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Spanish Heritage Language Learners: Pedagogical Approaches and Recommendations

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SPANISH HERITAGE LANGUAGE LEARNERS:
PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
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Title: Spanish Heritage Language Learners: Pedagogical Approaches and Recommendations

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This study examines the existing literature dealing with Spanish heritage language learners in the United States to answer the following question: How are the needs of Spanish Heritage Language Learners reflected in the current research on pedagogical approaches and recommendations for heritage language instruction? In addition to presenting a profile of the heritage language learner and the academic challenges facing this group of learners, this study identifies curricular and pedagogical implications for more effectively serving the needs of Spanish Heritage Language Learners in the university setting. Specific ideas that are suggested include knowing the background of HLLs, creating a learning environment where the HLLs' variety of Spanish is respected and recognized, teaching HLLs strategies for acquiring a prestige variety of Spanish, and assessing the linguistic skills of these learners overtime to ensure that they are progressing.