that influences L2 speakers' linguistic readiness. At the university level, heritage and L2 speakers mentioned that the language-related courses they took before T&I courses did not prepare them well.

The preparation in previous university-level language courses is certainly one critical factor identified by both second language speakers and heritage speakers. L2 speakers particularly alluded to the medium of instruction as a challenging factor when comparing language courses and translation courses. Whereas in some language courses, professors used English, in introductory translation courses, they used Spanish exclusively. Along these lines, ACTFL reports (2010) and research studies (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002; Vidal & Jarvis 2018; among others) point to the importance of the teacher's use of the target language to foster the students' acquisition of the language. On a similar note, some L2 speakers in this study notice a lack of connection between language and translation courses, consequently arguing that introducing translation early on in the curriculum would have been advantageous. In this regard,

Colina and Lafford (2017) advocate for the use translation as a fifth skill in the L2 classroom. By observing the responses of L2 speakers from our study, it is clear that they notice an abrupt change between language courses and translation courses, that might be mitigated by introducing translation earlier in the language curriculum, as suggested by Colina and Lafford (2017).

The heritage speaker participants of this study also perceive a disconnect between prerequisite language courses and translation courses, because there were linguistic aspects of Spanish (e.g., the use of accent marks) that were not emphasized previously. Colina and Lafford (2017) identify that the lack of experience of heritage speakers with formal written registers of the language is one of the challenges for heritage speakers in the translation/interpreting classroom. Professors should pay attention to these linguistic features to help HL students. Not addressing their linguistic needs through instruction in previous instructions causes heritage speakers to struggle more in the translation/interpreting classroom and feel unprepared. Heritage speakers in this study feel that they are better prepared for interpreting courses than for translation courses because they perceive their speaking skills to be stronger than their writing skills. Thus, their grammatical/linguistic competence (and sometimes their overall language proficiency) and the domain-specific knowledge are two influential factors responsible for the language preparedness of students. These findings are in line of the challenges for heritage language learners discussed by Mellinger and Gasca-Jiménez (2019).

Regarding language development, the following themes emerged in interviews with L2 and heritage speakers: expectations, language-oriented and translation practice courses/opportunities for practice, transition between courses, addressing language needs through instruction and feedback, and language prerequisites and proficiency tests. Many of

these themes were found in a study carried out by Li (2002) with undergraduate students in a university of Hong Kong. The author found that a significant number of students expected to learn the language in the translation program, thus arguing that language training should be emphasized in the curriculum and that the translation program should provide more opportunities for language learning. Similarly, participants in this study also expected to improve their proficiency, and some of them report unsuccessful experiences with regard to language instruction. Regarding feedback, Li (2002) also found that students expected a greater number of detailed comments on their assignments. Likewise, L2 speakers and heritage speakers of our study reported that sometimes they do not get any feedback on the part of instructors or that sometimes the feedback they receive is not detailed enough. Another recurrent theme found by Li (2002) is that students felt that the program should have more practice-oriented courses rather than theoretical courses to better meet their needs and to better reflect the market needs. The importance of language-related courses and more opportunities for practice was also pointed out by L2 speakers and heritage speakers of this study, respectively. In this case, participants also complained about the repetitive nature of courses in one of the programs, alluding to the lack of collaboration between professors and to an overlap within translation/interpreting courses.

Finally, regarding the measurement of language proficiency, not all students support introducing an “admission test” in their programs, but they all agree on the importance of measuring language proficiency in translation/interpreting courses. In fact, both L2 speakers and heritage speakers agree that having a test or other tool to measure their level of proficiency when entering the program and after completing translation or interpreting courses would be beneficial. Undergraduate students mention that implementing such proficiency measurements

would allow programs to measure/evaluate/monitor students' progress throughout the program and would provide administrators and professors with information about the linguistic needs of students as well as placement and course sequencing. Thus, a proficiency test could be useful to place students according to their level in translation/interpreting courses.

Overall, the results presented in this chapter highlight two findings that are of significant relevance to T&I courses. First, although students enter the T&I programs for different reasons, one of them is language development. This is an important finding in that it presents a mismatch in expectations for programs that follow traditional practice in not regarding language development as one of the objectives in the training of their graduates. The results indicate that this mismatch is currently present in some of the programs in this study, as evidenced by students' comments in which they lament the lack of feedback or scaffolded practices. Second, the results from the present (and the previous) chapter provide evidence that students have much to say about the curricular and programmatic aspect of programs where T&I courses are offered. The students interviewed here provided program-specific comments that suggest that they are aware of administrative and curricular problems that affect their learning process. Thus, as the literature on program assessment demonstrates, students can provide administrators with very valuable information about the practices of academic programs. This type of data can be very useful as a guiding framework to understand the state of programs and to unveil the areas of programs that require attention.

## CHAPTER 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: ADMINISTRATORS AND INSTRUCTORS

### 5.1. Quantitative Results

Answers from 26 participants were included in the statistical analysis of instructional staff and administrators' responses. Table 16 shows the descriptive statistics of participants' responses. Table 16 shows the data (mean and standard deviation) regarding instructors' perceptions with regard to proficiency of their students, including *expected proficiency* (the proficiency level they think would be ideal to enter the program) and *average proficiency* (the perceived average proficiency of their students) for each language (English, Spanish). The table also shows the difference between expected and average proficiency. The quantitative data for the *future proficiency* (English, Spanish) could not be obtained due to a technical problem with the questionnaire in its online form. Thus, I was unable to obtain quantitative data on which to perform statistical analyses to answer questions related to language development from this group of participants. However, the responses for the yes/no questions "*Do you think that your students' Spanish proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?*" and "*Do you think that your students' English proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?*" were answered and will be used as a metric for quantitative responses in relation to language development.

#### 5.1.1. Language Preparedness

The first statistical exploration focuses on whether instructional staff perceive a mismatch between the proficiency level they think would be ideal to enter the program and the current

(perceived) proficiency of students entering the translation program. In order to answer this question, I submitted participants' responses to a two-way ANOVA, with *language* (English, Spanish), and *proficiency* (expected, average) as the within-subjects factors. The ANOVA revealed significant main effects of *proficiency*,  $F(1,25) = 8.97$ ;  $p < .05$ , and *language*,  $F(1,25) = 16.52$ ;  $p < .05$ . The interaction between both factors was also significant  $F(1,25) = 9.13$ ;  $p < .05$ . Further pairwise comparisons revealed that this participant group perceive a mismatch in language preparedness for Spanish ( $t(25) = -4.41$ ;  $p < .001$ ) but not for English ( $t(25) = -0.18$ ;  $p > .05$ ).

Table 16. Teaching staff responses on language preparedness (expected proficiency, average proficiency) means and standard deviation per language

	Expected Proficiency Spanish	Average Proficiency Spanish	Difference in Spanish Proficiency	Expected Proficiency English	Average Proficiency English	Difference in English Proficiency
All responses	72.8 (19.1)	64.4 (15.8)	8.4 (9.7)	85.7 (9.2)	85.3 (10.5)	0.3 (10.4)

It appears, then, that instructors perceive a mismatch between the actual proficiency of students entering T&I courses and the ideal perceived proficiency needed to enter these courses, but only when they are asked about student preparedness in Spanish. When it comes to English proficiency, instructors do not perceive a difference in the same situations.

### 5.1.2. Language Development

The quantitative responses to the *yes/no questions* (“*Do you think that your students’ Spanish proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?*” and “*Do you think that your students’ English proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?*”) reveal that, for all participants, the Spanish proficiency of students improved or will improve throughout the translation/interpreting courses across different programs. With regard to English proficiency, for most of the participants (84.6%), the students improved or will improve their English proficiency. Only 4 participants (out of 26) perceive that the English proficiency of students does not improve as a result of taking translation/interpreting courses, because they feel that only Spanish skills are emphasized, not English skills..

## 5.2. Qualitative Data

### 5.2.1. Language Preparedness

#### 5.2.1.1. Graduate Level

When asked about their perceptions on language preparedness, all administrators and instructional staff from graduate programs agree that not all students are prepared in terms of their language proficiency. Only two administrators from Program A did not express that graduate students still have language needs in their program. Whereas Administrator 4 (A) reports that language proficiency “*is not an issue*” but rather the students’ ability “*to do research, to work, to multitask and to write,*” Administrator 2 (A) refers to the program admission and selection process as a reliable measure to ensure that students are qualified to enter the program, as seen in (60).

(60) *We would not admit any students if they were not qualified. If you listen to their audios talking about what [the students] want to do, and who [they] are, what qualifications... you can sense if [they] are qualified or not. When you look at their writing samples in both languages, then you can see that they have no issues... and also minding the fact that we select the best of the best (Administrator 2A)*

However, the rest of administrators together with the instructional staff from Program A, and administrators from Programs B and E acknowledge that some graduate students are not necessarily prepared when they take translation courses and that they can fill those gaps throughout the program. On the one hand, Administrator 3A and Administrator 9E state that they teach *research skills* to remedy those language deficiencies, as shown in (61a) and (61b). On the other hand, the administrator from Program B (Administrator 5B) specifies that the language deficiencies of students are mainly observed in the Spanish proficiency of L2 learners of Spanish, and that, in a few cases, these deficiencies have led some students to leave the program in the past (61c). This administrator acknowledges that s/he had to provide those students with the tools to succeed, to *chart paths* and help them improve their language competence.

(61)

(a) *It's hit or miss from what I can tell, some struggle... I think they really start to struggle when they take the specialized translation courses and what we often do to accommodate for that is to teach research competence, research skills, data mining... ways for them to fill the gaps in their language deficiencies, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't (Administrator 3A)*

(b) *Some of them are very close, may not be completely there.... they can make up with good research skills and everything for those language skills that they still need to develop* (Administrator 9E)

(c) *I have students that have been accepted and that are struggling. And I normally say that these people who are struggling are English dominant and their Spanish is still like... we have people that have left the program because of that issue, very few...* (Administrator 5B)

Overall, most administrators and instructional staff share the perception that some graduate students enter their programs with language deficiencies. Teaching students *research skills* or offering tools to help them advance in their language proficiency is the main strategy adopted by administrators and instructional staff from Programs A, B, and E to address the language deficiencies of those students who do not have the expected proficiency level in graduate translation programs. Only two administrators believe that students are well-prepared in terms of language proficiency because of their rigorous admission and selection process. To better understand the perspectives of administrators and instructional staff, different themes that emerged in their responses will be discussed. Before that, I present below an overview of the responses in relation to the language preparedness of students at the undergraduate level.

#### 5.2.1.2. Undergraduate Level

When asked about their perceptions on language preparedness, the administrators and instructional staff from different undergraduate programs all state that not all students are prepared when they start taking translation/interpreting courses. These opinions are particularly

critical in the case of administrators from Program A. In this program, the undergraduate administrator identifies that, in general, the lack of language preparedness of students is due to a structural problem of undergraduate language studies in the U.S.. This participant also acknowledges that students in the Spanish concentration tend to be better prepared than in the rest of language pairs, but only “at a certain level” (Administrator 1A). In this regard, one of the instructors of the program states that the level of Spanish in the program “is not extremely high, but compared to other programs [s/he’s] been to... it’s a lot higher” (Instructor 1A). Similarly, as shown in (62), one of the graduate administrators also identifies that the lack of language preparedness of undergraduate students across all language pairs as a recurring complaint of professors and instructors. In addition, according to Administrators 1A and 3A, the students’ high school and study abroad experiences are reported to be decisive factors in the language preparedness of students from this program.

*(62) That happens all the time at the undergraduate level. I’ve heard a lot of that...the idea is if their language proficiency isn’t what it should be, what it could be... Let’s have them study abroad... Some sort of a default mentality just to enhance language proficiency (Administrator 3A)*

In the rest of the programs, the administrators and the instructional staff also refer to a variety of proficiency levels in the program, mainly due to different linguistic profiles and students’ study abroad experiences. The language deficiencies observed are mainly in Spanish. In Program B, the administrator states that s/he had to make adjustments to the courses of the program in order to accommodate for the linguistic backgrounds and profiles of students. S/he

mentions that some students are “double A,” meaning that a few students in the program are equally competent in both languages, Spanish and English. This same administrator mentioned that L2 speakers tend to take an introductory translation course but they do not usually continue taking advanced translation courses. Similarly, in Program D, the administrator mentions that there are three types of students in the program, and that those students who are not prepared are encouraged to study abroad for a semester or a year. In Program C, the administrator did not answer the question because s/he does not teach any of the translation/interpreting courses in the program; however, one of the instructional staff from Program C mentions a very diverse group of students in the program. Finally, in Program E, one of the former administrators and the instructional staff also expresses that there is a great variety of proficiencies in the translation/interpreting courses and that many students are not prepared because they did not have the opportunity to study abroad. Several sample quotes from administrators and instructional staff across different programs are shown below.

(63)

(a) *We have such a huge range of students... We have almost double A students... We have different weaknesses everywhere... And then people normally that are highly deficient in Spanish, for example, which is the largest group that we might have* (Administrator 5B)

(b) *We have three types of students: students who are very good in both languages, students who are dominant in one language but that can reach the gap in their second language, and then students who are not at the level in their second language...* (Administrator 7D)

(c) *The challenge for us is that the group comes very mixed* (Instructor 9C)

(d) *We try and talk and work pretty closely with them through advising, because if you're not prepared at the undergraduate level in particular... to go into a more advanced translation course, it doesn't do any good for the student or the program* (Administrator 8E)

(e) *Non-native Spanish speakers... these are the ones that maybe haven't had a chance to study abroad, so they're coming in with really the bare minimum...* (Instructor 16E)

(f) *The problem is that we have a little bit of everything, that's the whole problem.... for translation, we have a wide variety of proficiencies* (Instructor 14E)

(g) *You really are going to have a huge mix...I have a lot of heritage language students and they are pretty well prepared, whereas there are other students who really shouldn't be in there* (Instructor 17E)

Overall, in undergraduate programs that offer translation and interpreting courses, administrators and instructional staff agree that not all students are prepared in terms of their language proficiency when they enter translation/interpreting courses. From the responses above, it is clear that in all programs, there is a great variety of student profiles with different proficiency levels. Moreover, differences were found in relation to the preparedness of Spanish native/heritage speakers when compared to L2 speakers. Some participants allude specifically to the lack of *study abroad* experiences as the possible reason for the language unpreparedness of students. At the same time, study abroad is regarded as the solution they suggest for those students who are not prepared.

### 5.2.1.3. Overall Themes

Four main themes that are related to the language preparedness of graduate and undergraduate students are discussed below. These are admission/proficiency requirements, course prerequisites, directionality, and student needs and profiles (of both heritage and L2 speakers). The first two themes correspond to the graduate level and undergraduate level, respectively, but the latter two (directionality, and student needs and profiles) will be discussed considering the responses of both participants from graduate and undergraduate programs.

#### 5.2.1.3.1. Admission/Proficiency Requirements

The views of administrators and instructional staff are not always consistent regarding proficiency guidelines in graduate programs. In Program A, the administrator of the comprehensive program (Administrator 4A) alludes to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines when assessing writing and oral samples (as seen in example 64), whereas other administrators and instructional staff from the same program state that they do not use ACTFL proficiency guidelines as a reference. In contrast, in Program E, there seems to be agreement in the level of proficiency expected on the part of graduate students who enter the program: Advanced Low, according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. However, in this program, the expected level of proficiency is not explicitly communicated to prospective students.

*(64) As I mentioned, Advanced Low... a couple of them have Intermediate Plus... and through a written sample and an oral sample (Administrator 4A)*

Administrator 4, in the quote displayed above, refers to an Advanced Low level as the language proficiency expected on the part of students who enter the M.A. program. However, Administrators 2A and 3A who coordinate the face-to-face and online M.A. degrees in this program, explicitly express that they do not align the writing and oral samples of students with any proficiency guidelines. Whereas Administrator 2 explicitly states that this is not important for him/her or for the department, Administrator 3 connects this lack of explicit proficiency guidelines with the assumption held by some faculty members that the program is not about language teaching/training. (See examples in (65)). The idea will be explored later on as it came out in the individual interviews held with other administrators and instructional staff.

(65)

(a) *We do not dictate, really... We do not really decide on how they're going to write... I mean, our main objective behind reading their sample is to see if they can really write clearly and effectively... that they don't have ill-structured sentences, they don't have grammar issues.... So, we want them to be able to write things and have the ability to express themselves clearly and effectively, as much as possible. We do not really say "following the ACTFL...",* you know, *it doesn't really matter to me and to the department* (Administrator 2A)

(b) *Nothing formal. We have students submit oral and written samples but we don't map things on to an ACTFL scale or anything like that. It's some sort of a judgment call for better or worse... A lot of people are very adamant and they say that translator training isn't about language teaching or language training... That kind of picks up where language training leaves off. I'm not sure if that really is the best mentality to have... I think that often times that M.A. students do have weaknesses or deficiencies in their*

*language proficiency, and I guess the assumption is that those deficiencies will be addressed over the courses (Administrator 3A)*

One of the instructors of Program A explicitly states that the proficiency requirements in place are not very well defined. Just like the administrators of the program did, this professor also alludes to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines but admits that the admission process is based on judgment calls and estimations on the part of faculty members. This participant explicitly refers to these estimations as “*problematic*” and “*vague*” in relation to the assessment or the diagnosis of students’ language proficiency (see example (66)).

*(66) This is where it gets vague... They technically do, they have to pass, they have a certain... in the English language, the IELTS or the TOEFL... If they’ve lived here a certain amount of time, it’s often waived... But in general we don’t actually measure it in terms of, you know, assigning a rate or insisting on the ACTFL score, and in that sense, we will often use a proxy for it such as their writing level as we assess it, or their speaking level... And that probably is problematic now that I’m saying it out loud because we don’t have necessarily the numeric... for admissions... I think that’s one place where we’re not doing, you know, the diagnostic... (Instructor 3A)*

In Program E, there are also some problematic issues identified by instructional staff in relation to the admission requirements in place at the graduate level. The administrator of the graduate program expresses that students are required to have a reading and writing proficiency in both languages at around the Advanced Low level following the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. In this program, the administrator also holds oral interviews by phone with prospective students and through this conversation s/he can assess whether the students fulfill the proficiency requirement. There seems to be agreement between the administrator and

instructional staff, as they all refer to *Advanced Low*. However, this expected level of proficiency required is not overtly expressed to prospective graduate students, as expressed by Instructor 16E, nor stated in the website of the program. On a similar note, Instructor 17E shows a critical opinion towards the overall admission process stating that it is not rigorous enough because all decisions depend exclusively on one person.

(67)

(a) *So for me, because I'm in Spanish, it is relatively easy for me to assess if the prospective students have met or meet that requirement by having a phone interview in Spanish although the oral part is, you know, it's a different part of the language, right? And in combination with research papers that they need to submit to me, I can see how the student writes in both in English and Spanish. What is really determinant in admission is the ability to write because if you write well in both languages, you can infer that the reading skills are probably comparable* (Administrator 9E)

(b) *They really have to have Advanced Low proficiency to be admitted into the graduate program and we don't say that in so many words, but we say, you have to have an oral interview with the director...and the director; then can comment to the rest of us that this person is oral proficient* (Instructor 16E)

(c) *It would be great if we could screen people quite rigorously, but I'm not sure that that's happening right now. I'm not sure that that's the best system at the moment* (Instructor 17E)

Instructional staff across different programs agree that not all students are prepared when they get into their graduate programs. In Program E, two faculty members (Instructional staff

16E and 17E) indicate that they sometimes accept students with lower proficiencies which is “*problematic*” and “*challenging*” as seen in (68). One of the challenges identified by Instructor 17E in relation to students’ admission to the program is that they need to keep enrollment numbers steady. Yet, according to this administrator, these students will fill their language gaps throughout the program.

(68)

(a) *We have accepted on occasion folks that are lower but it’s problematic* (Instructional staff 16E)

(b) *We need to have enough people in the program... so that becomes challenging... You have to sometimes admit people that are not fully prepared or don’t have the level of proficiency, but you can see they will be able to develop over time* (Instructor 17E)

All in all, the level of proficiency expected does not seem to be clearly defined in Graduate Programs A and E. Whereas in Program A there seems to be a lack of agreement among administrators and instructional staff when referring to specific level of expected proficiency (following the ACTFL proficiency guidelines), in Program E administrators and instructional staff commonly refer to *Advanced Low*, but this is not explicitly communicated to students. Instructional staff from Programs A and E are aware of the need for more formal measurements to screen prospective students more rigorously regarding their language proficiency. Some important consequences at a programmatic level are observed. In Program A, Administrator 3 links the lack of alignment with proficiency guidelines to some faculty’s views on language who neglect language teaching in the translation program. In Program E, two main

issues are identified: “Advanced Low” is not necessarily communicated to students as an admission requirement, and only one administrator in charge of assessing the proficiency level of students is not seen as thorough.

#### 5.2.1.3.2. Course Prerequisites

In Undergraduate Programs B, C, D, and E, students are required to take prerequisite courses to enter translation/interpreting. However, programs and administrators are unaware whether these courses correspond to specific ACTFL or other proficiency guidelines. Different opinions in relation to the previous preparation of students are found among administrators across different programs. For instance, the administrator from Program B states that it is assumed that by completing previous courses students should be prepared and for this reason, s/he does not assess the students’ level of proficiency with ACTFL guidelines. This administrator also mentions s/he meets with students struggling in the introductory course to let them know that “*they need to work on whichever learning outcomes from a previous class that they seem to be lacking*” (Administrator 5B).

In Program D, the administrator is critical of the course prerequisites in place, stating that enrollment rates prevail over academic criteria in the department. The strong perception of this administrator in regards to language preparedness of students is related to his/her expectations and to the mission of the translation/interpreting program: “*This is a program that ideally prepares to professional translators and interpreters*” (Administrator 7D), as opposed to other administrators (for instance, Administrator 1A) who consider their undergraduate programs

*pre-professional degrees*. Concerning the established prerequisite courses in Program D, other instructional staff also express their disagreement.

(69)

(a) *I consider [translation] language acquisition, but it's sort of specialized language acquisition rather than general language acquisition.... So we don't use the ACTFL because if they passed the classes leading up to [introductory translation course]...and they have an entry exam, a placement exam at the university, so if they go through the whole process, they get to all of these classes with good grades... that means that the competence level is enough to participate (Administrator 5B)*

(b) *The requirement to enter the program is [intermediate language courses for L2 and heritage speakers]. A few years ago, I realized that that was insufficient for the type of students that we are getting. So I sent a proposal to the administration.... It was a proposal to the undergraduate studies committee, which was approved unanimously and then we decided that a much better requirement would be [a more advanced intermediate grammar/writing course]. That was submitted to the head of the department and it was shelved... mostly because the department thought that requiring higher levels will have a negative impact on the number of students that the program will attract, and did not prioritize academic criteria over financial criteria. But in general, there is a deficit... There is a deficiency in the preparation of our students. And there is a problem... A serious problem when you take a student that is going to be in your program for three years and that has tremendous deficiencies that you will not be able to remediate during the years that students are going to be in the program... (Administrator 7D)*

(c) *They have to have been through at least the third year, [name of prerequisite courses], which to me was a shocking requirement to go into a translation course (Instructor 12D)*

Furthermore, in Programs C and E the administrators and other instructional staff consider the established prerequisite courses to be insufficient for translation/interpreting courses. In Program C, a Spanish grammar course is established as prerequisite, but participants from this program reported that they are trying to establish a more advanced Spanish course as a prerequisite. In this regard, Instructor 9C specifically refers to this advanced Spanish course as useful for both students: Spanish heritage language learners and L2 learners. In Program E, the former administrator (8) refers to the need of a better command of the language in a translation track and the need of proficiency requirements (e.g., ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview). Similarly, Instructors 16E and 17E also refer to the need for proficiency requirements in these interpreting courses, with one of them alluding to the responsibility of the overall program in the language preparedness of students in translation courses.

(70)

(a) *I definitely would like [a more advanced writing course] to be a prerequisite. That will be very helpful for them. At least, I have heard a lot of my students say that (Instructor 9C)*

(b) *I've always thought personally that when you compare a major in Spanish to say a concentration or a major in Translation Studies English-Spanish that you probably have to have stronger, higher communicative abilities for the translation track, I mean... it's just by the nature of it... we're just adding interpreting right now... That's where I think the oral OPI would make sense (Administrator 8E)*

(c) *If they work really hard, they can come out with a C, so they can pass the class. I'm not going to punish them for being at a language level... at a proficiency level that they can't help. I mean they are where they are and they are there because of our program...*

*We just added interpreting and I think their language proficiency makes a big difference and [the instructor] needs to be very careful about who [s/he] lets into the class and we've already seen that for example, we cannot combine an undergraduate interpreting class with a graduate interpreting class because the levels are too different (Instructor 16E)*

*(d) And I've asked if I could like put like a proficiency level requirement on the course to get in and at the moment the answer is no because we need to have enough seats for students (Instructor 17E)*

Overall, it is clear that the preparation of students in previous language courses is crucial for entering undergraduate translation/interpreting courses/programs. It is assumed that students should be prepared by completing a whole sequence of language courses. However, there are several issues identified through the responses of administrators and instructional staff at the undergraduate level. First, these prerequisite language courses are not aligned with specific proficiency guidelines. Second, in Program D, these prerequisite courses are established by the administration in order to maintain high enrollment rates, but this is problematic for the preparation and the academic performance of students in translation/interpreting courses. Therefore, some administrators and instructional staff are trying to create courses that serve as a better transition for translation courses (Program C) and administrators and instructional staff are aware that some proficiency measurements should be in place, especially in interpreting courses (Program E). However, the enrollment rates are reported to be one of the main challenges that translation/interpreting administrators face when trying to establish more advanced language courses or proficiency requirements. For this reason, a possible solution on the part of language programs and translation programs would lie on a more collaborative effort in terms of the

outcomes that they set for their courses. The transition, alignment and articulation of prerequisite courses and translation/interpreting courses is crucial in this regard. On a similar note, preparing professional translators and interpreters in an undergraduate degree is an unrealistic outcome that only a few students may achieve. Therefore, administrators from undergraduate programs should set more realistic expectations in their programs that are a better fit for the actual linguistic proficiency of the students.

#### 5.2.1.3.3. Directionality

Translation directionality was identified as one of the emergent themes in relation to the perceptions of program administrators and instructional staff on the language preparedness and development of students across different programs and levels (graduate and undergraduate). At the graduate level, Instructor 3 from Program A states that students mainly translate into English in the department. Yet, in the Spanish concentration, they are trying to be bidirectional. As expressed by this participant, administrators and instructional staff from other language pairs are reluctant to implement this bidirectionality due to either a lack of expertise or to the fact that they are not native speakers of those languages. By observing the response from this professor in (71), it is clear that s/he is aware of the needs of graduate students from this program, but the *bidirectionality* that this participant mentions is somewhat contradictory to the *unidirectionality*—translating into English—that graduate students from Program A express. A possible reason to explain these contradictory opinions is that only those graduate students who were in their second year of the M.A. degree in Program A could be interviewed and some

resistance was also found on the part of one faculty member to interview first-year M.A. students in the Spanish concentration.

(71) *I think we're very not Anglocentric, but we're English-centric in this department because we are an 'into English' translation program. You might have noticed that most of our courses are, except in Spanish... because we worked it out so that we could be bi-directional. We've been the most vocal about this, but I think there's a sense that if a professor isn't an expert in those languages or a native speaker in those languages or the language in question, that they are less willing to lead a course into that language.... I don't think students care so much. I think they really want the practice regardless.... you know... If their teacher is a native speaker or not. And in Spanish, we've managed to get some bidirectionality going... In terms of agreement with the instructors from the other language pairs, we have found resistance there... we've made some concessions so that we've been able to get that for Spanish, because we've made some good arguments. But yeah, it would have to be balanced and that's very... that's been very hard and students want that, they are always interested...* (Instructor 3A)

In Program A, at the undergraduate level, the former administrator and the instructional staff also clarify that students mainly translate into English in the program. For this reason, Instructor 1 states that s/he does not assess the writing skill in the translation course. In contrast, in translation courses from Programs C and D, Instructors 9C and 13D, express that they do both directions but that the emphasis is mainly from English to Spanish. (See examples in (72)).

(72)

(a) *They're mainly translating into English, not Spanish... and I think that's probably the case for the whole program* (Instructor 1A)

(b) *Heritage speakers of Spanish, well, any heritage speaker... I generally tell them they're gonna be translating into the language that they went to school in because that's what they can write in... Sometimes you get heritage speakers, sometimes you get immigrants... who come over and do a degree... and because they are immigrants, then they're like "I can do this, this is easy..." and then they learn it... they're translating into English* (Administrator 1A)

(c) *We do both but there is a heavy emphasis from English into Spanish* (Instructor 13D)

(d) *I have a few translations that we go into English, but mainly is Spanish. because my A language is Spanish* (Instructor 9C)

However, administrators and instructional staff from Undergraduate and Graduate Programs B, D, and E refer to their programs as *bidirectional*. Particularly some administrators explicitly report to be in favor of a balance in terms of the directionality of the program in order to provide equal opportunities for heritage and L2 speakers of Spanish. This may favor those heritage speakers who might want to improve both their English and their Spanish skills, and L2 speakers who might want to improve their Spanish and translate into their native language as well (Instructors 16E and 5B). Also, the administrator from Program B specifically expresses that working bidirectionality is the way to make sure that all students are included and no one is ignored.

(73)

(a) *You need that balance because a lot of times you have native Spanish speakers or heritage speakers who are having more trouble with English and they are Spanish and so... It sort of levels the playing field for everybody* (Instructor 16E)

(b) *Normally all the classes are fully balanced because... through collaborative practice and teamwork, social constructivist approaches... we make sure that everybody is included.. Whenever we change the directionality for example, some might feel like left out... but if in a collaborative classroom environment for translation or social constructivist.... everything works pretty well* (Administrator 5B)

(c) *And here you have a very mixed population. So you have different types of heritage students, you have Spanish speakers, you have the English dominant... So you have this mix... So I do understand that the course goes in both directions, that they have practice going into English and into Spanish, but sometimes the level of their non-dominant language is too low... Most of the cases it's for Spanish* (Instructor 5B)

All in all, it seems that bidirectional translational programs are seen by undergraduate/graduate administrators and instructors from Program B and E as a good way to provide opportunities for a variety of student profiles (Spanish native and heritage speakers vs. L2 learners of Spanish) in the classroom and to meet their expectations and needs. However, whereas Instructor 3A at the graduate level is aware of the importance of making the program bidirectional, this participant also mentions that there is still some resistance on the part of faculty members who might not be experts or natives of the language pair. The “nativeness” idea was also mentioned by one instructional staff from Program C who feels more comfortable teaching translation into Spanish, whereas an instructor from Program D refers to the location of the program as one of the reasons to emphasize translating into Spanish.

#### 5.2.1.3.4. Student Needs and Profiles

The majority of the administrators and instructional staff are aware of the different linguistic needs that heritage speakers and L2 speakers have and the challenges that they might face in translation/interpreting classrooms. In general, administrators report that heritage speakers in their programs have a better command of their spoken language, so they are always “*potential interpreters*” (Instructor 3A) and “*better prepared for interpreting courses*” (Instructor 17E) but they still need to work on their writing skills, as they still do not master certain aspects of the language. For instance, all instructional staff and administrators refer to the use of accent marks, punctuation or the academic register of the language as some of the issues that heritage speakers face.

Only one of the administrators from Program A (Administrator 4A) specifically stated that L2 speakers and heritage speakers do not have different needs when they enter the courses of their graduate translation program, arguing that their program is not about language acquisition. This confirms one controversial issue mentioned by another administrator (Administrator 3A) from the same graduate program. There are faculty members who neglect the role of language teaching, language training, and language acquisition in T&I courses. This may be related to the *resistance* to maintaining the unidirectionality of the program that was mentioned by Instructor 3A or may have to do with the intended “professional orientation” of the program and the conflict between the actual language proficiency of students and the adherence to “professional norms or mandates.”

(74) *Not really, because by the time they enter the program those linguistic needs should have been met because the program is not a language acquisition program, is a translation-skill acquisition program (Administrator 4A)*

In most of the departments that house the translation/interpreting programs (Programs B, C, D, and E), there are specific undergraduate courses for heritage speakers that they take before entering translation/interpreting courses. Program A is the only one where heritage speakers are not tracked into specific undergraduate language courses; as stated by Administrator 1A, they do not have *a large population of heritage speakers*. According to the administrators from all T&I programs, these students are not tracked in translation/interpreting courses and there are no statistics to account for the linguistic profile of students in the programs. Some instructors across different programs explicitly state that oftentimes they identify heritage speakers and L2 speakers “*by the way they speak*” or their “*accent*” (Instructors 1A and 2A), by their *physical appearance* (Instructor 10C), their *last name* (Instructor 6B), and sometimes students *self-identify* as heritage speakers or L2 learners (Instructor 12D and 17E).

In Program D, Administrator 5D also stated that there are no *official tools nor statistics* to identify heritage and second language learners in the translation/interpreting program, and that many times, students self-identify as heritage speakers. Furthermore, this participant acknowledges that there is a huge amount of interaction with the students and they hold conversations with them about these topics, especially in the introductory course where the topic of social justice is predominant. Conversely, an administrator of Program C (Administrator 6) refers to a lack of identification of the students’ linguistic profiles, as these students “*do not know the concept*” of what a heritage speaker is.

(75)

(a) *Many times, the students, we ask them, you know, if they identify themselves with any of these categories... And many times they will say “yeah sure” but we don’t have an official means nor official statistics (Administrator 5D)*

(b) *Well, I don’t think they are identified as heritage speakers because they don’t know the concept. I think it is more like... when they try to take classes at another level, we kind of put them in the heritage classes (Administrator 6C)*

In other programs, administrators and instructors use informal interviews and language profile questionnaires. In Program A, administrators at the undergraduate and graduate level seem to use informal interviews to identify the type of students that they receive in their programs, whereas in Programs B and E, some instructional staff report using language profile questionnaires to get to know the linguistic background of their students.

#### 5.2.1.3.4.1. Informal Interviews

The administrator of the Undergraduate Program A acknowledges that heritage speakers might face some challenges in translator courses at the undergraduate level. This administrator conducts an informal interview during advising (as seen in (76)) to get to know the educational background of students. As stated before, this information is crucial to determine the directionality of the translations the students will be working with (although students vastly translate into English in the program).

(76) *I interview them in advising... I'd say "Who are your parents?" "Where did you go to school?" "What language did you do your schooling in?" It's really critical to identify that* (Administrator 1A)

Similarly, at the graduate level, another administrator from the same program (Administrator 2A) conducts informal interviews to know a little bit of the background of the prospective graduate students including their goals and their expectations. These interviews are held with speakers from all the language pairs and they can identify whether or not prospective students are native, heritage speakers, or L2 speakers.

#### 5.2.1.3.4.2. Language Profile Questionnaires

Some instructional staff from Programs B and E report using language profile questionnaires in their translation/interpreting classrooms. In Program B, although the program director indicated that there are no official tools to identify second language learners and heritage speakers in the program (they basically only consider the requirements and prerequisite courses that they need to complete), two instructors reported using a *language profile questionnaire* at the beginning of the course including questions such as "*Were you born in the US?, Have you always lived in the US? Do your parents speak other languages?*" (Instructor 5B), to know the demographics of the class. However, questionnaire use is inconsistent in the program, as not all instructors use it. Instructor 7B from Program B admits that s/he was aware of the importance of identifying heritage speakers when grading translation assignments. Another instructor from the same program mentioned that s/he uses a self-made questionnaire that is useful for them to choose and develop materials for the classroom.

(77)

(a) *It's useful to know they are heritage speakers because when I'm grading into both languages, then I know if one of the languages is stronger and then I can be more lenient or less lenient in one direction or the other* (Instructor 7B)

(b) *I send them a survey... Everybody has to take it as their first assignment. And it's a survey for me to understand the demographics of my class. I designed this myself. Nobody else that I know of uses it. But I have found it to be very useful for me when developing materials* (Instructor 17E)

Overall, most of the administrators and instructional staff seem to be aware of the different needs that heritage speakers and L2 speakers have in translation/interpreting programs and courses. However, according to the administrators' responses, heritage speakers and L2 speakers are not identified and tracked in translation/interpreting courses and there are not statistics to account for the linguistic profile of students in the programs. Different tools are used by administrators and a few instructional staff in Programs A, B, and E to better understand the linguistic backgrounds and profiles of prospective students: informal interviews (Program A) and language profile questionnaires (Programs B and E). As will be discussed later on, this type of measure (keeping track of the number of students enrolled in the program, the linguistic profile of students in the program as well as getting to know their backgrounds, expectations, and so on) may be a useful tool for translation/interpreting programs to ensure that their curriculum addresses the needs of all students, especially in introductory translation/interpreting courses, and to improve their overall program practices.

## 5.2.2 Language Development

In general, all administrators and instructional staff believe that the students will develop their language proficiency throughout the translation/interpreting courses of undergraduate and graduate programs. As observed with the *language preparedness* question, only two exceptions are found at the graduate level, as will be discussed below.

### 5.2.2.1. Graduate Level

At the graduate level, most administrators believe that language development is an *implicit goal*, an *implicit outcome*, or a *natural byproduct* of the program, as stated by Administrators 9E, 8E, and 3A. However, whereas in Program E administrators and instructional staff seem to share the same perspective, as seen in (78a) and (78b), in Program A some discrepancy is found among administrators and instructional staff at the graduate level due to different beliefs about language acquisition/language teaching in translation training. Administrators 4A and 2A explicitly state that language development is not one of the *goals* or *objectives* of the program; they allude to *language proficiency* as a requirement for the student admission in the program but not as a real outcome of the translation courses of the program, as observed in (78c) and (78d).

(78)

(a) *There's definitely an implicit goal of language development... We are inviting language development at the academic level and of course, research skills development, also* (Administrator 9E)

(b) *At the graduate level it's an implicit outcome that we're looking for* (Administrator 8E)

(c) *No, because the program does not work on the language proficiency of the students...It is a requirement but it is not the goal of the program...* (Administrator 4A)

(d) *Not really... Our objective is not to teach language but to train them on the skills they use in translation... We assume and I hope... even the criteria we apply to admit students also is good enough... We always have students who are outstanding and they can really write Arabic and English. or Spanish and English, or any other language, as fluid as a native speaker...* (Administrator 2A)

The contradictory views on language training and language teaching on the part of faculty members mentioned by Administrator 3A in relation to the language preparedness were also raised when this participant was asked about language development. This administrator does not seem to share the beliefs of Administrators 4A and 2A regarding language training and language teaching, as s/he expresses that sometimes, students enter the program with language deficiencies. Similarly, one of the instructors at the graduate level (Instructor 3A) states that s/he believes that students develop their language competence and their domain-specific knowledge in the courses and the program. Furthermore, this participant mentions that language development is one of the motivations and expectations of some graduate students when they apply to enter the graduate program. In contrast to Administrator 2A and 3A, Instructor 3A also mentions that students are *still working through language acquisition*.

(79)

(a) *There's no focus on language training per se... It's not framed as such. So, it is not mentioned in the mission of the program or the program learning outcomes... And it kind*

*of goes back to that mentality that we are not here to train language proficiency but to train translation (Administrator 3A)*

*(b) I guess it's kind of an indirect way of saying... in fact, when some students write to apply for admittance here they say, "Oh, I really want to improve my English" or "I really want to improve my Spanish"... when someone says that... It isn't naive, is it? They really are going to be able to improve their control of certain... It's professional vocabulary in a given domain... Yes, I definitely think they do. I'm seeing that language acquisition and translation, they run in parallel they have all kinds of different relationships to each other but they definitely are not consecutive, right? You don't master language and then become a translator... (Instructor 3A)*

Overall, it seems that *language development* is seen as one of the implicit outcomes or goals of translation training at the graduate level by most of the administrators and instructional staff from different programs; only two administrators believe that translation training is not related to language development. However, as expressed by administrators from graduate programs, language development is not explicitly stated as such in the mission statement of translation programs or in the program learning outcomes. Instead, it appears to be an *implicit* goal. This situation is slightly different in the case of undergraduate programs, where language development is usually one of the main goals or outcomes. However, one program administrator (Program D) refers to the professional preparation as a goal of the program ("*a program that ideally prepares to professional translators and interpreters*"). As stated before, this unveils that this program might have expectations that are too high for their undergraduate students in comparison to other undergraduate degrees or programs that are considered pre-professional.

#### 5.2.2.2. Undergraduate Level

Across different programs, administrators believe that language development is one of the objectives of the program. In Program A, Administrator 1 explicitly states that language development is the overall goal of the program but probably not in “*core courses in translation theory since [they] are piggybacked on the traditional degree.*” In Program B, Administrator 5B refers to a genre-based approach and a task-based approach that the program adheres to. This participant refers to translation as a specialized type of language acquisition, as shown in (81). In Program C, the administrator says that s/he hopes that language development is one of the objectives of the program, but s/he is not sure whether or not it is explicitly stated as such. In Program D, the administrator specifically states that, when students graduate from the program, they “*are much more proficient and much better than when they enter the program.*” Finally, in Program E, the administrator states that language development is “*without doubt one of the goals of the undergraduate program, since [translation courses] are part of the Spanish major.*”

(80)

(a) *Of course it is... in my belief... and I take it from the translation-research community... you have language and translation acquisition involved... Students need to demonstrate the ability to produce texts in different academic... different types of genre... They are taught cross-linguistically across genres many techniques at the lexical, syntactical...everything... to be able to produce those specialized genres (Administrator 5B)*

(b) *Our students in general, when they graduate, they are much more proficient and much better than when they enter the program... there is a great progression, and*

*unfortunately, we don't have metrics, nor mechanisms to make sure of that...*  
(Administrator 7D)

Furthermore, there is general agreement on the part of the instructors who teach translation/interpreting courses at the undergraduate level across the five programs in that language development is one of the objectives of their courses or “*always one of the learning outcomes*” (Instructor 14E), although it seems that this is not always explicitly stated as such in their syllabi. Some instructional staff are more explicit about the language skills that students develop: “*more written than spoken*” (Instructor 1A); “*not only translational competence, but also reading and writing, which are the two sub-competences that you need for translation in any case*” (Instructor 7B). Others express that translation “*is just another way to learn the language*” (Instructor 6B) and that they hope that “*they learn the language*” through translation (Instructors 9C and 13D) in order to “*prepare them for the next [translation and interpreting] courses*” (Instructor 11D). With regard to interpreting courses, Instructor 17E, states that “*there is a component related to language development because the courses are at the undergraduate level are listed as Spanish courses and that the idea is to develop and get their language proficiency up*” while students are in interpreting courses. “*This is something that I do believe in.*” (Instructor 17E)

The following quote from one of the instructional staff in Program E really reflects the reason why language development might not be explicitly stated in the syllabi of translation courses or even program learning outcomes. When asked about his/her perceptions on language development, this participant explicitly mentions “*how translation studies traditionally wants to distinguish itself from language acquisition... a division of fields that is probably more politically*

*motivated than anything.*” This participant also alludes to his/her own language learning experiences in a translation program and how s/he changed some of the materials of the course because “*students were not developing their language.*”

(81) *I like language acquisition and that's why I initially started in that course... I was a younger version of myself, much younger... but I wanted to be really good at languages and I thought translation was something that would help you.... I knew that it's not the way to become proficient, but I thought that it's something somebody very proficient could do, learn how to do and maybe too, could perfect some things when they're working on that. I really did. That was my... and I'm only bringing that up because I think I've been in between both fields... I don't have that as an objective... I don't think I could because that's where I'm like, where's my class versus other classes? But I think though, talking with you and now reflecting... That's a hope of mine too. I think it's in my subconscious... That's why I've changed things because I'm happier to know... There was a feeling of guilt sometimes... “The translation teacher feels guilty.” Maybe the translation concept, approach, strategy or the translation thing you're supposed to learn this week, it was kind of hard to learn, but at least you read in Spanish and you worked with your Spanish too, your target language or your foreign language... So maybe that kind of counters some guilt when you think that things aren't working, at least they're getting... because I'm in a languages department, I'm not in a translation department (Instructor 15E)*

Overall, there seems to be general agreement with the fact that undergraduate and graduate students develop their language proficiency and their language skills in translation and interpreting courses. Only a few exceptions are found in the case of Administrators 1A, 2A, and 4A from Program A, probably because the overall translational directionality of the program is

mainly into English or because they did not consider translation training as a way to acquire language or to improve language proficiency. In general, it seems that language development is identified by administrators as an *implicit* goal of the program, especially at the graduate level, although it is much more explicit at the undergraduate level, especially in introductory translation courses (Programs B, D, and C) and interpreting courses (Program E). Finally, the role of language instruction and feedback is crucial to address the language deficiencies of students on the part of instructional staff and administrators who teach translation/interpreting courses.

### 5.2.2.3. Overall Themes

#### 5.2.2.3.1. Attention to Language Deficiencies

There are some instructors from Programs B, C, and D who specifically state that there is a lot more explicit language instruction in introductory courses at the undergraduate level. Instructor 8 from Program B states that in some way or another, it's present throughout the other courses as well because [they] cannot separate language structure from translation. Similarly, instructor 9C acknowledges to teach the language depending on the mistakes or difficulties that the students have in their assignments or translations. In Program D, Instructor 11D expresses that the introductory course has been modified to address the needs of students that they receive, and that there is, in fact, an explicit linguistic component. Instructor 17E also mentions that s/he addresses language deficiencies when s/he observes recurrent difficulties or mistakes. This participant also alludes to the importance of scaffolding. For this instructor, it is essential to know where the students are and meet their needs.

Some instructors from different programs alluded to the importance of using pre-translation activities to anticipate the possible language issues and to guide the students. As stated in the previous chapters, pre-translation activities following Colina's framework (2003b) are used to drive the attention of students towards pragmatic factors and to help students see that translation is a communicative activity that is not based on isolated sentences, among other purposes. This author also mentions the inclusion of reading comprehension and language-focused activities as preliminaries. Overall, these pre-translation activities aim to guide students before they actually translate, activating the students' background knowledge and increasing their awareness on different linguistic and pragmatic factors for completing the translation task. Yet, despite of the importance given to pre-translation activities in the literature (Colina, 2003b; González-Davies, 2004; among others) some of the participants of this study acknowledge that not all professors follow this approach (Instructor 14E). In a way, this professor states that through pre-translation activities, the students know the proficiency that they need or what they need to review. Similarly, in Program B, one of the instructors refers to some recent changes including pre-translation exercises in the courses that s/he teaches, because making students translating a text without guidance and a previous reflection was not very effective (Instructor 7B). This instructor specified that students have reading comprehension difficulties and through these pre-translation activities (ranging from documentation, finding out information about the topic of the text, reading techniques, etc.), s/he is trying to tackle that before they actually translate. Not all instructors use translation activities, and they overlook linguistic hurdles, which creates frustration among students who are less linguistically prepared.

The way that instructors address language deficiencies through feedback is also a very important aspect to consider. Some instructors state that, through individualized feedback, in translation (Instructors 6B and 14E) and interpreting courses (Instructor 17E), respectively, they can meet the needs of both L2 speakers and heritage speakers and reach multiple populations in the single classroom (Instructor 17E). Some instructors across different programs also mention other strategies used to address language problems after grading the translation assignments, prepare a summary of the most common mistakes and they go over them in class (Instructor 5B). Similarly, in Program D, Instructor 13D mentions that s/he get students together to compare their translations. However, a lack of consistency in regards to the type of feedback (explicit vs. implicit) and the use and/or type of rubrics (based on the American Translators Association (ATA) criteria or self-designed by instructors) is observed within and across programs. It seems that every instructor makes his/her own decisions individually, and most of the time these are independent of what other instructors do. In the same way, the way that language deficiencies are addressed in the classroom vary depending on the instructors. Yet, there seems to be common agreement that a more explicit attention to language teaching is given in introductory translation courses.

Based on administrators and instructors' responses, it seems that translation and interpreting programs might benefit from working more collaboratively in terms of their pedagogical and assessment practices. Communication among instructors and administrators is a crucial component for successful program delivery (Lord, 2014). Regardless of the approach or methodology the program adheres to and the type of feedback or rubrics used, it is clear that undergraduate and graduate students still have language needs. Thus, students expect their

language gaps or deficiencies to be addressed in the translation and interpreting classroom. In this regard, Colina's (2003b) translation pedagogical framework seems to be an extremely useful resource for translator trainers. Through this framework, translator trainers may provide students with guidance and scaffolding on linguistic aspects (and pragmatic aspects) before they start practicing their translation, as Instructors 7B and 14E do. In this line, Adab (2000) suggests the implementation of a framework to assess translation that takes into consideration the development of language skills. The inclusion of these frameworks across the translation curriculum might facilitate the articulation within and across courses. More importantly, for this to happen, administrators and instructional staff must jointly acknowledge that students are still on a developmental path towards their language and that they need to set up realistic expectations that are aligned with students' current needs. Thus, prescriptivist assumptions held by some administrators who neglect language teaching and language acquisition within translator training, and consequently, language development as one of the goals and outcomes of their programs are detrimental for the students and for the program itself.

#### 5.2.2.3.2. Proficiency and Outcomes Assessment

In general, there is agreement among administrators and instructional staff, that it would be beneficial to use some tool to assess the proficiency of students before starting translation/interpreting courses and at the end of the programs. Some programs already use proficiency assessments at the end of the program (Programs A, B, and E). For instance, in Program A, at the undergraduate level, they use the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) as one of the outcomes measures at the end of the program.

Similarly, in Program E, at the undergraduate level, the Spanish majors (including those students who take the undergraduate certificate) complete a simulated OPI in a capstone course. In Program B, the administrator also reports that students who complete their major in Spanish are required to take the OPI. In the other programs (C and D), administrators did not mention specific language proficiency measures or outcomes assessment in place at the programmatic level. In this regard, the administrator from Program C mentions that they used to have an exam at the end of the certificate but that they decided to eliminate it. It is important to highlight that these last two administrators see the program assessment as an outsider's job and not their own, as seen in (82a) and (82b). At the same time Administrator 7D mentions that "*the superior court and the juvenile court judge had eight full-time openings for full-time interpreters last year*" and that these positions were filled by graduates from this program.

(82)

(a) *Nothing that it is global and takes into account their progression, the different grades, how they're doing... Nothing of that at the department, the program or at the college level that I am aware of. I wish we could* (Administrator 7D)

(b) *I don't think so. [The previous director] used to do an exam. Nobody taught anybody how to do assessment in this department or in the University in general* (Administrator 6C)

At the graduate level, different tools are used as a way to measure the learning outcomes in Programs A, B, and E but these measures are not aligned with specific proficiency scales. In this regard, Instructor 3A believes that "*there could be some kind of measure from beginning to*

*the end, whether we're using professional standards, you know, the Interagency Roundtable Guidelines or another one that is developed just for students.*" However, with regard to learning outcomes in general, Instructor 3 states that they use the capstone projects of the students to measure one of the outcomes of the program. Also, they look where students are employed six months after they finish the program. In this regard, Instructor 3A states that this is not enough, although these seem to be *"fairly good indicators of who were strong students and who are employable."* Within the program, Administrator 3A states that they do not have entrance and exit metrics to assess the students' performance across the program. This participant also acknowledged that this is something that they need to consider. In Program E, they have students submit their best translation by the time they graduate and by using a rubric, they determine *"whether the translation is satisfactory, unsatisfactory or outstanding"* (Administrator 9B). However, there is no agreement among instructional staff as they doubt of the reliability of this measurement since this is a translation that has gone *"through several rounds of revision"* (Instructor 17E) and that the students prepared beforehand (Instructor 15E). Instructor 15E also mentioned that it would be more beneficial to use a *"controlled testing environment as well."* Finally, in Program B, the students are required to take a comprehensive exam that consists of two parts: one exam in which students translate in both directions (replicating the ATA exam), and another exam in which students translate a specialized text into their A language.

Overall, different proficiency and outcomes assessment tools are used in Programs A, B, and E, but there seem to be no official tools or mechanisms in place to measure proficiency and the overall learning outcomes in Programs C or D. In Program C, there used to be an exam that students had to take at the end of the program, but the new director decided to eliminate it. Thus,

this program does not currently use any additional tool to measure the program learning outcomes besides the students' grades in each specific course. Similarly, in Program D, there are no official tools or statistics in place, although the administrator reports that very demanding interpreting positions in the market were obtained by eight students of the program. However, this does not seem to be a reliable measure as the approximate number of students enrolled in the program is 120. For this reason, translator and interpreting programs might benefit from establishing tools or mechanisms to measure what the outcomes are at the end of their programs. The inclusion of student learning outcomes assessment practices has been shown to be very advantageous to improve the educational quality of language programs and the overall satisfaction of program stakeholders, as shown in the collection of case studies gathered in Norris and Davis (2015).

#### 5.2.2.3.3. Program Development

At the programmatic level, it seems that undergraduate programs do not have a written plan for development; they do not always review/evaluate their components on a regular basis. For instance, in Program A, the administrator states that *“there’s a certain amount of administrative disarray, so not everybody is sure who’s in charge and nobody’s minding the store... there’s not a lot of review of if we are still doing what we wanted to do.”* Similarly, an administrator from Program C states that they do not have a mechanism for program development that but that they should have it. More specifically, this administrator alludes to the possible benefits of having an ongoing mechanism for program development, especially for the program’s academic review.

Finally, in Program D, the administrator expressed that they do not have anything of the sort and s/he alludes to a lack of *mentoring* and “*no mechanisms for interdisciplinary cooperation.*”

Conversely, at the graduate level, administrators state that they review their components annually (Programs A, B, and E) and they allude to recent curricular changes in terms of new course offerings (Program A), new certificate offerings (Program E), or courses that are offered in different modalities, such as hybrid courses and online courses (Program B). One of the administrators from Program A states that they try to get input from the industry and that s/he conducts surveys at the ATA conference and interacts with various industry stakeholders to see what is needed. However, s/he also acknowledges that they could be doing more along these lines, maybe “*consulting more with our alumni to see if their happy with their decisions... to see which courses worked well, which courses did not work well, where their gaps are... and maybe some of those gaps are in the domain of language teaching*” (Administrator 3A). For this reason, s/he believes that it would be really helpful if they heard students’ voices as a way of informing curricular change.

Some program-level suggestions were identified in the responses from instructors in regards to how undergraduate programs meet the needs of their students. Some instructors mentioned that there should be more *collaboration* among translation/interpreting faculty members to share practices. Also, they wished for more participation of professors in the *admission decisions* of students and having a good *feedback loop* to hear the voice of students in terms of their satisfaction with the courses and the program. This is especially expressed in those programs where several Ph.D. holders (assistant professors) are in charge of teaching translation/interpreting courses.

In undergraduate programs, where most of translation/interpreting instructors are lecturers or Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), a need for more *collaboration* was identified among instructors. In one of the programs, the syllabi of previous translation/interpreting courses were not shared with an instructor who asked for them to the director of the program, and that they have not had meetings to discuss how the curriculum is meeting the needs of both heritage and L2 speakers. In this line, this instructor reported that L2 learners do not feel as comfortable as heritage speakers in the program, as L2 learners are told many times that they are not prepared and that they have to have a really *high level of Spanish* to continue in the program. The same idea was observed among L2 learners in this program.

### 5.3. General Discussion

With regard to *language preparedness*, there is general agreement among administrators and instructional staff that not all students are prepared in translation/interpreting courses. Some discrepancies are found in some programs where two administrators believe that language proficiency is not an issue and that students are prepared because they have been selected by means of a rigorous admission/selection process. However, whereas at the graduate level administrators tend to allude to *research skills* that students gain in the translation courses to fill their language gaps, at the undergraduate level, administrators and instructors allude to *different student profiles and proficiencies* (L2 speakers vs. heritage speakers) and the positive influence of *study abroad experiences* in students' language preparedness.

At the graduate level, some administrators and instructors show a very critical opinion about the *proficiency requirements* in place. Advanced Low (corresponding to the ACTFL

proficiency guidelines) is the level of proficiency expected on the part of students who apply to graduate translation programs. Apparently, this is not always applied consistently by administrators and instructional staff and it is not explicitly stated in their website information. For this reason, there seems to be agreement among some of the administrators and instructors across different programs that they should improve the way they screen prospective graduate students.

At the undergraduate level, the preparation of students in previous language courses that are established as *prerequisites* is definitely one of the most influential factors that affect the language preparedness of students according to instructors. In general, those prerequisite language courses are not specifically aligned with specific proficiency guidelines. Most importantly, responses indicate that prerequisite courses are not aligned with translation and interpreting courses. This may explain why administrators and instructors feel that students are not necessarily prepared when they get into introductory translation or interpreting courses. In general, administrators and instructional staff are aware of the need of establishing more advanced language courses to improve the transition between translation/interpreting courses but it seems that keeping enrollment rates up is one of the challenges that administrators face when trying to establish more advanced language courses or other proficiency requirements. Yet, more collaboration is needed between language and translation programs to determine the level of proficiency expected on the part of students who finish the prerequisite courses in order to establish outcomes that are aligned with students' actual language proficiency. This lack of articulation between prerequisite language courses and introductory translation courses is problematic for students, as they might feel anxious, frustrated and might even end up leaving

these courses. In some cases, this lack of articulation seems to be related to unrealistic expectations set in undergraduate programs. In these instances, administrators should reconsider the expectations set in the courses of their programs so that they are aligned with the actual proficiency level of students, their needs and their expectations. Finally, another way to improve the transition between language courses and translation courses would be to introduce translation as a pedagogical tool or as a fifth skill early on in the language curriculum (Colina & Lafford, 2017), as students would have previous practice with translation and thus would feel more comfortable when entering translation practice courses.

The *directionality* of programs is another factor that has an influence on the language preparedness and language development of students. Some of the administrators/instructional staff emphasize that their programs and/or courses are bidirectional to give opportunities to the different student language profiles (Spanish native/heritage speakers and L2 learners of Spanish) to meet their expectations and needs. However, it seems that in one of the programs, some faculty members are hesitant to make the program bidirectional due to the fact that they are not experts in or native speakers of the language B. The “native-speaker” idea is also identified in other programs where instructors feel more comfortable teaching translation into their native language. This shows that certain stereotypical assumptions on “directionality” and “nativeness” still persist in some translation programs. Yet, these prescriptivist ideas have been refuted in research studies (Pokorn, 2005, 2009; Zlatnar et al., 2017). For instance, Pokorn (2005) shows that there is no correlation between the native language of the translator, the directionality of the translation, and the quality of the translation. Instead, the quality of the translated text depends on the translator’s abilities (translator competence, strategies, knowledge of the source and target

cultures and languages) but not on their native language or the directionality (p. 123). Similarly, Pokorn's (2009) findings also seem to question the traditional view that translation trainers are to teach translation courses into the L1 exclusively. Finally, the results from Zlatnar et al. (2017) also challenges the "nativeness" traditional assumption. These authors found that, unexpectedly, the quality of translations (into the L1) of language students was lower than that of translation students. These results are, thus, in line with Pokorn's (2005) findings: the quality of the translation does not depend on the translator's "native" language or mother tongue. Thus, students need to be trained to acquire translation skills even if they translate into their L1.

All administrators and instructional staff are aware of the linguistic needs of heritage speakers and L2 speakers have. In general, there seems to be agreement that heritage speakers tend to be better prepared for interpreting courses and that they might still have some challenges in the translation classroom. The use of accent marks, punctuation, or the academic register of the language appear to challenge this population of students. However, according to administrators' responses, heritage speakers and L2 speakers are not identified in translation/interpreting courses and no statistics are used to account for the linguistic profile of students in the programs. Only some administrators report to use informal interviews and/or language profile questionnaires but there is no consistency within administrators and instructor from the same program. In this line, conducting student analytics (Ecke & Ganz, 2014) might be an advantageous practice to keep track of the number of students enrolled in T&I programs and their linguistic profiles and to correlate these data to their achievements throughout the program. On a similar note, getting to know students' expectations and satisfaction levels throughout their

studies would ensure that administrators and instructors have data to further adapt the curriculum to meet students' needs.

In terms of language development in translation/interpreting courses, administrators and instructional staff at the graduate level state that this an *implicit* goal of their programs, whereas in undergraduate translation/interpreting programs, language development is generally a more explicit outcome and it tends to be more overtly stated as such. However, there are exceptions to this overall observation, especially in programs where administrators are of the belief that their program is not about language acquisition or language training.

Overall, the way that instructors address language deficiencies in the classroom and through feedback varies depending on the instructor, so there seems to be no consistency in the methodology used or the type of feedback given to students within each one of the programs. The two main conclusions drawn from the responses of administrators and instructors is that language instruction is much more explicit at the undergraduate level and in introductory translation courses. The use of pre-translation activities as a way to scaffold the learning of students was explicitly stated by two instructional staff from two different programs. Similarly, the use of rubrics and the feedback type (explicit vs. implicit) vary depending on the instructor.

Regarding proficiency measurements and outcomes assessment, at the graduate level, translation programs use different types of outcomes assessment, such as capstone projects, having students submit their best translation, and an exam that partly replicates the ATA certification exam. At the undergraduate level, some administrators alluded to the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) and Oral Proficiency Interview as the main tools used to measure the proficiency outcomes of those students who major in Spanish; in general, the results from these

tests are used for internal purposes of the program. However, two administrators did not mention any proficiency tests that students take after completing translation/interpreting courses in their programs. In general, all administrators and instructors state that it would be preferable to establish a tool to measure the proficiency of students at the beginning and at the end of the courses and the program so that they could observe the progression of students throughout the program. In general, translator and interpreting programs would benefit from implementing more outcomes assessment practices (Norris & Davis, 2015) in their programs to know what students are able to do in each of the courses of the program. This might be a useful way to improve the program articulation across courses (vertical articulation) and within same-level courses (horizontal articulation).

Finally, translation/interpreting programs may benefit from developing program assessment practices. These practices have increased in the field of foreign language teaching with research studies (Norris et al., 2009) conducted in language programs and also with program standards (e.g., CEA Standards, 2019) in order to ensure that the program addresses the needs of all stakeholders. At the graduate level, there seems to be more consistency in the way that administrators review the program components, but at the undergraduate level there are several programmatic issues observed depending on the program. Overall, regardless of the program, curriculum design and curriculum delivery appear to be inconsistent within the same programs. These programs could benefit from implementing ongoing evaluation practices to help ensure course articulation/progression and avoid content overlap. In the same way, more explicit tools should be used to ensure that the translation/interpreting curriculum meet the needs and expectations of students with different linguistic profiles.

## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

### 6.1. Introduction

This dissertation examined the current state of articulation, language preparedness and language development in U.S. T&I programs by collecting program information through questionnaires and studying the perceptions of T&I stakeholders (program administrators/coordinators, instructional staff, and students). The present chapter provides a summary of the findings followed by a discussion of their implications, recommendations, and directions for further research.

### 6.2. Summary of Findings

#### 6.2.1. Graduate Students

Chapter 3 lays out the results of quantitative and qualitative analyses conducted with graduate students' responses. For the quantitative analysis, the graduate student group was treated as a sole experimental group with no distinction in linguistic profile. Despite the fact that the quantitative analysis failed to demonstrate a significant mismatch between the perceived *expected* and *average* proficiency taking the students' responses as a group, the qualitative analysis clearly demonstrates that students perceive a mismatch in the Spanish proficiency of students. Two main themes related to *language preparedness* were identified in the qualitative analysis: *feelings of insecurity* and *unbalanced proficiency requirements*. Some students self-reported feeling worried, insecure and even anxious before starting the programs or when

they initially started translating and interpreting courses. These feelings of insecurity seem to be mainly motivated by lack of preparation (mainly lack of domain-specific knowledge or

Table 17. Summary of themes identified by stakeholder group for Language Preparedness and Language Development

Graduate Students	Language Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feelings of Insecurity</li> <li>- Unbalanced Proficiency Requirements</li> </ul>
	Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Directionality</li> <li>- Language-Related Courses</li> </ul>
Undergraduate Students	Language Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Previous Language Preparedness</li> <li>- Language Challenges</li> </ul>
	Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expectations and Language Gains</li> <li>- Language Training</li> <li>- Translation Practice</li> <li>- Course Articulation</li> <li>- Feedback</li> <li>- Prerequisites</li> </ul>
Administrators and Instructors	Language Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Admission Requirements</li> <li>- Course Prerequisites</li> <li>- Directionality</li> <li>- Students' Needs and Profiles</li> </ul>
	Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attention to Language Deficiencies</li> <li>- Proficiency and Outcomes Assessment</li> <li>- Program Development</li> </ul>

specialized language proficiency), lack of scaffolded practices in an interpreting course, and the unidirectionality of one program. Furthermore, graduate students in one of the programs felt that the proficiency requirements in place are unbalanced, ineffective, and unfair, in particular, the program's departmental requirement that international students take an English-proficiency test, whereas no Spanish-proficiency test is required.

The quantitative and qualitative results on *language development* reveal that graduate students expect to increase their proficiency in both languages, with more expected gains in Spanish than in English. Two main themes connected to language development were identified: *translational directionality of programs* and *language-related courses and language teaching*. Concerning the first theme, some graduate students believe that directionality is linked to language proficiency enhancement, as they expected greater gains in the language they are translating into. Some students reported that they expected to translate into Spanish, and consequently expected greater improvements. Also, some students raised concerns on how the program is not meeting the expectations of students who may end up translating bidirectionally in the future, as they did not have that experience in the program. The second theme is connected to the need of more translation practice, language related courses and language teaching embedded in the program. In one of the programs, the emphasis on computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools does not seem appealing for all the students, who would instead prefer more language-oriented courses. Some students state that language teaching is not a component of the program because it is assumed that students already have the linguistic proficiency needed to be in those courses, although that does not seem to hold true for all students.

### 6.2.2. Undergraduate Students

Chapter 4 gathers the results of quantitative and qualitative analyses conducted with undergraduate students' responses. The results from both analyses (quantitative and qualitative) on *language preparedness* point in the same direction: for both groups of undergraduate students, heritage speakers and L2 speakers of Spanish, the perceived *average* Spanish proficiency of students is significantly lower than the *expected* proficiency. However, both groups of students agree that the perceived *average* English proficiency of students is higher than the *expected* English proficiency. Some common themes connected to *language preparedness* were found among both groups of participants, although, in some cases, each group pointed out different factors. Both groups of participants noticed a *disconnect* between prerequisite courses and translation courses. L2 speakers alluded to the *medium of instruction* in previous courses (in some cases, previous language instructors used English mostly) and lack of opportunities to practice their *speaking* skills and to practice *translation*. Heritage speakers in turn mentioned that this lack of transition was mainly due to their lack of *domain-specific knowledge* and a lack of *grammatical competence*, feeling in general less prepared for translation courses than for interpreting courses.

The results from both analyses (quantitative and qualitative) on *language development* also reflect the same overall concerns. Both groups of undergraduate students expect significant proficiency gains in Spanish by the time they finish the program, whereas the heritage group is the only group who expects significant proficiency gains in English. All students reported perceived linguistic gains, sometimes in their overall language skills, and in other cases, they explicitly mentioned specific language skills or subskills (e.g., writing, reading, speaking,

vocabulary, and grammar) Regarding English, some of the heritage speakers expressed an overall improvement of their English proficiency. The following interconnected themes were identified by both groups of participants in relation to *language development*: expectations, opportunities for practicing translation and language skills through more translation practice and language focused courses, articulation between courses, more feedback, and language prerequisites and proficiency tests. Although participants of this study expected to improve their proficiency and reported perceived linguistic gains, not all of them reported successful experiences the programs. Some heritage speakers expressed that not all translation/interpreting instructors addressed language deficiencies in the classroom because they assumed that students should have already mastered those aspects of the language. On a similar note, some L2 speakers reported feelings of frustration due to unrealistic expectations that do not align with their needs. In one of the programs, some students report being constantly reminded by one of the administrators that they should not be in the program due to their language deficiencies. Not all students feel that their language needs are always addressed adequately in some translation and interpreting classrooms across different programs. Similarly, both L2 and heritage students stated that in some courses, they did not get enough scaffolding, enough feedback or not detailed enough from some of the instructors. Some students also point out to a lack of transition within translation courses and within interpreting courses. In several programs, students suggest the need for more practice-oriented courses and language-oriented courses. Finally, in one of the programs, students complained about the repetitive nature of courses, sometimes alluding to a lack of collaboration between professors and to an overlap within translation/interpreting courses.

### 6.2.3. Administrators and Instructional Staff

Chapter 5 outlines the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses carried out with the data gathered from administrators and instructional staff. Findings on *language preparedness* show that instructors perceive a mismatch between the actual proficiency of students entering T&I courses and the ideal perceived proficiency needed to enter these courses. Four main themes connected to *language preparedness* were identified: admission/proficiency requirements, course prerequisites, directionality, and student needs and profiles. In general, administrators and instructors feel that not all students are prepared in graduate and undergraduate programs.

First, *proficiency/admission requirements* are not considered a reliable measure of linguistic proficiency by administrators and instructors in two graduate programs since admission decisions are based on judgement calls and no objective criteria is used and since students' admission decisions are not made collaboratively by faculty members. Only two graduate administrators exhibit a positive attitude towards the selection/admission process of one program and, thus, they do not detect proficiency issues in students admitted into the program.

Second, student preparation in *prerequisite courses* is a decisive factor for administrators and instructors. The findings show that there is no articulation between prerequisite courses and translation and interpreting courses. Some administrators and instructors seem to be aware of the problem and they are trying to establish more advanced language courses as prerequisites (sometimes unsuccessfully due to administrative constraints) and create new courses that facilitate the transition to translation courses. In some cases, this lack of articulation seems to be motivated by expectations that do not correspond to the linguistic preparation of undergraduate students.

Third, regarding *translation directionality* of the programs, most of the administrators and instructors support the bidirectionality of their programs as a means to address the needs of students with different linguistic profiles. Yet, some opposition is found among some faculty members in one of the programs, as they do not consider themselves experts in the other language.

Finally, concerning students' needs and profiles, overall, administrators and instructors are well-aware of the linguistic needs of heritage speakers and L2 speakers. However, no statistics are used to account for the linguistic profile of students in the programs and language profile tools (informal interviews, language profile questionnaires) are not applied consistently among administrators and instructors from different programs.

The results on language development show that in general, administrators and instructors expect their students to improve their language skills in translation and interpreting programs. Furthermore, administrators and instructional staff at the graduate level consider language development as an *implicit* goal, whereas at the undergraduate level, language development is generally a more *explicit* outcome and tends to be more overtly stated as such. A few exceptions to this overall observation are found in those programs where administrators neglect language acquisition or language training or set unrealistic expectations that don't exactly match the actual proficiency of students. Three main themes were identified in connection with language development: attention to language deficiencies, proficiency and outcomes assessment, and program development.

First, concerning *attention to language deficiencies*, the way that instructors address language deficiencies through instruction and feedback varies depending on the instructor, who

use different types of rubrics and feedback (explicit vs. implicit). More explicit attention to language instruction is observed at the introductory undergraduate courses.

Second, regarding *proficiency measurements and outcomes assessment*, at the graduate level, translation programs use different types of outcomes assessment: capstone projects, best translation submission, and a translation exam. At the undergraduate level, some administrators alluded to the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) and Oral Proficiency Interview as the main tools used to measure the proficiency outcomes of those students who major in Spanish; in general, the results from these tests are used for internal purposes of the program. However, two administrators did not mention any proficiency tests after course completion.

Finally, regarding *program development*, undergraduate programs do not have a written plan for development and do not always seem to review/evaluate their components on a regular basis, whereas at the graduate level, all administrators appear to review their program components annually.

### 6.3. General Discussion

After analyzing the practices of five translation programs through the perceptions of their stakeholders on the language preparedness and language development of students in translation/interpreting programs and the collection of objective data from websites, questionnaires and interviews, the main concluding remarks are the following. Overall, it seems that stakeholders at the graduate and undergraduate level feel that there is a mismatch between the level of proficiency expected in the translation/interpreting courses and the actual level of proficiency of students, being much more notable in the case of undergraduate students. Also, all

stakeholders perceive that students' proficiency improved or will be improved across the translation/interpreting courses offered in undergraduate and graduate programs. However, current program practices and beliefs on the part of administrators and instructors do not always contribute to successful language experiences in terms of aligning with their actual proficiency or addressing their language needs throughout the program. Two main converging themes correspond to the overall results and the conclusions drawn from the observed findings in Chapters 3, 4, and 5: proficiency requirements, directionality, and loyalty to professional norms; and program articulation.

#### 6.3.1. Proficiency Requirements, Directionality, and Loyalty to Professional Norms

At the graduate level, stakeholders (especially instructors and students) are critical of the proficiency requirements in place. Sometimes, these decisions are made exclusively by graduate directors individually, without feedback from other faculty members who seemed to be interested in participating in the students' admission process. More importantly, the lack of objective measures in these programs is clearly one of the most influential factors in the attitudes observed among stakeholders towards the proficiency requirements in place. The negative perceptions of stakeholders towards the proficiency requirements also reveal some inconsistencies regarding the application of ACTFL proficiency guidelines. These inconsistencies may lie on the prescriptivist assumption that translator training is not about language acquisition or language training. The fact that a few administrators in one of the programs express a feeling of pride about their admission process (they select the best of the best) and fail to recognize that students still may have language needs, unveils issues of program's identity and reputation. These administrators

consider their graduate program somewhat “superior” by showing their loyalty to “professional norms”: their program is not about language teaching or language acquisition. In fact, these administrators explicitly indicate that language development is not one of the goals of the program, and one administrator even goes further, denying that heritage speakers and L2 speakers have different needs in their program. However, not all administrators and instructors share this perspective, and most acknowledge the need to meet the needs and expectations of students with different linguistic profiles. In this regard, the issue of *directionality* plays an important role because most T&I programs in this study are reported to be bidirectional, precisely to address the needs of students with different linguistic profiles: L2 speakers and heritage speakers. Only one program appears to be unidirectional, which appears to be problematic for students and some faculty members who would like to make it bidirectional in the Spanish concentration. Thus, this program appears to not fully meet the expectations of graduate students in their second year, as the unidirectionality of the program was unknown by the students when they entered the program and, consequently, did not have opportunities to translate into Spanish, as they expected. Furthermore, there exists resistance on the part of some faculty members to make this program bidirectional, possibly due to traditional assumptions on directionality and on the “nativeness” of the translator. The fact that some faculty members do not consider themselves “experts” or “native-speakers” of the language pair is possibly one of the reasons for the reluctance of some professors to make their program or courses bidirectional. Nevertheless, these assumptions have found to be false (Pokorn, 2005, 2009) and based on unsupported hypotheses and unrealistic expectations, as there seems to be no correlation between the quality of the translated text, one’s native language or the directionality. The loyalty of this

program to “professional norms,” once again, gives rise to some inconsistencies, as students report to be told by some faculty members that they should always translate into their native language, but they still translate into English exclusively, even when there are native or heritage speakers of Spanish. In this way, there is a clear conflict between the actual proficiency of students and the intended “professional orientation” of this program. The remaining graduate programs try to find a balance in directionality to meet the expectations of students and address the needs of mixed groups (L2 speakers and heritage speakers) of students.

### 6.3.2. Program Articulation

At the undergraduate level, there exists a *lack of articulation* between prerequisite courses and the introductory courses to translation and interpreting. Most of the time these prerequisite courses are set up by the administration, and many times *enrollment figures* are one of the challenges that administrators from T&I programs face when changing those prerequisites. The main causes of the lack of articulation may be the lack of alignment of prerequisite courses with proficiency guidelines and the unrealistic expectations of some undergraduate T&I degrees. The lack of alignment with proficiency guidelines that exist in prerequisite courses generates feelings of insecurity on the part of undergraduate students, as they start translation/interpreting courses without knowing whether they are prepared or not or where they should be at to be successful in T&I courses or programs. This is an important element that the administration (those in charge of setting prerequisite courses in language departments) should take into consideration, perhaps introducing proficiency tools in the program after completing prerequisite courses (e.g. OPI, WPT, or other objective measures). In some programs, these proficiency tools seem to be in

place but are only used for internal purposes. The second reason for the lack of articulation between courses may lie on the expectations set in undergraduate T&I programs. Considering that these students are still taking intermediate writing and/or writing courses, it seems highly ambitious to prepare professional translators or interpreters in T&I undergraduate degrees. These goals are very unlikely to be achieved by the majority of students. At the same time, these unrealistic expectations are inconsistent with the language proficiency and needs of incoming students' in undergraduate T&I courses and programs. More importantly, these high expectations may have a negative impact on the students' overall experience, their presence, and their continuity in the program. Additionally, the expectations that administrators set for their programs of study will impact the whole curriculum. The findings of this study suggest that attention to language deficiencies is much more explicit in introductory courses to translation, possibly to remediate possible language gaps and try to balance students' proficiencies. Yet, there is no consistency in the instructional approaches followed by instructors within programs, and only two instructors from two different programs mention specifically the importance of including pre-translation tasks (Colina, 2003) as a way to guide the students before immersing in the actual translation practice. Not surprisingly, the responses of students also reflect their preference for more language guided and scaffolded approaches to translation/interpreter training and sometimes, the need for more language teaching embedded in their translation classes or more language courses. Similarly, there is no general consistency among instructors within programs regarding the type of feedback and rubrics that translator/interpreter trainers provide the students with. This lack of consistency also generates a lack of articulation, this time within

the T&I courses, including a lack of horizontal articulation (within same-level courses) and a lack of vertical articulation (across different courses).

#### 6.4. Limitations of the Study

One of the goals of this study was to examine the question of students' linguistic preparedness in undergraduate and graduate T&I courses/programs. That no explicit reference to ACTFL proficiency guidelines was made in the questionnaires addressed to T&I stakeholders or in the focus groups held with students can be considered a limitation of this study. Students and administrators could have provided more explicit information on language proficiency if they had been asked to refer to specific levels on the ACTFL scale. However, using the scale also had its challenges, as this researcher observed through initial contacts that many students and administrators were not familiar with the ACTFL proficiency scales and their alignment with course prerequisites.

Another reason why this researcher decided not to include references to proficiency guidelines in the questionnaires and focus groups is that assessing language proficiency within T&I education is challenging because the student population consists of two distinct groups of students: second language learners and heritage speakers. Some authors argue that instruments used to measure L2 proficiency, such as the ACTFL scales, may not be applicable to heritage speakers as both groups differ in terms of linguistic proficiency patterns (Fairclough, 2012; Valdés, 1995).

Another challenge related to the student population is finding a common definition of language proficiency that works for heritage and second language learners. Whereas Carter and

Nunan (2001) defined proficiency as the ability to use the second language for communicative purposes, the definition of linguistic proficiency in heritage language education is more complex. As stated by Polinsky (2014), there are heritage speakers who might have no proficiency in their heritage language but they might still feel related to this language culturally (thus, in terms of their linguistic competence, there would be no distinctions between second language learners and this type of heritage language learners). On the other hand, there are heritage speakers who have had a personal experience with the heritage language which led to “some real amount of proficiency in that language” (Polinsky, 2014, p. 1). Since the former type of heritage speakers were not part of this study, heritage speakers were treated as a distinct group and their responses were analyzed independently of those from second language learners.

Although it would be helpful to know whether T&I stakeholders agree as to the expected level or perceived level of proficiency established through the same shared guidelines (e.g., ACTFL), the challenges described above suggest that using the guidelines also has its own set of limitations. Additionally, the purpose of this dissertation was not to test the level of language proficiency of students, but rather to examine the perspective of T&I stakeholders regarding the students’ linguistic preparation and possible mismatches between the T&I programmatic/course expectations and the perceived average proficiency of students. One might assume that the concept of “language proficiency” might be different for each participant and that this may pose a limitation or a problem. However, this study proves that whatever language proficiency might mean for instructors, administrators, and students, they still perceive mismatches between the level of proficiency that they consider to be ideal to be in T&I programs and the perceived average level of proficiency of students.

## 6.5. Conclusion

Overall, the practices of translation and/or interpreting programs, including admission procedures, attention to language deficiencies through instruction and feedback, articulation of translation and/or interpreting courses, among other factors, have an impact on the development of language proficiency of the students. It is undeniable that second language learners and heritage language learners working in translation/interpreting tasks, regardless of the direction they translate or interpret into, are still on a developmental path towards their heritage or second language, and they expect to improve their proficiency in their native and second languages. The overall responses from most of the stakeholders (students, administrators, and instructional staff) reflect that students at the undergraduate and graduate level still have language needs that might not be fully addressed if there is no explicit attention to the different stages of acquisition that students are at. Therefore, program directors need to listen more carefully to their students to understand their needs. For this reason, it seems that translator/interpreting courses should be created and sequenced considering the actual level of proficiency of students, choosing texts that match the students' proficiency, using more scaffolded practices in the translation/interpreting curriculum, and reviewing/assessing the course and program learning outcomes so that they are aligned with the students' needs and expectations. T&I administrators should not disregard current practices within the field of second language acquisition and applied linguistics in relation to ongoing evaluation practices in language programs (Norris & Davis, 2015; Norris et al., 2009; among others), as they would help improve the experiences of stakeholders and the overall quality of their educational programs.

This study aimed to make a contribution to the field of applied linguistics by studying the programmatic articulation between prerequisite language courses and translation/interpreting courses in language departments. Also, it aimed to describe current T&I programmatic practices to analyze how the linguistic needs of students are addressed at the undergraduate and graduate level. This study filled a research gap to better understand the perspectives of stakeholders in T&I programs on students' language preparedness and language development through the analysis of objective information (gathered from websites, interviews, and questionnaires) and stakeholders' perceptions (administrators, instructors, and students). However, the use of objective measures before entering T&I courses and after completing the courses and programs would provide more reliable data for future studies on students' actual level of proficiency at the beginning of the program and their linguistic gains. Future research studies on internally-driven evaluations conducted in T&I programs would be useful to gather data on student analytics (Ecke & Ganz, 2014) in order to monitor student enrollment for internal purposes (and compare with data from other programs), identify problems in the program, establish student profiles, and keep track of students' individual achievements throughout the program. By using internal evaluations, T&I programs will better achieve best practices, as they will pay more attention to the needs of students, their profiles, and their expectations through program decisions.

#### 6.6. Recommendations

Based on the observations discussed above, in this section I provide some recommendations on program design and delivery that might be advantageous for T&I. These recommendations are based on best practices in program articulation, program development and evaluation (Barrette &

Paesani, 2005; Davis & McKay, 2018; Lord, 2014; Lord & Isabelli, 2014; Norris & Davis, 2015; Norris et al., 2009; among others).

The inclusion of program articulation and program development practices have been reported to be successful in language programs. Some research studies on program evaluation have focused on different strands such as program and curriculum development (Milleret & Silveira, 2009; Walther, 2009), retention of students (Ecke & Ganz, 2014; Loewensen & Gómez, 2009) and student learning outcomes assessment (Blad & Williams, 2015; Davis, 2015; Grau-Sempere et al., 2009; Houston, 2005; Liskin-Gasparro & Vasseur, 2014; Sasayama, 2015; among others). Many of these research strands are interrelated and should be taken into consideration by all educational programs to ensure quality in terms of program design and delivery.

The need of articulation in foreign language programs has been widely discussed in the last two decades (Barrette & Paesani, 2005; Barrette et al., 2010; Byrnes, 2002; Byrnes & Maxim, 2004; Lord & Isabelli, 2014), especially to avoid the division between traditional language courses and literature and culture courses and to accomplish a “new, modified goal: that of multiliteracies” (Lord & Isabelli, 2014, p. 155). However, despite the many advantages of a literacies/multiliteracies orientation (Kern, 2000; Paesani, Allen & Dupuy, 2016; Sawaffar & Arens, 2005), the division between language courses and literature or content courses still persists in FL programs (Paesani, 2018). As observed in the findings of this study, the “division” or “disconnect” observed between “language” and “literature or content” courses can also be extrapolated to the so-called “language courses” and “T&I courses.” This disconnect between T&I and language courses could be solved by introducing literacies approaches in the foreign

language curriculum. For instance, Pfeiffer and Byrnes (2009) discuss the benefits of implementing a genre-based and task-based curriculum in the 4-year foreign language curriculum of the German department at Georgetown University. These curricular changes contributed to a restructuring of the language major in order to create an integrated and articulated program, following some of the directions of the MLA Report (2007).

The MLA Report (2007) argues for the need to developing translingual and transcultural competence as one of the outcomes of the foreign language major. Integrating translation as a pedagogical tool or as a fifth skill (Colina & Lafford, 2017) would serve this goal and facilitate the articulation across courses within language departments. Students would start practicing communicative translation activities, tasks or projects from early on. Furthermore, as argued by Colina & Lafford (2017), the use of translation in the Spanish language classroom can foster the development of linguistic and textual competence and the motivation of both L2 and heritage learners. Ultimately, introducing translation in the language curriculum (Cook 2010, Carreres & Noriega-Sánchez, 2011; González-Davies, 2004; Colina & Lafford, 2017) would prevent the disconnect that still exists between the fields of language teaching and translation.

Although little work has been conducted concerning program evaluation and articulation in Spanish language programs (Lord & Isabelli, 2014), some results of ongoing evaluation practices observed in other language programs or departments are applicable to Spanish language programs and to T&I programs. For instance, Milleret and Silveira (2009) described the results of an evaluation project conducted in the Portuguese program at the University of New Mexico by means of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data through beginning and end-of-semester surveys and focus groups. In order to address the curricular needs of the

students, these authors examined the extent to which the students received the appropriate information for enrollment in language courses, as well as the students' course expectations and the types of classroom activities and assessments that were most helpful for them. As a result of this evaluation, new courses were created, and valid instruments for beginning-of-semester, mid-semester, and end-of-semester data were established to gather data on students' expectations and their overall satisfaction. The implementation of surveys throughout T&I courses would be useful in order to check the students' expectations in the program and/or courses, as well as their overall satisfaction or even their perception regarding the stated learning outcomes.

Furthermore, establishing mechanisms to review/evaluate different program components (e.g., mission, curriculum, course articulation, and student achievement) on a regular basis would be beneficial for T&I programs. At the curricular and program levels, the implementation of student learning outcomes assessment practices (Norris & Davis, 2015) is useful to ensure the articulation between prerequisite language courses and translation/interpreting courses. Needs analysis is being used in student learning outcomes assessment. For instance, Sasayama's study (2015) was conducted in a Japanese program at a U.S. university. This author explored the needs of students and instructors. Since unclear purposes of the program and a lack of alignment between the students' expectations and the outcomes were observed, an evaluation was carried out to define effective student learning outcomes (SLOs).

Concerning student learning outcomes assessment, T&I programs should define several terms and stages that intervene in this procedure. Learning outcomes are defined by Watanabe and Davis (2009) as "statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity" (p. 5). Ideally, the learning outcomes should encompass the following

characteristics (Dupuy, 2016): they should describe what students will learn, they should be detailed enough so that they can be assessed, they should reflect the departmental mission goals and objectives, they should be representative of the educational value and values of the program, they should be developed as a result of departmental collaboration and consensus, and they should be modified as evidence about student needs and achievements and faculty expectations.

When developing student learning outcomes, there are five steps that Dupuy (2016) suggests that will be beneficial for T&I programs: (1) identifying the program for which you want to develop SLOs; (2) identifying users and audiences for SLOs; (3) identifying sources of information and methods of data gathering; (4) drafting and revising SLO statements; and (5) planning for ongoing SLO review based on student learning evidence and faculty requests for modification. After stating student learning outcomes, it is important to assess them since this will improve student learning and will enable the program to modify and adjust teaching practices on a regular basis by gathering information on the extent to which learners achieved those outcomes. The SLO assessment cycle is made of 4 phases: situating, planning (purposes and uses of assessment), implementing, and utilizing. If adopting the utilization-focused SLOs assessment, this should follow the principles of utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994).

From a general perspective, Paesani and Barrette (2005) suggest four guidelines that might be useful for program administrators in order to improve articulation (vertical and horizontal) in language programs. First, administrators should pay attention to different program components, overall programmatic practices and to the perspectives of all stakeholders. Second, they should ensure that there is alignment between instructional practices, content, assessment

and goals. Third, they should view language as both a process and a product, giving priority to the enhancement of proficiency as the desired program outcome. Fourth, they should foster content knowledge and proficiency skills through curricular and instructional practices. Considering these guidelines, the following recommendations would be useful for T&I programs:

(i) *Availability of mission statements and learning outcomes.* T&I programs will benefit from ensuring that their mission statements, program objectives, program learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes are available on their websites. Making this information available to the public would contribute to improve communication among stakeholders (Lord, 2014), as all would be aware of the philosophy of the program, the program expectations, and the program and course outcomes.

(ii) *Program development and ongoing evaluation practices.* First, T&I programs should have a written plan for regular review and update of the programs' mission statements and learning outcomes (CEA Standards). Second, T&I programs will benefit from administering surveys (at the beginning, mid and end of program) or using other mechanism to assess the curriculum and ensure that it addresses the needs and expectations of students (Milleret and Silveira, 2009). Once T&I programs collect these data from the students, programs should adapt their mission to the expectations and the actual needs of students (Lord, 2014) and align the program's mission with curricula by means of currently assessed student learning outcomes (Sasayama, 2015). Third, T&I programs should select and follow a consistent program teaching methodology or approach (Lange, 1982) to facilitate program articulation; T&I programs should review the articulation and alignment between courses to ensure a smooth curricular flow and to

avoid content overlaps and to ultimately produce the desired course and program outcomes (Byrnes, 2002).

(iii) *Admission requirements and outcomes.* T&I programs can also benefit from more explicit and clear communication of admission requirements, outcomes, and other program components, especially linguistic proficiency requirements and translation directionality. Our research found that the level of proficiency expected to enter translation and interpreting programs is not always described in the website of T&I programs. For this reason, graduate programs that use proficiency guidelines (e.g., ACTFL) as the main reference to measure the level of proficiency of prospective students or to determine the students' admission into the program should explicitly state the desired/expected level of proficiency as part of their *admission requirements*. Along the same lines, T&I programs should communicate to stakeholders the *directionality* in which students will be translating from or to. Thus, students might choose programs that better match their needs and expectations.

(iv) *Objective proficiency measurements.* T&I programs will also benefit from testing language skills in undergraduate and graduate levels. This would provide a more objective assessment of the actual proficiency level of prospective students. The use of more objective proficiency measurements would help identify the students' linguistic needs, differentiate instruction for HL learners and L2 learners (Mellinger and Gasca-Jiménez, 2019), and determine if the program needs to adjust the curriculum so that it is better aligned with the students' actual proficiency level and their linguistic needs. Ultimately, this would help prevent the *lack of articulation* between established "prerequisite" courses and T&I courses. Furthermore, implementing an objective tool to measure the Spanish proficiency of students is one way to

prevent the *feelings of anxiety* and of *unbalanced proficiency requirements* reported by graduate students in our research. The inclusion of proficiency tests would be beneficial for administrators, as these tests can be used as benchmarks and indicators of the strengths and weaknesses of students at the beginning of the program, which will consequently allow administrators to set outcomes that are more realistic, especially at the undergraduate level.

(v) *Expectations and alignment with proficiency guidelines.* Along the same lines, some administrators should reconsider the goals and the expectations they set for their programs so that they are a better fit for the actual linguistic proficiency of the students. For example, preparing professional translators and interpreters in undergraduate degrees is not a very realistic goal. Likewise, the alignment of the outcomes stated in prerequisite courses with proficiency guidelines has been found useful to improve articulation (Klee, Melin, & Soneson, 2014). This is a measure that should be taken in language programs to improve articulation between courses. By aligning course learning outcomes with proficiency guidelines, all T&I stakeholders would have a better understanding of the level of proficiency that students have acquired in prerequisite courses and what administrators and instructors should expect in introductory translation/interpreting courses.

(vi) *Profiling of students with different linguistic backgrounds and differentiated instruction.* Furthermore, T&I programs should establish more precise ways to identify the different learner profiles in the translation and interpreting classroom would help instructors to address the needs of those students and differentiate instruction. This has been recently discussed in the literature (Mellinger & Gasca-Jimenez, 2019) as heritage language learners merge with L2 learners in the translation and/or interpreting courses.

(vii) *Collaboration.* The need for more collaboration among faculty members (program administrators, professors, and instructors) is another aspect that T&I programs should consider (Lord, 2014). This is an essential element for effective curriculum design and delivery to happen. Therefore, they should work together and hold regular meetings to discuss program and curricular issues and design tools to ensure that the program and the courses match the expectations and the needs of students from different linguistic profiles and backgrounds and the stated learning outcomes. In addition, more collaboration between language program directors/coordinators and translation/interpreting directors can facilitate the transition between prerequisite courses and introductory translation courses. Similarly, more collaboration among administrators and instructors within T&I programs would be useful to establish more standardized articulatory practices among courses in terms of their methodology/approach to teach translation and their ways of providing feedback, thus preventing feelings of frustration among students. These collaborative practices will ensure that the program is being delivered efficiently for all students taking the perspectives of all stakeholders into consideration.

## APPENDIX A – SURVEY FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND INSTRUCTORS

### **Survey for instructors in Translation programs**

My name is Julio Fernández Cordero Ciller and I am a PhD candidate in Hispanic Linguistics at the University of Arizona. I am currently writing my dissertation on the role of language proficiency in undergraduate and graduate translation programs across the U.S. This is a short anonymous survey addressed to instructors/coordinators in translation programs. You will be asked to answer a few questions on your experience with students' proficiency in Spanish and English. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Julio F.C. Ciller (ciller@email.arizona.edu). Electronic consent: By carrying on with the questionnaire you indicate that:

- You have read the information above
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You teach in a translation program
- If you do not wish to participate in this survey, please decline participation by exiting the survey.

Please click continue to begin.

Continue (1)

Q1 Please indicate the name of the institution and the program where you teach:

\_\_\_\_\_

Q2 Please indicate your role within the institution:

Program director/coordinator (1)

Instructor (2)

Other: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Q3 Please indicate the course(s) you are currently teaching:

Course 1: (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Course 2: (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Course 3: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

I am not teaching any course(s) this semester (4)

Q4 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what level of SPANISH proficiency is expected of students who enter the Translation program?

0

100

Expected level of proficiency ()



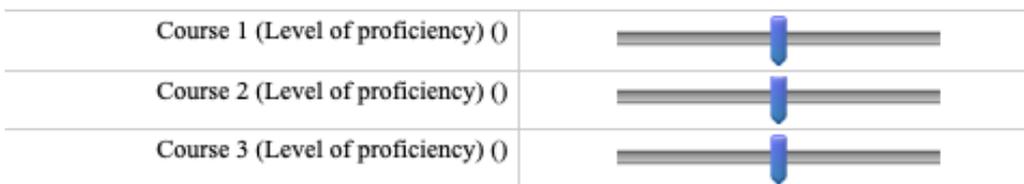
Q5 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what is the actual level of SPANISH proficiency of students who enter the Translation program?

0 100



Q6 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what is the level of SPANISH proficiency of students who take your course(s)?:

0 100



Q7 Do you think your students' SPANISH proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q8 What do you think the reason is? (Please explain your previous answer):

---

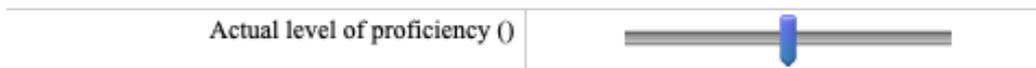
Q9 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what level of ENGLISH proficiency is expected of students who enter the Translation program?

0 100



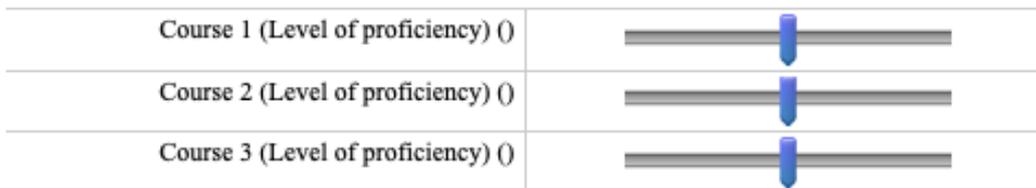
Q10 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what is the actual level of ENGLISH proficiency of students who enter the Translation program?

0 100



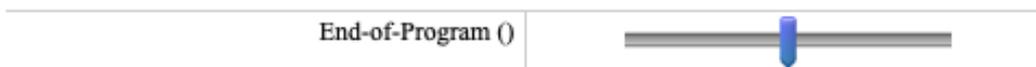
Q11 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what is the level of ENGLISH proficiency of students who take your course(s)?:

0 100



Q12 If 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency, what level of ENGLISH proficiency is expected of students who finish the Translation program?

0 100



-----

Q13

Do you think your students' ENGLISH proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?

Yes (1)

No (2)

-----

Q14

What do you think the reason is? (Please explain your previous answer):

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B – SURVEY FOR STUDENTS

### Survey for students in Translation programs

---

We would like to ask you to help us by answering the following questions concerning your language experience, history and proficiency. This survey is based in part on Birdsong, Gerken and Amengual (2012), which was created with support from the Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning at the University of Texas at Austin to better understand the profiles of bilingual speakers in diverse settings with diverse backgrounds. The current survey consists of 35 short questions and will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer every question and give your answers sincerely, as only this will guarantee the success of the investigation.

\*Birdsong, D., Gertken, L.M., & Amengual, M. Bilingual Language Profile: An Easy-to-Use Instrument to Assess Bilingualism. COERLL, University of Texas at Austin. Web. 20 Jan. 2012. <<https://sites.la.utexas.edu/bilingual/>>.

Thank you very much for your help.

Please click continue to begin.

Continue (1)

**I. Biographical information**

-----  
Q1 Age

\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Q2 Sex

- Male (1)  
 Female (2)

-----  
Q3 Current place of residence: City/State

\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Q4 Current place of residence: Country

\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Q5 Highest level of formal education

▼ Less than high school (1) ... Other (8)

-----  
Q6 Please indicate the name of the institution where you are currently taking translation courses:

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q7 Translation degree in which you are enrolled in:

- Undergraduate certificate (1)
- Graduate certificate (2)
- BA in Spanish-English Translation (3)
- MA in Spanish-English Translation (4)
- Courses (not part of a Translation degree) (5)
- Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Page Break

II. Language Experience

---

Q8 What is the last language course that you took?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q9 Are you currently taking any language course(s)? If so, indicate the name of the course

Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_

No (2)

---

Q10 What language prerequisites did you have to satisfy to enter the Translation program?

Exam (1)

Required language courses (2)

Other (3) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Q11 Do you think you were prepared -in terms of language proficiency- when you started taking courses in the program?

Yes (1)

No (2)

---

Q12 What do you think the reason is for this? (Explain your previous answer)

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Page Break

---

### III. Language History

---

Q13 At what age did you start learning ENGLISH?

▼ Since birth (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q14 At what age did you start learning SPANISH?

▼ Since birth (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q15 At what age did you start to feel comfortable using ENGLISH?

▼ For as long as I can remember (1) ... 20+ (22)

---

Q16 At what age did you start to feel comfortable using SPANISH?

▼ For as long as I can remember (1) ... 20+ (22)

---

Q17 How many years of classes (grammar, history, math, etc.) have you had in ENGLISH (primary school through University)?

▼ 0 (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q18 How many years of classes (grammar, history, math, etc.) have you had in SPANISH (primary school through University)?

▼ 0 (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q19 How many years have you spent in a country/region where ENGLISH is spoken?

▼ 0 (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q20 How many years have you spent in a country/region where SPANISH is spoken?

▼ 0 (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q21 How many years have you spent in a family where ENGLISH is spoken?

▼ 0 (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Q22 How many years have you spent in a family where SPANISH is spoken?

▼ 0 (1) ... 20+ (21)

---

Page Break

---

**IV. Language Proficiency**

---

Q23 Please indicate the translation course(s) you are currently taking:

- Course 1: (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Course 2: (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Course 3: (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Spanish Proficiency**

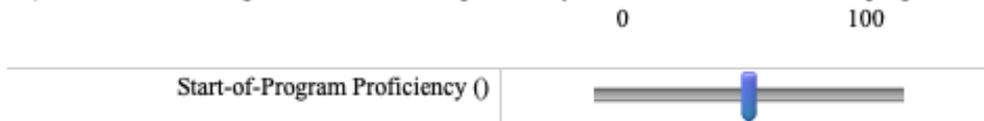
---

Q24 Imagine that 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency.

What level of SPANISH proficiency do you think would be IDEAL to enter the Translation program?



Q25 What is the average level of SPANISH proficiency of students who ENTER the program?



-----  
Q26 What is your CURRENT level of SPANISH proficiency?

0

100

Level of proficiency ()



-----  
Q27 What is the level of SPANISH proficiency that you expect to have after FINISHING the program?

0

100

End-of-Program Proficiency ()



-----  
Q28 Do you think that your SPANISH proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?

Yes (1)

No (2)

-----  
Q29 What do you think the reason is for this? (Explain your previous answer)

\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Page Break \_\_\_\_\_

**English Proficiency**

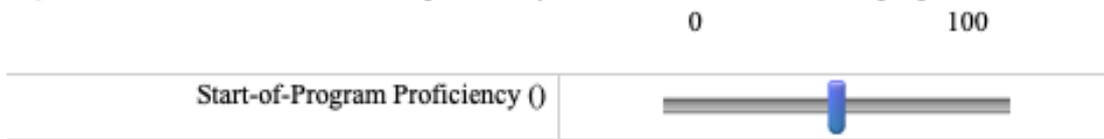
---

Q30 Imagine that 0 is no proficiency and 100 is full native-like proficiency.

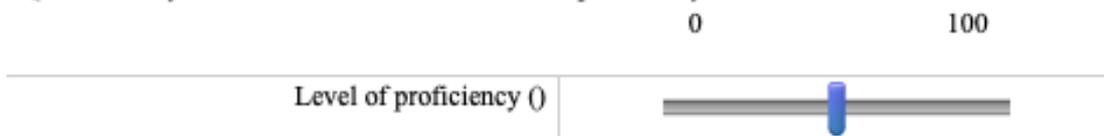
What level of ENGLISH proficiency do you think would be IDEAL to enter the Translation program?



Q31 What is the level of ENGLISH proficiency of students who ENTER the program?

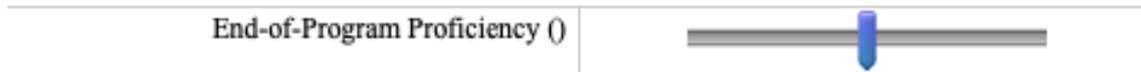


Q32 What is your CURRENT level of ENGLISH proficiency?



Q33 What is the level of ENGLISH proficiency you expect to have after FINISHING the program?

0 100



Q34 Do you think that your ENGLISH proficiency improved or will improve throughout the program?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q35 What do you think the reason is for this? (Explain your previous answer)

---

## APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

### **Interview questions (for program directors)**

1. What is your academic background in relation to teaching translation and/or languages?
2. How long have you been the director of the program?
3. How many years have you been teaching at this institution?
4. Which courses have you taught in the past?
5. Which course(s) are you currently teaching?
6. Can you tell me a little bit about the program? What is the mission of the program? Where is it available? What are the program learning outcomes?
7. How often is the information in the website updated? When was it last updated? Is there a specific timeline to review this information?
8. How many instructors are currently teaching in the program?
9. What are the qualifications to be able to teach in the program? What level of education/training is expected on the part of the instructors?
10. How many students are currently enrolled in the program?
11. What is the percentage of heritage speakers in the program?
12. What is the percentage of second language learners in the program?
13. How are these students identified as such? Are there specific courses in the program that target heritage speakers and second language learners separately?
14. Do you think HL learners and SL learners have different needs? How so?
15. Are there language proficiency requirements for students to enter your program(s)? If so, of what kind?
16. Do the language proficiency requirements correspond to specific guidelines/scales (ACTFL, ILR...)? Which one(s)?
17. Do students have to take any prerequisite language course before taking courses in the program? Do you think that is enough? If not, what would be ideal in your opinion?
18. Do you think that students are prepared to start taking courses in the program - in terms of language proficiency-? How do you collect that information?

19. Have you ever experienced a situation where an instructor complains because a student cannot follow a class or complete assignments successfully due to inadequate Spanish (or English) proficiency? What do you do in this situation?
20. After finishing the program, do students need to demonstrate improved language proficiency? How?
21. Is language development/improvement one of the objectives of the program? Should it be? Do you think this is reflected in the mission of the program? What about the program learning outcomes? and the student learning outcomes?
22. Does the students' language proficiency level impact the way the courses are designed and sequenced? How?
23. Is Spanish /English proficiency reflected in the final assessment of the courses? How so?
24. Does the program have a written plan for development? Does the program review its program components on a regular basis?
25. Have there been any recent changes/developments (in the last two years) in relation to curricular elements, student assessment practices, etc.?
26. Does the program have a mechanism in place to ensure that the curriculum addresses the students' needs? Is there any type of assessment of the learners needs? Do you collect this information? If so, how often?
27. What is the methodology/approach followed in the translation courses of the program?
28. Has the program determined that materials and technologies meet the needs of students and are effective for delivering the curriculum? If so, how?
29. Does the program ensure that instructional materials are clearly related to classroom activities and assignments? If so, how?
30. How does the program ensure that the teachers' qualifications are aligned with their course assignments?
31. Are teachers trained and supervised in the program? If so, how?
32. Is there a process to evaluate the instructors? If so, what is it?
33. What are the primary tools or instruments used to gauge student progress?
34. Regarding assessment of achievement of SLOs to determine progression to the next level or exit from the program, does the program use purchased and/or published instruments to establish course or level achievement?
35. Does the program gather evidence of how well students are achieving the established student learning outcomes? If so, how?

## APPENDIX D – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

### **Interview questions (for instructors)**

1. What is your academic background in relation to teaching translation and languages?
2. How many years have you been teaching at this institution?
3. Which courses have you taught in the past?
4. Which course(s) are you currently teaching?
5. Can you tell me a little bit about the course(s)? description? Learning objectives?
6. What do you expect students to know or be able to do after completing this course?
7. In general, what is your opinion about the level of Spanish proficiency of your students? Are they prepared to take this course?
8. Do students have to meet any language requirement to get into your course? What type of requirement?
9. Would you advocate for the use of an assessment tool to measure the Spanish/English proficiency of students when entering the program? What type of tool? Why?
10. Do you think that your students have a good command of Spanish? How do you know that?  
Do you think that your students have a good command of English?
11. Do you think that students are prepared to take this course -in terms of language proficiency-? How do you know that?
12. Do students have to take any prerequisite course before taking this course? Do you think that is enough? What would be ideal in your opinion?
13. Have you ever experienced a situation where a student cannot follow your class or complete assignments successfully due to their low Spanish (or English) proficiency? What do you do in this situation?
14. Do you teach language in the classroom? If, so how?
15. How many heritage learners are there in your course? and second language learners?
16. How do you identify heritage learners in the classroom?
17. Do you think HL learners and SL learners have different needs? How so? How do you see that in the classroom?
18. What type of materials do you use in the classroom? textbook, own materials, handouts, etc.?
19. Imagine the following situation: you have a student who is experiencing difficulties with a specific grammatical structure in Spanish, how do you address that in the classroom?
20. Are you responsible for designing your class? Your syllabus? learning objectives? student learning outcomes?

21. Imagine the following situation: In a student assignment, you observe that a student makes recurrent mistakes with a specific grammatical structure in Spanish: Does that impact your teaching in the classroom? What type of feedback do you provide the student(s) with?
22. Is language development/improvement one of the objectives of this course?
23. Does the proficiency of the students impact the way you teach and what you teach? How?
24. Is Spanish /English proficiency reflected in the final assessment of your students?
25. Do you use some sort of outcomes assessment in the classroom? if so, what do you use?

## APPENDIX E – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

### **Focus Groups (with students)**

#### I. Introduce myself:

Hello everyone! My name is Julio Fernandez and I am a PhD candidate in Hispanic Linguistics. I would like to thank you in advance for being here today and participating in my dissertation project.

#### II. Purpose of the Focus Group:

We are here today to talk about your language learning experiences in the Translation program. The purpose is to get your perceptions on different components of the program/courses. There are no right or wrong answers and you should just say what you think.

#### III. Information for the students:

I will be taking notes and audio recording the discussion so that I do not miss any important information. Your name and everything you may say during this focus group will remain confidential, in other words, my advisor and I will be the only ones to have access to the written and recorded data and it will not be shared with anyone in your program. When reporting data in my dissertation, an article, or a conference presentation, your names will be substituted with a pseudonym. So feel free to express your opinion freely. This should be a group discussion, so feel free to respond to me and to other members' opinions in the group. You can jump in at any time, but I would prefer if only one person spoke at once. During the discussion, you can agree or disagree with each other, and you can change your mind. The discussion will last approximately 45 minutes. There are several questions we need to cover, so I will move the discussion along in order to make sure that happens.

#### IV. Questions

##### *Background*

1. What is your major? What is your minor?
2. What is the last language course that you took?
3. Are you currently taking any language course?
4. At what age did you start learning Spanish? and English?
5. What language prerequisites did you have to satisfy to enter the program?
6. Do you think you were prepared -in terms of language proficiency -when you started taking courses in the program?

##### *Expectations*

7. When did you start taking course(s) in the translation program?

8. Why did you enroll in the translation program? (Was improving your language proficiency one of the reasons?)
9. After finishing the courses of the translation program, what are your plans? where would you like to work in the future?

*Translation course(s)*

10. Which translation course(s) have you taken in the past?
11. Which translation course(s) are you currently taking?
12. What made you enroll in those courses? What do you expect from these courses?

*Language proficiency*

13. How would you define your current language proficiency in Spanish? and in English?
14. Has your level of language proficiency changed since you entered the program? how?
15. Would you say that these translation courses helped you improve your proficiency in Spanish? and in English? how so?

*Translation and Language Proficiency*

16. Should teachers of translation address language deficiencies? Explicitly? Implicitly? How?
17. Should language proficiency be a prerequisite to the program? Should it be assessed? How should it be assessed?

*Textbook, Activities and Materials*

18. Do you use a textbook in the translation courses? What is good about it? Anything bad about it?
19. Does the textbook help you learn the language? How? Please provide examples
20. Do activities or materials help you learn the language? How?

*Instructor and Feedback*

21. Does the instructor teach you Spanish/English in the classroom? How? Do you think they should?
22. Imagine that you are experiencing difficulties with a specific grammatical structure in Spanish, does your instructor address that in the classroom? How?
23. What type of assignments do you usually complete for the course(s)?
24. What type of feedback do you get from your instructor? Imagine that you make mistakes with the subjunctive in Spanish, how does your instructor inform you of those mistakes? Does he/she use an error correction code? do you get written explanations in the assignments? Is this addressed later in the classroom?
25. Do you think that this type of feedback will help you learn how to translate? Will it help you improve your language proficiency? How?

26. Do you think that your Spanish and English proficiency helped you be successful in the program(s)? How so?

*Overall learning experience*

27. Do you feel your knowledge or lack of knowledge of Spanish/English affects your learning in the program? How?

28. What resources do you use to improve your level of Spanish? English?

29. Are there any specific changes that you might recommend for improving the course(s)? and the program as a whole?

V. Wrap-up

Although you seem to have different language experiences in the program, it seems unanimous that \_\_\_\_\_. Does anyone see it in a different way? Would anyone like to clarify an opinion on this? Is there any other information regarding your language experiences in the translation program that would be useful for me to know?

VI. Closing remark

Thank you very much for sharing your perceptions and experiences with me. Your comments were very useful for me.

## REFERENCES

- Adab, B. (2000). Evaluating translation competence. In C. Schäffner & B. Adab (Eds.), *Developing translation competence* (pp. 215-228). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Alderson, J. C., & Beretta, A. (1992). *Evaluating second language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allen, M. J. (2004). *Assessing academic programs in higher education*. Bolton, MA: Anker.
- Alonso, E. (1997). Evaluation of the oral performance of bilingual Hispanic students by means of the ACTFL guidelines. *Hispania*, 80(2), 328-341.
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (2012). *Proficiency Guidelines*. Retrieved from [www.languageTesting.com/proficiency-scales](http://www.languageTesting.com/proficiency-scales)
- Angelelli, C., & Degueldre, C. (2002). Bridging the gap between language for general purposes and language for work: An intensive Superior-level language/skill course for teachers, translators, and interpreters. In B. Leaver & B. Shekhtman (Eds.), *Developing language proficiency at the professional level* (pp. 77-95). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Angelelli, C. V., & Jacobson, H. E. (2009). *Testing and assessment in translation and interpreting studies: A call for dialogue between research and practice*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bachman, L. F. (1991). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Barrette, C. & Paesani, K. (2005). *Language program articulation: Developing a theoretical foundation*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle.
- Barrette, C., Paesani, K., & Vinall, K. (2010). Toward an integrated curriculum: Maximizing the use of target language literature. *Foreign Language Annals*, 43(2), 216–230.
- Barrette, C. M., & Paesani, K. (2018). Conceptualizing cultural literacy through student learning outcomes assessment. *Foreign Language Annals*, 51, 331-343.
- Beaudrie, S. M. (2009). Spanish receptive bilinguals: Understanding the cultural and linguistic profile of learners from three different generations. *Spanish in Context*, 6(1), 85-104.
- Beaudrie, S., & Ducar, C. (2012). Language placement and beyond: Guidelines for the design and implementation of a computerized Spanish heritage language exam. *Heritage Language Journal*, 9, 77-99.
- Beaudrie, S. (2016). Building a heritage language program: guidelines for a collaborative approach. In S. Beaudrie & M. Fairclough (Eds.), *Innovative approaches in heritage language teaching: from research to practice* (pp. 80-98). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Birdsong, D., Gertken, L. M., & Amengual, M. (2012). Assessing language dominance with the Bilingual Language Profile. Retrieved from <https://sites.la.utexas.edu/bilingual/>
- Blad, A., & Williams, S. (2015). Journey greater than the destination: A department and program perspective on utilization-focused assessment. In J. Norris, Y. Watanabe,

- & J. Davis (Eds.), *Student learning outcomes in college foreign language programs* (pp. 173-197). National Foreign Language Resource Center. University of Hawai'i.
- Bowen, D. (1989). Pendulum swings in language teaching and translation. In P.W. Krawutschke (Ed.), *Translator and interpreter training and foreign language pedagogy* (pp. 26-38). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bowen, M. (1989). Language learning before translator/interpreter training. In P. W. Krawutschke (Ed.), *Translator and interpreter training and foreign language pedagogy* (pp. 51-64). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Braband, C. (2008). Constructive alignment for teaching model-based design for concurrency. *Lecture Notes on Computer Science, 5100*, 1-18.
- Bryfonski, L. (2018). Questionnaires for evaluation. In J. M. Davis & T. McKay (Eds.), *A guide to useful evaluation in language programs* (pp. 47-56). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Byrnes, H. (2002). Language and culture: Shall the twain ever meet in foreign language departments? *ADFL Bulletin 33*(2), 25–32.
- Byrnes, H., & Maxim, H. (2004). Introduction: Creating sites for collegiate advanced foreign language learning. In H. Byrnes & H. Maxim (eds.), *Advanced foreign language learning: A challenge to college programs* (pp. vii–xv). Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle.
- Cabrera, T. (2017) El sector de la traducción y la interpretación en los Estados Unidos. *Informes del Observatorio: Observatorio de la lengua española y las culturas*

- hispánicas en los Estados Unidos*. Instituto Cervantes en Harvard University-FAS.
- Campbell, S. (1998). *Translating into the second language*. London and New York: Longman.
- Cao, D. (1996). A model of translation proficiency, *Target*, 8(2), 325-340.
- Carreira, M. (2014). Teaching heritage language learners: A study of programme profiles, practices and needs. In A. Themistoklis & P. Trifonas (Eds.), *Rethinking heritage language education* (pp. 20-44). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Carreres, A., & Noriega-Sánchez, M. (2011). Translation in language teaching: insights from professional translator training.” *Language Learning Journal*, 39(3), 281-297.
- Carter, R., & Nunan, D. (2001). *Teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions. (2019). Retrieved from <https://cea-accredit.org/about-cea/standards>
- Cheng, Y. S., Horwitz, E. K., & Shallert, D. L. (1999). Language anxiety: Differentiating writing and speaking components. *Language Learning*, 49(3), 417–446.
- Clyne, M., Fernandez, S., Chen, I. & Summo-O’Connell, R. (1997). *Background speakers: Diversity and its management in LOTE programs*. Belconnen: Language Australia.
- Colina, S. (2002), Second language acquisition, language teaching and translation studies. *The Translator* 8(1), 1-24.

- Colina, S. (2003). Towards an empirically-based translation pedagogy. In B. Baer & G. Koby (Eds.), *Beyond the ivory tower: Rethinking translation pedagogy* (pp. 33-59). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Colina, S. (2006). Spanish second language acquisition: Applications to the teaching of professional translation (and interpretation). In R. Salaberry & B. A. Lafford (Eds.), *The art of teaching Spanish: Second language acquisition from research to praxis* (pp. 213-234). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Colina, S. (2015). *Fundamentals of translation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Colina, S., & Angelelli, C. V. (2015a). T&I pedagogy in dialogue with other disciplines. *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 10(1), 1-7.
- Colina, S., & Angelelli, C. V. (2015b). Translation and interpreting pedagogy. In C. Angelelli & B. Baer (Eds.), *Researching Translation and Interpreting* (pp. 108-117). Taylor & Francis.
- Colina, S. & Lafford, B. A. (2017). Translation in Spanish language teaching: The integration of a “fifth skill” in the second language curriculum. *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching*, 4(2), 1-14.
- Cook, G. (2010). *Translation in Language Teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1989). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). Steps in Conducting a Scholarly Mixed Methods Study. *DBER Speaker Series*, 48. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/dberspeakers/48>
- Davis, J. M. (2015). The usefulness of accreditation-mandated outcomes assessment: trends in university foreign language programs. In J. Norris & J. Davis (Eds.), *Student learning outcomes assessment in college foreign language programs* (pp. 1–35). Honolulu, HI: National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Davis, J. M., & McKay, T. H. (2018). *A guide to useful evaluation of language programs*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Davis, J., Norris, J., Malone, M., McKay, T., & Son, Y. (2018). *Useful assessment and evaluation in language education*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Denzin, N. (1970). *The research act in sociology: a theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Dollerup, C. (1994). Systematic feedback in teaching translation. In C. Dollerup & A. Lindegaard (Eds.), *Teaching translation and interpreting 2* (pp. 121-132). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Dupuy, B. (2016). Quality management of the program: developing student learning outcomes (SLOs) [Webinar]. In *PAH/SLAT 574: Foreign Language Program Direction*. Retrieved from <http://learning.beatricedupuy.com/>

- Ecke, P., & Ganz, A. (2014). Student analytics and the longitudinal evaluation of language Programs. In J. Norris & N. Mills (Eds.), *Issues in language program direction: Innovation and accountability in language program evaluation* (pp. 62–82). Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Fairclough, M. (2012). A working model for assessing Spanish heritage language learners' proficiency through a placement exam. *Heritage Language Journal*, 9(1), 121-138.
- Gasca-Jiménez, L. (2017). *La experiencia traductora de estudiantes de español como lengua de herencia: un estudio empírico a través de tres niveles de enseñanza superior* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Houston, Texas, Houston, TX.
- Gironzetti, E., & Belpoliti, F. (2018). Investigación y pedagogía en la enseñanza del español como lengua de herencia (ELH): una metasíntesis cualitativa. *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching* 5(1), 16-34.
- González-Davies, M. (2002). Translation in foreign language learning: sleeping with the enemy? *APAC of News*, 64-74.
- González-Davies, M. (2004). *Multiple voices in the translation classroom*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- González-Davies, M. (2012). The role of translation in other learning contexts: towards acting interculturally. In S. Hubscher-Davidson & M. Borodo (Eds). *Global trends in translator and interpreter training: Mediation and culture* (pp. 161-179). London & New York: Continuum.

- Grau-Sempere, A., Mohn, M. C., & Pieroni, R. (2009). Improving educational effectiveness and promoting internal and external information-sharing through student learning outcomes assessment. In J. M. Norris, J. McE. Davis, C. Sinicrope, & Y. Watanabe (Eds.), *Toward Useful program evaluation in college foreign language education* (pp. 139–162). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Grudens-Schuck, N., Allen, B. L., & Larson, K. (2004). Methodology brief: Focus group fundamentals. *Extension Community and Economic Development Publications*. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1969B.pdf>
- Hague, D., Melby, A., & Zheng, W. (2011). Surveying translation quality assessment: A specification approach. *The Interpreter and translator trainer*, 5(2), 243-267.
- Hertel, T. J., & Dings, A. (2014). The undergraduate Spanish major curriculum: Realities and faculty perceptions. *Foreign Language Annals*, 47(3), 546-568.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132.
- Houston, T. (2005). Outcomes assessment for beginning and intermediate Spanish: One program's process and results. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38(3), 366-376.
- Hubert, M. D. (2017). Teaching translation to foreign-language majors. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *Teaching translation: programs, courses, pedagogies* (pp. 55-62). Routledge.
- Jiménez-Crespo, M. A. (2014). Building from the ground up: on the necessity of using translation competence models in planning and evaluating translation and

- interpreting programs. *Cuadernos de ALDEEU, Special Issue, Translation and Interpreting Training*, 11-42.
- Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1994). *The program evaluation standards: utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kelleher, A. (2010). Who is a heritage language learner? *Heritage Briefs*, 1-3. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Kelly, D. (2005). *A handbook for translator trainers: a guide to reflective practice*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Kern, R. (2000). *Literacy and language teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Kiely, R., & Rea-Dickins, P. (2005). *Program evaluation in language education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kim, A. I., & Davis, J. M. (2018). Questionnaires for evaluation. In J. M. Davis & T. McKay (Eds.), *A guide to useful evaluation in language programs* (pp. 69-84). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Kiraly, D. (1990). A role for communicative competence and the acquisition-learning distinction in translator training. In B. Van Patten and J. Lee (Eds.), *Second language acquisition/foreign language learning* (pp. 207-215). Bristol, PA and Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Kiraly, D. (1995). *Pathways to translation*. Kent: Kent State University Press.
- Kiraly, D. (2000). *A social constructivist approach to translator education*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

- Klee, C., Melin, C., & Soneson, D. (2014). From frameworks to oversight: Components to Improving Foreign Language Program Efficacy. In J. Norris & N. Mills (Eds.), *Issues in language program direction: Innovation and accountability in language program evaluation* (pp. 62–82). Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: an introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.
- Labrum, M. (1991). What everyone should know about translation. *ATA Chronicle*, 20(7): 1, 21-22.
- Lacorte, M., & Suárez-García, J. (Eds.). (2014). Teaching and learning Spanish in the United States in the 21st century. *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching* 1/2 [Special issue].
- Lange, D. L. (1982). The problem of articulation. In T. Higgs (Ed.), *Curriculum, competence, and the foreign language teacher* (pp. 113-137). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.
- Lange, D. L. (1988). Articulation: A resolvable problem? In J. F. Lalande (Ed.), *Shaping the future of foreign language education: FLES, articulation and proficiency* (pp. 11-31).
- Lange, D. L. (1997). Models of articulation: struggles and successes. *ADFL Bulletin*, 28: 31-42.
- Li, D. (2001). Language teaching in translator training. *Babel*, 47(4), 343-354.
- Li, D. (2002). Translator training. What translation students have to say. *Meta*, 47(4), 513-531.

- Li, D. (2007). Translation curriculum and pedagogy: views of administrators of translation services. *Target*, 19(1), 105-133.
- Li, D. (2012). *Curriculum design, needs assessment and translation pedagogy*. Beijing, China: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Liskin-Gasparro, J. (1995). Practical approaches to outcomes assessment: The undergraduate major in foreign languages and literatures. *ADFL Bulletin*, 26(2), 21-27.
- Liskin-Gasparro, J., & Vasseur, R. (2014). Designing an embedded outcomes assessment for Spanish majors: Literary interpretation and analysis. In N. Mills & J. M. Norris (Eds.), *Issues in language program direction: Innovation and accountability in language program evaluation* (pp. 83-110). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Llamas, C., & Watt, D. (2014). Scottish, English, British? Innovations in attitude measurement. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 8(11), 610-617.
- Loewensen, F., & Gómez, R. (2009). Coming to our senses: the realities of program evaluation. In J. Norris, J. Davis, C. Sinicrope, & Y. Watanabe (Eds.), *Toward useful program evaluation in college foreign language education* (pp. 83-96). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Looney, D., & Lusin, N. (2018). Enrollments in languages other than English in United States institutions of higher education, Summer 2016 and Fall 2016: Preliminary report. Modern Language Association of America.

- Lord, G. (2014). *Language program direction: theory and practice*. Upper Saddle River (NJ): Pearson Education.
- Lord, G., & Isabelli-García, C. (2014). Program articulation and management. In M. Lacorte (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of Hispanic applied linguistics* (pp. 150-167). London, UK: Routledge.
- Lowe, H., & Cook, A. (2003). Mind the gap: are students prepared for higher education? *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 27(1), 53-76.
- Lynch, B. K. (1996). *Language program evaluation: theory and practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lynch, B. K. (2000). Evaluating a project-oriented CALL innovation. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 13(4-5), 417-440.
- Lynch, B. K. (2003). *Language assessment and programme evaluation*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Gardner, R. C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning*, 44(2), 283-305.
- Malmkjær, K. (1998). *Translation and language teaching: language teaching and translation*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Malone, M., & Donovan, A. (2014). *The state of applied linguistics in the United States: results of a nationwide survey*. Presentation at the annual conference of the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), Brisbane, Australia.
- Marmaramidou, S. (1996). Directionality in translation processes and practices. *Target*, 8(1), 49-73.

- Martin, C., Swender, E., & Rivera-Martinez, M. (2013). Assessing the oral proficiency of heritage speakers according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines 2012-speaking. *Heritage Language Journal, 10*(2), 73-87.
- McKay, T. H., & Davis, J. M. (2018). Selecting methods and collecting data for evaluation. In J. M. Davis & T. McKay (Eds.), *A guide to useful evaluation in language programs* (pp. 35-46). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Mellinger, C. D. (2017). Translation, interpreting, and language studies: Confluence and divergence. *Hispania, 100*(5), 241-246.
- Mellinger, C. D., & Gasca-Jiménez, L. (2019). Challenges and opportunities for heritage language learners in interpreting courses in the U.S. context. *Revista Signos, 52*: 950-974.
- Méndez Seijas, J., Zalbidea, J., & Vallejos, C. (2018). Questionnaires for evaluation. In J. M. Davis & T. McKay (Eds.), *A guide to useful evaluation in language Programs* (pp. 57-68). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Milleret, M., & Silveira, A. S. (2009). The role of evaluation in curriculum development and growth of the UNM Portuguese program. In J. Norris, J. Davis, C. Sinicrope, & Y. Watanabe (Eds.), *Toward useful program evaluation in college foreign language education* (pp. 57–82). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Modern Language Association (MLA). (2007). Foreign languages and higher education: New structures for a changed world. Retrieved from [http://www.mla.org/pdf/forlang\\_news\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.mla.org/pdf/forlang_news_pdf.pdf)

- Modern Language Association (MLA). (2009). Report to the Teagle Foundation on the undergraduate major in language and literature. Retrieved from [http://www.mla.org/pdf/2008\\_mla\\_whitepaper.pdf](http://www.mla.org/pdf/2008_mla_whitepaper.pdf)
- Neubert, A. (2000). Competence in language, in languages, and in translation. In C. Schäffner & B. Adab (Eds.), *Developing translation competence* (pp. 3-18). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Norris, J. M., Davis, J. McE., Sinicrope, C., & Watanabe, Y. (2009). *Toward useful program evaluation in college foreign language education*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Norris, J. M., & Davis, J. McE. (Eds.). (2015). *Student learning outcomes assessment in college foreign language programs*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Norris, J. M. (2016). Language program evaluation. *Modern Language Journal*, 100(S1), 169-189.
- PACTE. (2008). First results of a translation competence experiment: 'knowledge of translation and 'efficacy of the translation process'. In J. Kearns (Ed.), *Translator and Interpreter Training. Issues, Methods and Debates* (pp. 104-126). London: Continuum.
- Paesani, K., & Barrette, C. M. (2005). The role of the language program director within a three-dimensional model of articulation. In C. M. Barrette and K. Paesani (Eds.), *Language program articulation: Developing a theoretical foundation* (pp. 2-20). Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle.

- Paesani, K., Allen, H. W., & Dupuy, B. (2016). *A multiliteracies framework for collegiate foreign language teaching*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Paesani, K. (2018). Researching literacies and textual thinking in collegiate foreign language programs: Reflections and recommendations. *Foreign Language Annals*, 51, 129-139.
- Pappamihiel, N. E. (2002). English as a second language students and English language anxiety: Issues in the mainstream classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 36(3), 327–355.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation: the new century text* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pfeiffer, P., & Byrnes, H. (2009). Curriculum, learning, and the identity of majors: A case study of program outcomes evaluation. In J. Norris, J. Davis, C. Sinicrope, & Y. Watanabe (Eds.), *Toward useful program evaluation in college foreign language education* (pp. 183-208). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Pierce, S. (2012). Utilization-focused evaluation for program development: investigating the need for teaching experience within the Bachelor of Arts Program in Second Language Studies. *Second Language Studies*, 30(2), 43-107.

- Pokorn, N. K. (2005). *Challenging the traditional axioms*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Pokorn, N. K. (2009). Natives or non-natives? That is the question ...Teachers of translation into Language B. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 3(2), 189–208.
- Polinsky, M. (2014). Heritage languages and their speakers: looking ahead. In M. Fairclough, & S. Beaudrie (Eds.), *Innovative Approaches to Heritage Languages: From Research to Practice*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Pym, A. (2003). Redefining Translation Competence in an Electronic Age. In Defense of a Minimalist Approach. *META*, 48(4), 481-497.
- Rhodes, N., & Pufahl, I. (2014). An overview of Spanish teaching in US schools: national survey results. *Instituto Cervantes at FAS-Harvard University*, 8.
- Richards, J.C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Harlow, England: Longman Group U.K.
- Saito, Y., Horwitz, E. K. & Garza, T. J. (1999). Foreign language reading anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 202–218.
- Sasayama, S. (2015). Formulating effective student learning outcomes through utilization-focused evaluation: A case study of a university Japanese program. In J. Norris, Y. Watanabe & J. Davis (Eds.). *Student learning outcomes in college foreign language programs*. (pp. 97-122). National Foreign Language Resource Center. University of Hawai'i.

- Son, Y. (2017). Toward useful assessment and evaluation of heritage language learning. *Foreign Language Annals, 50*(2), 367-386.
- Swaffar, J., & Arens, K. (2005). *Remapping the foreign language curriculum: An approach through multiple literacies*. New York: Modern Language Association of America.
- Turnbull, M., & Arnett, K. (2002). Teachers' uses of the target and first languages in second and foreign language classrooms. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 22*, 204-218.
- Valdés, G. (1989). Testing bilingual proficiency for specialized occupations: Issues and implications. In B. R. Gifford (Ed.) *Test policy and test performance: Education, language and culture* (pp. 207-229). Boston: Kluwer.
- Valdés, G. (1995). The teaching of minority languages as academic subjects: Pedagogical and theoretical challenges. *The Modern Language Journal, 79*(3), 299-328.
- Valdés, G. (2000a). Introduction. In N. Anderson (Ed.), *AATSP professional development series handbook for teachers K-16: Vol 1. Spanish for native speakers* (pp.1-20). Orlando, FL: Harcourt College Publishers.
- Valdés, G. (2000b). Teaching heritage languages: An introduction for Slavic-language-teaching professionals. In O. Kagan & B. Rifkin (eds.), *Learning and teaching of Slavic languages and cultures: Toward the 21st century* (pp. 375–403). Bloomington, IN: Slavica.
- Valdés, G. (2003). *Expanding definitions of giftedness: the case of young interpreters from immigrant communities*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Van Wyke, B. (2017). An undergraduate certificate in translation studies. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *Teaching Translation: programs, courses and pedagogies*, (pp. 17-24). Routledge.
- Vidal, K., & Jarvis, S. (2018). Effects of English-medium instruction on Spanish students' proficiency and lexical diversity in English. *Language Teaching Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818817945>
- Walther, I. C. (2009). Developing and implementing an evaluation of the foreign language requirement at Duke University. In J. Norris, & J. Davis, C. Sinicrope, Y. Watanabe (Eds.), *Toward useful program evaluation in college foreign language education* (pp. 117-138). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Warner, R. N., & Picard, M. Y. (2013). *Issues in Educational Research*, 21(1), 83-96.
- Watanabe, Y., Norris, J. M., & Gonzalez-Lloret, M. (2009). Identifying and responding to evaluation needs in college foreign language programs. In J. Norris, & J. Davis, C. Sinicrope, Y. Watanabe (Eds.), *Toward useful program evaluation in college foreign language education* (pp. 5-56). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Wilson, J.A. (1988). Foreign language program articulation: Building bridges from elementary to secondary school. ERIC. Digest. ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.
- Windham, S. (2008). Redesigning lower-level curricula for learning outcomes: A case study. *ADFL Bulletin*, 39, 31–35.

- Yan, J. X., Pan, J., & Wang, H. (2018a). Second language writing anxiety and translation: performance in a Hong Kong tertiary translation class. In J. X. Yan, J. Pan, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Research on translator and interpreter training* (pp. 169-190). New Frontiers in Translation Studies. Springer, Singapore.
- Yan, J. X., Pan, J., & Wang, H. (2018b). The interplay between foreign language anxiety, willingness to communicate and other learner factors in tertiary interpreting classrooms. In J. X. Yan, J. Pan, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Research on translator and interpreter training* (pp. 147-167). New Frontiers in Translation Studies. Springer, Singapore.
- Zlatnar Moe, M., Mikolič Južnič, T., & Žigon, T. (2015). I know languages, therefore, I can translate?: a comparison between the translation competence of foreign language and interlingual mediation students. *Translation and Interpreting Studies. The Journal of the American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association*, 10(1), 87-107.