

University of New Mexico

## UNM Digital Repository

---

Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies  
ETDs

Education ETDs

---

Fall 11-11-2019

### Using the linguistic experiences of youth and their families as curriculum: The language box project

Molly A. Perara-Lunde Ms.

*University of New Mexico - Main Campus*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/educ\\_llss\\_etds](https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/educ_llss_etds)



Part of the [Applied Linguistics Commons](#), [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), and the [First and Second Language Acquisition Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Perara-Lunde, Molly A. Ms.. "Using the linguistic experiences of youth and their families as curriculum: The language box project." (2019). [https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/educ\\_llss\\_etds/120](https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/educ_llss_etds/120)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Education ETDs at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies ETDs by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu), [lsloane@salud.unm.edu](mailto:lsloane@salud.unm.edu), [sarahrk@unm.edu](mailto:sarahrk@unm.edu).

Molly Perara-Lunde

*Candidate*

---

Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies

*Department*

---

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

*Approved by the Dissertation Committee:*

Lois Meyer, Chairperson

---

Carlos Lopez Leiva, Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies

---

Kersti Tyson, Teacher Education, Education Leadership and Policy

---

Damián Vergara Wilson, Spanish and Portuguese

---

**USING THE LINGUISTIC EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES AS  
CURRICULUM: THE LANGUAGE BOX PROJECT**

**By**

**MOLLY PERARA-LUNDE**

B.A., Spanish Language & Literature, Western Washington University, 2009

B.A., Linguistics, Western Washington University, 2009

Master's in Teaching, Western Washington University, 2014

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy  
Educational Linguistics**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**December, 2019**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Anna and her students for allowing me to learn from and with them over the course of my time spent at East Mesa Academy. I also wish to thank the administration and Governing Council at East Mesa for giving me permission to carry out this research project at the school. Beyond granting me permission to enter the school and work with students, the teachers, office staff, and students all welcomed me into the school community. Thank you, East Mesa community, for your kindness and openness.

Thank you to Dr. Lois Meyer, for her guidance over the years as my doctoral advisor. The curriculum studied in this dissertation was very directly influenced by her own work, and I feel so grateful for her enthusiasm and generosity in allowing me to use her work.

Thank you to the rest of my committee members- Dr. Kersti Tyson, Dr. Damián Vergara Wilson, and Dr. Carlos Lopez Leiva. I feel honored to have worked with each of you and appreciate your support.

Thank you to my family and friends who were with me along the doctoral journey. Thank you especially to my parents, John and Jane Perara, and my aunt, Eve Perara, for spending time with my child and making it possible for me to write this dissertation. Thank you, Frankie and Seth, for your love and patience.



**USING THE LINGUSITIC EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES  
AS CURRICULUM: THE LANGUAGE BOX PROJECT**

**By**

**Molly Perara-Lunde**

B.A., Spanish Language & Literature, Western Washington University, 2009

B.A., Linguistics, Western Washington University, 2009

Master's in Teaching., Woodring College of Education, Western Washington University,  
2014

Ph.D., University of New Mexico, Educational Linguistics, 2019

**Abstract**

This qualitative curricular case study investigated the implementation of a project called the Language Box in a seventh grade Humanities classroom in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I worked with the classroom teacher to design the Language Box project, which focused on the language use practices of the students and their families. We designed the project with the goal of addressing issues of home language loss, bilingualism, and English language acquisition. The students in the classroom were almost exclusively Hispanic, many came from low income families and some were undocumented. Each student acted as a researcher, investigating the language use practices in their homes and at school, and wrote a final project in which they analyzed how language use practices were changing across generations in their families. As a researcher, I had two goals. First, I was interested in the design and implementation of the Language Box curriculum. I sought to understand how the project could be transformative for bilingual adolescent students in New Mexico, as we hoped to raise consciousness about the effects of home language loss. Secondly, I wanted to understand how students perceived their opportunities to develop bilingualism within the context of their school experiences and family histories. I use culturally sustaining pedagogy

(Paris, 2012) and sociocultural-historical theory (Rogoff, 2003), along with Norton's (2013) concept of investment as theoretical guides to analyze the data. My analysis reveals that the project was indeed transformative for some students, who reported their desires to reverse home language loss, their increased appreciation for linguistic diversity, and the realization of the integral role that they were playing in developing bilingualism with and for their families, thereby improving their opportunities of success in the future. However, I also found that though bilingualism was highly valued among the families and within the school community, not all students had equal opportunity to develop bilingual language skills. There were significant social barriers, especially in the case of two students, who refrained from using Spanish with friends and family members. Analyzing students' perspectives sheds light on the realities of bilingual language development for this group of young adolescents and can help researchers and teachers understand how to best nurture bilingualism in other classrooms.

*Keywords:* Culturally sustaining pedagogy, bilingual language development, bilingual education, heritage language maintenance, sociocultural historical theory, investment

## Table of Contents

|  |      |
|--|------|
| KEY TERMS.....   | VIII |
| Bilingual.....   | viii |
| Emergent Bilingual (EB) versus English Language Learner (ELL) .....                    | viii |
| Spanish as a heritage language.....  | ix   |
| Curriculum .....   | ix   |
| PROLOGUE.....  | XI   |
| INTRODUCTION .....   | 1    |
| WHY THIS RESEARCH MATTERS .....  | 7    |
| SOCIOCULTURAL-HISTORICAL THEORY .....  | 10   |
| INVESTMENT .....   | 15   |
| ASSET PEDAGOGIES: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY (CSP) ..... | 18   |
| OTHER IMPORTANT CONCEPTS .....   | 25   |
| Minoritized languages in the United States .....                                       | 25   |
| Spanish in the United States .....   | 29   |
| The case of New Mexico: Historical context.....  | 30   |
| Language development at home.....  | 34   |
| Language development at school.....  | 37   |
| METHODOLOGY.....   | 41   |
| METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.....  | 41   |
| CURRICULAR CASE STUDY .....  | 44   |
| TEACHER-RESEARCHER TEAM.....   | 46   |
| Friendship as positionality .....  | 50   |
| EAST MESA ACADEMY (EMA) .....  | 52   |
| Anna’s classroom .....   | 55   |
| National politics at the time of the study.....  | 57   |
| PILOT STUDY.....   | 59   |
| PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION.....   | 61   |
| Researcher as outsider .....   | 63   |
| RECRUITMENT OF 7 <sup>TH</sup> GRADER PARTICIPANTS.....                                | 64   |
| METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS .....  | 68   |
| Deductive coding.....  | 73   |
| Inductive coding.....  | 74   |
| ANALYZING STUDENT PERSPECTIVES .....   | 76   |
| TRUSTWORTHINESS.....   | 77   |
| CHAPTER 4.....   | 80   |
| ANALYSIS PART I: ANALYZING PEDAGOGY.....   | 80   |
| THE MACKEY BOXES .....   | 81   |
| HOW WE DESIGNED THE LANGUAGE BOX PROJECT: THE PILOT STUDY.....                         | 87   |
| Revisions for fall 2017 .....  | 92   |
| LANGUAGE BOX ACTIVITIES .....  | 96   |
| PEDAGOGICAL GOALS AND TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING .....                                    | 141  |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| CHAPTER 5 .....  | 148 |
| ANALYSIS PART II: ANALYZING STUDENT PERSPECTIVES .....                             | 148 |
| PERSPECTIVES ON SPANISH LANGUAGE LOSS: ANDRÉS, XENA, NADINE, AND NICOLE.....       | 151 |
| PERSPECTIVES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: ERNESTO, ADÁN, HUGO, AND DAVID ..... | 170 |
| CHAPTER 6 .....  | 185 |
| CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS .....   | 185 |
| SUSTAINING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM .....                             | 185 |
| THE COMMON CORE .....  | 188 |
| REALITIES AND POSSIBILITIES OF BILINGUAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT .....                | 191 |
| PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH.....                                 | 197 |
| LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS.....   | 199 |
| RESEARCHER REFLECTION .....  | 201 |
| APPENDICES .....   | 203 |
| APPENDIX A .....   | 204 |
| APPENDIX B.....  | 205 |
| APPENDIX C.....  | 207 |
| APPENDIX D .....   | 226 |
| APPENDIX E.....  | 236 |
| REFERENCES .....   | 262 |

## **Key terms**

### **Bilingual**

I characterize the students in this study as bilingual. Virtually all of the students at the school resided in the community of East Mesa, an area well known as a bilingual space, and the students and classroom teacher, Anna, all talked about the East Mesa Academy as a bilingual school where students were learning English and Spanish. I use the term ‘bilingual’ with the understanding that bilingualism is dynamic and will look very different over the course of an individual’s life (Valdés, 2000). Some of the students in the study were Spanish dominant while others were English dominant. There were some students who told me that they felt equally comfortable and confident in English and Spanish. All of them were developing linguistically and cognitively in the context of their school, families, and community. In Chapter Three I introduce thirteen student participants and describe their specific linguistic proficiency in more detail and use the students’ own characterizations of their linguistic abilities.

### **Emergent Bilingual (EB) versus English Language Learner (ELL)**

I use the term emergent bilingual (EB) to refer to students who are otherwise referred to as English language learners (ELL) or limited English proficient (LEP). García (2009) explains that the latter two terms are problematic because they imply that the only noteworthy characteristic about a child is their proficiency (or rather, lack of proficiency) in English rather than their potential as a bilingual. Characterizing students as emergent bilinguals is a way to highlight their strengths by acknowledging that the home language is a resource that affords them the opportunity to benefit from bilingualism cognitively, socially and academically. It also implies that bilingualism is something that develops over time rather than a static characteristic.

### **Spanish as a heritage language**

There were three students who participated in this study who identified themselves and/or their parents as Hispanic New Mexicans, meaning their families had resided in New Mexico for many generations (in contrast to families who had recently immigrated from Mexico or other Spanish-speaking countries). Each of these three students reported that Spanish had been lost across generations in their family and that their parents did not speak the language. This is not uncommon in the state of New Mexico (MacGregor-Mendoza, 2010; Vergara Wilson, 2006). Consequently, these three students were hesitant to affirm any kind of proficiency in Spanish, describing themselves as able to understand Spanish but unable to speak it. One student was even hesitant to assert an identity as an Hispanic person. In this dissertation, I use the term heritage language to describe the familial, cultural, and historical connection to the Spanish language of these individuals (Fishman, 2001), and describe these three students as heritage language learners.

### **Curriculum**

Many scholars in the field of education are critical of standardized curricula because of the way it marginalizes, or simply ignores, diverse perspectives and experiences. They conceptualize curriculum as something much more than textbooks, standards, or state assessments. Joseph (2011) introduces her idea of curriculum as a transformative *process*:

For curriculum to be understood as process for transforming educational aims and practices, it must be conceptualized as an undertaking that encompasses inquiry and introspection. Therefore, the concept of curriculum should include in-depth examination of practices, interactions, values, and visions, as well as ‘inward journey’ of personal

reflection. It is ‘the purpose of curriculum... to engage the imagination’ (Doll, 2000, p. xi). (Joseph, 2011, p. 1)

Following Joseph, I conceptualize curriculum as a process of examination and reflection on practice. Though this dissertation focuses on the concrete development of a specific project, I include in my description of the project the theories, values, and beliefs that went into its design, its limitations, as well as the way it fits into the everyday pedagogy of the teacher’s classroom, which importantly includes student participation. I also add to Joseph’s definition that students and families are fruitful sources for curricular innovation that is aimed at engaging and honoring diverse perspectives (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017). This dissertation is a curricular case study, but it is important to clarify that the *curriculum* that is the focus of this study is not just the materials presented. It encompasses the pedagogical process of designing and reflecting on the project, the lives of the students, families, and teacher involved, and the way the curricular project was manifest in the classroom. This includes the conversations and insights of the students, as well as the practice of the teacher (Joseph, 2011; Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017).

## Prologue

*Students are reading silently after writing down their responses to the warm up questions: 1) What languages do you know? Why do you know these languages? 2) What languages do you want to learn? And, 3) What questions do you have about language? Anna (the classroom teacher) moves to the front of the room and breaks the silence by asking students in a gentle, low voice to put away their silent reading materials. She quickly, but carefully, reviews the information written on the board, beginning with the date, the daily agenda, and ending with the homework assignment. Then she asks students to share their responses to the warm-up questions with a partner. Students follow her instructions, and after a couple minutes she brings the whole class together for a group discussion, calling on individual students to share what they wrote by drawing names out of a can. Anna asks students to respond to the first question, "What languages do you know? Why do you know these languages?" She calls on Xena, who explains, "I speak English and I understand Spanish because that's what I was taught and because I went to a bilingual school in elementary." A few other students share their answers and Anna thanks them for sharing. She moves on to the second question, "What languages do you want to learn?" Nadine's name is drawn from the can and she says, "I want to learn Spanish and French, 'cuz Spanish, well I live in New Mexico, and French 'cuz it's dope." Other students comment they'd like to learn German, Japanese, a "Native" language, and others. Anna moves on to the last question, which is, "What questions do you have about language?" She calls on Jennifer, who asks, "When people are born, how do you get your language? Like your parents could be Mexican, but they teach you to speak*



*English. Like the parents only speak Spanish, but the kids only speak English. Why is that?" This question really hits the nail on the head. This is what this project is all about- how language use changes across generations. Nadine raises her hand and asks, "Why are languages mixed? Like literally, if you speak Italian and Spanish, they sound similar but they're different, so why is that?" Another student asks, "Why don't we all just speak one language?", and Jennifer quickly adds, "Or why don't everyone just speak two languages?" Students also ask questions about the influence of immigration on language, where languages come from, how they began, and more. Anna concludes this conversation by telling the class: "You just shared about the languages you know, and which you want to know. Those are kind of personal questions, so thank you for being brave and sharing your answers." (Field Notes, 10/16/17)*

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The excerpt above is from my first day observing a project called the “Language Box” in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Anna, the classroom teacher, and I worked together to develop the Language Box project, which was directly inspired by our own experiences in a graduate class at the University of New Mexico. During the Language Box project, Anna’s students researched language use practices in their homes, community, and school. They were asked to interview older family members about their language use as young adolescents, and then analyze the way that language use practices were changing over time in their families. They presented their final projects at a community exhibition, where they shared their research findings with their families, teachers, and peers. The purpose of the project was to heighten awareness of Spanish language loss in the school community, with the goal of encouraging families and students to continue the use of Spanish. We necessarily expanded the curriculum to also investigate cases of bilingualism and English language acquisition, according to the experiences of students in the class. The students in Anna’s class were almost exclusively Hispanic, and many of them were first- or second- generation Mexican immigrants. The school had a high number of emergent bilingual (EB) students, as well as many undocumented families. There was a small percentage of students who were from Hispanic New Mexican families- those who had resided in the state for generations and had strong cultural and familial ties to the Spanish language, some of whom were actively revitalizing the Spanish language in their families. Themes of immigration and documentation, heritage, identity, race, and schooling all surfaced in the students’ dialogue and writing as they investigated language use practices in their own families. The stories that students told, of Spanish loss, bilingualism, Spanish

revitalization, and English acquisition, highlight the complex social and cultural realities of acquiring and sustaining bilingualism in the United States.

As Anna and I worked together to design the Language Box project over two years, we developed a shared understanding of what the goals of this project were. Most importantly, we wished to confront the dominant pattern of language loss so prevalent in U.S. society. Windschitl & Joseph (2011) describe confrontation not as an “arbitrary” or purely emotional response; rather, it is “reasoned action taken as a result of deep reflection” (p. 221). Our journey in developing the Language Box project represents this process; reflecting on what we learned as graduate students, as well as what Anna knew about her students and their families, we thoughtfully designed a unit that focused on the language use practices of the students in the classroom. We understood (and still do understand) that language loss doesn’t just “happen.” There are social, economic, political, historical, and cultural influences that impact the maintenance or loss of languages. We also recognize that as teachers and researchers, we are complicit in this process if we do nothing to address it in our own classrooms and communities. Anna describes her rationale to implement a project focused on cross-generational language use with her particular student population below:

*The dominant language will always prevail, no matter what you do. So, when these kids that I teach, when their families move to the United States, no matter what, they’re going to learn English. It’s going to happen. But they might be losing their Spanish. When they have this true, really strong connection to Mexican culture, which is just so beautiful, and they have that strong identity, I just so badly want them to maintain that, and to learn English, too, and learn a different culture, too. They can be biliterate, which*

*is amazing. I don't want them to lose one. When I see my students, they are right at the cusp. They are able to change what their future family members will know and learn, what their traditions will be. I just so badly want them to realize: "You need to be responding to your mom in Spanish. You have lots of other people you can speak English with, but just keep using Spanish."* (Anna, Interview, 10/03/16)

Here, Anna connects students' present language use practices directly to their future opportunities to be biliterate and to sustain their family's culture and language in the future. She also speaks about their agency, and the ability that they have to impact what future members of their family will experience.

The Language Box project, and the personal and family experiences with language told by students as a result of their participation in the project, are the dual subjects of this dissertation study. The study had two goals. First, I investigated the case of this curriculum implementation with the broader goal of adding to what is known about culturally sustaining teaching practices. More examples are needed of successful teaching of linguistically and culturally minoritized students<sup>1</sup>, especially as they represent an increasing majority in public schools (Paris & Alim, 2017; Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017). Anna's creative use of the linguistic experiences of her students and their families can serve as one such example. My second goal was to explore and analyze the linguistic experiences of the adolescent New Mexican students in Anna's classroom, told from their point of view, in order to understand

---

<sup>1</sup> Following Meyer (2007), I adopt McCarty's use of the term "minoritized." McCarty explains: "As a characterization of a people, 'minority' is stigmatizing and often numerically inaccurate. Navajos living within the Navajo Nation are, in fact, the numerical majority. 'Minoritized' more accurately conveys the power relations and processes by which certain groups are socially, economically, and politically marginalized within the larger society. This term also implies human agency." (McCarty (2002), as cited by Meyer, 2007, 22).

their perceived opportunities to develop bilingualism within the context of their school experiences and family histories. Gutiérrez & Rogoff (2003) suggest that in order to truly understand how to best teach minoritized students, teachers and researchers must examine students' short and long-term histories, seeking to understand how each individual has developed specific cultural practices within their communities. Following their lead, I have taken seriously participants' historical, familial and cultural context when analyzing their experiences. My analysis revealed that though bilingualism was highly valued among the families and within the school community, not all students had equal opportunity to develop bilingual language skills. There were significant social barriers, especially in the case of two students, who refrained from using Spanish with friends and family members. I use Norton's (2013) concept of investment to explain these students' experiences and provide implications for other teachers and researchers concerned with promoting and nurturing bilingual language development in the classroom.

Qualitative research is not generalizable, but it is transferrable (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016), and what I learned from Anna's classroom can be insightful for other teachers, students and classrooms in other contexts. Though individual experience is unique, the experiences of the 7<sup>th</sup> graders in this study offer researchers and teachers insight into the broader social, linguistic, and cultural realities of adolescent bilingual students in the United States. I address my two research goals by asking the following research questions:

1. What is the Language Box project, and what is the process of developing and implementing it?
2. How can the Language Box project be transformative for adolescent bilingual New Mexican students?

3. How do students analyze the impact of bilingualism, language loss, and language acquisition in their families?
4. How do students perceive their opportunities to develop bilingualism at home and at school?

### **Organization of the dissertation**

One of the most challenging aspects of writing this dissertation was wrapping my head around the dual focus of the project. I was interested in the development and results of the Language Box curricular innovation, but I was also interested in what the curriculum revealed about who Anna's students were - their beliefs, values, experiences and histories pertaining to language. At some point, I wanted to describe the curriculum as my methodology, my way of getting to know the students and their stories. I thought I would write a description of the curriculum as a methodological tool, but because I was also interested in analyzing the curriculum itself, this did not work. I ended up deciding to write two separate analysis chapters, one pedagogical analysis of the project as innovative curriculum, and one analysis of students' perspectives on language use that the curriculum revealed. The separation of the two analyses is not a clean break, nor is it meant to imply that these two aspects of the dissertation were two completely different projects. Each of them was influenced by the other and each contains pieces of the other. I learned about students by listening in on class conversations and asking them questions before or after class. With their permission, I read what they wrote down throughout the project and interviewed them at the end of the unit. My observations all happened during their participation in Language Box activities. The curriculum served as a window into their lives at home and at school, their beliefs and values, and their perceptions of what

role English and Spanish were playing in their social interactions. The only method of data collection extraneous to activities embedded in the curriculum was individual interviews conducted with thirteen student participants.

As the person writing it all down, I found myself playing multiple roles, often at the same time. While I was clearly an outside researcher in Anna's school where I had no previous involvement, I was also helping Anna design the Language Box project, and I was therefore a curriculum developer. I would meet with her, and sometimes with the other Humanities teacher, to brainstorm, plan lessons, look for resources, or reflect on how the project was going. During the dissertation study, I acted as an instructional assistant in Anna's class, and students- whether they were study participants or not - had my help when they asked. I even co-taught one of the lessons, and Anna would refer to me from time to time when giving instruction, asking if I had anything to add to what she had said. When I wasn't working with students, I was observing Anna's instruction, writing field notes and reflections, and debriefing with Anna after class. Over time, Anna and I became friends who socialized outside of our work time. In other words, I was friend, researcher, curriculum developer, and instructional assistant, and I was always moving in and out of these roles when I visited the school. The two analysis chapters also helped me to untangle the many roles I took on and helped organize my thoughts about everything I saw and heard in the classroom.

The dissertation chapters are organized as follows. Chapter two lays out the theoretical frameworks I employ as a researcher. Anna, too, was familiar with the theoretical concepts I employ, as she had studied them in graduate classes with me. These frameworks, therefore, impacted the way Anna and I designed the unit. We

especially relied on Rogoff's (2003) concept of cultural communities to frame Anna's students as active participants in their own language community. Chapter two also discusses other important concepts relevant to the study, such as language development at home and school, minoritized languages (including Spanish) in the United States, the historical case of New Mexico, and Norton's (2013) concept of investment, which I found to be important in explaining some of the findings of the study. Chapter three contains the methodological framework. Chapter four contains Analysis Part One, that is, the pedagogical analysis of the project. My voice in chapter four is as curriculum developer, and I answer the first two research questions. Chapter five contains Analysis Part Two, which examines eight students' perspectives on their personal and familial language use practices. This chapter highlights my role as researcher, and I answer the second two research questions. Chapter six offers a conclusion to the study and pedagogical implications.

### **Why this research matters**

*The largest silenced group is millions of American school children who do not speak English, or Standard English. (Santa Ana, 2004, p. 2)*

The stories, histories, and ways of knowing of culturally and linguistically minoritized students are not often represented in the mainstream curriculum, nor are the skills that they bring to school valued in academic classroom learning (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017). Researchers have affirmed that incorporating minoritized students' experiences and perspectives into the curriculum is beneficial academically and socially (Cammarota, 2007; Choi, 2013; Gay, 2000; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 1999; Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2017; Valenzuela, 1999). Culturally sustaining pedagogy



(CSP) is an approach to teaching that has as its goal “to perpetuate and foster- to sustain- linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation” (Paris & Alim, 2017, p.1). Adolescence is often a time when individuals make choices about their language use, abandoning the home language if it is seen as socially stigmatized (Cho & Krashen, 1998; Tse, 2000; 2001), or continuing to develop their home language if support is available to do so in the home, school, and community (Paradis, Genesee & Crago, 2011). During adolescence, then, there is opportunity to discuss issues such as language and culture, as young students are just beginning to deepen their awareness of the roles these play in their social experiences and to form their identities in impactful ways (Mahn, 2008). Pedagogical approaches that capitalize on investigating and validating the home language and culture can help students to develop positive identities during this time of new discovery and deepening understanding (Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee, 2017).

It is especially poignant in the present culture of high stakes testing to investigate how teachers creatively work to meet the needs of their students by designing and implementing curricula they deem appropriate and relevant to their students’ lives (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017). Case study examples, such as this one, can be useful for teacher training programs that wish to provide examples of culturally sustaining pedagogy for prospective teachers (Gay, 2002; Morrison, Robbins & Rose, 2008). Furthermore, there is little qualitative work that explores the complex histories, lives, experiences, and realities of culturally and linguistically minoritized students (Potowski & Rothman, 2011). The United States Census Bureau reported that 20% of individuals over the age of five spoke a language other than English in their home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015), demonstrating that the number of emergent bilingual children in K-12 continues to grow (National Center for Educational

Statistics, 2016). Teachers and researchers need to continually investigate the experiences of this growing population- in the classroom, as well as in their homes and communities (González et al., 2005; Sleeter, 2012) - in order to ensure that schools are offering meaningful educational experiences for all students.

The most significant impact of this study took place in Anna's classroom, as students benefited from participating in the project. Our initial goal in developing this curriculum was to talk about language loss and maintenance critically in the classroom, with the hope of raising awareness of issues of language loss, and to talk with students about how to address these problems. At the end of the project, Nicole, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student of Anna's, wrote as a part of her final project (note that I did not change grammar or spelling of students' writing):

*Spanish is getting lost in my family by us speaking more English than before...*

*Therefore I really want my family to gain that Spanish back. In the future I want my family to continue speaking Spanish. I also want my children in the future to know Spanish perfectly as well as English but I don't want them to lose a language like my family has. I would really like my language exposure to change by me being exposed to more Spanish. (Nicole, Final Project)*

Anna and I felt that our purpose in implementing the project was achieved when we observed students like Nicole writing about reversing home language loss in their families.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Theoretical frameworks and other important concepts**

In this dissertation I investigate the case of a curriculum implementation in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom and the experiences of students and their families who were the focus of the curriculum. I use culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012) to analyze the pedagogical aspect of this project and rely on sociocultural-historical theory (Rogoff, 2003) to conceptualize the students, their families, and the important role their cultural and historical context plays in their perspectives on the development of bilingualism in their families. In this chapter I explain my own understanding of these theoretical concepts, and most importantly, how they apply to the specific context of Anna's classroom and students. The data analysis also led me to include a third analytical tool, Norton's (2013) concept of investment, which I use to explain students' perceived opportunities to develop bilingual skills. Also included in this chapter is a discussion of other important concepts. I discuss minoritized languages in the United States and Spanish in the U.S. specifically. I give an historical account of schooling and language in New Mexico, which is a special case unlike other regions of the country. And lastly, I discuss language development at home and school.

#### **Sociocultural-historical theory**

Sociocultural-historical theory finds its roots in the work of Lev Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist whose theory of development relied on the interplay of individual, social, cultural and historical contexts to understand how children learn to participate in their homes, schools and communities (Rogoff, 2003). Learning for socioculturalists is a necessarily social experience. These theorists conceptualize culture as practiced and lived- not fixed. It is present in the everyday interactions and activities of individuals and communities. It is not

something an individual “has” or “does not have.” Rogoff (2003) describes culture not as “an entity that *influences* individuals. Instead, people contribute to the creation of cultural processes and cultural processes contribute to the creation of people. Thus, individual and cultural processes are *mutually constituting* rather than defined separately from each other” (p. 51). Across generations, as individuals participate in their communities, they contribute, as Rogoff describes, to the creation of culture, just as the cultures of their communities contribute to an individual’s development.

When applied to the concept of cross-generational language maintenance and loss, sociocultural-historical theory problematizes conceptions of language as an entity passed down by older generations to accepting younger generations. Rather, language maintenance viewed through the lens of sociocultural-historical theory would depend on the active participation of both older and younger generations. Individuals are not viewed as “carriers” of a cultural trait (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 19), but rather as agents in the dynamic process of continuing (or discontinuing) the use of language in daily interactions. Both older and younger generations are responsible for continual use and maintenance of the home language, even while language use will change over time as each new generation carves out a stake in new linguistic territory, improvising and innovating the linguistic tools they are handed down by those before them to meet their actual communicative and social needs. This concept is illustrated clearly in the bilingual’s ability to codeswitch, which is now understood by linguists as a sophisticated skill (Carvalho, 2012). In her discussion of the sociocultural nature of heritage language development, He (2010) asserts that

...people are not only passive cultural transmitters but also conscious, reflexive agents in the heritage enterprise itself. HL [heritage language] is not static but dynamic; it is

constantly undergoing transformation by its learners and users, so that at the same time it serves as a resource for the transformation of learner identities, it is also transformed itself as a result of learners' and users' language ideologies and practices (p. 77)

He critiques correlational studies that treat ethnic identity, language proficiency, attitudes, and motivation as static character traits associated with the home or heritage language. The majority of research on language acquisition and development, especially in the field of heritage languages, has employed methods that quantify variables associated with the home or heritage language, and He believes that this misleads us to understand how these variables impact the home/heritage language.

I first learned about Rogoff's (2003) sociocultural-historical theory in Dr. Lois Meyer's graduate class on first and second language development. Rogoff's work was influential in my understanding of the way that language acquisition impacts on individual and family experience; Rogoff's work gave me a new understanding of how language and culture work and the way that broader social and historical movements interact with personal experience. Anna, also a student in Dr. Meyer's class and also impacted by Rogoff's theory, describes how she understands sociocultural theory as applied to her students in the following example: *"A student goes to school and learns English. Then, he takes English back to his family and exposes his family to a new language and a new culture. He changes the culture of his family this way"* (Anna, Conversation, 11/01/17). In the specific case of recently arrived immigrant families, which describes many students' families in Anna's class, cultural processes take a dramatic shift due to immigration and schooling in a second language. As immigrant children enter school, the shift to English begins to take place (Wong Fillmore, 2000); older children who bring the use of English home can influence the language use of

younger siblings and parents alike (Schechter & Bayley, 2002; 2004). This pattern was common amongst the students in Anna's classes. For example, Genesis, a bilingual 7<sup>th</sup> grade girl, describes her younger siblings' Spanish proficiency as non-existent, despite the fact that her mother speaks limited English. In response to a writing prompt asking about language loss, Genesis wrote: *"My sister and brother had [lost Spanish]. Since they don't know [Spanish] they would call me to help them out or I would just talk for them."* (Genesis, Artifact, Analysis Stations, 11/10/17). Other students explained that they were in the process of teaching their parents English or that the family was learning English together. Some of them would assist their monolingual Spanish-speaking parents at work, acting as translators. These language practices profoundly shift the culture of the community in East Mesa. The particular experiences that immigrant students spoke about- teaching English to and translating for their monolingual family members - especially highlight the important role that this young generation plays in setting a precedent for bilingual language development. As Anna put it, these students *"are right at the cusp. They are able to change what their future family members will know and learn, what their traditions will be"* (Anna, Interview, 10/03/16). From a pedagogical standpoint, Anna and I wished to capitalize on the agency these students possessed in shaping their own future, as well as transforming their families' futures.

Socioculturalists warn against thinking of cultural traits as static markers of group membership, as this leads to "essentializing" people on the basis of a group label" (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 20). Students who are bilingual, Hispanic, and living in the Southwest of the United States may participate in many of the same cultural practices, but Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) suggest that this is due to their shared history, schooling experience, and

cultural context rather than a fixed trait. In other words, patterns across individual experience are to be expected, and it is the source of those patterns that socioculturalists wish to draw attention to analytically and pedagogically:

Our focus, however, is on the importance and benefit of knowing about the histories and valued practices of cultural groups rather than trying to teach prescriptively according to broad, underexamined generalities about groups. In cultural-historical approaches, learning is conceived of as a process occurring within ongoing activity, and not divided into separate characteristics of individuals and contexts. (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, 20)

The Language Box project relies on this underlying assumption of sociocultural theory- that “broad, underexamined generalities about groups” have little pedagogical value. As a teacher-researcher team, Anna and I found that this reflected what we knew about bilingual students and what we learned about language acquisition and loss in Dr. Meyer’s graduate class.

Rogoff defines *cultural communities* as groups of people who share a common history, ways of communicating, practices, values, and understandings (p. 80). A community “adapts with changing times, experimenting with and resisting new ideas in ways that maintain core values while learning from changes that are desired or required” (p. 81). I found Rogoff’s sociocultural theory useful in analyzing many of the students’ stories, especially those whose families had recently immigrated to the United States and described the acquisition of English as a tool necessary to adapt to life in a new country. However, sociocultural-historical theory fails to explicitly attend to relations of power and the role that power plays in an individual’s opportunities to participate, or not, in community cultural

practices. There were three student participants who identified themselves or their family members as Hispanic New Mexicans- families who had resided in the region for many generations- and who had experienced historical Spanish language loss. These three students described situations in which they refrained from speaking Spanish in the presence of more fluent peers or family members and described speaking Spanish as stressful and embarrassing. They therefore did not have the same opportunities to develop bilingualism as their peers. I added Norton's (2013) concept of investment to my framework to make sense of their experiences using language at home and at school.

### **Investment**

In the early 90's, Norton (2013) developed her concept of investment through the study of four recently arrived immigrant adult women in Canada, all of whom were in the early stages of learning English. Her longitudinal study drew attention to the social conditions that impact an individual's experiences learning English. She paid close attention to the way that relations of power between learners and native speakers, specifically involving race, class, and gender, all influenced the four learners' perceptions of being marginalized by native speakers they come into contact with at work or in other public spaces. The learners' sense of being marginalized by native speakers narrowed their perceived opportunities to use English meaningfully. Investment is a concept that emphasizes the social realities and histories of learners and explains how and why their identities form in relation to the target language. It explains a learner's willingness to participate or not in using the target language with various people and in various social spaces:



The construct of investment offers a way to understand learners' variable desires to engage in social interaction and community practices. Inspired by Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1991), it signals the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it. If learners 'invest' in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic resources (language, education, friendship) and material resources (capital goods, real estate, money), which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power. (Norton, 2013, p. 6)

Norton contrasts investment- a sociological concept- with motivation- a psychological concept. For example, the women in her study all appeared to be motivated to learn English; they enrolled in English classes, completed their homework, and verbally confirmed that they were motivated to learn the language. However, their investments in using English- their language use practice- with certain individuals varied depending on their relationship to the person with whom they were interacting.

Norton's work has had a profound impact on second language acquisition theories, and many researchers have used her work to explain the process of acquiring a second language. Potowski (2004) used Norton's investment to explain how the language use patterns of fifth grade English-Spanish bilingual students in a dual language program in Chicago explained their investments in identities. She found that students used Spanish with the teacher more than with their peers, and that most of the Spanish use in the classroom was during specific academic tasks; English was the language used for social talk. She believed that students used Spanish in order to form identities of being good students, well-liked, funny, and "good" Spanish speakers at home, and that future research in dual language

classrooms should consider the concept of investment as very insightful to the language use practices of second and heritage learners alike:

Investment can make an important contribution to the study of L2 acquisition as well as heritage language development and maintenance because this approach seeks to understand the reasons why students decide to communicate in their L1, in their L2, or in code switched language. No matter how well-run a language program is, if students' identity investments compete with their investments in developing the target language, or if the classroom environment denies them opportunities to participate in ways that are acceptable to them, their target language growth will not be as great as educators might hope. (Potowski, 2004, p. 95)

Like Potowski, I extend Norton's concept of investment to the case of heritage speakers of Spanish. Three students of Hispanic New Mexican descent had limited or no access to Spanish at home. Their resistance to using Spanish at school in the presence of their more fluent classmates is similar to Norton's observations of her research participants, who also refrained from using the target language (English) with certain individuals, especially if they sensed that individual would make a negative evaluation of them based on their speech. There are important distinctions to be made between Norton's work and my own, however. For example, Norton's participants were immigrant women living in Canada. Norton draws attention to differences in social class, race and ethnicity, and citizenship. In the present study, all of the students were part of the same bilingual community, and none of the Hispanic New Mexican students were immigrants. One of these students describes a racialized experience in her community, but none of them talk about social class or citizenship as significantly influencing their use of Spanish. I use investment instead to

analyze their access to the cultural capital that fluency in Spanish represents in their bilingual community, as well as their perceived opportunities to develop bilingualism in the future. The concept of investment provides important insight to the present study as it sheds light on the decisions that individuals make about when, where, and with whom to use language. I use the concept of investment in this dissertation to draw attention to the social forces that influence individual's engagement in language use. Rather than discuss students strictly in terms of being "motivated" or "lazy," my analysis considers the social dynamics present in each participant's world and seeks to explain how those social dynamics shape their investment in language use.

All of Anna's students participated in the Language Box project. We carefully designed lessons with their specific needs and strengths in mind. I now turn to the pedagogical theoretical framework that guided me through the process of analyzing the curriculum.

### **Asset pedagogies: The historical context of culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP)**

Over the last fifty years, a rich body of literature has emerged which speaks to the value of pedagogical approaches that focus on incorporating students' home practices into classroom learning with the goal of facilitating academic success for minoritized students (Gay, 2000; González et al., 2005; Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Moll, 2013; Nieto, 1999; Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017; Valenzuela, 1999). Paris (2012) names these "resource pedagogies<sup>2</sup>" which conceptualize the home culture and language of minoritized students as "resources to honor, explore, and extend in accessing Dominant American

---

<sup>2</sup> Paris names these "asset pedagogies" later (Paris & Alim, 2017). I use the terms "asset pedagogies" and "resource pedagogies" interchangeably.

English (DAE) language and literacy skills” (Paris, 2012, p. 94). The resource pedagogies assert that all students are capable of success and counteract the long history of deficit thinking associated with linguistically and culturally diverse students. They consider cultural diversity to be a strength, as well as a desirable and necessary condition for a just and equitable society (Gay, 2015). Gloria Ladson-Billing’s theory (1995) of *culturally relevant pedagogy*, rooted in her seminal study of successful teachers of African American students, and Geneva Gay’s (2000) concept of *culturally responsive teaching*, are now widely known as anchors of these resource pedagogies, and these terms are used often in education circles. Most recently, Paris (2012) put forth the term *culturally sustaining pedagogy*, adding to this body of work. I outline the key dimensions of the resource pedagogies below. Rather than referring to culturally relevant or responsive or sustaining pedagogy, I use the term “resource” pedagogy throughout for consistency until I explain the specific characteristics of culturally sustaining pedagogy near the end of this section.

### **Teacher-learner relationship**

In order for teachers to enact a resource pedagogy, they must know their students, understand their needs, and be familiar with their cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003; Sleeter, 2012). Ladson-Billings (1995) found that exemplary teachers of African American students thought of themselves as members of the community in which they taught, and hence, their teaching was a contribution to the future success of the community. Relationships with students and communities are a priority for these teachers. Caring is a fundamental and essential foundation of this work (Valenzuela, 1999). Teachers create a collaborative learning environment where students feel cared for and empowered (Choi, 2013); they model and scaffold instruction (Morrison et al., 2008) and use what they

know about students' strengths to inform their teaching. Community members and parents are also seen as resources for teaching and learning, and are invited into the classroom

### **The cultural nature of learning**

When culture is viewed as the everyday practice of individuals and communities (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 2003), then learning must be viewed as a deeply cultural activity. Acknowledging that learning is cultural allows teachers to view the skills and knowledge that children acquire in their homes and communities as a resource, not a deficit. Heath (1983), in her decade long ethnography of preschool age children in working class Black and White communities in Southern rural and urban U.S. communities, found that children's language reflected the social and cultural traditions of their community. However, these traditions may or may not align with the social, linguistic, and cultural traditions of schools. It is therefore valuable for teachers to examine their own assumptions about what is a "normal" way of talking and behaving, and to also examine why their students come to school with the skills that they do. Heath worked with local teachers to design literacy lessons that would build on what students already knew about literacy, and the teacher participants that she worked with found this pedagogical approach to be impactful in their classrooms.

### **Achievement**

Teaching and learning are one and the same process. That is, all members of the classroom engage in both teaching and learning, including the teacher. Knowledge is not static, but rather, it is "shared, recycled, and constructed" by all (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 481). Thus, all members of the classroom, including students, have expertise they can share. In the present study, while teaching a lesson on how to correctly cite references from interviews,

the teacher deferred to students as experts of Spanish grammar and punctuation. Such gestures, though they may seem small, imply that the teacher is not the only one in the room with knowledge or authority. Academic success is not thought of as high scores on a standardized test, and teachers promote academic success by providing students with meaningful and diverse opportunities in the classroom to share what they know, to develop skills, and to learn new material.

### **Cultural competence**

Culture and difference are natural and essential aspects of the human experience, so culture and difference should be treated as normal and essential aspects of learning and teaching (Nieto, 1999). Teacher who enact a resource pedagogy are creative in finding ways to include marginalized voices into the curriculum (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017). Culture and academic success should not be seen as incompatible (Nieto, 1999). Morrison et al. (2008) found that teachers enriched and built on their students' cultural competence by reshaping the prescribed curriculum; teachers brought in parents or community members to teach, relied on students to share with others their cultural knowledge, and worked together with students to create materials that represented where the students come from and who they are.

### **Critical consciousness**

Ladson-Billings (2014) defines critical consciousness as “the ability to take learning beyond the confines of the classroom using school knowledge and skills to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems” (p. 75). The concept of critical consciousness is rooted in Freire’s (1970) pedagogical work, which advocated for an emancipatory pedagogy, centered in and focused on dialogue between students and teacher, which in turn would promote social

change. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes her understanding of this as a collective, not individual process, which necessarily relies on the collaboration, encouragement, and participation of all individuals in a group. Nieto (1999) describes empowerment as “*power with*” as opposed to “*power over*” (p. 105), once again emphasizing the collective nature of critical consciousness. Morrison et al. (2008) found that many culturally responsive/relevant teachers encouraged students to take a critical stance toward the content of literacy and modeled a critical stance for their students. Teachers were also found to engage students in social justice work in the community. And lastly, many teachers gave students the power to make decisions about the curriculum, classroom policies, and assessments.

### **Transformative results**

The resource pedagogies are focused on nurturing students who are empowered to think and act critically, take pride in their cultural inheritance, and understand the complexities of the world they live in. When students have the opportunity to see their communities, families, and histories reflected in the curriculum, they are more invested in their schooling experience (Cammarota, 2007; Choi, 2013; Irizarry, 2017; McCarty & Lee, 2014; San Pedro, 2017). Scholars of culturally sustaining pedagogy have included examples of excellent curricula in which students act as investigators in their homes, communities, and schools, with the purpose of inciting positive social change in their own spheres of influence (Alim, 2005; Cammarota, 2007; Irizarry, 2017).

Conceptual and theoretical understandings of resource pedagogies abound, yet more empirical studies carried out in classrooms are needed in order to extend this work (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Morrison et al., 2008; Sleeter, 2012). Unfortunately, despite being widely used in educational research, terms such as *cultural relevance* and *cultural responsiveness*

are lacking in depth (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Lee & McCarty, 2014; Sleeter 2012). Paris (2012) argues a new term is needed, *culturally sustaining pedagogy* (CSP):

Relevance and responsiveness do not guarantee in stance or meaning that one goal of an educational program is to maintain heritage ways and to value cultural and linguistic sharing across difference, to sustain and support bi- and multilingualism and bi- and multiculturalism. They do not explicitly enough support the *linguistic and cultural dexterity and plurality* (Paris, 2009, 2011) necessary for success and access in our demographically changing U.S. and global communities (p. 95).

CSP builds on and extends the important dimensions of the resource pedagogies and adds this critical goal:

Culturally sustaining pedagogy seeks to perpetuate and foster- to sustain- linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as the democratic project of schooling. In the face of current policies and practices that have the explicit goal of creating a monocultural and monolingual society, research and practice need equally explicit resistances that embrace cultural pluralism and cultural equality (p. 93).

Scholars of CSP extend previous conceptions of the resource pedagogies. Rather than viewing the home language and cultural practices as “starting points from which to learn appropriate academic language,” they believe that home practices are “legitimate practices in their own right” and worthy of being celebrated and sustained, even in the classroom where the focus is so often the acquisition of Dominant American English (Rosa & Flores, 2017, 178). As a result of schooling, students should continue the use of the cultural, linguistic and literacy practices valued and used in their homes and communities, as well as those valued and used in school. In a pluralist society, we need both.



### **Curriculum development**

Each of these elements of culturally sustaining pedagogy can and should be curricularized according to the specific context of a classroom community (Paris & Alim, 2017). Common themes across different examples of culturally sustaining curricula include: students taking on the role of curriculum designer (Irizarry, 2017); carrying out action research projects that target social issues within the community (Cammarota, 2007; Irizarry, 2017; Lee & Walsh, 2017); and a focus on identity development (Lee & Walsh, 2017; McCarty & Lee, 2014). Relevant especially to the present study is the focus that CSP places on home and community language practices as curricular material. Researchers have found that talking about language in the classroom with students can have transformative results. For example, Alim (2005) created a curriculum using critical theory and sociolinguistics to teach adolescent Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islander students about how language is used for and against them. Through ethnographic and sociolinguistic analyses of their own language use practices, students “become more conscious of their communicative behavior and the ways by which they can transform the conditions under which they live” (p. 28). Martinez and Montaño (2016) document a curriculum implementation in a seventh grade English Language Arts classroom that seeks to raise Latina/o students’ consciousness of their use of formal and informal Spanish and English in various social domains. Youth participants in Martinez and Montaño’s study comment on the social prestige attached to Standard English, the familiarity of Spanish, and the importance of showing respect to diverse audiences through the use of particular registers. They conclude that students’ experiences and perspectives can provide powerful pedagogical insight into the teaching of bilingual students.

Though its scope is global, enactments of CSP are necessarily tailored to specific students, schools, and communities (Paris & Alim, 2017). Paris' (2012) relatively recent call for a "change in stance, terminology, and practice" has been followed by several studies that demonstrate what CSP looks like in particular contexts (see Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014; Lee & McCarty, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2017). The present study hopes to add to this growing body of work, particularly those studies that focus on the way that language is used and valued in bilingual schools and communities (Irizarry, 2017; Martinez & Montaña, 2016). Sociocultural-historical theory and culturally sustaining pedagogy are natural complements. Both frameworks draw attention to the historical, cultural, and social context of the daily experiences of individuals and groups and reject static and essentializing characterizations of minoritized communities. They position individuals as agents of cultural and linguistic change. We capitalized on individual agency in the pedagogical approach that we took in designing the Language Box project, seeking to encourage students to "take action" when it came to their future language use practices. These theories also point to the role that individuals play in their community, and we also sought to emphasize to students that they were responsible to their future family members and community when it came to language learning and language maintenance or revitalization.

### **Other important concepts**

#### **Minoritized languages in the United States**

In this dissertation, I describe non-English languages in the United States as minoritized languages that have historically been marginalized, repressed, and in some cases, forcefully eradicated. These are the home and heritage languages of present-day school-age children and the future leaders of society. The United States is and always has been a

multilingual and multicultural society, yet it is not a nation that supports the use of languages other than English (Portes & Hao, 1998; 2002; Suarez, 2002; Wiley & García, 2016; Wong Fillmore, 2000). Some researchers have asserted that there is a national discourse that linguistic diversity is a threat to national unity (Carreira, 2000; Carreira & Beeman, 2014; MacGregor-Mendoza, 2010; Valdés, 2011). Indeed, Theodore Roosevelt's well-known proclamation that "we intend to see that the crucible turns out our people as Americans and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house" (as cited in Gonzalez-Berry, 2000, p. 178) is evidence of the engrained heritage of this nationalist ideology. Despite the absence of a formal national language policy, English Only ideologies have been enacted both formally and informally through school policies, propositions, and political movements throughout the nation's history. Well known more recent examples include Proposition 227, which eliminated dual language instruction for EB students in California, Proposition 203, Arizona's even more restrictive proposition that banned bilingual education, and No Child Left Behind, which mandated that all students be tested in Standard American English and imposed punitive consequences for poor results (Meyer, 2007; Thomas & Collier, 2009; Wiley & García, 2016). The Common Core State Standards, currently implemented in forty-one states (Core Standards), place heavy emphasis on the use of complex academic language in English, and were seemingly devised with little thought for the nation's growing number of bilingual children:

Academic language extends beyond mere vocabulary words and grammar in isolation to articulate the ways in which students must use specific types of language to interact with context as well as with peers and teachers. The CCSS stresses that all students- including Els [English learners]- must master academic language so that they can

successfully perform such CCSS required tasks as persuading, citing evidence, and engaging with complex informational texts. Even though they bring many strengths to the academic environment, Els may face more challenges than native English speakers in acquiring the academic language they will need to access the CCSS (Fenner, 2013, p. 7).

Even while English Only ideologies and policies persist, the strengths and challenges facing EB students are not acknowledged in national education standards, and the task of fostering confident bilinguals in schools remains a difficult task for teachers (Fenner, 2013).

Compounding these challenges are recent anti-immigrant policies that undoubtedly cause fear and anxiety in immigrant communities, especially for those who are undocumented. In fall 2017, the Trump administration sought to end DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), a program that provided temporary work visas for individuals who had been brought to the United States as children without papers (Romo, Stewart & Naylor, 2017). An executive order, signed by President Trump in January 2017, banned nationals from seven Muslim majority countries for 90 days, Syrian refugees indefinitely, and refugees from any other country for 120 days ([www.aclu-wa.org](http://www.aclu-wa.org)). And in April 2018, the Trump administration adopted a “zero tolerance” policy for illegal border crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border, separating over 2,000 children from their parents (Domonoske & Gonzales, 2018). These are only a few salient examples. More cases of English-Only ideologies and anti-immigrant policies, both contemporary and historical, are easily found in the media and are well documented in research literature (Carreira, 2000; Wiley & García, 2016).

Despite lack of acknowledgement and support of EB students on a national level, as well as anti-immigrant policies and English Only ideologies, it is well known and documented in the literature that bilingualism is both a personal and a societal asset for a variety of reasons (Fishman, 1997). In the case of bilingual youth, researchers have found that continued development and use of the family language contributes positively to affective factors such as increased confidence, cultural pride, positive language attitudes, and positive opinions of the ethnic or cultural group (Beaudrie, Ducar & Relaño Pastor, 2009; Coles-Ritchie & Lugo, 2010; Otcu, 2010; Tse, 2000). Family language use and proficiency signal membership in an ethnic group<sup>3</sup>, facilitate positive social interactions with other ethnic group members and closer relationships with family members, and provide opportunity for greater understanding of cultural practices and knowledge (Cho, 2000; Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Paradis et al., 2011; Phinney, Romero, Nava & Huang, 2001; Tannenbaum & Berkovich, 2005). Linguists have also found that fluency in two languages (in an additive environment where academic skills are supported in both languages at school) is an academic asset as it strengthens an individual's cognitive flexibility and metalinguistic awareness (Bialystok, 2009; Carreira, 2007; Cummins, 1976; Paradis et al., 2011; Portes & Hao, 1998). Such benefits are indeed compelling. Yet fostering bilingualism in younger generations requires that young people have opportunities to develop their languages in environments where they perceive the use of those languages are valued, accepted, and actively promoted.

---

<sup>3</sup> However, Potowski (2012) argues that thinking of Spanish fluency as a prerequisite to Latinx identity is harmful, especially for younger generation Latinxs who may have limited, if any, Spanish proficiency. This is true not only for Latinx youth, but for all heritage speakers and learners.

### Spanish in the United States

Spanish is the most commonly spoken non-English language in the country. Indeed, of the 60.3 million people who speak a language other than English at home, 37.5 million speak Spanish (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). According to the Census Bureau's language use statistics, Spanish use at home among Hispanics is the highest it has been (Flores, 2016). In addition, Lopez, Krogstad & Flores (2018) found most Hispanics in the United States speak Spanish to their children and believe that it is important for future generations of Hispanics to maintain the language. However, they also found that second- and third-generation immigrant Hispanics are much less likely to be Spanish dominant or speak Spanish at home to their children. They report that while 97% of immigrant parents report speaking Spanish to their children at home, only 71% of U.S. born second-generation Hispanic parents and 49% of third-generation (or higher generations) parents speak Spanish to their children at home. Moreover, Hispanic parents who have a non-Hispanic partner or spouse are less likely to speak Spanish at home. Also of interest is the fact that while 80% of Hispanics surveyed said their own parents encouraged them to speak Spanish, 20% reported that they were *discouraged* by their parents to speak Spanish, perhaps contributing to the reluctance of some Hispanics to pass the language on to future generations. Lopez et al. (2018) predict that as U.S. born Hispanics are an increasing majority of the population, Spanish language use may decline in the future. Though the *number* of Hispanics speaking Spanish at home is higher than it has been in the past, the *percentage* of Hispanics speaking Spanish at home is slightly declining. Krogstad & Lopez (2017) report that 73% of Hispanics reported speaking Spanish at home in 2015, while 78% reported speaking it at home in 2006. Consequently, the percentage of Hispanics who speak English at home and report being English dominant is on

the rise. Nevertheless, nearly all individuals surveyed reported that their parents speak Spanish to some extent, regardless of generation, demonstrating the significance of the Spanish language to the Hispanic experience in the U.S.

### **The case of New Mexico: Historical context**

Spanish has been spoken for centuries in the southwest region of what is now the United States. Historians have documented the controversy and complexity of the language issue as this region of the country shifted to English upon entering the union. For example, Dubord's (2010) discussion of language policy in Arizona sheds light on how elite Mexicans attempted to defy Anglo power and separate themselves from lower class Mexicans by implementing bilingual Spanish-English schools in the late 1800's, thus establishing Spanish as a prestigious language fit for public use, yet also affirming the need for the use of English. González-Berry (2000) and Fernández-Gibert (2010) illustrate the contradicting opinions of New Mexicans as to the utility and desirability of English as a public language in New Mexico. While some viewed the shift to English as necessary and desirable, others felt that maintaining Spanish would importantly sustain a strong sense of cultural identity. These historical accounts illustrate how present debates about language in schools, communities, and homes are simply new iterations of a long-standing contention. Indeed, Gonzales-Berry (2000), in describing the state of New Mexico, asserts: "New Mexico has long been a crossroads where peoples of distinct cultural and racial backgrounds have met, clashed, accommodated, and developed complex strategies to ensure cultural survival" (169).

The current linguistic, cultural, and educational realities of New Mexican youth are situated in a long and complex history. Though there is much to be said about other languages and cultural groups, I focus my discussion here on the case of Spanish in the state

of New Mexico. Spanish was first brought to the Southwest region of what is now the United States when Juan de Oñate and a group of about 500 Hispanics<sup>4</sup> settled territory in what is presently New Mexico in 1598. Thus, Spanish was spoken in this state long before English (Bills & Vigil, 2008), and enjoyed a position of prestige for centuries. As noted by Sanz-Sanchez (2014) and Espinoza (1975), the use of Spanish persisted in many communities due to isolation and what Espinosa called the “tenacity and vigor of the Spanish culture and language” (p. 102). To this day, New Mexican Spanish is considered by many to be a regional treasure worthy of maintenance. Because of the particular sociocultural history of New Mexican Spanish, it is considered a heritage language, not a foreign language (Vergara Wilson, 2006), and can be compared in some ways to an indigenous language. Unlike indigenous languages, however, Spanish seemingly continues to thrive in the southwest due to the arrival of monolingual Spanish speakers from Latin America (Villa & Rivera-Mills, 2009).

In 1848, with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, New Mexico became a territory of the United States. Compared to other neighboring regions, relatively few Anglos migrated to the new territory of New Mexico, and Spanish continued to be used in public and private sectors (Sanz-Sanchez, 2014). During this time, an educational board was established in the territory, and public schooling began to be implemented in communities throughout the territory (Getz, 1997). Instruction in English was encouraged, although Spanish continued to be the language of instruction in Spanish speaking communities, and local communities continued to control the schools.

---

<sup>4</sup> Bills & Vigil (2008) point out that while members of this group were subjects of the Spanish Crown, they “brought to New Mexico a Spanish language and culture already modified by a century of “Americanization” (p. 29), meaning that the Spanish language and culture in the Americas was already distinct from that of European Spaniards. Thus, they use the word Hispanics rather than Spaniards.



As New Mexico began the process of statehood early in the 1900's, the prevalence of Spanish was considered problematic in allowing the territory to enter the union. Although there was some push to adopt English as the language of instruction in schools, only about half of the population of school age children were attending school, and it was difficult to control what went on in rural, Hispanic communities (Getz, 1997, p. 25). In 1910, English became a prerequisite for voting and holding state office positions through the Enabling Act, theoretically ousting Spanish in the public sector and disqualifying Spanish speakers from participation in government affairs (González-Berry, 2000). However, Getz (1997) explains how the state constitution contains clauses that suggest otherwise: "The New Mexicans who gathered to write the state constitution in September, 1910, did not give entirely in to the dictates of Washington. Instead they wrote into the law contradictory and ambiguous clauses that would confuse educational matters for decades" (p. 26). While one clause mandated that all schooling be conducted in English exclusively, another clause clearly implies that Spanish should be used when teaching Spanish-speaking children. However, English began to gain cultural capital as it came to symbolize nationalism and upward mobility, and New Mexicans disagreed about whether Spanish should be continued as the language of instruction in schools. Some argued that Spanish held both aesthetic and utilitarian value, while others asserted that Americanization and the use of English in schools would provide children with more advantages (Fernández-Gibert, 2010; Getz, 1997; González-Berry, 2000).

When New Mexico became a state, English began to be enforced in some (though not all) schools, and MacGregor-Mendoza (2010) uses data from retrospective stories told by older generation Hispanics to demonstrate the lasting harm this had on individuals. Her participants recall being physically punished for speaking their home language at school.

Discipline for speaking Spanish included “being smacked on the hand with a ruler, paddled, pinched, pulled by the ear, having their mouths washed out with soap, or being forced to engage in some physical test of endurance” (p. 358). Some individuals even reported being punished for pronouncing English with a Spanish accent. The psychological harm done by these policies has unfortunately endured to the present day and has resulted in many Hispanics in the region not passing their language on to their children and grandchildren. Spanish language loss, precipitated by anti-Spanish school and government policies across the years, continues to affect New Mexico communities. However, issues of language loss in New Mexico are not limited to Spanish; efforts to revitalize and maintain local Indigenous languages and cultures are just as important in this state (Benjamin, Pecos, & Romero, 1996; McCarty & Lee, 2014), and face even more difficult barriers - for example, limited literacy resources and smaller numbers of proficient speakers. Meyer (2012) questions Fishman’s optimistic evaluation of the maintenance of both Spanish and Navajo in the state. She describes the experiences of some of her own Navajo students who, despite being Navajo language and culture educators raised in Navajo speaking homes, used limited, if any, Navajo in their own home with their children. These students were surprised when they gained consciousness of their own contributions to their family’s and tribe’s language loss.

At the time of this study, the state ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in terms of children’s well-being indicators- 30% of children ages 0-17 were living in poverty (Kids Count, 2017). The Albuquerque Public School (APS) District had 44 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 8 high schools that offered bilingual programs, though only 29 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and no high schools were classified as offering dual language programs, which offer instruction in both Spanish and English. The remaining schools offered

maintenance bilingual programs, meaning that native speakers of the minority language were supported in maintaining their native language. According to the 2017 district report card, 27% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders in APS scored proficient in reading and 17% scored proficient in math on the English language state mandated standardized assessment (2017 District Report Cards). According to data on standardized tests and poverty levels, it might appear that students are low achieving and there are few resources in New Mexican communities. Yet, despite the challenges students and teachers face in this state, there are creative, lively, and nurturing classrooms, such as Anna's. All of this gives important context to my own study, as I investigated the case of a 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at a school where 96% of students were classified as Hispanic and 90% received free or reduced lunch, a measure of relative poverty, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

### **Language development at home**

The home is the most powerful influence on intergenerational language transmission of minoritized languages (Fishman, 1997; Schecter & Bayley, 2002), especially in the early years of a child's life when the home is the primary source of cultural and linguistic socialization. Parents' language ideologies and practices both impact a child's opportunity and ability to maintain the home language over time. However, these ideologies and practices are not static and are shaped by both the past experiences of parents, as well as their future hopes and dreams for their children. For example, in a case study of four Latino families, Suarez (2002) found that parents' practices aligned with their ideologies, and that all parents associated language with success, meaning that the language they promoted and used in the home was conceptualized as a tool to gain economic, personal, and cultural capital. Whether this association results in Spanish maintenance or loss depends on the

ideological orientation and past experiences of the parents. For example, parents who associate bilingualism, and therefore the continued use of Spanish, with success strongly encourage their children to use Spanish at home and speak to them often in Spanish. Conversely, parents who have internalized negative stereotypes of Spanish speakers do not use Spanish in the home. Other parents choose to speak English rather than Spanish to their children because they remember the painful experience of being made fun of in school when they themselves were learning English. Suárez (2002) illustrates that choices surrounding language use are tied to both past oriented (parents drawing on their own school experiences to inform their choices) and future oriented (preparing their children for multilingual or English dominant work forces) understandings of the value of bilingualism.

Other researchers have come to similar conclusions. Schechter and Bayley (2002; 2004) conducted a longitudinal study with eight Mexican-American families in order to understand the home influence on bilingual language development and maintenance in children. They also sought to explore how the symbolic meanings that families attach to language use interact and play out in various social contexts. Selecting participants who represented a variety of socioeconomic status, from both rural and urban communities, and who were both newly arrived immigrants and established United States residents, they conducted ethnographic interviews, home visits, and took quantitative language measures in order to answer their research questions. Their findings echo assertions made by other researchers - school may support language maintenance efforts, but home remains the critical space for sustaining home language use (Fishman, 1997). Indeed, Hammer & Rodríguez (2012) speak to this truth, as well, in the particular case of Spanish in the U.S.:

Studies of Latino children living in the United States suggest that English does not necessarily need to be used in the home to promote children's English language acquisition. However, Spanish is needed at home to promote children's Spanish abilities." (p. 35)

The continued use of Spanish and other home languages is extremely important for family relations, as noted by Norton (1991) and Wong Fillmore (2000), both of whom provide cases of families in which children abandon the home language as a result of schooling in English, and eventually are unable to communicate effectively with their parents and/grandparents.

While home has been conceptualized as the most influential site of home language development, Valdés (2011) questions this assumption. She suggests that this is not always true, especially in the case of second or third generation families in the United States in which there may not be a parent fluent enough to effectively transmit the family language to their children. In her longitudinal study of her own third generation granddaughters, she found that the school rather than the home was a stronger and more reliable source of Spanish input due to the limited Spanish proficiency of the parents. While Valdés' assertion seems to hold true in the case of language use, we must also consider that the parents' assumed positive attitude toward bilingualism shaped the children's school experiences in important ways. Valdés describes how her daughter sought out bilingual education programs for her children, suggesting that, while the home was not necessarily a source of Spanish input, it was certainly a source of positive values and beliefs surrounding the development and maintenance of the Spanish language.

Choices surrounding language use are informed by a variety of factors on the national, school, community, and home level. While the home and community may be safe

havens for home language use, this may not always be so. Heritage speakers have been recorded commenting that their fluent family members have been the most harmful in making them feel like illegitimate speakers of the language (Carreira & Beeman, 2014). All of the influences- past and present, at school or at home - affect individuals differently according to their own particular sociocultural history and personality (Schechter & Bayley, 2002), making it difficult to draw generalizable conclusions about the role that the home, community and school play in home language development.

### **Language development at school**

Historically, school has been the site of linguistic and cultural repression for Indigenous, immigrant, and African American youth (MacGregor-Mendoza, 2010; McCarty & Lee, 2014; Olsen, 1997; Tatum, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999), and starting as early as preschool, children are exposed to the language ideologies of their teachers and fellow classmates at school (Potowski, 2004; Relaño Pastor, 2007), which often signal to them that fluency in English is a priority and loss of the family language is necessary to gain fluency in English. Researchers have written extensively on the relationship between school and home language maintenance or loss, and they have found that school plays an increasingly crucial role as peers and teachers become the main source of linguistic, cultural, and social input (Iglesias & Rojas, 2012; Hammer & Rodríguez, 2012; Valdés, 2000). Indeed, school is where youth spend the majority of their time and therefore gives important context to their social and personal development (Feinaur & Whiting, 2012). For immigrant youth, school is often the first place they are exposed to the English language and Western schooling practices, which likely do not align with their own home practices (Rogoff, 2003). Olsen's (1997) ethnography of immigrant students' experiences in a California high school highlights

the social pressure, stigmatization, and racism that immigrant youth confront at school. Students believe that in order to participate in the social and academic life of school, they must “cross over into the English-speaking world” (Olsen, 1997, 39) and leave behind their mother tongue, which is evidence of their association with an unwanted identity as “un-American.” The immigrant students in Olsen’s study become “English preferers,” yet they are painfully aware that the preference for English comes at a great cost, evident in the student vignette below:

I sometimes don’t have Spanish words anymore for the feelings I have here, and I don’t yet have English words for them either. Or I can’t find the English words that explain what I know and have felt in my Mexican life. The words don’t work for me. I have become quiet, because I don’t have words. I don’t even try to use my Spanish. I only wait until I know my English. (p. 99-100)

Although immigrant students are pressured to learn English, Valdés (2001) found that EB students often have little opportunity to do so. She spent two years investigating the experiences of four newcomer Latinx middle school students, Manolo, Elisa, Lilian and Bernardo, in three middle schools near San Francisco, California, in order to understand the opportunities that immigrant students have to learn English. She found that overcrowded classrooms, grammar-based instruction, segregation from native English-speaking peers, and “dumbed down” curriculum, left the four students she studied with few opportunities to acquire the necessary linguistic skills to thrive academically at school. Following these students through high school, Valdés found that Lilian and Bernardo both remained in ESL (English as a second language) tracks throughout high school. Elisa transferred to a high school where she was enrolled in mainstream courses, but she was later assessed as ‘ESL’ by

a community college. Manolo was placed in mainstream classes that were more engaging and rigorous according to Valdés, but still did not appear to thrive (Meyer, 2007).

Immigrant students are not the only ones who face discrimination and marginalization at school. Many of the same social and academic barriers exist for minoritized students who speak variations of English that are not accepted at school (Heath, 1983; Valenzuela, 1999). Valenzuela (1999) documented the school experiences of U.S.-Mexican youth in an urban high school in Houston, Texas. Rather than focusing only on immigrant students like Valdés (2001), Valenzuela examined the school experiences of U.S.-Mexican youth at this school, including newly arrived immigrants and third generation Mexican Americans. Like Olsen, she found that immigrant youth are subject to the subtractive process of Americanization. Furthermore, Valenzuela documented how non-immigrant Mexican American youth were subject to the same subtractive process. The vast majority of youth in Valenzuela's study reported feeling uncared for by teachers and that school is not a place where they are given the opportunity to experience success.

These ethnographic cases, documented twenty or more years ago, illustrate the intense pressure to assimilate culturally and linguistically that minoritized youth have faced historically in the United States. Pressure from teachers and peers to learn English and assimilate leaves little room for youth to explore or understand what it means to develop a multilingual and multicultural identity at school. Though individual experience is unique, the looming presence of English as a preferred and desirable language is consistent across these studies.

While these cases paint a dismal picture of the school experiences of minoritized youth, there are case studies that showcase teachers who recognize the importance of



validating, promoting, and incorporating the home language and culture of students into the curriculum and using students as resources for curriculum development. Dual language immersion programs have been found to be effective in producing bilingual individuals (Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2011), and Saturday schools and heritage language programs are also important promoters of home/heritage language use and maintenance (Otcu, 2010). One excellent example of the transformative power such pedagogies can have in the classroom is a unique educational program called The Social Justice Education Project (SJEP). This special program is implemented at a high school in Tucson, Arizona, and grants high school students American History and government credit, while also using Chicano studies, critical race theory, and critical pedagogy to inform the design of the curriculum. As participants in this program, Latinx students initiate and investigate a research question that has to do with social justice issues in the community and, using ethnographic research methods, carry out a study that seeks to promote real life, positive change. For example, one group of students mapped out the space that the majority of Latinx students in their school occupied and found that most Latinxs took remedial classes held in poorer facilities (run down portables located at the back of the campus) compared to white students. Upon discovering this inequity, the students advocated for better facilities for Latinx students. Not only were these students empowered by their learning to be active citizens, many of them graduated high school and contradicted the low expectations the community had for them. After participation in the SJEP program, Cammarota (2007) reports that 93% of students felt that their participation in the program made them more likely to graduate high school. Consequently, according to reported data, the program does produce much higher graduation rates for Latinx students compared to other high schools in the district.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **Methodological framework**

This is a qualitative curricular case study. Qualitative researchers are interested in how people make sense of their lives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). They use methodologies that “celebrate richness, depth, nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity” (Mason, 2006, p. 1). A major assumption of qualitative work is that reality is understood through personal interpretation, and therefore is subjectively known. The work of the qualitative researcher is to generate rich, descriptive data, generally through participant-observation, cultural artifacts, and interviews, which collectively tell a story of real people in a real situation. In contrast to quantitative work, the researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research because the researcher interprets what is seen and heard and understands that this interpretation is particular to their understanding (Geertz, 1994).

An interpretivist approach to qualitative work seeks to understand the ideas, actions, and interactions of people in a particular context (Glesne, 2016, p. 9). Interpretivist approaches assume that reality is complex, nuanced, ever-changing, and socially constructed; variables are assumed to be interwoven and therefore difficult to measure. Interpretivists investigate how individuals understand a given concept, object, or idea, and an individual’s interpretations are thought to “interact with the thought and language of the wider society” (Glesne, 2016, p. 9). Thus, accessing the perspectives of individuals from the same social or cultural group can give insight to broader patterns of cultural practices or ways of thinking for a group of people. The interpretivist approach seeks to illuminate the complexity and pluralistic nature of the phenomenon under study and uses an inductive approach to analysis.

The role of the researcher is one of “personal involvement” and “empathetic understanding” (Glesne, 2016, p. 10).

There are multiple layers to this research study; though I am the sole researcher who gathered, organized and analyzed data, my analyses are based very much in the analytical and reflective work of the teacher and the students in the classroom. I draw on two fruitful sources of investigation for my analyses. First, my pedagogical collaboration with Anna, the classroom teacher, was a source of data. We adapted the Language Box project from a graduate assignment created by Dr. Lois Meyer, and I helped Anna design lessons which she implemented in her 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. I observed as Anna taught these lessons, and we reflected together on the process. Anna and I were co-researchers of the curriculum, and our different perspectives complemented one another. This aspect of the project could be called action research, but I ultimately decided against characterizing this study as action research because our purpose in implementing the curriculum was not about improving practice, it was much more about finding out whether or not talking about language use in class was an effective way to get students invested in developing their Spanish and English. I was particularly interested in the curriculum as a means to access students’ perspectives. Anna and I both believed that what we were doing was in many ways, good pedagogy, or at least we intended it to be good pedagogy. But our focus was not on improving Anna’s practice.

Second, the students themselves acted as researchers, investigating language use in their families, school, and community. Anna and I supported their investigation through the design of the lessons. We even had one lesson called “Who is a researcher?”, designed to teach students about being a researcher, and specifically to teach interview skills. One of my interests in the study is students’ perspectives on their own experiences with bilingualism. I

have to acknowledge here that students were given specific vocabulary and information about bilingualism, language loss, revitalization, and language acquisition before I analyzed what they produced. In other words, I did not show up to a school and ask students questions about language. I was very involved in the design of lessons that taught them directly about certain concepts (these lessons and concepts are discussed in detail in Chapter Four). I did not manipulate their responses on worksheets, or what they wrote for their final projects, or what they shared in interviews or classroom discussions, but I did play a part in shaping and facilitating the concepts discussed. This felt sticky to me. It was difficult for me to separate my roles as curriculum-developer, classroom assistant, and researcher as I collected and analyzed data. I was involved on every level, though the data revolves unwaveringly around the students themselves and the experiences they shared. Indeed, classroom activities were structured in such a way to allow the students to take the content in the direction they wished. Whether I was there or not, Anna said she would have designed the Language Box project and students would have done the work. I represent the layers of this research study, and my involvement on multiple levels, in the diagram below:

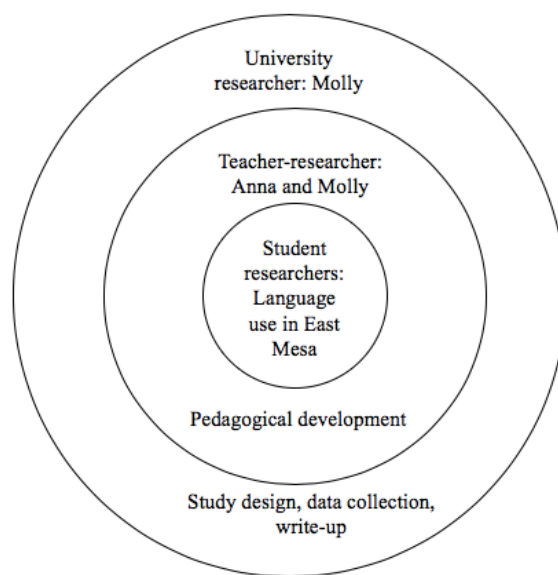


Figure 3.1: Research paradigm

Though Anna and I were a collaborative team pedagogically, it was I alone who designed the research study, submitted IRB materials, interviewed students, wrote field notes, and analyzed the data. Our pedagogical work was reflective and careful about the way the Language Box project was designed and carried out. Of course, there were decisions made in the moment, or hurried lessons or last-minute changes, and we made plenty of mistakes. But we were intentional. The lessons and activities were designed to facilitate reflection and dialogue about students' own experiences. That is why the innermost circle of the graphic above is the students. All of the work centered on them pedagogically and methodologically.

### **Curricular case study**

This is a curricular case study that investigates the experiences and perspectives of the students, teacher, and researcher during the implementation of a specific curriculum called the Language Box project. The curriculum is what forms the case- not the classroom. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) define a case study as "a detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, a single depository of documents, or one particular event" (p. 59). Case

studies are used in education to investigate issues related to teaching and learning, and often draw on theoretical concepts from other disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, or psychology (Merriam, 1998). A curricular case study in particular examines the context, design, and implementation of a curriculum (Spronken-Smith, Walker, Dickinson, Closs, Lord & Harland, 2010). It can document the process of implementation, the perspectives of key figures who bring about the curricular change, and the resulting effects on students (Muncey, Paine & White, 1999). The purpose of a curricular innovation is usually transformation of some kind, for students and teachers alike (La Velle, McFarlene and Brawn, 2003), and case studies that report on curricular innovations can be useful for teacher training programs or administrators looking for examples of exemplary teaching (McKernan, 1996). I limited my investigation to the work of designing and implementing the curriculum, and the work of students (their written thoughts, reflections, analyses, and discoveries) as they participated in the curriculum. I did not record observations of Anna teaching other content, and I did not observe students in other classrooms or social spaces at school. Of course, the students talked in detail to me about their families and home lives, their language use in other spaces, and their thoughts and feelings about all of it. Still, the curriculum formed the case. I knew about students only in so far as they participated in the Language Box project. The one exception to this were the interviews that I conducted with individual students.

A curriculum study will look very different depending on the theoretical background of the researcher and the methodological choices that she makes. There are benefits and limitations to each of the choices the researcher makes, theoretically and methodologically, and it is important to understand how these choices will impact the researcher's ability to

draw conclusions from their analysis. Following Carr and Kemmis (1986), I assumed that education is a human and social process, and I used qualitative methods that are appropriate for the study of social life. In particular, I took an interpretivist approach as it reflects my close involvement in the research site, my collaboration with Anna, and my understanding that the phenomenon under study was socially constructed. Furthermore, I recognized that, as a researcher, my point of view was limited (Glesne, 2016). I relied on Anna's expertise as the classroom teacher and her seven years of prior teaching experience, three of which were at East Mesa Academy for insights. I also relied on students' conversations, comments, written reflections, final projects, and interviews to form my analysis.

### **Teacher-researcher team**

Anna and I were both students in Dr. Lois Meyer's graduate course, First and Second Language Development within Cultural Contexts, at the University of New Mexico, and we both expressed interest in adapting an assignment created by Dr. Meyer for graduate students, which she calls the Mackey Boxes project<sup>5</sup>, so that it would be appropriate for use with younger students. Meyer connected us and suggested we work together. When I approached Anna about collaborating on this project, she enthusiastically agreed. Curricular innovation done well is a lot of work (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017), and working with someone else to design the project appealed to Anna. We both had first-hand experience completing Meyer's Mackey Boxes project, so we could share the understandings we gleaned from participation in that assignment as we adapted a version to apply in Anna's 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. This situation especially appealed to me, too, since I was looking for a

---

<sup>5</sup> The assignment makes use of a graphic originated by a researcher named Mackey (1970), which is where this name comes from. Meyer adapted the graphic in her project to display individual language use in multiple social and educational contexts. The graphic and the assignment are discussed further in chapter 4.

secondary teacher to collaborate with in adapting the Mackey Boxes into an instructional unit. There was one other 7<sup>th</sup> grade humanities teacher at the school who also adapted the project and taught it in her classroom. She sometimes met to plan with us, but I decided against collecting data in her classroom and limited my study to the single case of Anna's classroom and students. I made this decision for practical purposes. It would have been very difficult to schedule time with both teachers to plan and reflect. I completed a pilot study in Anna's classroom in fall 2016, which provided continuity as I continued collecting data in her classroom the following year. I did not know the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher personally, whereas Anna and I had become friends while students in graduate school and during the pilot study the following year. Also, the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher had not taken Meyer's graduate course and therefore had not experienced the Mackey Boxes assignment herself.<sup>6</sup>

Anna and I are both highly educated White women. Anna was in her early 30's at the time of the study. She is tall and thin with black hair and blue eyes. She is from New Hampshire, has an undergraduate degree in Anthropology, a Masters degree in Elementary Education, and her TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) certification. We met in Meyer's graduate class when Anna was completing her coursework for this certification. At the time of the study, she had seven years of teaching experience and had *"always taught bilingual students"* (Anna, Interview, 10/03/16). As an undergraduate, I double majored in Spanish and Linguistics. I also have a TESOL certification and a Masters degree in Teaching with a concentration in Secondary Education. I am from Washington state, and was completing my PhD in Educational Linguistics at the University of New

---

<sup>6</sup> The other 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher was included in professional development opportunities that had to do with the curriculum design, and the three of us presented our work together at the La Cosecha Dual Language Conference in fall 2017.



Mexico. Like Anna, I am a White woman. Though I do have some mixed Portuguese and Hispanic ancestry, I have light brown hair, blue eyes and fair skin. My heritage did not grant me any insider status in the classroom amongst Anna's students, as the cultural context of my own upbringing and schooling was completely different from the students in the classroom. However, my heritage did spark my interest long ago in learning Spanish as a second language and even motivated me to move to the southwest where my paternal grandmother was born. When I began data collection in Anna's classroom, I was seven months pregnant- another significant aspect of how students' perceived me and how I related to Anna. My experience teaching in public schools is very limited. I completed my student teaching in a very diverse middle school in Washington state, where I taught Spanish as a second and heritage language and provided one-on-one support to Emergent Bilingual students in an English Language Arts class. I also taught Spanish at an elementary school for one semester before moving to Albuquerque and beginning my doctoral program. Despite my limited experience as a classroom teacher in public K-12 schools, my experience going through a teacher training program helped me immensely throughout this project, as I was familiar with concepts such as the Common Core State Standards and current best teaching practices.

Though both Anna and I speak Spanish as a second language and have experience teaching in predominantly Latinx schools, we acknowledged that our cultural, linguistic, and educational experiences differ greatly from most of the students in Anna's 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. We were well aware of the privilege afforded to us by our education, social class, race, and citizenship status. Neither of us was raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and we were only familiar with the cultural, linguistic, and educational landscape of the city from the perspective of adults working as teachers and researchers. One of the most important

elements of this project to both of us was the fact that students' lives, histories, and daily experiences were the primary sources that drive classroom activity. This was not only enriching and engaging for the students; it also gave us important insight into the realities of their language development as teachers and researchers (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017).

Anna and I shared an agenda carrying out this project. From our experiences teaching and learning, we both believed (and still do) that supporting and sustaining students' home language abilities are just as important as developing their abilities in English. This agenda may also be evidence of our education, specifically our training as language educators. We sought to promote the belief that multilingualism and multiculturalism are desirable and attainable social conditions, especially within the context of school. We believed that this is doable and that students, as evidenced in the present study, are enthusiastic about language learning when they are part of a community that values their diverse linguistic experiences and that provides the supports necessary to acquire bilingualism.

As Anna and I lived and worked in Albuquerque, we became more familiar with people, places, and the way of life there. As a teacher, Anna was a member of the school community, though she was an ethnic and cultural outsider with her students. As Glesne (2016) puts it, "The interaction of your identities with identities of others is always in flux" (p. 150). My relationship with Anna, her students, and other individuals I came in contact with over the course of this project evolved and changed with time. I became comfortable with the office workers and the students, who referred to me as "Ms. Molly." I was part of conversations between Anna and teachers who visited her class when very sensitive information about students' home lives, academic progress, and even citizenship, were

discussed. I knew about issues of bullying at school and domestic violence and drug abuse at home; I knew which students were struggling academically and what Anna believed were the root causes of that struggle. In this dissertation, I do not share any information that I learned about students from Anna or any other adult at the school, as this would be a serious violation of confidentiality. I only write what students themselves gave me permission to write. However, being included in teacher conversations gave me a more dynamic understanding of the students' lives and the general school community.

### **Friendship as positionality**

Anna and I became close friends as we worked together over the course of two years on the Language Box project. Our work impacted our friendship just as our friendship, and the parallel life events that deepened our friendship, impacted our work. We were both pregnant for the first time during the pilot study in 2016, and we both endured difficult miscarriages that year (Anna miscarried twice and I miscarried once). During the dissertation study, we were both pregnant again and we both gave birth to babies soon after the project was completed. We experienced these intense, life-changing events in tandem, and as a result, began to rely on each other and trust each other to a much greater extent than I had imagined. Now it seems impossible to me that we could have worked so well together under different circumstances. Sharing the experience of pregnancies and miscarriages made me empathetic to Anna in a way I had not anticipated. It even made me understand some of her pedagogical decisions differently. During the dissertation study, I found that I was constantly aware that Anna was not only pregnant but had recently experienced two losses. I always factored this into what I saw in the classroom. Below is a typical entry in my field notes:

*I arrive before the students entered the classroom today, while they were still at morning assembly. Morning assembly takes a little longer than usual. Anna comes in and explains to me that it's been a very intense morning at the assembly. The middle school principal had to give everyone a talk because there's been some serious issues with bullying and fights in the school, so Anna tells me she's in a little bit of a daze. But then she says, "Oh my gosh, but how are you? How are you feeling?" My baby is due to arrive in a couple of weeks. This is just how it is between us- we know how central pregnancy is to our lives and experiences right now. I know she had her 20-week ultrasound yesterday and ask about it. She pulls out some pictures of the ultrasound and shows me. (Field notes, 11/15/17)*

Our conversations before and after class were always about our work, our pregnancies and families. We spoke quite candidly and often about our miscarriages- and what it felt like to be pregnant again after loss- the joy and the anxiety. In this sense, I was an insider in Anna's world; I had the firsthand experience and knowledge of pregnancy and miscarriage that she did, and this insider status opened up a deeper trust and stronger friendship between us. New life, death, acquisition and loss wove their way throughout our personal experiences, family life, teaching, and learning. My positionality as a researcher was temporary, but my friendship with Anna continued on beyond our time working on this research project.

Qualitative research is unique and specific to the context of the research site, the participants, and the researcher. I found this to be so strikingly true as I experienced the process of carrying out my own dissertation. I often found myself wondering about the boundaries I crossed with Anna and whether our friendship threatened the validity of the work we did from a research perspective. I made sure to reflect and write down my thoughts

and feelings in my researcher journal as a way to monitor this (Glesne, 2016; Maxwell, 2013). In the end, I chose to follow Glesne's (2016) advice to "act from the heart and honor the consequences of those actions" (p. 144).

### **East Mesa Academy (EMA)**

I carried out this research project at a public charter school located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I chose this site out of convenience and because of my connection with Anna, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade humanities teacher at the school. In spring 2016, Anna spoke with the middle school principal on my behalf, explaining that I was interested in helping her plan and implement the Language Box project and collect data in the classroom. Once he agreed to allow me to work in the school, I wrote and presented a proposal to the school's governing council. The school was a public charter, and its governing council, comprised of East Mesa community members, made decisions about curriculum, programming, and so on. I wrote and presented two proposals to the school. The first one allowed me to collect pilot study data in fall 2016, which included conversations with and observations of Anna. The second proposal was more extensive; in addition to observing, interviewing, and conversing with Anna, I also requested to collect data from student conversation in class, student interviews, written data from worksheets, and final projects. The final dissertation proposal was approved at a governing council meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Before connecting with Anna, I had not spent any time in the East Mesa community or the school. The community surrounding the school is primarily Mexican and Mexican-American and was known in Albuquerque as a Spanish dominant community. In casual conversation, I would hear some people describe it as a dangerous and impoverished area. However, when I taught for a semester in the Spanish Department at UNM, my

undergraduate students from East Mesa always described their home community in positive terms. To them, it was a special place with a unique history and culture. Two teachers founded East Mesa Academy because they recognized the need for a community-based, small school environment in this particular area of the city. In the 2017-2018 school year, the school served 460 students; 96% of the students were Hispanic, 3% were White, and .4% were African American. Over 90% of students at the school qualified for free or reduced lunch; 31% were classified as emergent bilinguals (or English language learners), and 12% were classified as receiving special education services. The average 7<sup>th</sup> grader at the time of the study had a 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. According to the results of a state mandated standardized assessment (the PARCC test), 14% of students at East Mesa Academy were proficient in reading and 4% were proficient in math. Despite these low scores on standardized assessments, the school had a graduation rate of 85%, a remarkably high percentage.

At the time of this study, EMA was, in Anna's words, an "*unofficial bilingual school*" (Anna, Interview, 10/3/16). The school offered Spanish language classes at all grade levels and students were required to take Spanish, though the classes were structured like a traditional world language class and focused on learning grammar. However, according to Anna, the language teachers spoke only in Spanish in class and focused very much on building oral proficiency and learning about and strengthening students' cultural knowledge. For example, 7<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish students tape recorded themselves retelling traditional legends known in their families and communities for their final exhibition project.<sup>7</sup> Electives at the school, such as Art, Physical Education, and Drama, were taught every other day in

---

<sup>7</sup> I explain the exhibition projects at the school in more detail later

Spanish. Student participants in my study talked about EMA in positive terms, and also referred to it as a bilingual school. For example, Ernesto described the school as a school “for” bilingual kids: *So, it’s for the bilingual...like, in other schools it’s just the class and here you can talk it [Spanish] everywhere. It’s not just the class, it’s kind of, the school* (Ernesto, Interview, 11/15/17). Adán, another student, said he enjoyed attending EMA: *“It’s good cause you can concentrate in like two languages, and you don’t lose either, your English or your Spanish.”* (Adán, Interview, 11/27/17). In short, Spanish was used by many students in and out of class throughout the day. Anna instructed in English and was dedicated to providing a model of the English language for her students, as this was the expectation for the Humanities teachers at the school. Anna conceptualized her students as simultaneous language learners with the following definition:

*My students are simultaneous language learners. So, the vast majority of them speak Spanish, or Spanish and English at home, but that doesn’t mean they’re quote-unquote literate in Spanish. So, when they come to school, they’re learning English, but they also take Spanish where they’re really learning reading and writing in Spanish as well. So, our students really do need help in learning English, but also in Spanish. Most of our students have parents who have immigrated to the United States. So most of our students have been born in the United States, but they have very strong family and cultural ties to Mexico, and that’s very much celebrated here.* (Anna, 10/03/16)

Though Anna affirms here that most of her students are progressing in their proficiency in English and Spanish ‘simultaneously,’ there was a wide variation in language proficiency

and linguistic experiences amongst this group of adolescents, and students progressed in their language development at different rates, according to their unique needs and abilities. Anna offered a wide range of linguistic support in her classroom, which focused on the acquisition of English. As a seasoned teacher of bilingual students, she relied on strategies to strengthen students' literacy skills and oral English proficiency. I discuss some of these strategies in detail in chapter four.

### **Anna's classroom**

I limited my study to the case of Anna's classroom when she implemented the Language Box project. Though I spent some time in other school spaces, I did not write field notes about the time spent in other spaces, nor did I interview other teachers or school employees aside from Anna. My understanding of the school is truly through the perspective of Anna and her students as I myself spent very little time outside Anna's classroom. I sometimes felt quite limited, feeling like I was missing out on the bigger picture. Anna and her students were experiencing the school in the broader, fuller context of everyday activity. But this limitation also clarified the dissertation data for me, and I was truly seeing these places and people through the eyes of the study participants rather than my own. My perception relied entirely on what they told me.

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities class was located in a portable a short walk from the main office. The walls of the classroom were covered in student work, motivational posters, and history curriculum materials, such as timelines and geographical maps. Next to the door was a portable closet full of student binders, and at the front was a white board with a teacher station directly in front of it. The teacher's desk was in the back left corner, and opposite was a couch with pillows and a small coffee table. Two bookshelves at the back were loaded



with young adult literature. Along the back wall was a table, usually covered with crafts, student papers, and, at the end of October, Día de los Muertos holiday decorations. This was where I would sit to observe Anna's teaching if I was not walking around assisting students (see map of classroom in Appendix A).

For Anna, teaching began with forming relationships with her students. As she explained to me in an interview:

*I really like working with those kids because I really like being able to make a personal connection with them. I like being able to let them know that they have a safe environment at school, and they can come here and feel safe. So that's what I try to do first, when they come to my classroom we create a safe environment that's accepting to all students. And then, then comes the academics. I just think that teachers too often try to teach content before their students trust them or feel safe at school. (Anna, Interview, 10/03/16)*

I often observed students hanging back after class to talk with Anna about a variety of topics including their personal and home lives, books they were reading, or projects they were working on in her class or in other classes. In fact, almost any time I met with Anna we were interrupted by students wanting to talk with her. I took this as a sign of Anna's positive rapport with students. She invited me to community events where she knew students and parents would be attending, and I once went with her to a students' water polo match on a Saturday afternoon. Initiating a safe environment in the classroom and a trusting relationship with her students is in large part what allowed Anna to implement a project that focused so

much on students' families, which can be a vulnerable topic for many individuals, especially young adolescents (Sleeter, 2012; Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017).

### **National politics at the time of the study**

Significant political events transpired during the two school years (2016-2017) the study took place. In fall 2016, Donald Trump was elected as President of the United States. Many of the students at East Mesa Academy were undocumented or had family members who were undocumented, and the election caused some students and their families to fear for the worst. Trump had campaigned incessantly for a border wall between the United States and Mexico and repeatedly disparaged Mexicans and Mexican Americans, calling Mexicans drug dealers, criminals, and rapists (Reilly, 2016). When he was elected, Anna told me that students came to school crying, worried that they or their parents would soon be deported and/or separated. During the dissertation study in fall 2017, the Trump administration rescinded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a program that granted temporary work visas to individuals who had been brought to the United States as children and were undocumented:

The Trump administration Tuesday formally announced it will end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program- also called DACA- putting an expiration date on the legal protections granted to roughly 800,000 people known as 'DREAMers,' who entered the country illegally as children (Romo, Stewart, & Naylor, 2017).

These political events were not only topics in the news; students lived them in their homes and community. During a class activity in which we analyzed census data, as Anna explained what the census was, a student asked, "*Es la migra?*" (Is it the border patrol?)

(Field notes, 11/06/17). This question reminded me as an outsider of my privilege of citizenship, and the harsh realities that some of Anna's students faced daily. Nevertheless, Anna felt that the school did a good job of addressing the issues, as she explained to me the extra events and resources the school made available to families:

*It's just been such a rough year politically. It weighs really heavily on some kids for sure. However, I think our school is kind of a hub for support and networking. As soon as Trump was elected, we had workshops, counseling sessions for parents and families. And when the DACA announcement was made, same thing. We definitely have a lot of undocumented students in these two cohorts. (Anna, Planning session, 10/20/17)*

I observed flyers for events such as citizenship classes posted in the office, confirming what Anna told me about the school culture. The thirteen student participants in my study all agreed that they enjoyed attending EMA. A few who had negative experiences at other schools commented to me specifically what a special place EMA was:

- 1) *At this school I think kids are more mature. Like over there at the other school everyone was a tattletale, but at this school they [teachers] all really want you to get better. (Adan, Interview, 11/27/17)*
- 2) *It feels fun [to go to school here]. It gets me more comfortable with the other kids, I'm not like scared that I'm the only one that talks Spanish. (Nicole, Interview, 11/15/17)*
- 3) *[It's] cool 'cuz puedo hablar español con algunos de mis maestros [I can speak Spanish with some of my teachers] and English with my other teachers, and I practice my English and my Spanish, and I have friends that speak both, and it's*

*cool 'cuz when I don't know how to say a word in English they help me, um, because I struggle sometimes with English, and the teachers tell me sometimes how to pronounce, the pronunciation of words in English. (David, Interview, 11/13/17)*

The positive characterizations of the school culture by Anna and her students led me to believe that EMA was indeed a special place.

### **Pilot study**

I conducted a pilot study in fall 2016 in order to collect data on our first attempt at developing and implementing the Language Box project. The pilot study focused exclusively on Anna's teaching and our collaborative planning and reflection. My research question was: *How does Anna use the Language Box project in her classroom?* The data were very limited, but they served as a foundation for my dissertation study. More than anything, being in the classroom and recording how the project was designed and implemented helped Anna and me the following year as we set out to improve it. I collected pilot study data in fall 2016, from September 30<sup>th</sup>- November 11<sup>th</sup>. I recorded two planning sessions, conducted two interviews with Anna, and observed her classroom eight times. The classroom observations took place over two and a half weeks between October 14<sup>th</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016. When I observed, I would only observe one of Anna's two block periods, which each lasted 100 minutes. After each observation, Anna and I reflected together on the lesson and sometimes planned or adjusted plans for the next lesson, depending on what happened that day. Below is a table that summarizes the pilot study data I collected:

Table 1: Pilot study data collection

|  | Number | Total time spent |
|--|--------|------------------|
| Total time in the field                        |        | 19 hours         |
| Planning sessions                              | 2      | 1.5 hours        |
| Observations and post-observations reflections | 8      | 16 hours         |
| Interviews                                     | 2      | 1.5 hours        |

I did not collect student data during the pilot study and instead focused on the pedagogical work of designing, implementing, and reflecting on the Language Box project. I had a busy schedule at the university, teaching a course, working as a Research Assistant, and taking two graduate courses, which limited my time and availability to make visits to the school. Regardless, the pilot study played an important role in developing the Language Box project and familiarizing me with Anna's classroom and teaching style.

I analyzed the data using a thematic analysis. I open-coded field notes and interviews, and looked for patterns across pieces of data. Then, I constructed categories based on those patterns (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). The results of my analysis were the following. Anna used the Language Box project in her classroom to:

1. Encourage students to discover and deepen their understanding of their own, unique experiences and histories with language;
2. Broaden students' understanding of linguistic diversity in the classroom, community, and nation;
3. Empower students to make changes in their own language use practices, if desired.

The three themes developed from the pilot study served a dual purpose. Firstly, the themes guided Anna and my reflection and planning the following fall as we revised the Language

Box project. Secondly, the themes gave me a starting place from which to understand and analyze the pedagogical data collected in the dissertation study conducted in fall 2017.

### **Participant-observation**

I focused the pilot study on the curriculum development and the collaborative work with Anna that it took to produce the Language Box project; I did not collect data from students and spent most of my time in the back of the classroom writing down field notes. I did interact with students during group work time and occasionally offered some assistance to them but it was minimal, and I did not record in my field notes anything about these interactions. In other words, my role in the classroom during the pilot study was as an observer. When we met to plan for the dissertation study, Anna and I agreed that I would be much more involved in classroom activity. I did spend some time sitting at the back of the classroom writing field notes, especially right after I participated with students in small group discussions, but I spent most of my time getting to know students by assisting them with their classwork or making conversation before and after class. I acted more or less as an instructional assistant. Students came to know me as Ms. Molly, and Anna often said things like *“Now, Ms. Molly and I are going to come around to check your work,”* or *“If you need extra help, you can always ask Ms. Molly, too.”* Anna and I planned a lesson together we called, “What is a researcher?” and I helped model “good” interview skills to the class, skills extremely useful when the students interviewed their own family members. I became a member of the classroom community, and I even returned in the spring after my baby was born to introduce him to Anna’s students. Because I was seven months pregnant when I began collecting data for my dissertation in fall 2017, many of Anna’s students were very curious about my baby.

My dual role as a researcher and classroom assistant forced me to reflect carefully on the way my presence altered the data, especially because students would ask me so often for help or input. In other words, I intentionally altered their perceptions, values, and knowledge through my own participation in the classroom, as I took on a teaching role. I was helping them learn the content, which was focused on heightening their awareness of language loss, bilingualism, and language acquisition. The excerpt from a reflective memo illustrates my involvement with students in the classroom and the kinds of support I offered them individually as they wrote an analysis paragraph for their final projects:

*On Wednesday, I got to spend most of class working one-on-one with students as they wrote their analysis. Many of them wrote a page, or even a page and a half. Anna reminded me that these are not kids that enjoy writing. I find this quite impressive. I know this unit isn't like some magic formula that gets bilingual kids engaged in writing, but it is significant to both Anna and me that many of them are writing so much. There were of course other kids who didn't write a lot and who were confused and not sure what to do. I ended up giving some kids a lot of help who were really not sure what they were supposed to analyze. I still think this was very much a minority of the students in both classes; however, most of the students knew exactly what to do since we had spent so much time talking about it. (Reflection Memo, 11/17/17)*

I was careful to not show favoritism to the thirteen consented study participants (I explain in more detail later how students consented to participate) by circulating the classroom during observations and working with small groups or individuals regardless of whether they were study participants. As a result, I ended up getting to know many students

well who were not participants in my study. If Anna asked for me to work with a student, I always said yes, even if it meant I had limited time to talk with the participants in my study, conduct an interview, or write down field notes. I often struggled with researcher guilt, feeling like I was asking too much of Anna. She was busy, pregnant, and stressed- like many teachers- from the constriction of time and the many personal issues her students brought to her. Working with students, and anything else I could do to contribute to her work and her students' learning, I considered reciprocity to a small extent for imposing so much on her. When I interviewed Anna a couple of months after the project had been completed, she said that looking back, it was ultimately very helpful to have my help planning and implementing the project:

*I also just think a major benefit was having you and Lois<sup>8</sup> and other classmates from graduate school as resources, so professional resources within the 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. And I guess that's what I would say was really wonderful about working with you, I wasn't alone in the planning. Not like I really would have been alone, because I would have had the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities teacher planning the curriculum with me, but, um, I had your expertise to help me. (Anna, Interview, 01/24/18)*

### **Researcher as outsider**

On my second observation day during the dissertation study (10/18/17), a student came to Anna and told her he did not feel comfortable when I was in the classroom. Inez, the Special Education Instructional Assistant, who was a member of the East Mesa community

---

<sup>8</sup> Anna refers here to Dr. Lois Meyer, my doctoral advisor. We took a class on language development from Dr. Meyer which led us to create the Language Box project based on one of the assignments that Meyer designed and had us complete as graduate students.



and a Latina, talked with this student and found that he was worried I was gathering information to give to the police. I felt terrible. I talked with Anna and Inez about how to address this problem, and a few days later, they facilitated a conversation between the student and me, and I was able to explain to him my role and purpose in the classroom as a researcher and helper with the Language Box project. Interactions like this were difficult to process. I struggled, feeling like a burden to Anna and an intruder in the school community. It was uncomfortable for me to realize my presence in the classroom caused at least one student to pause and wonder whether I was a threat. These instances also reveal the reality of a school such as EMA at this particular time in the Southwest United States. My work was wrapped up in all of this, and it all very much affected how I processed, reflected on, and analyzed the data presented in this dissertation.

### **Recruitment of 7<sup>th</sup> grader participants**

In September, 2017, I recruited 7<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate in my study by visiting Anna's classroom and making an announcement in her morning and afternoon Humanities classes. To ensure confidentiality, Anna left the room, and I spoke with students alone. I came prepared with a consent form written in Spanish and English and written at a reading level appropriate for young adolescent students. I explained to Anna's students that the form needed to be signed by them and their parents. I also left a large manila folder in Anna's classroom, placed by the door, and let students know that they could return the consent forms to me by placing them in the folder. Anna had twenty-four students in each of her Humanities classes (making a total of forty-eight students). A total of fourteen students returned signed consent forms; nine from the morning class and five from the afternoon class. There was one student from the afternoon class that I chose to not include in the final

study because he was so frequently absent from class and did not turn in his final project. Because there were few opportunities to generate data from his class work, I felt it was best to not include him in the dissertation study.

When the time came to conduct interviews with students, I would check in with them quietly during silent independent reading time (which always happened at the beginning of the class period) and asked if they were still willing to participate in my study. We would arrange to meet at Anna's classroom during lunch and then walked next door to the portable where the computer lab was empty during lunchtime. I always reminded them at the beginning of an interview that they would remain anonymous, that they did not have to answer any questions they did not wish to answer, and that they could speak in English or Spanish any time they wanted during the interview. I also made sure they knew that what they *did* choose to share would potentially be published in my study. As some of these youth were undocumented, I found it especially important that they clearly understood what it meant to participate in the study. All participants were given pseudonyms, including the school, teacher, and Instructional Assistant. On page 76, there is a table that provides demographic information for the thirteen students who consented to participate in the study and from whom I collected dissertation data.

It is important to note how I have chosen to describe students' proficiency in English and Spanish. Whenever I characterize students' language abilities in this dissertation, I describe them in the way that the students have described themselves to me in interviews, in their Language Box project written assignments, and in class discussions. The table below provides information on each participant's place of birth, first language, "dominant"

language (in response to an interview question: *Which language do you feel most comfortable using?*), and their parents' place of birth:

Table 2: Student participant demographics

| Participant Pseudonym | Place of birth | First language (Spanish or English) | Dominant language (Spanish or English) | Mother's place of birth | Father's place of birth |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Andrés                | Albuquerque    | English                             | English                                | New Mexico              | New Mexico              |
| Nadine                | Albuquerque    | English                             | English                                | Albuquerque             | Albuquerque             |
| Xena                  | Albuquerque    | English                             | English                                | Albuquerque             | Mexico                  |
| Adán                  | Albuquerque    | Spanish                             | Both                                   | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Ernesto               | Mexico         | Spanish                             | Both                                   | Mexico                  | United States           |
| Genesis               | Albuquerque    | Both                                | Both                                   | Mexico                  | United States           |
| Jennifer              | Albuquerque    | Both                                | Both                                   | New Mexico              | Mexico                  |
| Nicole                | Albuquerque    | Spanish                             | Both                                   | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Simón                 | Albuquerque    | Spanish                             | Both                                   | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| David                 | Mexico         | Spanish                             | Spanish                                | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Hugo                  | Albuquerque    | Spanish                             | Spanish                                | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Monica                | Albuquerque    | Spanish                             | Spanish                                | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Ramón                 | Albuquerque    | Spanish                             | Spanish                                | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |

There were three students who were English dominant. I classify these three students as heritage learners of Spanish as they clearly described to me their families' identity as Hispanic New Mexican, their families' intergenerational loss of Spanish, and their own attempts (to varying degrees) or intentions to revitalize Spanish at home and at school.

Andrés describes himself as a monolingual English speaker and Nadine and Xena described themselves as able to understand Spanish but not proficient in speaking Spanish. I describe Nadine and Xena as passive bilinguals and Andrés as a monolingual English speaker. There were six student participants (Adán, Ernesto, Genesis, Jennifer, Nicole, and Simón) who described themselves as equally comfortable and proficient in Spanish and English, and I describe these students as balanced bilinguals. David, Hugo, Monica, and Ramón all described themselves as Spanish dominant. I did not have access to school records, so I do

not know which students were categorized by the school as emergent bilingual (or English language learners). Hugo, Monica, and David were all aware of their developing English, and I believe it is likely they were classified as EBs, though I cannot confirm this. I describe these students as Spanish dominant, according to their own assessment of their proficiency in English and Spanish, and I made no evaluation of their proficiency in English or Spanish. David and Ernesto were the only participants born in Mexico; David came to the U.S. when he was three years old and was undocumented; Ernesto thinks he came to the U.S. when he was about two years old, but he did not know exactly.

When I began transcribing the student interviews, I realized that students were speaking different varieties of English (I had not paid close attention to linguistic variation during data collection). Some students spoke a variety of English that would be called “Standard English” or “Dominant American English” (Paris, 2012), while others growing up in bilingual households spoke “Chicano English” (Valdés, 2000). Still others spoke English as a second language and thus spoke what some would call “Learner English,” language affected phonologically and morphosyntactically by their first language (in this case, Spanish). A linguistic analysis is beyond the scope of this study and I make no assertions about whether students speak “Chicano English” or “Learner English,” or why they do so, though it is important to mention the varieties of language these students produced and heard others speak in the classroom. I transcribed interview data verbatim but did not do a phonetic transcription because I did not conduct a linguistic analysis. For example, I transcribe words like “wanna,” “cuz,” and “gonna” but do not transcribe various pronunciations of the word initial sound in “thanks” ([θ] or [t], depending on the speaker). When students used Spanish in interviews, in writing, or in class conversations, I wrote down

exactly what they said, and then translated any Spanish to English. I checked the translations with a native speaker of Spanish; here I provide English translations in parentheses. Any sample of student writing is left ‘as is’ in the dissertation. I make no spelling or grammatical adjustments to what they produced. I do add information to some hard-to-interpret samples, using my own words in parentheses. I want anyone who reads this to see exactly what students produced, and what Anna saw when she assessed their academic work.

### **Methods of data collection and analysis**

I wanted to generate data that would allow me to analyze the collaborative process Anna and I participated in as we developed the Language Box project, as well as data that would allow me to explore in as much detail as possible who the students were, where they came from, and what they made of their own experiences with language. Qualitative researchers traditionally gather data from multiple sources in order to triangulate their findings. In case studies, triangulation of methods is especially important since the case is limited in scope and using multiple methods of data collection strengthens the findings and adds dimension to the case (Stake, 2005).

I collected data for the dissertation study in fall 2017. The Language Box project lasted five weeks (October 16<sup>th</sup>- November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017)<sup>9</sup>, and I spent roughly six hours a day, three days a week collecting data during that time. Anna and I also met one time before October (on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017) to plan together before the unit began. I observed her teaching on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. After every class period, Anna and I always had a conversation where we debriefed the lesson and reflected together. This time was also sometimes used to adjust or change plans for the next lesson, depending on how

---

<sup>9</sup> This includes a week-long break during Thanksgiving

things were going. There were times that these post-observation reflections were brief, as Anna had many responsibilities to plan, meet with other teachers and students, and so on. I also had responsibilities- I was teaching two classes at the University of New Mexico and working as a research assistant in the Linguistics Department. But we always made sure we at least let each other know how we thought things went, even if it was just a short, five-minute conversation. During some of our reflective conversations, we would review student work together. This served as a way of gauging whether students were “getting it.”

During the dissertation study I stayed all day in Anna’s classroom, observing both the morning and afternoon class periods that each lasted 100 minutes. At the end of each class period and after we had reflected together, I made copies of student work from consented students. I was only able to collect work that was turned in at the end of class. I ended up collecting student work from five lessons. I also collected students’ final projects. In total, I collected 447 pages of student work. Between class periods, I would sometimes talk with students, plan with Anna, or write in my researcher journal. By the end of the project, I was nine months pregnant (I was due on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017), and I ended up staying only a half day the very last lesson because I was very tired and uncomfortable.

I interviewed Anna at the beginning and end of the Language Box project implementation, and I also interviewed the thirteen consented student participants once near the end of the project. Student interviews took place during lunch or during a twenty-five-minute advisory period right after lunch. Near the end of the project, I interviewed three students during Anna’s class period because I was running out of time. Each class period began with 15-20 minutes of silent reading, and Anna agreed to let me interview students during this time. I did not specify which students I was interviewing, but it is possible she

noticed which of her students accompanied me to the computer lab during class time. The student interviews lasted 20-25 minutes, depending on how much time the student had during lunch, advisory, or their Humanities class period. All thirteen students who consented to the study also agreed to be interviewed. Finally, I attended the community exhibition where students presented their final Language Box projects. The event lasted about an hour and a half, and I attended as a guest. Below are two tables that summarize the data collected in the dissertation study. Table 3 represents the number of times I engaged in specific activities (planning, observing, interviewing), how much time I spent engaged in those activities, and the data that came from that source. Table 4 represents the student artifacts that I collected and from which lessons they were collected. I collected artifacts from each of the thirteen students as long as they were present in class. If a student was absent during a lesson, then I did not have a chance to collect their work. I note this in Table 4. Three of the artifacts (Final Projects, Parent Interviews, and Analysis Discussion Sheets) were not collected until after the project was completed:

Table 3: Data collection sources

|                    | Number | Time spent | Data collected                   |
|--------------------|--------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Planning sessions  | 3      | 2 hours    | Field notes, reflective memos    |
| Observations       | 12     | 38 hours   | Field notes, reflective memos    |
| Teacher interviews | 2      | 2 hours    | Audio recorded, reflective memos |
| Student interviews | 14     | 4.5 hours  | Audio recorded, reflective memos |
| Exhibition         | 1      | 1.5 hours  | Field notes                      |
| Total              |        | 48 hours   |                                  |

Table 4: Artifact Data Collection<sup>10</sup>

| Date     | Lesson                                | Artifact name  | Number of copies |
|----------|---------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| 10/16/17 | Mapping language at school            | Map of language exposure, exit slip                    | 11               |
| 10/18/17 | Gallery Walk: What is a Language Box? | Exit slips   | 8                |
| 10/20/17 | U.S. History of Language              | Stations packet  | 13               |
| 10/23/17 | Home Language exposure                | Reflection Sheet, Home and school Language Box graphic | 12               |
| 11/06/17 | U.S. Census Data                      | Exit slips   | 11               |
| 1/24/18  | Parent Interview                      | Parent Interview sheet                                 | 13               |
| 11/17/17 | Analysis Themes                       | Stations packet  | 13               |
| 1/24/18  | Analysis Discussion                   | Reflection Sheet                                       | 13               |
| 1/24/18  | Exhibition                            | Final Projects   | 13               |
| Total    |                                       |  | 107              |

I had originally intended to also conduct focus groups with students at the end of the project. This proved impossible due to the school schedule and the pressure teachers felt to get students ready to present quality final projects at the exhibition. I also intended to interview parents after the community exhibition to capture their perspectives on the project. Four parents indicated on consent forms that they would be interested in participating in the study. I contacted these four parents by telephone in January, 2018. Two parents did not have time to participate in an interview. The other two parents spoke with me over the phone months after the Language Box project had been completed. I took notes about our conversation but did not collect substantial data from these conversations and do not include them as data in this dissertation. There was not enough information to rationalize including them.

<sup>10</sup> A copy of these artifacts can be found in Appendix C





## Analysis

I used Dedoose<sup>11</sup>, a qualitative analysis app, to analyze my dissertation data. I uploaded field notes, transcripts from interviews, and copies of artifacts into Dedoose, and coded the data electronically. I conducted two analyses that, though they were separate, were very much informed by each other. I had two pedagogical research questions that were concerned with the process and results of the curricular process. I also had two research questions that focused on students' perspectives. All of the data were used for both analyses except for the interviews with Anna- I did not use interviews conducted with Anna to analyze student experiences and perspectives. Though essentially using the same set of data, I took on a different perspective when conducting each of the analyses.

### Analyzing pedagogy

My pedagogical research questions were aimed at understanding the process of carrying out the Language Box curriculum and describing the ways that it possibly impacted students. I began my analysis by organizing the data. I transcribed interviews with Anna and the students, and uploaded transcripts, field notes (from observations and planning sessions), copies of student work from artifacts, and reflective memos into Dedoose. I coded field notes first and did a mix of inductive and deductive coding (Miles et al., 2014). I already knew some of the concepts I would be interested in before beginning the process because of the pilot study and my theoretical framework.

### Deductive coding

I created the codes: *unique experience*, *shared language experience*, and *empowerment*, at the beginning of the coding process. I knew that Anna was interested in

---

<sup>11</sup> For more information about Dedoose, visit <https://www.dedoose.com/>

having students compare and contrast their own experiences with language use, so it seemed appropriate to code when, where, and how students were talking about their language experiences together in class. I also used the code *empowerment* because I was particularly interested in identifying the kinds of activities that facilitated reflective and analytical dialogue about language. This code ended up being not as useful as I thought because I ended up making value judgments on what kinds of activities appeared to me to be empowering, or not, for students. The code did not help me understand what empowerment looked or felt like for students. I ended up relying much more on students' written reflections to understand how or whether any kind of transformative learning took place as a result of the project. There was one reflection prompt that was specifically insightful: *Has your attitude toward language changed because of this project? How?* I used data from this question, as well as other written reflections, and comments in one-on-one interviews or comments made publicly during class discussion, to ascertain what students learned from the project, and how or whether this learning impacted their understanding of language use practices in their own lives. I also paid attention to what students were willing to share publicly and what they shared privately in an interview with me.

### **Inductive coding**

Other more meaningful codes arose as I read through my field notes. I created codes like: *student affirmations*, *academic language*, *vulnerability*, *curiosity*, and *scaffolding*, that helped me to understand the way that Anna supported her students' learning throughout the project. These codes gave me insight into her teaching style, values, and relationships with students. I found that she was constantly affirming students' participation in class, their vulnerability in sharing sensitive or personal information, and she emphasized practicing

curiosity, which she described as an important skill for student researchers to possess. The use of academic language and scaffolded instruction also gave me insight into how she facilitated students' understanding of the major concepts that were important to their projects. I also came up with codes that helped me organize the data. For example, I created organizational codes like: *teacher talk*, *student talk*, *pedagogical decision*, *teacher intentions*, and *student understanding*. These codes were applied to field notes, planning sessions, and interviews. They organized the data into separate categories for me. I could take a look at all the teacher talk at once, or all the student talk. I could look at all the pedagogical decisions Anna and I made before and during the unit implementation. And I could look back and see what Anna intended to do and compare it to what ended up happening.

The inductive codes, along with my reflective memos, were the most helpful in answering my first research question, which concerned the process of carrying out the project. The pedagogical analysis was very reflective. I sought to connect what Anna and I intended- our global pedagogical goals - with the specific lesson design and plans, Anna's teaching practices and instruction, and our reflections together as a teacher-researcher team. I also connected all of this to what students wrote, said, and produced as a result of their participation in the project. Coding the data was helpful, as was writing analytical memos along the way. My pedagogical questions were concerned with the process and results of the curriculum. Coding the data helped me to understand some of the dimensions of the process and the way Anna's teaching impacted the design and implementation of the project. But I did not create categories or themes as is typical in qualitative work. Chapter four contains the pedagogical analysis, and this chapter is very much a reflection on how the curriculum was carried out, whether we met our pedagogical goals or not, and what students said or

wrote about how the project impacted them. I report the findings of the pedagogical analysis in chapter four.

### **Analyzing student perspectives**

I did a cross-case analysis of eight adolescent participants in order to understand how students analyzed the way bilingualism was developing in their families. I selected the eight student cases based on what they wrote about in their final projects. Four students chose to write about their perspective on English language acquisition, and how that process was impacting their family's experiences. Four other students chose to write about the way that Spanish language loss had impacted their families or would impact their families in the future. I did not make any judgments or suppositions about whether these processes were "really" taking place. This is important, because I would not have guessed that some of these students would write about their chosen theme. For example, I was initially surprised by Nicole's decision to write about Spanish language loss because I observed her speaking Spanish often in class with other students, and she characterized herself as a balanced bilingual. Building my analysis on students' own analyses was much more informative than beginning with my own observations of language use in class, especially because I spent a limited amount of time in the classroom. I wanted to ground the analysis as much as possible in students' own understanding. Beginning with their learning from the project felt like the most logical place to start.

I coded students' final projects, written reflections, interviews, and their verbal participation in class from field notes. I created a code for each student, which allowed me to easily see the entirety of data on each student. I began to notice similarities and differences across their experiences. The four students who wrote about English language acquisition

shared similar experiences and perspectives, but also differed in significant ways. The same was true of the four students who wrote about Spanish language loss. I formed categories based on the patterns I saw across these participants, and decided to create matrices, one for each of the two student groups (English language acquisition and Spanish language loss) to visually represent the patterns I saw. These allowed me to compare and contrast student cases within groups and across groups. Each matrix is a table organized by students' names and different concepts that I found very relevant to compare across individual cases, for example: *language exposure at home, language exposure at school, attitude toward bilingualism, feelings toward speaking Spanish, and past experiences learning English*. I filled the table with summaries of student comments or verbatim chunks of data. The two matrices can be found in Appendix B. These matrices were also helpful in reformulating the second research question aimed at student perspectives. Observing when and where students said they used (or did not use) Spanish or English, and how they felt about their use of those languages, led me to investigate their perceived opportunities to develop bilingualism. I report the findings of the analysis of student perspectives in chapter five.

### **Trustworthiness**

Qualitative analysis is an act of interpretation, and each researcher will come to different conclusions about their data (Geertz, 1994). And yet, researchers still must ensure that the results of their study are believable and credible (Maxwell, 2013; Glesne, 2016). I was an outsider in the school. I was White, had not spent significant time in the school or East Mesa community, and was not a teacher at the school. I had taught as a student teacher previously at a middle school in Washington state, but most of my teaching experience was in university level classrooms with international students studying English. Yet I had insider

status with Anna through our friendship and shared experiences with pregnancy and miscarriages. I was a researcher, but I also interacted with students as an instructional assistant. I also helped Anna develop lessons and design the Language Box project. My involvement with Anna and her students was significant, and I found ways to account for and reflect on this involvement. I have sought to be as transparent as possible about this involvement and how it affected the data that I collected. I wrote reflective memos which contained my thoughts, feelings, and reflections on my own experience in the field; I gathered data from multiple sources, using audio recording during interviews with students and with Anna. I paid close attention to what students said publicly in class, what they wrote in reflections, their final projects which were shared publicly at the community exhibition, and what they said privately to me in individual interviews. I let students share whatever they wanted with me about their families and personal lives. Some of them chose to share very personal information, such as their documentation status, fear of being bullied at school, mental health issues, and stories of violence in their neighborhood. Other students shared very little with me. Perhaps with time, some of these students would have opened up, sharing more as I developed rapport with them. My limited time spent in the field prevented me from digging deeper into some of the students' stories, all of which were fascinating to me.

I also shared my developing analysis with Anna. I was unable to specifically share which of her students consented to participate in the study, as she was not formally a researcher listed on the study IRB, but I shared as much as I could with her about what I was thinking and observing, especially pedagogically. This served as a member check (Glesne, 2016). Lastly, I looked for contradictory cases in the data in order to ensure that my

assertions were substantiated by the data. I found this to be particularly important when answering my research question about transformative results of the project. I found evidence that some students did indeed experience changes in their attitudes, and even one student participant, Nicole, wrote passionately about wishing to reverse Spanish language loss in her family. This was what we hoped would happen. There were other cases in which students showed no evidence that they had learned anything transformative about themselves or their families, even if they enjoyed the project. I share these cases, too, in the data analysis. I chose to ground my analysis of student perspectives in their own final project analyses. I wanted to understand why they believed language loss or acquisition was taking place in their families, and what implications they believed this had for their future and for the prospect of bilingual language development. The curriculum directly impacted their understanding of these processes. For example, one of the students who seemed to benefit the most from the project was Hugo, a Mexican American boy who was still not confident using English, despite having been exposed to English at school since kindergarten. Through dialogue in class and personal reflection, he reported that he came to a new understanding of the important role his acquisition of English was playing in his family. His learning was directly and positively impacting his parents, and also was providing more opportunities for his whole family. The student perspectives should be read with the knowledge that they are the direct results of students' learnings from the project



## **Chapter 4**

### **Analysis part I: Analyzing pedagogy**

I address two research questions in this chapter:

1. What is the process of developing and implementing the Language Box project?
2. How can the Language Box project be transformative for adolescent bilingual New Mexican students?

I explain where the project came from, along with the process of crafting and revising it to the needs of young adolescent students over two school years, from fall 2016 to fall 2017. I rely on field notes from planning sessions with Anna and classroom observations, interviews, and reflective memos to answer my research questions above. I describe the ten lessons that Anna and I designed and that Anna implemented to demonstrate the academic work required of students during the unit. I include a reflection of how each lesson went, according to Anna and me, and how we planned or revised plans accordingly. At the end, I revisit our pedagogical goals (which are outlined in this chapter in a following section) and reflect on whether and how those goals were met. I answer the second research question by using students' written reflections, final projects, and comments to me during interviews to demonstrate the transformative learning that took place during or as a result of the project, as identified by the students themselves. My focus in this first analysis section is pedagogical—the design, implementation, and lived experience of the curriculum. My position as a curriculum designer and classroom assistant is highlighted in this section. I use Anna's impressions and reflections as a guide, especially since she knew her students so much better than I did. I only spent about two months in her classroom, a relatively short amount of time to get to know students personally. Student written work is presented “as is,” and I do not

edit their writing because I want to give the reader an accurate understanding of what the students' work was like, and what Anna and I saw as we reviewed their work together. This chapter is analytical, but also reflective. My priority was looking at the curriculum through the perspectives of the teacher and the students in order to come to conclusions about how they experienced the curriculum. I add my voice, too, because I was an active member of the classroom during those blocks of time across five weeks when all of us – teacher, students and researcher – engaged the Language Box project as our shared curriculum experience.

### The Mackey Boxes

The Language Box project is a direct adaptation of an assignment that Anna and I completed as graduate students in Dr. Lois Meyer's course, LLSS 556: First and Second Language Development within Cultural Contexts. In this section I describe Meyer's original project and explain how and why Anna and I chose to adapt it for use with 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in her classroom. Below is a graphic that Meyer calls a "Mackey Box."

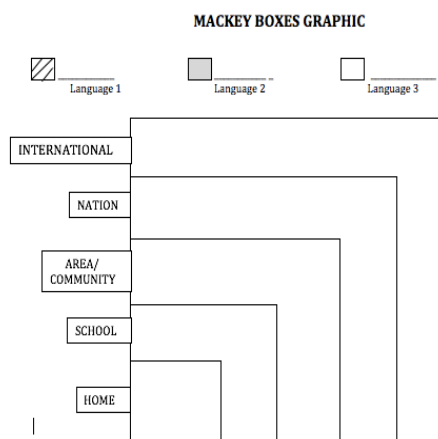


Figure 4.1 Mackey Box graphic

Each section of the graphic represents a distinct social space: the home, school, area/community, nation, and then international (which is meant to represent time spent physically in a country other than the home country, or time spent communicating by

telephone or internet with speakers who reside in another country, or time spent viewing films or other media originating in another country). The graphic was used first by Mackey (1970), who was graphically displaying types of bilingual programs in the world (he called his work a typology of bilingual education). He analyzed bilingual program types according to the general characteristics of the students who composed them (he identified five types of students according to their language use); the types of curriculum in the school, the language use possibilities in communities, and the language use possibilities of nations. Each type of student that Mackey identified was represented by shading in different sections of the graphic to represent language use. For example, in Figure 1 below, the home language is not spoken in any other social domain:

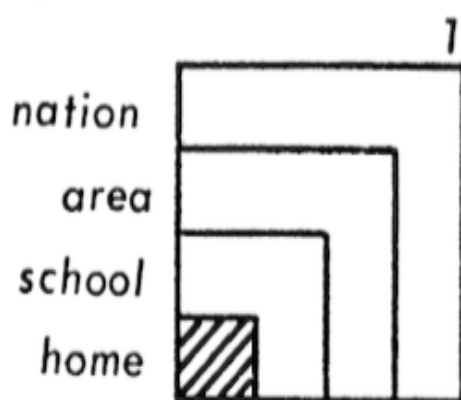


Figure 4.2 Mackey, 1970, p. 602

This is one kind of bilingual child, whose home language is not reinforced in any other social space. Mackey's work was not individuated to specific students or their families; instead, he was displaying generalized characteristics of types of students and the different possible types of programs, curricula, linguistic communities and nations they might inhabit. He was focused on describing general patterns of language use, which have implications for curriculum and program design. Dr. Meyer's use of the graphic is quite distinct from

Mackey's original intentions. Rather than asking the question: *What types of bilingual education programs exist in the world and why are they constructed as they are?*, Meyer prompts students to ask very personal, biographical questions: *What are and have been my language and culture exposures, especially in my early life? Why are my language and culture exposures the way they are? And how did they get to be that way?* Meyer asks students to create graphics, like the one above, for 2 or 3 older family members, along with one for themselves, and perhaps one for a child in their family, with the purpose of comparing and contrasting the way that language use and other cultural traits have changed across generations in their own personal histories<sup>12</sup> (Meyer, 2015).

Meyer stipulated that each graphic should represent the language use of an individual at the age of six, the age at which children likely enter school. Students write a detailed narrative to accompany each graphic, describing social and cultural practices that include not only language use, but also household chores, schooling experiences, literacy practices, and other social and cultural practices relevant to an individual's childhood experience. Whenever possible, these individual, personal narratives are based on interviews conducted by Meyer's students with each family member the student has selected to feature. Meyer's classes are always a mixture of international students and students from communities across the United States, resulting in narratives and graphics that are richly diverse. This project is further enriched and deepened by peer inquiry groups, which are set up at the beginning of the semester and serve as an opportunity for students to reflect together on similarities and differences in each individual's story. Gleaning insight from peer dialogues, their personal

---

<sup>12</sup> Many of Meyer's students are international students or US students who have lived or studied abroad, and so she also gives these students the option of creating two graphics for themselves at different points of time in their own lives, which reflect the way that international travel or schooling has impacted their language use over their own lifetime.

and family narratives, and course readings, students then analyze their own cross-generational stories of language and culture loss and gain, relying principally on Rogoff's (2003) sociocultural-historical theory, as well as theories of language acquisition and learning, to inform their analysis. These analyses are shared, compared, and contrasted in class at the end of the project.

For my own Mackey Boxes project, I interviewed my paternal grandfather, Frank Perara Jr. I had always loved hearing my grandfather's stories growing up and was excited to interview him for this project. Born to an Italian-immigrant mother and Portuguese/Spanish-American father, he was raised on a farm outside of Oakland, California, where his mother's family lived communally, relying fully on the land for subsistence. As a child, he gathered chicken eggs every morning, kept the wood fire stove in the kitchen burning, and even helped his father and uncles butcher meat. He shared a room with his parents in the small farmhouse that was home to his maternal grandparents, parents, three aunts and two uncles. Though his parents spoke English, Italian was used in the house, principally by his monolingual grandmother with whom he spent the majority of his time. However, by the time my grandfather was an adult, he did not use or hear Italian at all.

As I set out to write an analysis for Dr. Meyer's class, the changes across generations in my family were quite obvious. We are now monolingual English-speakers; we buy food at the grocery store- we don't grow it ourselves; and I have never butchered a cow or collected chicken eggs. All of these changes were spoken about in my family as universal, natural results of assimilation over time. I had always thought it was a little sad that my grandfather no longer spoke Italian, but I had never thought about the cultural changes he experienced in a critical way. My grandfather explained to me that the family stopped using Italian because

it was no longer useful. But, as I dialogued with other graduate students in Dr. Meyer's class and read literature on cultural practices and language acquisition and loss, I began to understand my own family's historical context in a different way. Rogoff's (2003) version of the sociocultural-historical perspective states that "culture is not an entity that *influences* individuals. Instead, people contribute to the creation of cultural processes and cultural processes contribute to the creation of people" (p. 51). We actively participate in the daily practices that make us who we are and let us know we belong to our community. The external pressure to assimilate experienced by my grandfather, combined with an internal desire to assimilate, resulted in the intergenerational language loss experienced by many immigrant groups in the United States (Portes & Hao, 1998). This gave me a new understanding of how language and culture work, and the way that broader social and historical movements interact with personal experience.

Students in the graduate course report that the project influenced their thoughts on cross-generational patterns of linguistic and cultural practices by: 1) heightening their awareness of the preciousness and fragility of linguistic and cultural practices; 2) demonstrating through the individual narratives the influence of historical, political, and economic forces that affect linguistic and cultural practices; and, 3) requiring them to think critically about whether and how they will intentionally support the continuation or revitalization of linguistic and cultural practices in their own families, communities, and schools (Fraser, 2016; Gagliano, 2016; Haq, 2015; Perara-Lunde, 2015). Anna explains the connection she made in her own Mackey Boxes project between her own learning about her family language history and her students:

*My family is really into our history, so I knew a lot about the people, the places, but languages weren't really too much spoken about. So, I learned that there were quite a few languages spoken in my family, but by the time I came around, we were only using English. And some of the languages were taken away, it was intentional. It was intentional that people didn't teach those languages to their kids. And it was when I learned that, it made me reflect on my students. Because I hear some of the parents of my students say, "You need to be learning English! You need to learn English!" And I understand that they need to learn English, but they also need to maintain their Spanish. (Anna, Interview, 10/03/16)*

Anna wanted to adapt the Mackey Boxes project for her 7<sup>th</sup> grade students because she thought it would be a powerful tool in addressing the urgency of language maintenance, more effective than her own "lecturing:"

*I can get up in front of class and say, "Make sure you're reading in Spanish and English. Or make sure you're using Spanish at home." But that's just a teacher lecturing. I want the kids to go through a process and go through the project and actually think and discover for themselves, "Wow. This is up to me. I have to work hard at this." It's like now or never, you know? So, I want them to discover it... and create some, you know, next steps for their lives, and just reflect on that. And just show them that they definitely have control over their lives and that they can make changes, even at twelve years old. (Anna, Interview, 10/03/16)*

We set out to adapt the Mackey Boxes project for Anna's students with the hope that the project would be an effective way to critically discuss language use practices. We also needed the project to adhere to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). This was not a

challenge. In fact, one of the reasons Anna wanted to adapt the Mackey Boxes for her students was because she believed the project naturally lent itself so well to one of the standards that was the focus of their Humanities curriculum: “I can support my claim with relevant evidence from a credible source, so it is clear and concise for my reader” (W.7.1b Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text). Applied to our Language Box Project, a ‘claim’ would be students’ analyses of cross-generational language use patterns. The ‘credible sources’ they draw evidence from include parent interviews, their own language boxes, and informational texts on language acquisition and loss that we exposed the students to as readings. Anna taught a Humanities block class, which was a 100-minute class period that students attended daily. The content included Social Studies curriculum and English Language Arts curriculum. The project built upon the classroom routines, teaching style, content, and classroom culture already established by Anna in her classroom. Though it took a lot of discussing and questioning and planning, we found a way to incorporate the project somewhat seamlessly into Anna’s classroom culture and practice.

### **How we designed the Language Box project: The pilot study**

We began adapting the Mackey Boxes for Anna’s 7<sup>th</sup> grade students by looking at the big picture- what did we want Anna’s students to experience? For that matter, what did we experience when we completed the Mackey Boxes? Our first planning session consisted of an hour-long conversation about the graphic itself and the pros and cons it presented in representing language use. Many of Anna’s students lived with relatives other than their parents or were in the foster care system, though nearly all lived locally in the East Mesa community; some spent their summers in Mexico with grandparents, while others had never



crossed the border. What connotation did “international experience” hold in the context of these students’ real life experiences? And what about adopted students, or students who went between two family homes in Albuquerque? How should Anna explain the process of filling out the graphic? Should students distinguish between the language(s) they speak versus the language(s) that were spoken to them? How should they indicate when immediate family members speak to or with them in different languages? Should we talk about codeswitching or Spanglish? All of these were questions that we discussed thoughtfully.

We also needed to determine which resources would be useful and meaningful for students as they analyzed their own and their family members’ experiences with language. Anna explained that she would need to teach vocabulary words such as “nation,” “multilingual,” and “language exposure.” We spent our second planning session exploring resources online, such as statistics made available through the U.S. Census Bureau. We found articles on language loss and revitalization, language attitudes, and decided to use an excerpt from Richard Rodríguez’s memoir, *Hunger for Memory*, in which he relates his own experience of language loss in very emotional terms. We also used three sets of graduate student Mackey Boxes graphics (but not written narratives), prepared for Meyer’s course and used with each author’s permission: Anna’s, mine, and a friend who is an Hispanic New Mexican. Using these three Mackey Boxes graphics as examples exposed students to three very different linguistic histories: my own graphics diagram the loss of Italian from my grandfather to my aunt, and then the acquisition of Spanish in my own life; Anna’s graphics diagram the loss of Hungarian, German, and French across one generation, some exposure to African American English, and the acquisition of Spanish in her own life; the third set of graphics diagram the loss of Spanish over four generations in an Hispanic New Mexican

family. Because Anna and I are not from New Mexico, we specifically chose to use graphics from a native Hispanic New Mexican because we thought it would be important for students to have one story that would be more familiar to them, at least geographically. We knew that the following year we would be able to use, again with each student's permission, exemplars from the students in the pilot study. We decided to make two important changes. The first was that students would investigate and analyze language use at their current age- twelve or thirteen years old- and compare their current language use to their parents at that same age. This would be simpler and more relevant to our goal of wanting to address language loss as it was currently playing out in their lives and family experiences. The second was that we decided not to call the project the Mackey Boxes and instead 'The Language Box Project.' Anna explained that the name 'Mackey' might be distracting and confusing to her students, and that 'Language' was a direct correlation to what the graphic represented. The students were told that the graphic came from the work of another researcher, and then was adapted for a project that Anna completed as a graduate student.

During the pilot study in fall 2016, students diagrammed, reflected on, and analyzed language use across one or two generations in their families. They interviewed one or two older-generation family members, read articles, dialogued in class, and reflected individually. The students also examined national language statistics, watched videos, and analyzed Mackey Boxes completed by graduate students. They created final projects which contained two graphics representing language use at the age of twelve, one personal graphic and one for an older generation family member, each accompanied by a written explanation. They wrote an analysis paragraph that explained how language use had changed in their families across one or two generations, and wrote a personal reflection that included their hopes for their

future language use. At the end of the unit, each student presented their final projects at a community exhibition attended by their teachers, principals, and family and community members. Over the five weeks that the unit was taught, we planned and adjusted as we went. Two weeks into the pilot study, we realized students had had almost no time to dialogue as a whole group. Anna planned a class discussion activity in reaction to this observation. Though the initial pilot study felt mostly successful, there were many adjustments to be made for the coming fall.

The project differed significantly in some ways from the graduate school Mackey Boxes project. Seventh grade students were given very specific instructions on how to fill out the graphic that represented their language exposure, and Anna modeled this for them by giving a brief lesson on how to represent percentages accurately in a visual. They were required to interview at least one older generation family member, a parent or guardian, and had the opportunity to conduct an interview with a grandparent, but this was not required. There simply was not enough time to require students to conduct a second interview and write a third explanation. More significantly, they filled in their graphic according to their current life as twelve or thirteen-year old adolescents (unlike Meyer's graduate students who diagrammed language use at age six). We believed it would be more impactful to talk about students' language use as it was currently. Likewise, instead of interviewing their parents and/or grandparents about their linguistic experience at the age of six, they interviewed them about their experience when they were twelve or thirteen years old and compared and contrasted with their own. We named the boxes "Language Boxes" because Anna thought it would make more sense to her young students for the name of the graphic to correspond directly to what it represented. Unlike graduate students, 7<sup>th</sup> graders did not write in detail

about cultural practices at home. Their narratives focused on language and schooling.

Although the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were only required to interview and create a graphic and narrative for one older-generation family member, many students chose to also interview and create a graphic and narrative for a third older-generation family member, like a grandparent or great aunt or uncle.

Anna and I created four themes that guided the resources we used and the analysis that students wrote about language use in their families: language loss, language acquisition, language attitudes, and place. We thought that these themes would give every student something to write about and analyze. Many of the students in Anna's class were fluent bilinguals, and some of their parents, too, were fluent bilinguals. It was highly possible that some students would find that neither language loss nor language acquisition was taking place in their families. All students could write about the language attitudes in their families. At first, we thought immigration should be a theme, but Anna had a few students who were from Hispanic New Mexican families and who do not associate the Spanish language or a Hispanic identity with recent immigration from Latin America. The concept of "place" would allow students to talk about both immigration- movement from one place to another as a significant factor, or conversely about remaining in the same place as a significant factor in their family's language history, especially in New Mexico where some families have resided for many generations, yet have continued the use of Spanish. These themes also guided what kinds of activities students would do in class and what resources would help them in their analysis and reflection. We had to find grade-level appropriate readings about language loss and acquisition, which proved difficult, and Anna and the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher ended up writing 7<sup>th</sup> grade versions of resources we found on the internet that were at an adult reading

level. We guided and structured what the students read and discussed. Anna began each lesson with warm-up questions that required students to reflect on and describe their language use at school, at home, and in their community. Though it was necessary to have very structured and guided lessons and activities in order to be age appropriate, students led discussion in class, and they had the freedom to take the conversation where they wished. Themes of immigration, linguistic repression, colonization, heritage, identity, and anxiety and fear associated with language learning, all surfaced in class dialogue according to the personal experiences and histories of the students in the classroom.

### **Revisions for fall 2017**

The five-week pilot project in fall 2016 felt successful. Anna told me that in a survey she always gives at the end of each semester, many students told her their favorite project was the Language Box project. Anna felt good about all she was able to accomplish with the project, especially since so much of it was created by us from scratch. However, there were also many changes we wanted to make. The parent interviews students had conducted were surface level and lacked detail, and students demonstrated a less than proficient ability to use vocabulary such as language loss or acquisition. Anna was unhappy with the final written projects, as many students were not as descriptive or specific as she wanted. We took what we learned in the pilot study, along with my field notes and transcriptions of our conversations and interviews, and set out to improve the project the following year. We reflected seriously on what we wanted students to achieve, and then focused the lessons on those specific goals. At the end of the pilot, we found that there were three areas of focus we wanted to continue to develop and improve.

The first area of focus was to raise awareness of language loss in the school community by bringing conversations about language into the classroom. This was obviously the most important and basic focus of the project, and we felt that this did happen during the pilot study, but we wanted to facilitate more critical conversations and see more high-quality final projects. We needed to seriously revise the way the students' interviews of their parents were structured to strengthen this focus. We also needed to think about how we wanted to guide students to write in more detail about their language use at home and school and decided to devote whole lessons to interview skills and home language use.

The second area of focus was expanding students' understanding of linguistic diversity. This was a focus that had emerged as we experimented with lesson ideas and reflected on the "nation" section of the Language Box graphic. We did not want students to diagram English as the national language in their graphics, as this was not an accurate representation of the language use in the United States. We decided to analyze and use U.S. Census data on language use to complete the nation section of the graphic for the pilot study. This ended up being a very structured, teacher-led lesson, but it went well. However, we explored other options to teaching about language diversity meaningfully. Anna and the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities teacher decided that they could integrate their social studies curriculum into the project to achieve this goal:

*So, what we want to do is talk about the different communities within the United States. So again, this is within our Social Studies curriculum, and what we're thinking of doing is continuing with what we've been doing, so right now we're at the year 1700, and we've talked about European colonization, and we want to continue with that, so, where were slaves brought from? Where did they end up living? What*

*languages were they speaking? How are we affected by those languages and those communities now?* (Anna, planning session, 10/09/17)

Observing how students filled in the community section of their Language Box during the pilot study motivated Anna to make another change to the project. In the pilot study, students were simply instructed to diagram their language exposure in their community; they were given some time to reflect independently, but they were not given any information about language use in the community. Anna wanted them to understand that even in their own city of Albuquerque, there were languages besides just Spanish being spoken. She decided to use census data for the city of Albuquerque to discuss and diagram language use in the community, along with census data for the United States, which we had already used to discuss and diagram language use in the nation section of the graphic.

The third area of focus was that we wanted students to think about their future- *What did they want their Language Box to look like as adults? And what did they hope for future generations of their families?* We incorporated this focus into class discussions in the pilot study, but there was no writing prompt included in their final projects that asked students to reflect on their future. As Anna explained during a planning session, in our revised plan we wanted them to write more about what they saw happening with language in their families, and to think more deeply about what they were going to do about it:

*Anna: Last year, the kids worked really hard on their Language Boxes.*

*Molly: You mean the actual graph?*

*Anna: Yeah, and they had a lot of information in their heads, but when they went to write down their analysis piece, a lot of it just wasn't really thorough, and it didn't really get to the depth I wanted it to.*

*Molly: Okay.*

*Anna: So, they would say things like, “Yeah, I’m losing my language.” Well, what about that?*

*Molly: Okay, so yeah, we want them to dig a little deeper. I think that’s something for us to really think about. How do we really get them to engage in a deeper process? (Planning session, 10/09/17)*

We chose to devote one lesson to introducing the four analytical themes: language loss, language acquisition, language attitudes, and place, and additionally planned structured dialogue activities for students to reflect, write, and discuss these themes, so that when it came time to write, they would have a firm conceptual understanding. We also decided to include an “action step” in their writing prompt for the final project- something they wanted “to do” to change their language exposure- and students had time to reflect on and write about their action step throughout the unit.

Anna was the one who had the final say on the design of lessons. She was the classroom teacher, she knew her students best, and she only had so much time to plan and gather resources on top of her other duties and responsibilities. I sometimes made suggestions that ultimately did not make it into the design of the unit. Some of these suggestions had a dual pedagogical and research- oriented goal. For example, I wanted to have students fill out a survey about their family’s language use. The survey could have been a great discussion tool, but I also wanted to collect it as data. In the end, there was not enough time to include the survey. Ultimately, we made the decisions that we made. The way we designed the project wasn’t always the best way to do it, or the only way to do it, but it’s what we did do. I can only say that it seemed like the best and most realistic way for us



to do it at the time. The following section outlines the Language Box project as it was implemented in fall 2017.

### **Language Box activities**

In this section, I describe ten lessons that Anna and I designed and that Anna implemented. The lessons focused on developing students' abilities to critically discuss and write about language use in their own lives and in their family members' lives at the age of twelve or thirteen. They interviewed one or two older family members about language use when they were a child, and we focused a lesson on interview and research skills. Students analyzed changes in language use across generations in their family. We designed lessons that provided them with the skills to do this, too. The project was guided by the following questions, devised by Anna, the other humanities teacher, and myself. These were displayed at the front of Anna's classroom throughout the duration of the unit so that students would be familiar with them:

1. *How do my communities influence my exposure to language?*
2. *How do languages strengthen and weaken?*
3. *How does my language history affect me now and in the future?*
4. *Why is it important to know if your source is credible?*

To give a picture of what the Language Box project looked and felt like, I use excerpts from field notes, which include Anna's instructions, class discussions, and conversations between Anna and me after each lesson taught. I also use students' written responses on worksheets and their final written projects to give a sense of what students were thinking, talking, and writing about as they participated in the Language Box project. Sample materials from the unit- including worksheets, readings, and so on - can be found in

Appendix C. It is important to note that Anna taught a Humanities block, which combined Social Studies and Language Arts into a 100-minute class period. For the eight weeks that comprised the second quarter at East Mesa Academy, Anna taught Language Box lessons on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and taught other content material on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There were a handful of days that had to be cut from the Language Box project due to illness, doctor appointments, and our attendance at the La Cosecha Dual Language Conference, where we presented our work on this project. One or two lessons had to be rescheduled to take place on Tuesdays or Thursdays, which meant I was unable to observe because of my own teaching schedule at the University of New Mexico. Time was a crucial factor in the design of the project. The days that were not devoted to the ten lessons outlined below were spent writing rough drafts and final drafts of the project, catching up on late work, or working on other activities, such as assessments.

Along with the ten lessons described below, Anna also taught vocabulary mini-lessons for key concepts that students needed in order to complete the project. Anna used a GLAD (guided language acquisition design)<sup>13</sup> strategy to teach vocabulary mini lessons to her students. Each vocabulary word was entered in students' cognitive content dictionary (CCD). Anna modeled everything on a class CCD chart located on the wall. Students worked in small groups to make hypotheses about the definition of words, and once they were given the definition by Anna, they used the new vocabulary item in a sentence and drew a picture. This was a class routine that students were clearly familiar with before the start of the Language Box project. Vocabulary words entered in students' CCD were: *concise*,

---

<sup>13</sup> For more information about GLAD, refer to <https://begladtraining.com/>

*counter-argument, closure, acquisition, exposure, relevant, attitude, analyze, credible, claim, and cite.* Anna reinforced the use of this vocabulary throughout the project.

At the beginning of each class period, students would enter Anna's classroom quietly and follow two or three prompts written on the board under a heading that said, 'do now.' These were warm up questions that had to do with the concept that would be taught that day. For example, on the second day of the project students answered the following three 'do now' questions:

1. *What languages are you exposed to at home?*
2. *What percentage of time do you speak those languages?*
3. *Who (be specific) do you speak those languages with?* (Field notes, 10/18/17)

The questions prompted students to be specific and use academic vocabulary (in this case, 'exposed') from the project. Students would first write responses to the prompts quietly and independently. Then, they had time to read their independent reading book<sup>14</sup> silently for about fifteen to twenty minutes. After silent independent reading, they shared their 'do now' responses with a partner, then Anna would lead a whole class discussion. These discussions were often extremely interesting and insightful, as they provided me with data on students' thoughts, feelings, and experiences with language use at home and school. At the end of each lesson, students responded to a written prompt as an exit slip. I also collected these, as they served as comprehension checks. When we had time, Anna and I would look over these together after class to gauge whether students were 'getting it.' Below, I discuss the ten lessons that Anna implemented in October 2017-November, 2017. Each lesson began with

---

<sup>14</sup> Students read silently and independently every day of the week in Anna's class. They selected their independent reading book with help from Anna and according to their reading level. This activity was not part of the Language Box project.

‘do now’ questions and discussion and ended with an exit slip. Some lessons also included a vocabulary mini-lesson. Some were followed by time to write rough or final drafts, or to work on completing the Language Box graphics. Every lesson, regardless of the content or whatever other activities were scheduled for the day, included time to reflect individually and then, to dialogue in small groups and a whole class.

### **Lesson 1: Mapping language at school**

Anna began the unit by asking students to write down what questions they had about language. Some of the questions that students asked included: *Why don't we all speak two languages? Why do some Mexican parents speak Spanish but their kids only speak English? Why do Spanish and Italian sounds so similar? And Where do languages come from?* Though we knew it would be impossible to answer all the questions that students asked, beginning with their own curiosities helped Anna and me develop future activities. Students wrote down their questions individually, then had an opportunity to hypothesize about possible answers to their peers' questions during a group discussion. Anna then transitioned to the first lesson of the Language Box project, ‘Mapping language at school.’ This activity was one that I suggested during our first planning session for the pilot study. At the time I was reading Olsen's (1997) ethnography of immigrant students in a public high school in California. She collaborated with a language arts teacher to have students observe where on their school campus different non-English languages were spoken. They made personal observations by walking around the school campus, and interviewed their peers, asking when, where, and with whom different languages were spoken. I suggested doing a similar activity in our unit. We agreed that starting at school, where students spent most of their day, might be a natural way to introduce the idea of quantifying and visually representing

language use. We wanted language use to be visually represented, however, because this was a major component of the Language Box project. We decided to print out maps of the school campus, and have students shade in the areas where Spanish, English, and other languages were spoken. Anna modeled the activity to students by demonstrating what they should do on the board:

Anna gives instructions for the map activity, but makes sure that all students are able to read the map before she starts. She then explains a very important point: *“Your map won’t look the same as the person sitting across from you. Your maps will all look unique because you’re unique individuals.”* She asks students to really reflect and think deeply about their language exposure at school. She models with a think aloud: *“When I’m in Ms. C’s room... what languages do I hear, what do I speak, what am I really exposed to?”* Then, she models how to represent language use on the school map by using the Spanish classroom as an example. She draws a square, meant to represent the Spanish classroom, and then models her thinking to students before coloring in the square: *“What am I exposed to [in Spanish class]? What do I speak? What does Mr. B speak? What’s on the wall? I think Mr. B has mentioned he speaks Portuguese, and he’s taught us some words. So, I’m going to color mostly Spanish, some English, and a little bit of green, he’s used a little bit of Portuguese.”*

(Field notes, 10/16/17)

We decided to introduce a color key that would be used throughout the project: blue represents English language use and red represents Spanish language use. Green was used for any other language and Anna instructed students to label their maps accordingly. For example, some students included French, Japanese, and Portuguese using green. Once Anna

had modeled to students how to complete the activity, they had time to complete their map in groups of four. The students took to it quickly and enthusiastically. Figure 4.3, Figure 4.4, and Figure 4.5 are examples of student work from this activity completed on 10/16/17:

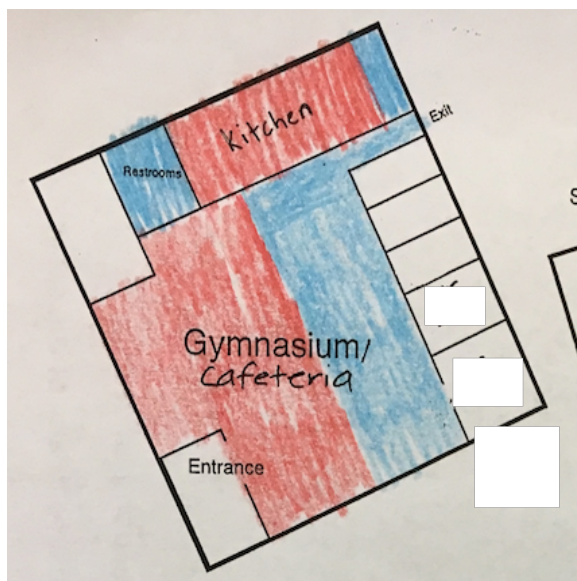


Figure 4.3 Andrés' (monolingual English speaker) language exposure in the gym

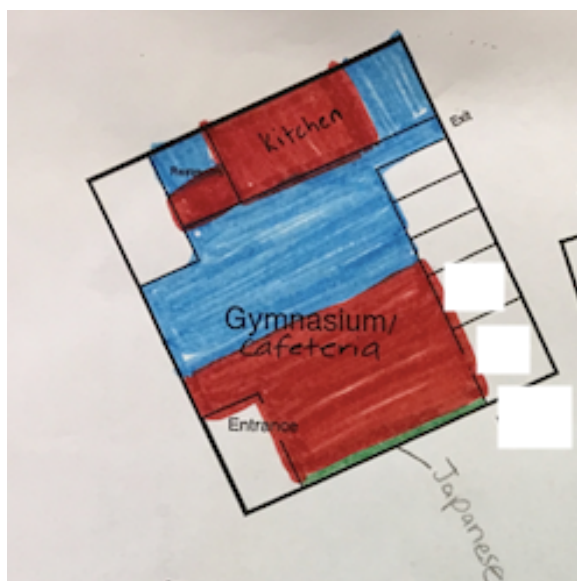


Figure 4.4 Genesis' (balanced bilingual) language exposure in the gym

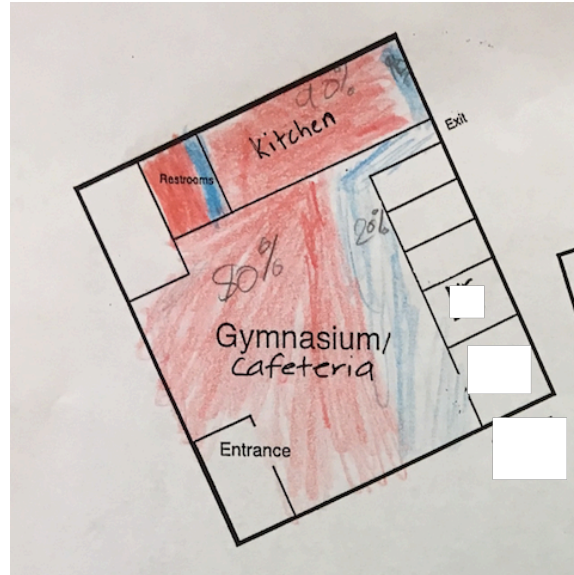


Figure 4.5 David's (Spanish dominant) language exposure in the gym

First, Andrés, an English monolingual, diagrammed slightly more Spanish than English in the cafeteria, only English in the bathroom, and mostly Spanish in the kitchen. Next, Genesis, a balanced bilingual, diagrammed an even split between Spanish and English in the cafeteria and bathroom, a small amount of Japanese in the cafeteria, and a majority of Spanish use in the kitchen. Lastly, David, one of the most Spanish dominant students who participated in the study, diagrammed 80% Spanish in the gym and 20% English, 90% Spanish in the kitchen and 10% English, and mostly Spanish and some English in the bathroom. All students agreed that they heard mostly Spanish in the kitchen, though their exposure to Spanish and English in the cafeteria and bathroom was more variable. This is because the women who worked in the school kitchen spoke only Spanish. Genesis diagrammed some Japanese exposure in the cafeteria. This is from practicing Japanese with some of her friends.

Once students completed their maps, Anna directed them to compare and contrast their finished products with a partner, instructing them to “*observe similarities and*

*differences between you and your partner, and discuss why your maps might be similar or different.... It doesn't mean you have to change it, it's good to talk about how they're different and the same"* (Field notes, 10/16/17). After about five minutes, Anna asks students to share their maps with the whole class. Throughout the first day of the project, Anna emphasized over and over that students each had their own story to share, and that this was important. She wanted to draw students' attention to the fact that even if they spoke the same languages, their own personal and family histories made their experiences unique. At the end of the first day, Anna and I were both fascinated by what we saw and heard as students diagrammed and discussed their language use at school. We found ourselves discussing who or what influenced students' language use the most at school. Anna felt that peers were extremely influential: *"I think it really depends on peers. I mean I can speak English to my ELL kids but it really depends on how their peers are supporting that language"* (Conversation, 10/16/17). We looked through students' maps together, and Anna was pleased to see that all students had diagrammed *"at least 80% English in her classroom"* this year. Last year during the pilot study, when students completed this activity, she was shocked to find that some students had diagrammed mostly Spanish exposure in her room. I asked her what made the difference: *"I think kids know I can speak Spanish, but I choose to speak English with them, whereas last year I would speak more Spanish with kids, but that's not best practice"* (Conversation, 10/16/17). In a school like EMA, where the use of Spanish abounds throughout the school socially and academically, students have opportunities to develop their Spanish in many other situations, but the Humanities classroom focused on developing English. Despite Anna's push for Spanish maintenance, and her statement about peers being the most influential source of language use, here she asserts that her role in the



Humanities classroom is to serve as a model of English language use to her students. Throughout the project we discussed the delicate balance of promoting the use and development of English in the Humanities classroom while also affirming the Spanish language and students' cultural and linguistic identity as bilinguals. This lesson was the most insightful to Anna about her own practice, as it provided a window into how her students experienced language use in her classroom.

### **Lesson 2: Analyzing language boxes**

Students began the class period by responding to the following 'do now' questions:

- 1) *What languages are you **exposed** to at home?*
- 2) *What percentage of time do you speak those languages? and*
- 3) *Who (be specific) do you speak those languages with?* (Field notes, 10/18/17)

After giving students time to write their responses, they shared their answers with a partner.

Then, Anna facilitated a class discussion:

*Anna draws Jennifer's name out of the can and asks her, "What languages are you exposed to at home?" Jennifer responds, "It's like mostly Spanish, but sometimes I speak English to my brothers, and my dad he speaks like real fast to me in Spanish 'cuz he like, don't know English." Anna addresses the whole class, "Raise your hand if you speak English to your parents and they respond to you in Spanish." Almost all students in the class raise their hands. Ramón raises his hand, and says, "I'm only exposed to Spanish at home." Anna asks, "Only Spanish?" He pauses and replies "Well... no, with my siblings I speak English." Anna again addresses the whole class, "Raise your hand if that's the same in your house." About 75% of students raise their hand. Anna continues to press students to think more critically about their*

*home language exposure. She asks, “Why is it that you speak to your parents in English and your parents speak to you in Spanish?” Students respond that their parents want them to keep their Spanish. They don’t comment on their own use of English, though. (Field notes, 10/18/17)*

Anna began the second day of the project by continuing the themes brought up in the previous day’s conversation, and challenged students to think critically about their language exposure. She wanted them to think beyond the simplified story of Spanish and English exposure at home and school; she asked them to dig deeper and reflect on whether they actually responded to their parents in Spanish or English. Thus, she pushed them to consider whether Spanish language loss was occurring presently in their own families because they themselves expressed favoring English over Spanish. This was an intentional change from the pilot, as we sought for students to include more detailed description in their writing about their language exposure, and to think more critically about the maintenance of their family language. We hoped that these classroom discussions would prompt them to write more detail into their final projects.

Following the warm up, students participated in a gallery walk activity. Anna posted four family Language Boxes around the room- each of our own Mackey Boxes graphics, a fellow graduate student’s graphics, and a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student’s graphics from the previous year. Each example provided three or four generations of language exposure, and students were asked to observe and analyze the changes that had taken place across these generations. They did not read any narrative description of the graphics, however. Anna and I have very different family histories from those of the majority of students in Anna’s classroom. My graphics show the loss of Italian across generations, and the acquisition of Spanish as a

second language over my own lifetime. Anna's family history shows the loss of French, German, and Hungarian, and exposure to African American English in the community section of her father's graphic. We included our own stories to illustrate how different a family's language history and exposure can be. We also included our graduate school colleague's family history because she comes from an Hispanic New Mexican family that had shifted from Spanish monolingualism to English dominance over the course of four generations. Anna had students whose family history possibly mirrored this pattern closely. Lastly, the seventh-grade example from the previous year closely resembled many of the student stories in the classroom. Students were asked to circulate the room and answer questions about each family history in a packet. Some sample questions from the packet were (notice names are omitted):

1. *E is J's mother. By comparing and contrasting their language boxes, how did the exposure of language(s) change at home over time?*
2. *How is your exposure to language similar to Student A's? Different?*
3. *M's language exposure changed a lot between the ages of 6 and 27. What changed? What may have caused this change? (Gallery walk, 10/18/17)*

Anna instructed students, *"You're gonna have to critically think. The answer isn't just right there. You're gonna have to look at the Language Boxes and analyze them"* (Field notes, 10/18/17). Students circulated the room and worked independently or in groups to answer the questions in their packet about the four family histories posted on the walls. The purpose of this lesson was to introduce the concept of the Language Box to students, and practice analyzing change over time. Anna and I wanted to make sure that students felt comfortable reading and analyzing what a Language Box represented before they created their own.

After students were given time to complete the packet, Anna went over each Language Box, and the class analyzed them together.

Anna shared her own family language history last, and shared with her students how sad it was for her that she could not speak Hungarian, her grandfather's home language. At the end of the discussion, she said, *"This is my explanation of my language history. Each of us has a very unique language history. This quarter, you're going to explore your own unique language history and you're going to decide what it is you want to do with your languages. I'm working on my Spanish, and you'll decide what you want to do, too, in the future with your languages"* (Field notes, 10/18/17). Class ended with an exit slip question that asked, *"What does a Language Box show you?"* Many students were already adopting the academic vocabulary from the project in their responses. Genesis wrote: *"A language box shows which languages you are exposed to"* (Exit slip, 10/18/17). We read through the exit slips and were happy to see that students were understanding what the Language Box represented.

### **Lesson 3: The history of languages in the United States**

One goal of this project was to expand students' understanding of language diversity in the United States across history, and particularly to examine how non-English languages have been minoritized. This lesson targeted that goal directly. The 'do now' questions that students responded to for this lesson were:

*1) How do the languages you speak become stronger? Weaker?*

*2) How does one language become stronger in a country over time?* (Field notes,

10/20/17)

Students seemed to already be aware of the power of English. During class discussion, when Anna asked the class, “*What has made English strong?*” Simón quickly replied, “*Colonists.*” Ernesto, responding to the same question in the afternoon class, explained, “*So like when the Europeans came to the U.S., the main language was the Native languages, but then they forced them out, so now the main language is English*” (Field notes, 10/18/17).

This demonstrates how Anna connected the themes of classroom discussion to the broader concepts being taught in the Social Studies curriculum, as well as students’ clear understanding of the connection between language and colonization.

Students worked in small groups at four different stations in this lesson. Each station provided students with information about cases of language loss in diverse communities across the United States (see descriptions below). Students had to take the information and work in groups to complete the packet information. They had about fifteen minutes to work at each station. Anna used stations often in her classroom, and so her students knew the appropriate procedures for the activity. Anna briefly explained the content at each station, broke students up into groups, and then let them begin to work. Each station in the classroom was labeled with a color that corresponded to a section in the packet where questions for each station would be answered in their groups.

**Green station:** Students analyzed information from two maps of the United States. One map showed which languages besides Spanish or English are the most commonly spoken languages in each given state. For example, New Mexico is labeled “Navajo” because Navajo is the most commonly spoken language besides English and Spanish in New Mexico. The other map was simply a map of the United States. Students answered questions about the information that the maps provided, and students made connections between the language

spoken and the communities of people who live in each state. A sample question from the packet was: *Native American languages used to be the ONLY languages spoken in the United States. What happened to weaken them? What happened to strengthen English over history? Spanish?*

**Yellow station:** Students read an informational article titled *Reversing Language Loss*. This article was found on the internet and adapted to be at an appropriate reading level for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students read the article together and then answered the packet questions. Students uniformly agreed in their responses that language death is harmful, and if they were to experience it, they would be sad and try to help revive the language by learning it from elders, speaking it, and helping others to speak that language. Andrés wrote that if one of the languages he spoke was going extinct, he would “*try to teach it to other people so it will not die off or be extinct*” (U.S. history stations packet, 10/20/17). This station activity familiarized students with terminology such as *endangered language*, *extinct language*, *language nests*, and *sleeping language*.

**Red station:** At this station, students chose to read one of three interviews that had been printed out and were laid on the table. The interviews were taken from a program on National Public Radio called “Talk of the Nation<sup>15</sup>.” Two interviews were conducted with Native American individuals who were working to revitalize their heritage language, and one interviewee was an Iraqi immigrant who spoke about the Aramaic language. Students discussed the content of the interview with their group, and then individually wrote summaries of the chosen interview. Ramón wrote for his summary:

---

<sup>15</sup> For full length transcripts of these interviews, visit <https://www.npr.org/2013/06/18/193135997/when-a-language-dies-what-happens-to-culture>

*At the Indian school they forced them to stop speaking the Washoe language and speak more English. There are only twelve people that speak the Washoe language.*

(U.S. history stations packet, 10/20/17)

Nicole wrote:

*I learned that the language Aramaic was lost and Chaldeans lost their language.*

*Chris and everyone want to revive the language. I also learned that Chris doesn't remember the language. Tambien que [also that] the language is from Iraq.* (U.S.

history stations packet, 10/20/17)

Some student groups had difficulty understanding what the interviews were about, though Nicole and Ramón seemed to understand the general idea of two of the interviews. There was no background information given on the speakers, which made it difficult to know where they were from, what language they spoke, and in general, what they were discussing.

**Blue station:** Students watched a video from National Geographic<sup>16</sup> of the Gullah Geechee people, a group of African Americans who have retained a distinct language and culture due to geographic isolation. The Gullah Geechee woman featured in the film resides in South Carolina. This particular topic connected to the Social Studies curriculum that students had been studying about slavery. Students watched the video and answered questions as a group. In the video, a woman named Theresa Jenkins, one of the last speakers of the Gullah Geechee language, talks about the importance of maintaining language and culture. She said in the video that it's important to know “whose back you're standing on,” metaphorically ascribing importance to the way that ancestors support and shape identity and culture. Students were asked to respond to the questions: *Do you agree that it's important to*

---

<sup>16</sup> To watch the video, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0DGijYiGQU>

know “whose back you’re standing on?” Monica wrote: “Yes because then you can know the struggle they lived” (U.S. history stations packet, 10/20/17), and Nicole wrote: “To know to keep the language you were born with.” (U.S. history stations packet, 10/20/17).

Before the stations lesson, Anna and I spoke generally about the idea for this lesson—that students would investigate language loss and/or acquisition in different language communities across the United States, with the goal of understanding how languages “strengthen” and “weaken” over time. Anna also wanted to expose students to different language communities; this was one way that Anna and the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade humanities teacher saw an opportunity to integrate the Language Box project with the Social Studies curriculum, and Anna planned this lesson herself. She was happy with her students’ engagement with the material and the conversations she observed during small group work time. Learning about diverse language communities was an important aspect of this project for her.

#### **Lesson 4: Home language exposure**

In the pilot study, we did not give students any time to reflect on, discuss, or pre-write about their home language exposure; Anna simply instructed them to diagram their home language exposure by filling in the home section of the Language Box graphic, then write a paragraph that explained verbally their language use at home. In fall 2017, Anna created a writing activity in which students were prompted to write specifically and in detail about their language use at home— which language(s) they used or heard, who spoke these language(s), and importantly, Anna included literacy skills and media language use from the internet and television. The written prompts were:



1. *Describe the languages your family uses to communicate with each other. What languages do you speak with your family at home? Do you sometimes speak different languages with different family members? Do other family members use a different language to communicate with each other?*
2. *Describe the languages you read and hear at home. Consider everything you read and hear while doing your homework, reading, watching television, using the internet, listening to music, using your phone, etc. (Home language exposure worksheet, 10/23/17)*

Students were given time to write responses to the prompts and discuss with a partner. This proved useful for many students. For example, Ernesto, born in Mexico to a Mexican mother and Anglo-American father, was a balanced bilingual. His parents were divorced and he spent time in two different homes. He represented this visually on his Home Language Exposure worksheet by separating his responses:

*Mom's: I speak Spanish at my mom's and a little Portuguese when she teaches me. I speak English with the person we are sharing the house with. I speak Spanish and English with my cats and dog. I read English and Spanish. I hear Spanish and English. I read my books that are usually English but I read my mom's books which are Spanish. What I look at on the internet is English but what she shows me is Spanish. The music can be different.*

*Dad's: I speak mostly English with my dad but sometimes Spanish. I read English mostly, I hear English mostly. The music can be different. (Home language exposure, 10/23/17)*

This pre-writing activity was especially helpful for students like Ernesto whose home life was complicated as he split time between his mother's and father's houses. The activity gave him time to think about how much English and Spanish he used at his mom's and his dad's, and thus create a more accurate representation of his language use, and eventually a more thorough analysis. In fact, Ernesto told me in an interview that he was originally going to write about language loss in his family for his final project, but upon closer examination, he decided to write about language acquisition. It was this kind of careful, analytical thought that we wanted to see.

Students also wrote down the percentages of English, Spanish, and any other language they were exposed to at home, which scaffolded their next step- shading in the home section of their Language Box graphic. They were given time in class to shade in the home and school sections of their Language Box. On their desks lay the map of the school that was completed on the first day of the project, and they now had their reflection worksheet to help them fill in the home section. Before they began diagramming their own language exposure in their Language Boxes, Anna showed them a few examples of student work from the previous year. She displayed three Language Boxes on the overhead projector, one at a time, and asked her students questions about the graphics:

*“So, if we look at this Language Box, we can see that most of her exposure at home is, what color?” Students shout out, “Red!” Anna replies, “So, what language is she mostly exposed to?” And students again shout out, “Spanish!” Anna continues, “So, does she speak Spanish?” Some students respond, “Yes,” but Anna corrects them, “We don't know, we'd have to look at her explanation to find out her story. Now, let's look at another box. This student has written down his percentages, he has 75%*

*English, 20 % Spanish, 5% Italian in his home box. Does he speak Italian? We don't know. Maybe his grandfather speaks Italian, and when his grandfather comes to visit, he speaks Italian to him. Maybe his mom uses a few Italian words when she gets mad. We don't know, we have to look at his story to find out.*" (Field notes, 10/23/17)

Anna took advantage of student examples from the previous year to guide students to be specific and detailed about their own projects, and to emphasize the fact that the written explanation is important to understand the story. After she showed students the examples, they had time to shade in their home and school sections of their Language Box graphics. Below is Ernesto's graphic, representing an amalgamation of his language exposure at his mother's and father's houses (recall that blue represents English language exposure and red represents Spanish language exposure. He also used green to represent Portuguese):

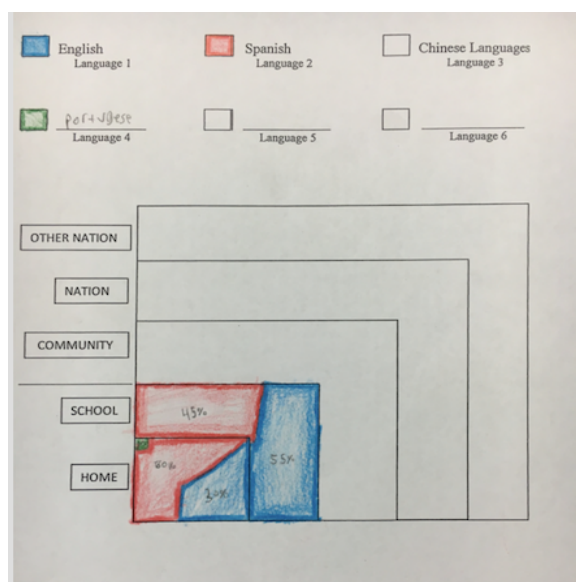


Figure 4.6 Ernesto's home and school graphic

Anna had hoped to have time in this lesson for students to begin writing their explanations of their language use, but there was not enough time that day. It made her nervous to feel behind, knowing there was so much more to be done. Though the project was going slower,

we both agreed that giving students so much extra time to pre-write, reflect, and discuss was already resulting in more thoughtful work than we had seen in the Pilot Study. The afternoon class, a group of students who had particularly difficult home lives and often difficult behavior to manage in the classroom, was especially engaged with the project. After this lesson, I wrote in a reflective memo:

*We are both amazed at how hard the afternoon class is working on this. They almost all finished their work! And unlike last year, every single Language Box [graphic] looks exemplary. Anna noticed and was proud of how many students were asking questions about how to use percentages correctly and check their work. They are taking the project very seriously. Slowing down and scaffolding has made a big difference. Anna and I also think it has something to do with the content of the project itself; although there's no way to "prove" this explicitly, it certainly supports what culturally responsive pedagogy theorists have to say. This is something kids are experts on, something they know about- their language. And not only that, they are talking about it using highly academic language. They can explain their home language exposure, and they can use percentages accurately, and they can give details about who speaks what language to whom, when, and where. (Reflection Memo, 10/23/17)*

After this lesson, we both felt very positively about the work that students were doing in the classroom.

### **Lesson 5: Being a researcher**

We placed a much greater emphasis on the parent interview during the dissertation study. In the pilot study, students did interview their parents, but Anna and I agreed that the

information they gleaned from these interviews was superficial. We thought carefully about how to help students get more detailed information from their parents. We felt this was especially important because the parent interview served as a primary source from which students cited evidence and drew their final analysis. I helped Anna create a guided notes sheet that offered basic information about what a researcher does (see Appendix C). The ‘do now’ questions for this day were:

*1) Draw a sketch of a researcher, and*

*2) What are 3 things a researcher does? Be specific. (Field notes, 11/01/17)*

Interestingly, between the two classes, only two or three students sketched pictures of female researchers. Anna reviewed the ‘do now’ questions, and then began going over the guided notes. At the top of the guided notes sheet, she had printed four images of researchers she found on the internet. One picture featured two children in lab coats doing a science experiment; another picture was of a woman in a library, looking at a shelf of books; one other picture featured a woman reading, and the last picture was of a man working at a computer. She introduced the guided note sheets to the class:

*“You can see there are four images of researchers on the top of your sheet. See this one (she points to one of the images) You can see he’s being really curious, looking for information on the internet.” There is an image of a child researcher, and pointing to the image, she explains: “You don’t just have to be an adult to be a researcher, kids can be researchers, too.” After she goes through each of the four images, she explains to the class: “When I looked up images of researchers on the internet, it was hard for me because most of the images I found were of people alone,*

*and that's not correct. You can also work with other people and be a researcher."*

(Field notes, 11/01/17)

Female or male, child or adult, Anna wanted to make sure students knew that they were researchers, and that researching can be a collaborative activity.

After completing the guided notes, Anna and I modeled a "good" interview and a "bad" interview. Anna acted as a mother, busy preparing dinner for her family, and I acted as a student in the class. In the "good" interview, I modeled appropriate body language, politely asking the interviewee to sit down and to concentrate on answering the questions, taking notes during the interview, and thanking the interviewee for her time. Students took observational notes as we modeled to them what an interview should and should not look like, then we discussed their observations as a class. As many of the students had complicated family histories and home lives, it was essential to devote time for students to ask clarifying questions about this aspect of the project. For example, Nadine asked,

*"So, my mom has a really complicated life, because when she was my age, she first, well first she lived with her mom, then she got taken away from her and then she went to live with her grandma, then she went back to live with her mom, so it's pretty complicated. I mean, so do I need to include all that information?" Anna responded, "Yes, you should absolutely include all of that information because it's part of her story and part of her language exposure." (Field notes, 11/01/17).*

Anna knew that students would bring up difficult situations, but she had built trust with her students over the course of the semester and they were able to discuss these important issues openly in class or privately with her one-on-one, as the example above demonstrates. The comment made by Nadine above was made during a class discussion.

We also revised the interview handout we gave to students to take home to their parents (see Appendix C for a copy). We treated the handout as a script that students would follow. The script was available to students in Spanish or English, since many students would be interviewing their family members in Spanish. During the pilot study, the interview questions were basic; students asked their family members questions about their language use- when and where they used language. We decided to add questions that tapped into the analysis the students would write- questions about language attitudes, language acquisition and loss, and how place affects language use. We also left room for students to create their own questions for their parents, but made this optional because we ran out of time during class. Some students did choose to create their own questions for their parents. For example, Andrés, a monolingual English speaker, asked his mom, who was raised in Albuquerque, *“Why was Spanish not passed down to you?”* (Parent interview sheet, 1/24/18). Genesis, a balanced bilingual, asked her mother, who was raised in Acapulco, Mexico, *“Did you have any relatives that spoke an Aztec language?”* (Parent interview sheet, 1/24/18). Xena, a passive bilingual, asked her mother, raised in Albuquerque, *“Do you think everyone in the U.S. should speak English?”* (Parent interview sheet, 1/24/18). And Monica, a Spanish dominant student who was the first in her family to attend school beyond elementary, asked her mother from Mexico City the following three questions: 1) *¿Por qué no terminaste la escuela?* [Why didn't you finish school?] 2) *Fue difícil venir a los estados unidos, ¿por qué?* [It was difficult to come to the United States. Why?] 3) *Estuviste triste cuando dejaste tu familia en México. ¿Por qué?* [Were you sad when you left your family in Mexico? Why?] (Parent interview sheet, 1/24/18).

This gave students the freedom and opportunity to ask their family members questions that otherwise they may not have asked. As the examples above illustrate, students asked their family members a wide range of questions that included questions about immigration, emotional aspects of leaving family, language loss, language attitudes, indigenous languages, and schooling. Students were assigned the parent interview as homework and were expected to complete it in a week. Later, many students told me that interviewing their family members was their favorite part of this project.

### **Lesson 6: Analyzing U.S. Census Data**

We looked at two sets of language use data from the U.S. Census during this lesson, and students had a chance to discuss and analyze the data. Later, the data were used to graph language use in the community and nation sections of their Language Box graphic. The ‘do now’ questions for this lesson were:

- 1) Predict the language exposure of Albuquerque, and*
- 2) Predict the language exposure for the U.S. (Field notes, 11/06/17)*

As always, students were given time to discuss their answers with their seat partner. I observed that many students in both the morning and afternoon class made predictions for only Spanish and English. Some students predicted that, in Albuquerque and the United States, Spanish and English were spoken roughly about the same. Other students included predictions for other languages, such as Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, German, and Russian.

After discussing their predictions, Anna handed out a worksheet that provided students with data from the census for the city of Albuquerque and the United States. The students had to use the graphs on the worksheet to come up with correct percentages of



language use (see Appendix C for worksheet). Students worked in groups to come up with the correct percentages, then had time to discuss their opinions about the census data. The graphs showed that roughly 75% of people in Albuquerque spoke English, 24% spoke Spanish, and 1% spoke Navajo. Other languages were also represented on the graph as very small percentages (less than 1%). The second set of data showed that in the United States, roughly 79% of people spoke English, 12% spoke Spanish, and 1% spoke Chinese. These statistics were shocking to most students in Anna's classes, and they were hesitant to believe them. In the morning class, I sat with Xena, a passive bilingual, and Simón, a balanced bilingual:

*Simón: I don't think this is right, there should be more Spanish.*

*Xena: In the Heights, there's a lot of people who only speak English.*

*Molly: Is that where you live?*

*Xena: No.*

*Me: But you know about it. But why do you think the percentages are like this?*

*[pause] Do you think people would lie to the census?*

*Simón: Maybe they feel ashamed or something.*

*Xena: Maybe they don't want to get deported.*

*Simón: Yah. (Field notes, 11/06/17)*

Xena and Simón both gave plausible reasons for why the census data may not be an accurate reflection of language use in Albuquerque, drawing attention to their awareness of the presence of undocumented families in their community, as well as the fear and shame associated with not speaking English. Some students, like Nicole, were not critical in the same way of the data, but rather felt compelled to "change these numbers" because she was

concerned about Diné disappearing, even though she herself was not a Diné speaker. Nicole, a fluent bilingual, was working with Monica and David, both of whom were Spanish dominant students, and I joined their conversation in the afternoon class:

*Nicole: We should change these numbers. We don't want to see so much English. For example, if English keeps being spoken then Diné will disappear.*

*Molly: Do you guys agree with Nicole?*

*(Monica and David nod their heads)*

*Molly: Were you surprised about the Spanish number?*

*Monica: Yeah, because we hear a lot more Spanish.*

*(Field notes, 11/06/17)*

After small group discussions, Anna facilitated a whole group discussion. The following conversation took place in the morning class:

*Anna asks the class, "Raise your hand if you think this [Census data] is accurate."*

*(No one raises their hand). "Raise your hand if you think the Spanish should be higher." (everyone but Xena raises their hands). Anna asks the class, "Why?"*

*Nadine responds, "Everywhere I go, I hear Spanish. Everywhere, someone is speaking Spanish. Since I'm brown, everywhere I go, people speak Spanish to me cuz of my color. No one speaks English to me." Jennifer adds to Nadine's response,*

*"Like, I think there is a lot of English, but I think there's a lot of Spanish, too. Like*

*Nadine says, everywhere I go there's Spanish." (Field notes, 11/06/17)*

Here, Nadine, a passive bilingual student, describes her own racialized experience in her community, pointedly illustrating the connection between skin color and perceived language ability. In her own personal experience, Spanish is "everywhere" and people speak it to her

because of the color of her skin. Jennifer, a balanced bilingual, affirms Nadine's observations. Students are much more willing to trust what they see and hear, rather than the census data. I was fascinated by their unwillingness to trust the data presented to them. Their comments about the fear of being deported, the shame of not speaking English, and the relationship between language proficiency and skin color, all point to a sophisticated awareness of the social dynamics present in their community.

This lesson left me with many questions, and Anna and I both felt it could have gone better. For one, we did not realize until the end of the first class that we failed to explain to students that languages other than Spanish, English, and Navajo are spoken in Albuquerque, but they represent very small percentages. This is shown in the graph they were given, and we spoke about this with some students during their time to discuss in small groups, but we agreed that Anna should have pointed it out during her instructions at the beginning of class. The same problem existed with the graph students were given for the United States census; the graph suggests that only Spanish, English, and Chinese languages are spoken in the United States. This logically makes no sense, since we show Navajo being spoken in Albuquerque! We should have made sure we did not give students the impression that only three languages are spoken in the United States, and that these are just the most commonly spoken languages. This is actually in contrast to our goal of expanding their notion of linguistic diversity. We repaired this in class by adding a row to the graph of language use in the U.S. labeled "other languages," which represents 8% of language use.

Anna explained to me after the lesson why she felt it was important that students see the statistics for language use in Albuquerque and the United States: *"They [the students] live in this bubble, and it's a beautiful little bubble, but it is also unacceptable for them to believe*

*that 50% of the U.S. population speaks Spanish. That just isn't true"* (Field notes, 11/06/17).

Anna felt it was important for her students to realize that outside their "bubble," English dominates. Sustaining Spanish in their own families is all the more urgent when this picture becomes clear. Yet, I worried that contradicting students' own perception of their community could have been a negative experience. Later, when I interviewed students, many of them commented on this lesson and found it to be very interesting and one of the things they most enjoyed in the project. Though Anna's students seemed troubled by the data, and they even challenged its validity based on their own personal experiences, the conversations in class ultimately resulted in an interesting lesson, and it changed their perception of language use in their city and the nation. Adán, for example, told me in an interview:

*Molly: What do you think is the most interesting thing that you learned in your project?*

*Adán: I think the most interesting thing I learned was that there was so much English in the U.S. Well, I knew there was a lot, but I didn't realize there was 27% of Spanish, I thought it was like, way more.*

*Molly: Yeah, why was that interesting to you?*

*Adán: 'Cuz like, I hear way more Spanish than English in a lot of places, and um, it's actually a really little percentage, so I was surprised by that. (Interview, 11/27/17)*

Anna told me at the end of the day she felt the lesson went poorly because she didn't take enough time to plan it out. Indeed, it was difficult to find time to plan, much less plan together and reflect on what we saw. Perhaps, too, we jumped from emphasizing students' own language exposure at home and school, based on their own understanding, expertise, and

perception, to the census data, something very abstract that they had never before even heard of. Furthermore, for most of the students, that Census data contradicted their own personal experiences. Sleeter & Flores-Carmona (2017) suggest that classroom sources should be a balance of “window and mirror” experiences for students; stories that reflect back, like a mirror, students’ own personal experiences, and others that serve, like a window, to give a glimpse into other’s experiences. We have attempted this balance in the Language Box unit and learned that it is difficult to emphasize both without careful, time consuming planning.

Later, Anna revisited the census data when she gave students time in class to write explanations for their community and nation language exposure. She chose to facilitate a “group write” to fill in the community section so that students understood how to use the census data to write an explanation:

*Students have their Language Box materials on their desk, and Anna walks them through what they’ll do next. They need to write their community language explanation. She models on the overhead how to fill out the very first sentence: “My community section of my language box shows...” They complete the sentence together. She asks the students how to begin their community section explanation: “Where did we get this information? When we filled out the home and school sections of our box, we used our own language exposure. But where did these percentages come from?” A student answers that it comes from the census data. Anna writes a sentence about this in the explanation. Then she asks, “So who can tell me why 75% of people in Albuquerque speak English?” The class comes up with a sentence together. She gives them some time to write, and then they move on to the Spanish percentage. The class comes up with another sentence together to answer the “why”*

*of this percentage. Then, they move on to Diné. She asks them to think back to their 6<sup>th</sup> grade New Mexico history. She asks: “Who are the Navajo?” They come up with a sentence together as a class to describe why 1% of people speak Diné in Albuquerque. Afterward, Anna tells me that a student asks her, “Why do I have to fill it [community section of the Language Box] out this way when I don’t think it’s true?” Anna tells me that she needs to address this later. (Field notes, 11/08/17)*

Once the class finished the community section group write, students were responsible for writing explanations for the nation section of their Language Box graphics, also using census data as a guide. Later, we decided that this was a bad choice. It was confusing and complicated for students, and it would have been better to have them create graphics that truly represent their own perceptions of language use. The student question directed at Anna, “Why do I have to fill it out this way when I don’t think that it’s true?” was very poignant. The critical conversations that took place while analyzing the census data, however, were still important in the end.

### **Lesson 7: Stations: Language Acquisition, Language Loss, Attitudes, and Place**

Students participated in one more station activity to learn about the four themes which were used to analyze changes in language use across one or two generations in their families. We chose language loss, language acquisition, place, and language attitudes. In this lesson, students rotated through four stations, each of which focused on one of these themes. Each station was labeled with a color, and students completed a packet with questions divided into four sections that corresponded to the station colors.

**Red station: Language loss:** At the first station, students read an adapted excerpt from Richard Rodriguez’ memoir, *Hunger for Memory*, in which he recounts his own

experience with losing Spanish, his first language. In the excerpt, Rodriguez explains how embarrassed and guilty he felt when he was unable to speak Spanish. Students read the excerpt together, then discussed and answered the packet questions. In the pilot study, many students related to the emotions that Rodriguez described in his writing. Anna included questions that would tap into this. One question asked students if they had ever felt similar to Richard, that is, guilty or embarrassed that they were unable to speak Spanish [*Have you (or someone you know) felt similarly to Richard?*]. A few students simply responded with a one-word answer- ‘Yes.’ Others gave more information. For example, Xena wrote: “*Yes, when I talk to my grandparents,*” (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17) and Nicole wrote: “*Yes, because sometimes when I talk to my dad in Spanish I forget the words*” (Artifact, Analysis Station Packet). A few students wrote about their siblings. Genesis wrote: “*My sister and brother had [lost Spanish]. Since they don’t know [Spanish] they would call me to help them out or I would just talk for them*” (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17). Monica wrote: “*My cousin didn’t know Spanish when he talked to my grandma*” (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17). Another question asked students if they ever felt like Richard when they spoke English [*Have you ever felt the same way about speaking English that Richard felt while speaking Spanish?*]. Several students wrote about their struggle to speak English:

*Yes. When I came to the U.S. I couldn’t speak English. – David*

*Only once when I was in kindergarten. -Genesis*

*Yes. Sometimes because I don’t know English much. -Monica*

*Yes. Because sometimes when I know the words I can’t speak them. - Ramón*

*Yes. I feel like I am saying words wrong. -Simón (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17)*

Though the purpose of this station was to learn about language loss, students who did not have direct experience with language loss could also comment on the emotional experience of not being fluent enough in English.

**Blue station: Language acquisition:** Students watched a video of polyglot Tim Doner<sup>17</sup>, who speaks over twenty languages. In the video, Tim explained why he believes it is beneficial to speak more than one language. Students watched the video and answered questions as a group. Few of the thirteen students who participated in the study completed this section. I am unsure why this happened. It could have been that they ran out of time or that they were not interested in the content. The last packet question asks students to list three reasons why learning multiple languages is beneficial. David and Genesis both wrote: *“break cultural barriers”* (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17), and Nadine wrote: *“able to talk to people from other countries and to help world problems”* (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17). This station did not ask students to reflect on their own experiences learning a second language, perhaps a missed opportunity to connect the content to their own lives. The benefit of using this particular video is that Tim Doner talks about how language reflects cultural values and the way individuals and communities think and connect, and that learning a language can help you make important connections and break barriers. It was not a perfect resource; Tim is a “hyper-polyglot” at seventeen and a White male from the U.S., his language learning experiences were not similar to students at East Mesa. The video sensationalized multilingualism. Anna and I were disappointed at the poor results of this station activity.

---

<sup>17</sup> For full video, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Km9-DiFaxpU>



**Green station: Language and place:** This station was designed to push students to think about why different languages are spoken in various regions of the country. The questions connected the Language Box project to the students' recent study of colonization. Anna explained to the class that different communities expose an individual to different languages, and told her students: *"Here in Albuquerque, you're exposed to a lot of Spanish and English, but in the community where I grew up [in New England], I was exposed to English and French. So, place influences what languages you are exposed to"* (Anna, 11/10/17). Students answered packet questions by using historical maps to aid their work. The maps they used showed how different regions of the United States had previously been territories of various countries. For example, students answered a question about Michigan: *Why are the names of so many places in Michigan in French?* Nicole correctly responded, *"Because France used to own the land where Michigan is"* (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17). There were three questions about Native American languages, too, but the maps did not help answer these questions, which caused some confusion.

**Yellow station: Language attitudes:** Students read different statements that express various language attitudes, such as: *I feel embarrassed when I speak my language*. At the top of the page was a key with five different emojis.



I love it! I totally agree



I agree!



No opinion



This is so sad




What?! Err!

Students were instructed to draw one of the emojis next to each attitude statement to express how they felt about that particular language attitude. Next, they chose three statements to

write a response out that explained their feeling. Below are four attitude statements taken from the packet:

1. *I feel embarrassed when I speak my language to others.*
2. *A language that isn't written is not a real language.*
3. *People can only know one language at a time. It is not possible to be fluent in two languages at the same time.*
4. *English is the best language to help you get a job.* (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17)

Ramón responded to the first three prompts using the emoji:  which signified “WHAT! Err!!” Students also wrote short responses explaining their reaction to each attitude. Ramón responded to the first three attitudes written above with the following comments:

1. *no you should feel proud*
2. *you could still speak it*
3. *I speak two languages*

(Ramón, Analysis station packet, 11/17/17)

He used an emoji that signified “this is sad” in response to the fourth prompt and wrote: “*no because some people only get Spanish jobs*” (Analysis station packet, 11/17/17). At the end of the packet, students worked independently to answer questions that assessed their comprehension of the four themes, as well as a question that asked them to reflect: *Why are we learning about these themes?* and to plan for their final project: *What theme will you choose for your analysis?*

The stations went really well, and Anna commented afterwards how happy she was to see students working together to understand the concepts, especially at the station where they learned about language attitudes. However, long after this project was completed, it was

brought to my attention that we did not include any positive language attitudes in this activity, such as “bilingualism is an important skill” or “knowing two language will help me get a job someday.” Looking back, we should have included some more positive attitudes in this activity. After this lesson, Anna and I discussed the video of polyglot Tim Doner and the issues it presented. She was disappointed because, as she put it, “*being multilingual can seem like a commodity*,” especially in the case of someone like Tim Doner. She found a Ted Talk by Doner in which he explains: “*It’s not just ‘cool’ to learn another language because its impressive or something, it’s really a way to broaden your understanding.*” (Anna, conversation, 11/10/17). She wanted her students to understand this and we discussed when there would be time to show the Ted Talk as a follow-up to the lesson.

### **Lesson 8: Discussion: Change across generations**

I was not present for this lesson due to my teaching schedule at the university, but Anna told me that she was so pleased with the dialogue in class, she ended up not moving on to the next activity that day. Anna told me about the lesson during her planning period the following day. She explained that students filled out a worksheet with ten prompts which asked them to consider how language had changed in their family and what they wanted for their family in the future (see Appendix C). They used their Language Box graphics to support their reflection. Students responded to the prompts, shared with a partner, and then Anna facilitated a class discussion. Some sample prompts from the discussion sheet are:

1. *Is your family losing language over time? How do you know this? Why is language loss occurring?*
2. *Is your family adding language over time? How do you know this? Why is language acquisition occurring?*

3. *How would you like your language box to look when you are 30 years old?*
4. *Has your attitude changed because of this project? How?* (Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)

Below are a few written reflections from students' Analysis Discussion Sheets:

1. *My family is losing language over time because I've gotten more lazy and more frusturated [sic] about Spanish. I think it's just confusing for me and my mom to try to speak it.* – Xena, (Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)
2. *Language loss is occurring because my two younger sibling don't know how to speak spanish. my cousins only spoke english to them and so they started speaking only english.* – Genesis (Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)
3. *My family is adding more language over time and that language is English I know because in the us you have to speak both languages* – Hugo (Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)
4. *I would like my language box to look the same [when I am 30] because I don't want to loose [sic] any languages.* – Jennifer (Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)

Anna shared with me her impression of the discussion that took place in class:

*It was just so interesting because so many kids wanted to share...lots of kids noticed that their families were losing language over time. But, they don't all necessarily see this as a bad thing. So even if their parent box is 100% Spanish, their box is 50/50 English and Spanish, they're really gaining a language. What they're really seeing is acquisition....But then in some cases, like in one student's case where German has been lost, like that's a fact....Another kid even said, "My mom didn't pass Spanish on to me," so it was lost, right there. And then she said, "I'm really annoyed at my mom*

*right now for not teaching me Spanish.” So that was all really powerful. And then with # 3: Is your family adding a language? A lot of kids realized that their family is adding a language just with them, like they are the ones adding a language.*

(Conversation with Anna, 11/15/17)

According to Anna, the conversation that took place in class during this lesson was enriching and powerful. Students spoke about the way that Spanish language loss has impacted their family. Other students observed language acquisition in their stories and felt empowered when they realized that “they are the ones adding a language.” This was a surprising result for us, and one we were happy to observe.

### **Lesson 9: Discussion: Analyzing change across generations**

The project was coming to an end. Students had been given time to write the explanations of their Language Box and their parent’s Language Box in class. These explanations were highly structured paragraphs that began with a sentence stem. Students wrote a paragraph for each section of the graphic- the home, school, community and nation (see Appendix D for final project materials). Now, they needed to write an analysis paragraph that showed their understanding of the way that language practices had changed across generations in their family. Before they began writing, Anna led another discussion about the four analysis themes: language acquisition, language loss, place and language, and language attitude. This gave students one more chance to discuss these important concepts before they wrote their analysis. Anna used the questions at the end of the Analysis Themes packet to facilitate the class discussion:

1. *What is the difference between language loss and language acquisition? Provide an example of each.*

2. *What is your attitude toward bilingualism? How can your attitude help you in the future?*
3. *How did you practice curiosity today? Be specific. What did you learn because of practicing this character trait?*
4. *Why are we learning about these themes? How does learning about language help us in our lives?*
5. *Which theme will you focus on for your Language Box analysis? Why?*

(Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)

Students discussed their answers with a partner, and then the whole class discussed the four themes. During this discussion, Anna clarified certain aspects of the analysis themes (language loss, language acquisition, language attitudes, and language and place) that we felt may have been unclear to students. For example, students learned about language loss by reading Richard Rodriguez's personal account, which illustrates his own experience losing Spanish as a school age child. Many students were familiar with this example, but we wanted to make sure students understood that language loss also affects families and communities across generations. Anna asked the class questions about language loss specifically:

*Anna: Can a family lose a language?*

*Students respond by shouting out: Yes!*

*Anna: How does that happen?*

*Several students respond: They don't pass it on.*

*Anna: What do you mean by that? [some students shout out answers] Yes, they don't pass it on to children. So, do you think it's really important for parents to keep their language alive?*

*Students respond by shouting out: Yes!*

*Anna: What about an even larger group? Like an entire community? [she calls on Ernesto]*

*Ernesto: Yeah, like when they're forced to stop speaking it.*

*Anna: Absolutely. Can you think of an example?*

*Ernesto: Yeah, the Native Americans. So, when the people from Europe came they made them stop talking their language.*

*Anna: Yes, that's right. They were forced to stop speaking. Why else might people stop speaking their language?*

*Students respond with various answers: when people immigrate here and get jobs they need English, they choose to let their language go. (Field Notes, 11/13/17)*

Through reviewing the four themes, Anna pressed students to consider each concept thoughtfully before they would write the analysis section of their final project. She showed students a few more example projects from the previous year and prompted them to analyze what change they observed across the parent and child graphics. Below are my reflections from my field notes that day:

*Anna does a great job at walking students through the analytical thought process of comparing and contrasting the parent and child Language Boxes. She uses examples from the previous year and asks students to analyze those examples. She asks questions like, "What language did this student acquire?" and "Which language did this student lose some of?" She then explains that the student decided to analyze her story according to "place" and "language loss," since her mom was born in Mexico*

*and lived there when she was 12. The student herself lives in Albuquerque and is exposed to less Spanish than her mother. She shows a second example and students analyze what they see in the boxes. She flips through the pages, and shows how the explanations are filled out, the boxes are neatly colored. “This student has a second interview, why would that be?” The class responds that he chose to interview a grandparent. She continues to flip through the booklet. “He chose to write about language loss and he was able to look at three generations in his family, so he could really see what was happening over time in his family. He did a beautiful job, look at how much he wrote, clearly and concisely” (Field Notes, 11/13/17)*

Anna also gave a mini lesson on how to cite evidence before giving students time to write.

Recall that the common core state standard that was the focus of the project was: *I can support my claim with relevant evidence from a credible source, so it is clear and concise for my reader.* Anna wanted students to cite evidence from their parent interview or their Language Box graphics, so she instructed students on how to use quotations correctly, and reminded them that their parent quotes should be verbatim, not paraphrased language. The rest of class time during this lesson was devoted to writing.

### **Lesson 10: Reflecting through dialogue**

The last activity students participated in before their community exhibition was a Socratic Seminar. Other class time was devoted to working on peer editing and completing their final drafts. Students who wished to create new graphics (if they had made a mistake) had time to do so. They peer edited each other’s writing, and also had time to decorate the cover of their project booklet.



Socratic Seminars are “named for their embodiment of Socrates’ belief in the power of asking questions, prize inquiry over information and discussion over debate. Socratic seminars acknowledge the highly social nature of learning and align with the work of John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, and Paolo Freire” (Scott Filkins, 2018). Anna used Socratic Seminars regularly in her classroom, so students knew what to expect. In a Socratic Seminar, the teacher prepares open-ended questions and gives students time to prepare for the seminar by responding to those questions individually and silently. Students discuss in two groups. A student facilitator for each group, chosen by the teacher, leads the class through the dialogue and is instructed to give everyone a chance to share their opinions. The teacher-generated questions begin the seminar, but more questions are generated by students as the discussion evolves<sup>18</sup>. The first group discusses while the other students observe and write down notes.

At the end of the project, students were beginning to ask each other more personal questions. Some of these questions were ones that Anna and I had collected over the course of the project and were included in the Socratic Seminar preparation notes. Though we wrote these questions down, they were based on my field notes and observations during class and focused on questions that students had raised over the course of the project. Students could choose to pose these questions to the group, or not. Other questions were asked that students generated spontaneously during their preparation time. Some of the questions asked and answered during the seminar included:

*How does it feel to have weaker language skills than other people?*

---

<sup>18</sup> For more information on Socratic Seminars, visit <http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/socratic-seminars-30600.html>

*How can we help others who have weaker language skills?*

*Does language loss affect a lot of people here?*

*Have you or anyone you know ever helped out someone in your family, like your parents, who don't know Spanish or English?*

*How can our teachers help us to learn a new language?* (Field Notes, 11/17/17)

The Socratic Seminar was an ideal activity to pose such questions, since individuals were able to volunteer responses as they felt comfortable. Students shared about their personal experiences learning English, losing their ability to communicate fluently in Spanish, translating for parents, and their plans for the future. David, an undocumented student, dreamed of returning to Mexico and using his English to make a difference: *"If you bring English to Mexico, you can have good opportunities and you can be a good politician."*

(Field notes, 11/17/17). Questions were also posed that were more general:

*What will happen with language in the U.S.?*

*Why does our community of Albuquerque have more English than Spanish when many people who live here are from Spanish speaking families?*

(Field Notes, 11/17/17)

Not all the questions posed were answered completely, but students were given time to think and reflect together as a group on their learning from the project. Though most students seemed eager and ready to participate in this activity, I noticed that neither Andrés, who identified himself as a monolingual English speaker, nor Hugo, a Spanish dominant student, chose to participate at all. After the seminar was over, I heard Andrés whisper to Adán, *"I hated that, I didn't participate at all"* (Field notes, 11/11/17). I had gotten to know Andrés over the course of the project, and I decided to ask him about his comment, but he didn't

want to talk to me about it. I never found out why he did not want to speak with me about this. Though it seemed that students were engaged, and that enough trust had been built in the classroom for individuals to participate freely, this was obviously not true for every individual all the time. I did not get to the bottom of why Andrés was upset during this particular activity; he had participated actively in other class activities, but it was a reminder that our efforts to facilitate transformative learning were indeed intentions, and did not always provide the results we wanted (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005).

### **Final projects**

Though a few students struggled to get the final project completed (due to absences, mostly, or serious personal/home issues that made participating in class a struggle), Anna was pleased that most of her students had completed, quality final projects ready to present at the community exhibition. The final projects included:

- 1) A personal Language Box graphic and explanation
- 2) A parent Language Box graphic and explanation
- 3) An analysis of family language history
- 4) A short reflection

Copies of eight student final projects can be found in Appendix E. Some students created a third graphic and explanation for a grandparent, though Monica was the only consented study participant who did so. Genesis did create three graphics, but she chose to interview both of her parents rather than a grandparent. This provided an interesting analysis because her mother grew up in Mexico and her father was raised in the United States. I collected thirteen final project booklets. Seven students interviewed parents who were living in Mexico when they were twelve/thirteen years old: Simón, Adán, Ernesto, Hernán, David, Monica, and

Ramón; five students interviewed parents who were living in the United States when they were twelve years old: Nicole, Xena, Jennifer, Andrés and Nadine. Genesis interviewed two parents, one from each country. In Appendix D are eight sample final projects that focus on language acquisition and language loss. I discuss these final projects in more detail in Analysis Part 2.

### **Community exhibition**

The community exhibition happened twice a year at EMA, at the end of the fall semester and at the end of the spring semester. It was an opportunity for students to share and celebrate their learning with their friends, teachers, and families. Though there was no grade attached to the exhibition, everyone at the school took it very seriously. Students spent time preparing by practicing their oral presentation skills. The Language Box was not the only project presented- the drama class, Spanish class, and science class also prepared projects to present in the fall. The theme of language caught on with other teachers at EMA; the drama class performed skits about language bullying and the science teacher had students write a short essay on how language is a tool of adaptation, essential for human survival. In Spanish class, students wrote and audio-record traditional *leyendas* (legends) in Spanish, which were played for the audience at the exhibition. Students were asked to bring snacks for the parents and teachers, making the environment feel like a celebration. Once the skits were performed and the recorded *leyendas* listened to, students spread out in the gymnasium, each individual posted near a table where audience members could approach them to listen to their presentation of their Language Box project and enjoy the food. The gym was packed, and I wandered around, looking for students that I knew from Anna's class. Below is an excerpt from my reflective memo after attending the exhibition:

*I start to wander, and the first student that I recognize is Hugo. I say hello, and he asks me if I want to hear his presentation, so I say yes. He makes eye contact with me, and speaks slowly and clearly, pausing before he turns each page. He told me in an interview he's still working a lot on his English pronunciation, and I sense that this kind of presentation skill may be difficult for him. Anna comes by and gives me a hug and listens to Hugo alongside me. A few times Hugo turns to her and he says he doesn't know how to explain things. Anna helps him through it by asking him questions: "Well, what does this represent? What does this mean to you?" and so on. We give him a little applause when he's done. Hugo presented to us in English. I did not see his parents at the event. I observed Monica and Simón present to their parents in Spanish. The exhibition is therefore an opportunity to practice oral presentation skills in both Spanish and English, depending on the audience members. Each student had a stack of small paper slips with a simple rubric in English on one side and Spanish on the other. Parents and teachers could offer students feedback on their oral presentation skills using these rubrics. I was able to meet several students' family members- Monica's mother and grandmother, Simón's mother, Nicole's mother, and Xena's parents. The whole event lasted about one hour, and before I knew it, the project was over. I was able to introduce myself to parents and congratulate students on their great work, though it felt a little rushed and overwhelming to me. (Field note, 11/30/17)*

I was not able to gather as much data at the community exhibition as I intended. I arrived late due to a traffic accident, and the event happened so quickly and it was so crowded that I ended up only having brief conversations with parents rather than more extensive

conversations. I had time to introduce myself, then move on to the next student presentation. I was also nine months pregnant, and it was difficult to move around the crowded room. I was exhausted and out of breath. Though the event was not a rich source of data, it was an important way for me to end my time as a classroom assistant and say goodbye to the students.

### **Pedagogical goals and transformative learning**

The analysis presented in this section relies heavily on Anna's perspective as an expert on her own students, as well as on students' own reflections on their learning. I take what Anna and the students said at face value and trust it. Recall that our original pedagogical goals were to:

1. Raise awareness of language loss in the school community by bringing conversations about language into the classroom;
2. Expand students' awareness/understanding of linguistic diversity;
3. Empower students to make changes (if desired) to their language use practices by creating goals for their future language use.

To some extent, we achieved these goals in that there was evidence that at least some students did: a) talk about language loss in their families; b) comment that they had a new understanding of linguistic diversity; and c) wanted to make changes to their language use practices to either prevent language loss from happening in the future or reverse the language loss that was happening presently in their families. Kemmis & McTaggart (2005) point out that just because teachers or researchers anticipate transformative results does not mean students will experience what they intend. Indeed, there is no way of knowing what kind of lasting impact the project will have in the future on students. Nevertheless, Anna was happy

with the positive results that she did observe, as was I. Firstly, students openly discussed language loss in their families. Xena, Nadine, Nicole, and Andrés all chose to write about language loss in their families for the final projects (these are analyzed more extensively in Analysis Part 2), and they shared those projects publicly at the community exhibition. Some of the things they said about language loss are featured below:

- 1) *Spanish is getting lost because they are speaking more English and Spanish. According to my language box my [mom] spoke more Spanish than I did and I spoke more English than my mom did when she was my age. In other words Spanish is getting lost in my family by us speaking more English than before. Therefore I really want my family to gain that Spanish back.* (Nicole, final project, 1/24/18)
- 2) *Language loss impacts me and my family by my mom not getting taught [sic] spanish. According to my mom in the interview “Yes, it exist’s because her parents can speak spanish but they didn’t teach it to her and her sister, it upset’s and frustrates her because she feels left out and can’t communicate in that language.” This quote shows how frustrating it is to be left out on a language. In conclusion my mom still fells sad that she wasn’t taught (sic) spanish.* (Andrés, final project, 1/24/18)
- 3) *My family is losing language over time because I’ve gotten more lazy and more frusturated [sic] about Spanish. I think its just confusing for me and my mom to try to speak it.* (Xena, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)

- 4) *I feel disappointed in my Language Box, because I know more English than Spanish. I grew up in a Spanish community, but I can't really speak it, so I don't know, it doesn't make me feel good.* (Nadine, field notes, 11/17/17)

Anna constantly encouraged the students to be vulnerable, and she praised them for sharing their feelings about language use in their families, which I strongly believe was what allowed students to share what they did in class and at the community exhibition. However, we did not just want students to discuss language loss; we hoped that they would find ways to make changes in their language use practices that would reverse language loss. Anna wanted her students to know that their futures relied on their actual, present-day decisions about whether or not to use Spanish, and that developing bilingual skill was ultimately up to them. Did these students feel empowered to make changes that would reverse the language loss taking place in their families? Nicole and Nadine commented specifically that the Language Box project could help you realize that language loss is taking place:

- 1) *It's really cool that we're doing it [the Language Box Project] because now, you know how much people speak English and Spanish, and how language is getting lost over the years...Now, you know, like there's a language that got lost. Maybe I can do something to get it back.* (Nicole, Interview, 11/15/17)
- 2) *So, if you're doing a Language Box, and you realize you've lost a language, then you can see that and it might motivate you to re-learn that language and then teach it to your kids.* (Nadine, Field notes, 11/17/17)

Nicole and Nadine clearly found that participating in the Language Box project helped raise consciousness about language loss, and that this consciousness could lead them to reversing language loss. Nicole even told me in the interview that she planned to start speaking more



Spanish at home. Nadine and her little sister spoke Spanish at home, even when her parents did not, with the goal of revitalizing Spanish in their own family. However, Xena and Andrés spoke extensively and emotionally about language loss in their families, but nowhere did I find evidence of them saying that the project motivated them to use more Spanish. I discuss their experiences and perspectives in more depth in Analysis Part 2. The discussion of language loss was also impactful to students who had not necessarily experienced language loss yet, but felt the project helped them to understand that they should continue speaking Spanish now if they did not want to lose Spanish in the future:

- 1) *this project shows me not to make fun of other languages and it also shows me to never loose [sic] my language* (Jennifer, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)
- 2) *We can learn the history of our languages, so we don't forget our languages, so we can improve in our languages, and we can see how, how we are exposed to language and how we hear other languages that we don't even notice... uh, it's important to know your history because nos identifica quien somos* [it tells us who we are]. (David, Interview, 11/13/17)

Our second goal was to expand students' understanding of linguistic diversity. I did find evidence that the project achieved this goal in students' written responses and interviews:

- 3) *My attitude is more great because ive been hearing other languages and I want to learn them.* (Ramón, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)
- 4) *this project shows me not to make fun of other languages and it also shows me to never loose [sic] my language* (Jennifer, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)

5) *I've learned that many other people are exposed to different languages at home.*

*At first, I thought it was only Spanish and English.* (Monica, Interview, 11/27/17)

It was necessary for the curriculum to focus to some extent on English language acquisition because of the student population- so many of Anna's students were English learners. We had not anticipated these students being so positively impacted by their analyses of English language acquisition. David and Hugo, both of whom described their English as still developing, felt that the project was beneficial for them because they realized that learning English was empowering for them and for their families. Hugo explained to me that he realized how it was "cool" to learn English and that his learning benefits his entire family. Likewise, David explained to me the most interesting result of the project for him was learning that he and his family were all learning English:

1) *It feels kind of cool [to learn English] because that means my sister, my little brother and me are getting more English to my parents, teaching them.* (Hugo, Interview, 11/17/17)

2) *[The most interesting thing I've learned is] how my family almost didn't talk English, but now they know English, and me too, I know English, so I can teach them.* (David, Interview, 11/13/17)

Lastly, Anna agreed that the project was mostly successful, despite the bumps in the road we experienced. Conversations about language became a normal occurrence in her classroom after the project. She was pleased that there appeared to be a heightened sensitivity to other cultures and languages amongst her students:

*There's also more sensitivity toward the mention of other cultures, countries, different ethnicities. At the beginning of the year, if I mentioned something about*

*Chinese people or China, there would be snickers or some inappropriate comment.*

*Today we were talking about cloning because of the book we're reading, and we were talking about how Chinese people are doing a lot with cloning, and there's no more inappropriate behavior, there's an acceptance there. And that was one of my goals, just an acceptance of different people and cultures. (Anna, Interview, 1/24/18)*

The most surprising result of the Language Box project for Anna was that a group of students started practicing Korean and Japanese. Learning new languages was not a focus of ours in designing the project, but a few students wrote in their goals for the future that they would like to learn Korean. They asked Anna to buy them some resources, and she agreed to:

*I am really seeing the benefits now [of the Language Box project], it's really interesting. So, I had one student come up to me, and they know I'll order them books if they want, and she asked me if I would get her a Korean workbook, and so I got her a Korean workbook and flashcards, and so all of a sudden, this little club started. We've got Japanese workbooks, and there's this little Korean club. Not only are they more passionate about language learning, they are taking the initiative and really practicing. (Anna, Interview, 1/24/18)*

The project was successful in ways that were different from what we had anticipated. The lessons on linguistic diversity (History of languages in the U.S. and The U.S. Census) were not the lessons that seemed to go well, yet many students told me afterward that the U.S. Census lesson was one of the most interesting to them. This was one of the most positive results of the study- students appreciating that other languages besides English and Spanish were spoken in their community and nation.

Unfortunately, Anna did not feel that the project was positively impactful to the monolingual English speakers:

*I think that actually those who have lost Spanish have actually become more insecure. Because now they're more aware of it, and everyone else is too. So, um, I'm not sure it's really helped. I do think that there is a little bit... one student who only speaks English, his friends will kind of joke with him now. His friends asked him to read something in Spanish, it said 'los niños,' so he read it, and his friends said 'good job' so there's a little there. Honestly, that piece, didn't go as well as I wish it had. (Anna, Interview, 1/24/18)*

This is Anna's impression of the impact the project had on students who had experienced Spanish language loss. My analysis of four students who wrote about language loss in their final projects affirms her observations to a certain extent, though not completely. For example, Nicole and Nadine both wrote about language loss and wrote that the project helped bring positive awareness to the issue. Importantly, Nicole and Nadine both have family members at home with whom they feel comfortable using Spanish and do not identify themselves as monolingual English speakers. I argue in the following chapter that students' feelings about Spanish language loss are directly tied to the opportunities they perceive are available to them to develop their Spanish. I now turn to that topic.

## Chapter 5

### Analysis part II: Analyzing student perspectives

In this chapter, I address two research questions:

1. How do students analyze the impact of bilingualism, language acquisition and language loss in their own families?
2. How do students perceive their opportunities to develop Spanish and English at home and at school?

I use the same set of data to answer these questions as I did to answer the pedagogical questions, but with a different eye to what the data reveal. The analysis in this chapter focuses on the *results* of the pedagogical efforts, principally what students learned about how language use practices were changing and developing in their families. In order to answer the first research question addressed in this chapter, I relied principally on students' final projects, in which they were asked to analyze the way that language use practices were changing across generations in their families. Students chose one of four concepts to analyze this: language loss, language acquisition, place, and language attitudes. We did not want students to be forced to talk about either language loss or acquisition, as some students may see little, if any, change in language exposure across generations. For example, Jennifer, a student participant in this study, observed that both her and her mother were bilingual and both felt confident and positive about their experiences learning two languages. Jennifer chose to write about language attitudes in her final project, and connected her and her family's positive attitude toward bilingualism with their success in maintaining bilingualism across generations. Ramón, too, chose to write about his positive attitude toward bilingualism and his desire to travel and learn new languages in his future. Other students

chose to talk about the impact that place has had in their families' language use practices. For example, Genesis talked about her family's move from California to New Mexico and how they heard less Spanish in New Mexico compared to previously in California. Sergio and Monica also wrote about place impacting language use in their families. They both noticed that their parents' language use had changed since moving to the United States, as they were now exposed to more English. Four student participants wrote about Spanish language loss in their final projects- Andrés, Nadine, Nicole, and Xena- and four student participants wrote about English language acquisition in their final projects- Adán, David, Ernesto, and Hugo. I decided to analyze these eight student cases. These eight students represented a wide variety of proficiency in Spanish and English. Adán, Ernesto, and Nicole characterized themselves as balanced bilinguals, equally comfortable in Spanish and English. Hugo and David characterized themselves as Spanish dominant and were actively learning English. I believe it is likely they were labeled as Emergent Bilingual or English Learners by the school. Nadine and Xena characterized themselves as passive bilinguals, able to understand Spanish but not speak it, and Andrés characterized himself as a monolingual English speaker. Their evaluations of their language abilities, as well as their beliefs and values surrounding language use and bilingualism, developed as a result of their particular experiences and histories. At the same time, they were all participating in the same classroom at East Mesa Academy and were interacting with each other constantly. They all completed the Language Box project and learned about bilingualism, language acquisition, and language loss. They each applied their learning to their own unique situations. As a researcher, I sought to understand how and why their experiences overlapped and where they

did not. Understanding their perspectives can help teachers and researchers better understand how to nurture bilingual language development in other contexts.

I did a cross-case analysis of the eight students who wrote about English language acquisition and Spanish language loss. Their completed final projects can be found in Appendix E. I coded interviews, field notes, and artifacts (including worksheets, written reflections, and final projects) for these eight student participants in order to understand as best I could their perspectives on bilingualism, language loss, and language acquisition. I write in detail about each one of their personal and family stories in this chapter, and I integrate my own understanding of the way their stories are similar and different. I found sociocultural-historical theory to be insightful when comparing and contrasting the student cases. I noticed that the students' language use practices, and the beliefs that surrounded those practices, were developed as a result of their cultural, linguistic, and familial histories (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Schecter & Bayley, 2002). Sociocultural-historical theory was limiting in one regard, however. It did not explain the reasons why some students refrained from using Spanish, despite seemingly ample opportunity to develop their heritage language. Norton's (2013) concept of investment filled this gap. This chapter contains a vignette of each of the eight student cases, grouped together according to the theme of their final project (Spanish language loss or English language acquisition). There is also one section devoted to each of the two groups that summarizes the similarities and differences between the four individuals in that group. There are large sections of student writing that I copied from their original work without making any changes to grammar or punctuation. Below is a table that summarizes demographic information for the eight student cases that are explored in detail in this chapter:

Table 5.1 Student demographic information

| Name    | First language | Place of birth | Dominant language | Mother's place of birth | Father's place of birth |
|---------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Adán    | Spanish        | U.S.           | Both              | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Andrés  | English        | Albuquerque    | English           | New Mexico              | New Mexico              |
| David   | Spanish        | Mexico         | Spanish           | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Ernesto | Both           | Mexico         | Both              | Mexico                  | U.S.                    |
| Hugo    | Spanish        | New Mexico     | Spanish           | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Nadine  | English        | Albuquerque    | English           | New Mexico              | New Mexico              |
| Nicole  | Spanish        | Albuquerque    | Both              | Mexico                  | Mexico                  |
| Xena    | English        | Albuquerque    | English           | New Mexico              | Mexico                  |

### Perspectives on Spanish language loss: Andrés, Xena, Nadine, and Nicole

#### Andrés

Andrés was a short, stalky boy with blue eyes, freckles, and dark brown hair. In our interview, he told me that he enjoyed playing video games and spent a lot of time by himself in his room on the weekends. He had no siblings and lived with his mom and dad, both of whom were Hispanic New Mexicans. He knew that his family had lived in New Mexico for many generations, but did not know exactly how long. Though all four of his grandparents spoke Spanish, his mother was not taught Spanish at all, and his dad was taught some limited Spanish as a child. The family used English exclusively in the home. Andrés was quite ambiguous about his cultural and familial connection to the Spanish language. He did not identify as Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino. In fact, he told me in the interview he didn't know how to describe his ethnic heritage, though at the end, when I asked him why he thought his teacher was doing this project, he gave me the following response:

*Molly: And why do you think your teacher is making you do this project?*



*Andrés: So we can learn more about our heritage and so we can learn about how even if we don't speak Spanish or maybe we can understand it, but it's part of our ancestry.*

*Molly: And is that true for you?*

*Andrés: Um, yeah. (Interview, 11/08/17)*

This was the only time that Andrés suggested to me that he possibly understood some Spanish, and that it was an important part of his own identity and heritage. He explained to me that he did not speak Spanish at school, and he was the only study participant to adamantly describe himself as a monolingual English speaker. He avoided speaking Spanish at school because he thought his friends would make fun of him if he tried:

*Molly: Do you speak Spanish at school?*

*Andrés: Nah.*

*Molly: Why not?*

*Andrés: Just because I feel like if I tried my friends might make fun of me.*

*Molly: Really? How does that make you feel?*

*Andrés: Sad. (Interview, 11/08/17)*

When I further questioned him about using Spanish in Spanish class, he again asserted that he did not use Spanish, though the teacher wanted him to try. He told me he hoped that the Language Box project would give him an opportunity to learn more Spanish.

Though he told me in his interview that there were clear benefits to bilingualism, including travel and communicating with different people, he shared a different opinion in a written response. When asked to describe his attitude toward bilingualism [*What is your attitude toward bilingualism? How can your attitude help you in the future?*], he wrote: “My

*attitude is that I have no opinion. I don't know how it will help me in the future"* (Andrés, Analysis themes packet, 11/17/17). His response perhaps reflects the fact that he does not consider himself to be bilingual. During the interview, he did express a positive attitude toward bilingualism, and asserted that it was important to his family that he learn Spanish. He also hoped that he would learn more Spanish in the future. In his final project, Andrés wrote about language loss in his family. He interviewed his mother who described to him in the interview the emotional pain of not being able to communicate in Spanish. In his final project, Andrés wrote the following:

*Language loss impacts me and my family by my mom not getting taught (sic) spanish. According to my mom in the interview "Yes, it exist's because her parents can speak spanish but they didn't teach it to her and her sister, it upset's and frustrates her because she feels left out and can't communicate in that language." This quote shows how frustrating it is to be left out on a language. In conclusion my mom still fells sad that she wasn't taught [sic] spanish. (Andrés, final project, 1/24/18)*

I noticed that Andrés used emotional language to talk about language loss. In the analysis paragraph above, he explains that his mom is upset, frustrated, and sad that she doesn't speak Spanish, and her experience "*shows how frustrating it is to be left out on a language.*" When Anna and I reviewed the final projects together, we both noticed that Andrés avoided speaking directly about his own feelings toward language loss, and focused instead on his mother's experience. Andrés participated actively in the Language Box activities, except for one class discussion at the end of the unit. I heard him lean over to Adán after that class was over and comment, "*I hate that, I didn't talk at all.*" (Field notes, 11/17/17). When I asked him about this activity, he did not want to talk about it, so I never got to learn more about

what made him uncomfortable during this discussion. During the one-on-one interview, Andrés alluded to his Hispanic identity, his ability to understand Spanish, and a desire to learn more Spanish, but I did not observe him talk publicly about any of this during the Language Box project. Andrés' story reveals the unfortunate and painful consequences of historical language loss. His attitude toward learning and using Spanish highlights the affective dimensions of heritage language development, which has been documented extensively in the literature (Carreira & Beeman, 2014; Ducar, 2012; Krashen, 1998).

### **Xena**

Xena was a tall girl with light skin and long, black hair who identified as Hispanic. She had a quiet voice and rarely talked in class. In our interview, she told me she loved to draw and liked acting. She was even part of a drama group that performed plays at elementary schools. I never heard Xena speak Spanish, except to re-tell me a story in her interview, where she repeated verbatim what someone else said and uttered two words in Spanish- "*pájaro*" [bird] and "*película*," [movie], but nothing else. She lived with her mom and dad. Her older half-sister was 28 and did not live with them. Xena's mom was an Albuquerque native and Hispanic New Mexican, raised, like Xena, in the East Mesa community. Her dad was from Mexico, and he learned English when he immigrated to the U.S. as an adult. Xena made sure to mention to me that he had a good job at the casino because he was bilingual. His parents (Xena's paternal grandparents) still lived in Mexico and only spoke Spanish. Xena's family expected her to speak Spanish when they visited, but this frustrated her. She explained to me in the interview that when she was younger, she spoke more Spanish, but she had gotten lazy and no longer practiced enough. She did not speak Spanish at school, and when I asked her why she said, "*'Cuz I don't really know how*

to speak it” (Interview, 11/13/17). Throughout her writing, Xena described her experience learning Spanish as frustrating. She did not see herself maintaining her Spanish in the future. Below are some of her notes<sup>19</sup> that she prepared for a class discussion:

*My family is losing language over time because I've gotten more lazy and more frusturated [sic] about Spanish. I think its just confusing for me and my mom to try to speak it. It would be difficult and frusturtating [sic]. I think there will be less Spanish [in the future] because I would probably not speak it as much with family but I will probably still hear Spanish in different places. If I had a child I think there will be more English than Spanish because I probably wont teach them a lot of Spanish that I've learned. (Xena, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18)*

Xena appears to blame herself for language loss taking place in her family, attributing the process to her own laziness and frustration. Despite this, Xena wrote that she has a positive attitude toward bilingualism because “*you can see more culture and get paid more in a job.*” (Xena, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18). Unlike Andrés, Xena had one fluent Spanish speaking parent at home and monolingual Spanish-speaking grandparents from Mexico that she interacted with occasionally. She would seemingly have more opportunity to use Spanish. However, at the end of the interview, when I asked Xena if she had anything left to share with me, the following conversation took place:

*Molly: Anything else you want to share?*

*Xena: Yeah, sometimes I get tired of Spanish.*

*Molly: Why?*

---

<sup>19</sup> These notes are in response to the following prompts: *Is your family losing language over time? How do you know this? Why is language loss occurring? How would you like your Language Box to look when you are 30 years old? Make a prediction for what your child's language box will look like in the future.*

*Xena: I don't know... cuz... my dad wants me to speak Spanish with my family but he doesn't like teach it to me.*

*Molly: So, do you wish he spoke more Spanish to you?*

*Xena: Little bit, yeah, but I guess I'd have to understand more 'cuz it'd get frustrating. (Interview, 11/13/17)*

Xena admits here that she wished her dad would speak Spanish with her, explaining that he is the one who wants her to be able to speak it. Interestingly, she once again puts the onus on her own frustration as a barrier to speaking Spanish with her dad, though she does partially blame her dad for not speaking the language more with her. Even though she wants him to speak Spanish with her at home, she clarifies that she would need to understand more first, otherwise she would get frustrated. In her final project, Xena analyzes the differences between her own language exposure and her mother's:

*Language loss impacts me and my family by how my mom doesn't know Spanish and my dad knowing Spanish. According to my moms and my language box, she was only exposed to 1% Spanish and 99% English. This shows that her parents didn't know or didn't teach her Spanish<sup>20</sup>. My language box shows about 20% Spanish and 80% English. overall this shows that I'm exposed to Spanish at home because my dad knows Spanish and taught [sic] me a little because hes from Mexico. That is why my language box is different from my moms. If my dad never knew spanish, I wouldn't have known some Spanish. If my mom knew Spanish, I probably would be fluent in*

---

<sup>20</sup> Xena told me in the interview that her mother is Hispanic, and her maternal grandfather speaks and understands Spanish, and her maternal grandmother understands Spanish. Though she writes here that her grandparents possibly "didn't know" Spanish, she asserts elsewhere that they did know Spanish.

*Spanish. That is how language loss impacted me and my family.* (Xena, final project, 1/24/18)

Xena was exposed to significantly more Spanish than her mother, but she still chose to discuss language loss rather than language acquisition. While Xena acquired more Spanish than her mom, she clearly sees herself as weaker in Spanish than in English, especially in comparison to her fluent bilingual father and peers at school, so she does not focus on her acquisition of Spanish relative to her mom. Xena takes personal blame for her weakening Spanish. Her notes to prepare for a class discussion reveal that she believed Spanish was being lost in her family because of her own laziness and frustration.

Xena's analysis is also interesting because she draws attention to the different possible outcomes according to her parents' language use; she had some exposure to Spanish thanks to her Mexican father. She would not be exposed to any Spanish if it were not for him. However, she believes she would be fluent in Spanish if her mom also spoke the language. Xena did not write about any attempt to revitalize or relearn Spanish, and instead anticipates using less and less Spanish over time. Though Xena commented throughout the data on her own frustration and laziness, at the very end of the interview, she admitted that she wished her father would speak more Spanish with her. I did not learn anything more about Xena's relationship with her father, but her additional comment at the end of the interview is telling. Xena understood that bilingualism would give her cultural and economic opportunities that monolingualism in English would not, yet she did not appear to be invested in Spanish language use at home with her fluent father, nor at school with her Spanish-speaking friends and peers. First, historical language loss in her mother's family resulted in Xena's mom being unable to communicate in Spanish and impeded her own opportunity to

develop Spanish at home. Second, an unexplained barrier to speaking Spanish with her father left her no opportunity to speak Spanish with the native speaker in her home. And third, her own feelings of laziness and frustration further discouraged her from improving her Spanish. Xena may have understood the concrete benefits of developing her Spanish, but the social and historical context in which she existed- at home and at school- presented significant perceived barriers to her using Spanish with those around her.

### **Nadine**

Nadine had long, black curly hair and dark brown skin. Both of her parents were Hispanic New Mexicans and she identified as Hispanic. She boxed and played basketball, and told me that her athletic commitments meant that she sometimes had little time to do her homework, which was stressful. She was one of Anna's students who would often come into class and lay her head on her desk or doodle on scrap paper. She was dealing with serious personal and family issues, and Anna would let her sit through class with her head down, never forcing her to participate. She told me in her interview that she grew up in a violent neighborhood, and remembers hiding in the basement of her grandfather's house at night in order to stay safe. At the time of the study, she lived with her mom, dad, younger sister, and younger brother. She also had two older half siblings and a twin brother who did not live with the family. She practiced speaking Spanish at home with her nine- year-old sister, who knew it well from being raised by Nadine's great-grandparents who spoke Spanish fluently. This is the only example in the data of a younger sibling influencing an older sibling to speak more Spanish. She also told me that one of her aunties spoke Spanish and that she would sometimes practice speaking with her. Nadine was contradictory about her ability to speak

and understand Spanish. She described her use of Spanish at school in the following dialogue during our interview:

*Molly: What about at school, do you speak Spanish at school?*

*Nadine: Not so much with my friends 'cuz they speak mostly English.*

*Molly: Your friends speak mostly English. Do you have any friends that speak mostly Spanish?*

*Nadine: Um, yeah.*

*Molly: Do you speak Spanish with them?*

*Nadine: No, they speak English to me 'cuz they know I'm not fluent in Spanish but I can understand it.*

*Molly: How does that make you feel?*

*Nadine: If someone talks to me in Spanish and I know what they're saying, like if someone asks me, 'Oh, what's your name?' I can reply it to them back in English, but I can't reply back to them in Spanish.*

*Molly: Okay, so do you wish your friends that speak Spanish would speak to you in Spanish?*

*Nadine: No, 'cuz like Spanish is a very fast language for people who don't understand it, so if they spoke to me, I wouldn't be able to understand like, well. (Interview, 11/13/17)*

Nadine asserts that she can understand Spanish, but then clarifies that it would be difficult for her to understand her Spanish-speaking friends because Spanish is a “*fast language for people who don't understand it.*” Like Andrés and Xena, she felt uncomfortable speaking Spanish in Spanish class because “*I can't pronounce stuff right. If*



*I'm reading stuff in Spanish I know what it's saying, I just can't pronounce it"* (Nadine, Interview, 11/13/17). Unlike Andrés, who also had Hispanic heritage, Nadine was clear about the fact that she was Hispanic, and even said several times in class and in our interview that you don't need to speak Spanish in order to be Hispanic, asserting that her ethnic identity was not necessarily tied to her proficiency in Spanish.

When her head was not down on her desk, Nadine was vocal in class, often eager to share her opinion. She was the only student in the study who brought up the relationship between skin color and Spanish proficiency. When the class was discussing language use data in Albuquerque, nearly all of Anna's students were surprised that the percentage of people who spoke Spanish at home was so low. When Anna asked individuals to explain why they thought the percentage of Spanish speakers should be higher in Albuquerque, Nadine shared her opinion: *Everywhere I go, I hear Spanish. Everywhere, someone is speaking Spanish. Since I'm brown, everywhere I go, people speak Spanish to me cuz of my color. No one speaks English to me.* (Field notes, 11/06/17).

Nadine's final project was eventually completed, but she struggled to make deadlines, and as mentioned before, spent a lot of class time with her head down. She did manage to finish, however, and was present at the community exhibition, but I did not listen to her presentation. For the Language Box project, she interviewed her mom, who lived in Los Lunas, New Mexico, when she was a child. She told me in her interview, and reiterated in her final project, that her family had Spanish roots and had lost the European dialect of Spanish through marriage. This was the focus of her analysis. In her analysis paragraph she wrote:

*Language loss has impacted me and my family by not being able to know that language. My family loss Spain Spanish due to marriage. Acording (sic) to my mom's language box she only had English with no much Spanish. In conculion (sic) my mom wasn't exposed to Spanish. Only some in her home.* (Nadine, final project, 1/24/18)

Nadine wrote very little, likely because she did not have much time to complete her project. She chose to focus on the loss of the European Spanish dialect, but says nothing about why that is significant or when it was lost. Though her final project revealed little about Nadine's perceived opportunities to develop bilingualism, she made several interesting comments during class discussions. During one discussion near the end of the project, she commented: *"I feel disappointed in my language box, because I know more English than Spanish. I grew up in a Spanish community, but I can't really speak it, so I don't know, it doesn't make me feel good"* (Nadine, Field notes, 11/17/17). During that same discussion, she later commented on the value of the Language Box project: *"So, if you're doing a Language Box, and you realize you've lost a language, then you can see that, and it might motivate you to re-learn that language and then teach it to your kids."* (Nadine, Field notes, 11/17/17). These comments, made publicly in a large, group discussion, suggest that Nadine is invested in regaining the Spanish lost in her family. She also wrote: *"My attitude toward bilingualism is strong. I want to learn Spanish. If you are bilingual you will get payed more and get a better job"* (Nadine, Analysis themes packet, 11/17/17). Yet in another class discussion, she said that she sometimes got lazy with Spanish, commenting to Anna, *"My attitude is I try it, I give up, then I get lazy,"* (Nadine, Field notes, 11/10/17). Nadine was unhappy with her language exposure, and she feels like she should know more Spanish. Yet she avoids using Spanish at school because she can't understand or can't pronounce it well.

She does practice Spanish at home with her little sister and she even commented on the usefulness of the Language Box project to revitalize a lost home language. These comments, combined with Nadine's positive attitude toward bilingualism, could point to her investment in developing her Spanish skills. However, she did share commonalities with Andrés and Xena. Though she had a positive attitude toward bilingualism, she commented in class that her attitude toward speaking Spanish was lazy. While she practiced Spanish at home with her sister, she avoided speaking Spanish at school. She did not speak Spanish with friends because it was difficult to understand them when they spoke quickly and she avoided speaking Spanish in Spanish class because she knew she could not pronounce the words correctly. An important difference between her and Xena is that Nadine did take advantage of a more fluent Spanish-speaking family member at home. It is significant that this family member is a younger sibling. The power dynamics between Nadine and her younger sister were certainly different than the power dynamics between Xena and her Mexican father.

### **Nicole**

Nicole was a light skinned girl with brown hair who was constantly smiling. She was often dressed stylishly and wore braces. She lived with her two younger sisters, mother and father and identified as Mexican-American. Both of her parents immigrated from Mexico to the United States as children and both spoke Spanish as a first language. Her father immigrated when he was about eleven years old, and her mom immigrated when she was six years old. Nicole reported that her dad was more comfortable in Spanish whereas her mom was more comfortable in English, though both were bilingual. Consequently, Nicole spoke English and Spanish with her mom and sisters, and Spanish with her dad. She described the language use in her house in the following excerpt:

*Nicole: I would say I speak a lot of Spanish, my dad, my mom too, my sisters. But then, like whenever my dad isn't home, my sister starts talking to me in English, and I'm like, "Talk to me in Spanish, I understand it too." And like, my mom will talk to me in English even when my dad is home. (Nicole, Interview, 11/13/17)*

I was surprised that Nicole chose to write about language loss because she spoke Spanish often in class. I decided to ask her about her choice in the interview:

*Molly: So, you speak Spanish and English, I hear you speak Spanish all the time in class. Do you feel like you're losing Spanish personally?*

*Nicole: Um, kind of.*

*Molly: Really, why?*

*Nicole: 'Cuz whenever I'm talking to my dad I get nervous I guess and then I kinda' like forget some words.*

*Molly: Okay, and how does that make you feel?*

*Nicole: it makes me feel kinda' weird, because my dad always wants us to talk Spanish, he's like, "I don't want you guys to lose your Spanish, I want you guys to keep talking it, so it makes me feel kinda' sad, 'cuz I'm not like actually speaking Spanish with my dad that much. (Interview, 11/13/17)*

When I asked her to explain what the Language Box project was and why it was important, she replied:

*It's fun, I like it a lot 'cuz we get to color and everything, and we get to know the percentages [of languages] we speak everywhere, and I dunno, it's really cool that we're doing it because now you know how much people speak English and Spanish*

*and how language is getting lost over the years... Like there's a language that got lost, maybe I can do something to get it back.* (Nicole, Interview, 11/15/17)

Nicole, more than any other study participant, showed the strongest desire to reverse Spanish language loss in her family. Though Nadine also commented once that the project could help one to realize that language loss was taking place, Nicole was constantly speaking out against language loss. During small group discussion about the Albuquerque census data, Nicole commented: *"We should change these numbers. We don't want to see so much English. for example, if English keeps being spoken then Dine will disappear."* (Nicole, Field notes, 11/06/17). Spanish language loss was upsetting to her in her own family, but she also showed concern for the loss of Diné in the broader Albuquerque community. In her final project, she wrote the following:

*Language Loss impacts me and my family by the language. The language we learned first is getting lost in my family. Spanish is getting lost because they are speaking more English and Spanish. According to my language box my [mom] spoke more Spanish than I did and I spoke more English than my mom did when she was my age. In other words Spanish is getting lost in my family by us speaking more English than before. Therefore I really want my family to gain that Spanish back. In the future I want my family to continue speaking Spanish. I also want my children in the future to know Spanish perfectly as well as English but I don't want them to lose a language like my family has. I would really like my language exposure to change by me being exposed to more Spanish.* (Nicole, Final project, 1/24/18)

Nicole was the only study participant to talk about language loss in her family, yet she had a majority of Spanish exposure at home and school. She was also the only student

who mentioned (even multiple times) wanting to “do something” about language loss. This is perhaps because she was the only one who was able to do something about it- she was comfortably proficient in spoken Spanish. Xena and Nadine could understand and perhaps speak Spanish to some extent, but did not use Spanish at school, whereas Andrés seemed hesitant even to admit that he might understand Spanish. Though Nicole felt nervous when she would forget a word in Spanish, she did not avoid using Spanish at school like Nadine, Andrés, and Xena. Nicole perceived language loss as a problem that could be reversed because she had access to the resources to use more Spanish. When I asked her what she could do about language loss in her own life, she explained she could speak more Spanish with her dad and speak more Spanish at school, especially in Spanish class. Nicole had the resources and the confidence in her linguistic proficiency to address language loss in her family, unlike the other students who wrote about language loss who lacked confidence in their pronunciation, felt lazy, frustrated, and feared being made fun of. She was clearly motivated to develop bilingualism, and her social circumstances- at home and at school, where she communicated with fluent bilinguals- further facilitated her investment, and actual use of Spanish with those around her to aid her in achieving her goal of preventing language loss.

### **Patterns, shared history, and unique experiences**

The four students who wrote about Spanish language loss in their families shared a common historical context. All of the parents interviewed for the project attended school in New Mexico where they were exposed exclusively to English. All of these parents were also exposed to some Spanish at home during their childhood, though the range of parent Spanish language exposure was quite variable. The one exception to this would be Xena’s father,

who immigrated to the U.S. as an adult. However, he was not interviewed for the Language Box project. The students' own language use practices, and the degree to which they were exposed to Spanish and English at home and at school also varied significantly. The tables below contain 1) Parent exposure to Spanish and English at home and at school at the age of twelve, and 2) students' self-reported exposure to Spanish and English at home and at school at the age of twelve:

Table 5.2 Parent language exposure at home and school

| Parent       | Home language exposure |         | School language exposure |         |
|--------------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
|              | English                | Spanish | English                  | Spanish |
| Andrés' mom  | 70%                    | 30%     | 100%                     | 0%      |
| Nadine's mom | 98%                    | 2%      | 100%                     | 0%      |
| Nicole's mom | 0%                     | 100%    | 100%                     | 0%      |
| Xena's mom   | 80%                    | 20%     | 100%                     | 0%      |

Table 5.3: Language exposure at home and at school<sup>21</sup>

| Student | Home language exposure |         | School language exposure |         |
|---------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
|         | English                | Spanish | English                  | Spanish |
| Andrés  | 100%                   | 0%      | 80%                      | 20%     |
| Nadine  | 75%                    | 25%     | 55%                      | 45%     |
| Nicole  | 20%                    | 80%     | 65%                      | 30%     |
| Xena    | 80%                    | 20%     | 60%                      | 40%     |

---

<sup>21</sup> \*if a student's exposure does not add up to 100%, it is because they included other languages besides English and Spanish in their language exposure

Nicole and Xena both lived with at least one fluent Spanish speaking parent, and therefore had the possibility of Spanish language use at home. Nicole had the most opportunities to speak Spanish at home by far because both of her parents and her siblings all spoke Spanish. Xena wished her father would speak with her in Spanish, but also said she would need to understand the language better first in order to not get frustrated. Nadine practiced Spanish at home with her younger, more fluent sister, who had been raised by their great-grandparents, and had some opportunity to speak Spanish at home. Andrés had no exposure to Spanish at home, though his dad reportedly spoke some limited Spanish. At school, Xena, Andrés and Nadine avoided using Spanish. Xena and Nadine could not pronounce Spanish words correctly, which impeded them from trying to speak, and Andrés was afraid he would be made fun of if he tried to speak Spanish. All four of the student participants associated Spanish use with some kind of negative emotion including nervousness, fear, sadness, laziness, and frustration. Even Nicole, who reported being quite proficient in Spanish, felt nervous when she forgot words in Spanish. Despite these negative associations, they had positive attitudes toward bilingualism, and every single one of these four students said it was important to their families that they develop their Spanish. They gave reasons such as communicating with more people, communicating with Spanish-speaking family, getting a better job, and having more opportunities. The only student of these four who appeared to be invested in Spanish language use was Nicole. It is obvious that her ability to invest in Spanish language use is directly tied to her social circumstances. She had more opportunities to use Spanish at home, and felt comfortable speaking Spanish at school. She was also particularly positively impacted by the Language Box project, and spoke about language loss as a problem to be solved multiple times. Nadine, too, made



comments that suggested she was also invested in Spanish language development at home with her sister. However, the social barriers at school- including her poor pronunciation- limited her opportunities there to engage in meaningful Spanish language use.

The main purpose of the Language Box project was to bring conversations about language use into the classroom with the goal of addressing issues of language loss in the lives and families of students. Hopefully, students would feel empowered to make the changes necessary to address language loss. Nicole and Nadine both commented on the way the Language Box could help an individual address language loss. They were unhappy with their current linguistic realities, and had ways to work toward a new possible outcome. Nicole had friends and family to speak Spanish with, and she felt confident enough to increase her use of Spanish with the individuals in her life who spoke it. Having a parent at home who appeared to enforce Spanish language use appears to be a significant factor in Spanish language proficiency when we compare Nicole's case to Xena's, who also had a fluent parent at home who did not speak with her in Spanish. Nadine had more limited opportunities, but still chose to take advantage of speaking Spanish with her sister at home in order to improve her Spanish skills. In her own words, her attitude toward bilingualism was "strong" and perhaps a motivator in practicing her Spanish, though she also admitted to sometimes being lazy with Spanish. Our pedagogical goal appeared to be met especially in the case of Nicole, and perhaps even in Nadine's case.

In contrast, Andrés and Xena made no mention of a change in perspective or transformative understanding. Andrés, the most extreme case of language loss of the four, had little, if any, real opportunity to use Spanish, for the social barrier to doing so- fear of being made fun of at school- was significant. Xena attributed her own barriers to Spanish

use to internal factors- her own frustration and laziness- rather than external, social factors. However, she did divulge to me at the very end of our interview that she wished her dad would use more Spanish with her. Most importantly, Xena and Andrés both appeared to want to use more Spanish, but felt powerless to change their situations. Their experiences reflect Norton (2013) and Potowski's (2004) observations that just because learners are in contact with fluent speakers of the target language does not mean they will engage in meaningful use of the target language. Within the context of East Mesa Academy, bilingualism was highly valued and celebrated, and Spanish fluency represented significant cultural capital. I wonder about the heritage learner's feelings of belonging in their community. It was clear to me that Andrés had a conflicted sense of identity as a Hispanic person, admitting to me only vaguely and in private that he was Hispanic and that the Spanish language was an important piece of that identity. When I asked him why he thought that his teacher was implementing the Language Box project, he responded: *"So we can learn more about our heritage and so we can learn about how even if we don't speak Spanish or maybe we can understand it, but it's part of our ancestry"* (Interview with Andrés, 11/08/17). It is well known in the literature on heritage languages that while heritage learners hold the heritage language in high esteem, they do not think of themselves as fluent speakers of the language (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2012). Interacting with more fluent peers and family members can cause anxiety and even fear for heritage learners (Krashen, 1998). The three heritage learners of Spanish in this study confirm that even young adolescent speakers share these feelings. Their experiences problematize the pedagogical efforts of empowering students to address language loss. I discuss this further in Chapter Six.

## Perspectives on English language acquisition: Ernesto, Adán, Hugo, and David

### Ernesto

Ernesto was a short boy with light brown skin, black hair, and bright green eyes. His dad was an Anglo American, and his mother was Mexican, and he identified as Mexican. He was born in Mexico City and moved to the U.S. when he was about two years old. He told me he felt equally comfortable in both English and Spanish and used more English than Spanish. His parents were divorced, and he split time between his dad's and his mom's house. At his dad's house he spoke mostly English, even though his dad spoke some Spanish, and at his mom's house he primarily spoke Spanish. In the interview, he told me that he enjoyed going to East Mesa because it wasn't like other schools where Spanish was only spoken in class. At East Mesa Academy, "*You can talk it [Spanish] everywhere,*" and the school is "*for the bilingual.*" (Ernesto, Interview, 11/15/17). Ernesto was the only participant who wrote about English language acquisition but did not remember his own experience learning English. It is possible and likely that Ernesto was exposed to English early on from his English-speaking father, even though he was born in México and told me that his first language was Spanish. Ernesto was articulate, and I noticed that his writing contained few spelling or grammatical errors. In his final project, Ernesto wrote:

*Language acquisition impacts me and my family by helping us expand our language knowledge. According to my language box I have more English exposure than my mom. I think it is like that because when she was my age, she wasn't in an English-speaking country. She grew up in Mexico where was only taught English in school. Therefore I have gained English. I will try to get at least 3 more languages. I want to learn more languages so I can teach other people.* (Ernesto, Final project, 1/24/18)

Ernesto's analysis focuses on the intergenerational acquisition of English rather than his own personal experience of learning English. He saw a clear connection between immigration to the U.S. and English language exposure. In his analysis paragraph above, he states that his mom "*grew up in Mexico where she was only taught English in school.*" Though she had some exposure to English, this was not enough for her to become a fluent speaker. Ernesto, on the other hand, went to a school in Albuquerque "*for the bilingual*" and lived in the U.S., where he had opportunities to use English and Spanish often at home and at school. Interestingly, in the parent interview, Ernesto's mother spoke with him about language loss: "*El idioma nawatl [sic] era una idioma ancestral y se perdió con mis abuelos y cuando pierdes una idioma pierdes parte de tu identidad y cultura* [The Nahuatl language was an ancestral language and it was lost with my grandparents. When you lose a language, you lose a part of your identity and culture." (Ernesto's mother, Parent interview sheet, 1/24/18). If Ernesto had chosen (or been able to) document more generations of his mother's family, he might have focused on the loss of Nahuatl, or at least included Nahuatl in his project. As it was, the scope of his analysis was limited to his mother's and his own language exposure. Ernesto, despite agreeing to participate in the study, seemed the least interested in talking to me, and I gathered little descriptive data about his family background or home life in comparison to other students. Nonetheless, he presented an interesting case, being one of only two student participants who were born in México, and the only participant who wrote about English language acquisition that did not recall the experience of learning English.

### **Adán**

Adán was a short, black haired boy with brown skin who liked playing sports. Born in the United States to Mexican parents, he identified himself as Mexican. From what I

gathered, he talked to anyone and everyone in class, in Spanish or English, and he described himself as comfortable using English and Spanish. He lived with his mom, step-dad, brother, two sisters and two step-siblings and liked being from a big family. Both of his parents were from small towns in Chihuahua. He spoke most about Nicolas Bravo, the small pueblo where his mother was born and where he went once to visit family. He was born in Utah, and he remembers working with his family in the fields when he was very young. Adán's first language was Spanish, and unlike other English learners, he recalls learning English in kindergarten as a positive experience, even though he remembers being a little nervous at first. In the interview, he told me: *"It was easy for me, 'cuz since I was small, I would ask the teachers what it meant, and my kindergarten teacher, that's all she spoke, so I had to learn it like, just a fuerza [by force], just because, like I had to learn it, otherwise I wouldn't understand anything they were saying"* (Interview, 11/27/17). He had a positive attitude toward bilingualism, and emphasized the economic benefits that come with knowing two languages. Adán's parents did not speak English, but they were learning. His father worked in a factory and his mother worked at a school. They both interacted with English speakers, and therefore they needed to learn the language to communicate better at their jobs. Adán and his siblings sometimes helped their parents by teaching them English words and translating for them when it was necessary. Adán would help his dad with "side jobs" and translate when they needed to communicate in English. When I asked him what it felt like to translate for his father, he responded: *"It doesn't bug me 'cuz I feel comfortable speaking English"* (Interview, 11/27/17). If he ever needed help with an English word, he said he would ask his older sister who knew a lot of English.

Most surprisingly about Adán was the low percentage of Spanish exposure he reported at home and school (75% English exposure and 25% Spanish exposure at both home and school). He even commented to me in our interview that one thing the Language Box project revealed to him was how much English he was using at home and school. Nevertheless, he felt confident in his bilingual skills, and his relatively limited Spanish exposure did not seem to affect his opportunities to use Spanish. When I asked him what it was like to go to school at EMA, he explained, *“It’s good cause you can concentrate in like two languages, and you don’t lose either, your English or your Spanish”* (Interview, 11/27/17).

Adán’s final project focused on his own acquisition of English, and he interviewed his mother, who was raised in the small town of Nicolas Bravo, Chihuahua, México:

*Language acquisition impacts me because we can all get better Jobs. If I could not acquire a language it would be harder to communicate and travel. My parents always told me that I can have a better future if I know english and spanish. As my mom said in my parent interview, That if we know two languages I can improve my and my family members future. In conclution [sic] language acquisition improves my family and I because by getting money to help pay stuff.* (Adán, Final project, 1/24/18)

Adán’s analysis focused on the material benefits that bilingualism would afford him and his family in the future. Nowhere in his writing did he mention the cultural value of bilingualism, though he did mention that acquiring a language would help him communicate and travel. Adán described his experience learning English in school in positive terms, unlike other students who expressed feelings of anxiety, stress, and fear when they entered

school and didn't know any English. Indeed, Adán appeared to be confident and positive, and even said the project had little impact on his attitude because his attitude “*has always been awesome*” (Adán, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18). Like Ernesto, Adán appeared to have ample opportunity to develop both of his languages at home and school, and did not mention any negative experiences associated with language learning, schooling, or home life.

### **Hugo**

Hugo was a thin, small boy with dark brown skin and black hair. He spoke very quietly, and seemed to use Spanish any chance he could in class. He often wore his soccer clothes- sweatpants, soccer shoes, and a t-shirt- and liked sports, especially running track. Hugo was one of the most Spanish-dominant student participants. Born in the U.S. to Mexican parents, he lived with his mom, dad, older sister and younger brother. He told me he identified as Mexican American, emphasizing he was born in the United States. At home, he spoke Spanish exclusively with his parents, but he said it was “50/50” Spanish and English with his siblings, and that they would use English if they did not want their parents to understand what they were saying. As far as I could tell, he used Spanish exclusively for social purposes in class, and used English only when he had to. When I interviewed him, I made sure to let him know that he could speak in Spanish, but he insisted on using English, and demonstrated his ability to answer my questions comfortably in English despite his preference for Spanish. During the interview, he opened up about his experience learning English as a young child:

*Molly: What's it like going to school here?*

*Hugo: I like it cuz in most schools... they just speak English.*

*Molly: Have you been to schools like that?*

*Hugo: Yeah, I had this really bad experience with a teacher...I only spoke Spanish and she only spoke English... and she only made me cry because I didn't get what she said... yeah, the word was really hard.*

*Molly: Wow, how old were you?*

*Hugo: Uh, I was like, in first grade.*

*Molly: First grade, wow. That must have been really hard for you. So, when did you start learning English?*

*Hugo: (pause) Like in second grade.*

*Molly: Second grade. Did you have a better teacher?*

*Hugo: (Nods head yes).*

*Molly: What was that like?*

*Hugo: It felt better because she was bilingual. (Interview, 11/17/17)*

Hugo felt that he was still very much learning English. He told me in our interview that it was important for him to maintain his Spanish to keep his culture, and that someday he wanted to teach Spanish to his children. It was also important for him to acquire English, but for very different reasons; English meant he could get a good job and broaden his communicative ability. Hugo's whole family was working on acquiring English. Like Adán, Hugo and his siblings translated for their parents and taught them words and phrases. Hugo said he felt good translating for his dad; the two of them worked together as mechanics, but he sometimes struggled to know the correct English words. If he needed help, he would ask his older sister who knew more English than he did. Hugo's final project focused on his family's acquisition of English. He interviewed his mother, who was raised in Mexico and immigrated to the United States with Hugo's father when they were sixteen years old:



*The way language acquisition impacts me and my family is by I have learned a new language for my family. The way that new language impacted me and my family is now we need the language english is mostly popular in the united states. As you can see the language box I created has more english than my mom's language box but now she is hearing more english in the house community nation a quote I got from her interview is it important to be bilingual to get a better job better future. Over all this proves how language acquisition impacts me and my family. I want to acquire more language so I can communicate with more people teach my children more language have a better job. (Hugo, Final project, 1/24/18)*

Hugo describes the acquisition of English as a necessary tool in the United States, one that will afford him and his family opportunities in the future. It is significant that he describes learning English as something he was doing “for” his family and not with his family. Hugo was one of the students that Anna felt was particularly positively impacted by the Language Box project, as he realized that he was actively improving his family’s opportunities by learning English. Indeed, Hugo explained to me in our interview: *“It feels kind of cool [to learn English] because that means my sister, my little brother and me are getting more English to my parents, teaching them”* (Hugo, Interview, 11/17/17). Considering his past experience learning English in elementary school, this was an extremely positive change in attitude toward learning English.

### **David**

David, a short, husky boy with black hair and brown skin, wore glasses and often entered class singing in Spanish. He was talkative, social, and often smiled. He used both English and Spanish in class to participate in Anna’s class and he liked to play soccer. In his

interview, he gave me a detailed historical description of his family's origins in Durango, México, and their eventual migration to Juárez, México. David is one of ten siblings, but he lived only with his mom, dad, and younger brother in the United States. His other, older siblings had different mothers and lived in México. He was an undocumented student, brought to the U.S. by his parents when he was three years old. He does not remember the journey, but his mom told him stories about it. David recalled the difficulty of learning English and admitted that he still struggles to speak English sometimes:

*Molly: What was it like [learning English]?*

*David: Very hard, because I could... I could no... ahh, que no podia [I could not], I couldn't say some words, like, now. Ha! But um, I still practice and practicing, and I'm not like 100% English and 100% Spanish because I think I learned Spanish more than English.*

*Molly: Okay, and how old were you when you started to learn English?*

*David: Five.*

*Molly: How did it make you feel to learn English?*

*David: I think it make me feel weird 'cuz I need another language, I only knew Spanish, and it was stressful 'cuz I didn't know how to pronounce some words.*

*Molly: And how do you feel now when you speak English?*

*David: Um, a little stress because I cannot say some words, but um, happy because I know another language that is not my own language. (Interview, 11/13/17)*

Despite the difficulties he experienced learning English as a young child, David, like Hugo, felt good about learning English, even when it was stressful, and said that he had opportunities to practice both English and Spanish at school. Though he was enthusiastic

about learning English, David was, at the same time, extremely loyal to his Mexican identity and the Spanish language. He asserted this several times. For example, in the interview, he told me: *“Spanish is my first language and I will never lose it”* (David, Interview, 11/13/17), and in his Analysis Discussion notes, he wrote: *“I need to never forget Spanish... when I’m 30 it will still dominate”* (David, Analysis discussion sheet, 1/24/18). He planned to return to México as an adult and find a job where he could use his bilingual skills. Like Adán and Hugo, he sometimes translated for his parents. In his final project, David interviewed his mother, who grew up in Ciudad Juárez, Juárez, México, and he focused on his family’s acquisition of English:

*Language acquisition impact’s (sic) me and my family because it helped us when we came to the U.S and it’s a great tool. According to my mom and my parent interview “Porque es una herramienta para poder expresarse y comunicarse con personas o comunidades dentro o fuera del país” [Because it’s a tool to be able to express yourself and communicate with people or communities within or outside the country]. This quote shows how language (sic) acquisition is a great tool an that it can be helpful to communicate with other communitys (sic) or nations. Therefore language acquisition is a great tool and I feel great to add a new language. In the future my plans are going to be to add a new language. Moving to another community that speak spanish and english so my kids don’t lose neither of those languages. I want to teach my child’s new languages, to go abough (sic) and beyond. They can be free choosing their languages. They steel (sic) need to know spanish. (David, final project, 1/24/18)*

David conceptualizes language acquisition as a “tool” that helped him and his family when they came to a new country. He repeats the word “great” several times in his analysis, emphasizing his positive feelings towards English language acquisition. His plans for the future include teaching his children even more languages beyond English and Spanish. He wants them to be “free” while at the same time continuing the use of Spanish in the family. David, like Hugo, has experienced difficulty learning English, yet remains positive about the future possibilities that bilingualism will afford him. Unlike Hugo, David is not learning English “for” his family but “with” his family.

### **Patterns, shared history, and unique experiences**

These students, too, had a shared historical context, and they participated in many of the same language practices. They all had close ties to México; Ernesto and David were themselves born in México, and Adán and Hugo’s parents both immigrated to the United States as working adults. All four of the parents who were interviewed for the project were living in México when they were twelve years old, and they all had some exposure to English at school or in their community, even if this exposure was very limited. Aside from Ernesto, the other three students all learned English when they entered school. They all had monolingual or very Spanish dominant parents, and translated for their parents when it was necessary. All four had positive attitudes toward bilingualism. They, too, recognized that bilingualism would afford them a better future, including a better paying job and a wider range of communication with diverse people. They also found bilingualism to be valuable because it would allow them to help others. Indeed, Hugo, David, and Adán all had experience translating for older family members. Though their experiences and feelings about translation varied, they all agreed that it was important to be bilingual in order to help

others who were not able to communicate in two languages. None of the students who wrote about Spanish language loss mentioned the ability to translate or help others as a reason to work toward fluency in two languages. The students who wrote about English language acquisition were in an interesting position. While they were positioned at school as English learners, at home they were English teachers, responsible for translating and teaching their parents English. Their perceived language exposure varied significantly, just like the four students who wrote about Spanish language loss (see table below):

Table 5.4 Language exposure at home and school

| Student | Home language exposure |         | School language exposure |         |
|---------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
|         | English                | Spanish | English                  | Spanish |
| Adán    | 75%                    | 25%     | 75%                      | 25%     |
| Ernesto | 20%                    | 80%     | 55%                      | 45%     |
| David   | 20%                    | 70%     | 20%                      | 75%     |
| Hugo    | 35%                    | 65%     | 55%                      | 45%     |

Ernesto, Hugo, and David all reported being exposed to mostly Spanish at home (65% or more). Adán was the outlier, reporting only 25% Spanish exposure at home. Adán, Ernesto, and Hugo all reported a majority of English language exposure at school (55% or more). David, however, indicated he had only 20% English language exposure at school. Once again, students' perceived language exposure did not necessarily correlate to their understanding of the way that language loss or language acquisition was playing out in their families, nor did it reflect their perceived proficiency in Spanish or English.

All four of these student participants felt positively about their opportunities to develop English. Though home was devoted to Spanish language exposure (except in the case of Adán), school presented opportunities to practice and develop both languages. Adán's comment, that *"you don't have to lose either, your Spanish or your English,"* was telling of his positive review of the school supporting bilingual language development. Likewise, Ernesto felt that school was special because it was *"for"* bilingual students. Hugo and David both had negative experiences learning English in the past. David still felt stressed when using English. However, they both felt that their teachers were available to help them develop stronger English language skills. Hugo, Adán, and David all readily pointed to friends, teachers, and family members who could help them when they struggled with English. Ernesto did not ever mention struggling in English, and therefore did not mention any sources of support in English language development. It is possible that his English-speaking father significantly impacted his language learning experience early on, even though he only spent some of his time living with his father and only reports 20% English language exposure at home.

Bilingualism appeared to be valuable and attainable for this group of students, and they were all invested in further developing their bilingualism. Despite past or present struggles in the cases of Hugo and David, they seemed to be hopeful about the future and took advantage of their opportunities to develop their English. Both of them were investing in future identities as bilingual individuals who had access to resources such as better jobs and wider communicative abilities (Norton, 2013). Unlike Xena, Nadine, and Andrés, Hugo and David were not impeded by the same social barriers- lack of proficiency, poor pronunciation, and fear of being made fun of. Even though David and Hugo knew their

English was not strong, they perceived that their peers and teachers were sources of support for their English development, not sources of ridicule or judgment. Perhaps their investment also speaks to the relative power of English on a national level. While Spanish language development was important to families and represented cultural capital within the East Mesa community, it was not a necessity in the same way that English was for survival and social success in the United States.

Ernesto and Adán both appeared to have already accomplished the task of developing bilingual skills. Though they were adolescents, and therefore still developing their language skills in general, they reported feeling equally confident and proficient in Spanish and English. Neither of them mentioned any negative language learning experiences, at least not to me or in their written work during the Language Box project. Bilingualism was not a future possibility for these two students, but rather a lived reality. Their investment in English and Spanish language acquisition was already paying off. They socialized with both Spanish- and English-speaking peers in class, felt that their language skills were strong, and also gave very positive reports about the school culture at East Mesa Academy as a place *“for”* the bilingual, where *“you don’t lose either, your English or your Spanish.”*

The experiences of the four students who wrote about English language acquisition illustrate Rogoff’s (2003) conceptualization of cultural communities well. The introduction of English has changed and will continue to change the way that each of the participant’s family functions, and each family will adapt as they must to the changes that immigration to a new country requires. Rogoff (2003) explains that communities “adapt with changing times, experimenting with and resisting new ideas in ways that maintain core values while learning from changes that are required or desired” (p. 81). However, Rogoff’s theory does

not explicate the shifting power dynamics implied in the students' description of their family experiences. Hugo, David, and Adán all mention teaching English to their parents and translating for them when it is necessary. In other words, these parents rely on their children's language proficiency to access valuable resources. David comments on his discomfort with this power shift during a class discussion when he shares with the class his experience translating for his dad at work: *"I help out, sometimes, like with my dad. Like one time my dad asked me to help out with something [translating between English and Spanish], and I felt like I knew more than my dad, but really, like, I don't know more than my dad."* (Field notes, 11/17/17). David notes that his English proficiency, relatively superior to his father's, could suggest that he "knows more" than his dad; however, he understands that in reality, this is not the case. He knows that his father is a knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced adult, yet his father's lack of English proficiency makes it appear otherwise.

This chapter analyzed the experiences of four students whose families had been affected by Spanish language loss and four students whose families were experiencing English language acquisition. I built my analysis around their own interpretations of their experiences, rooted in their final projects from the Language Box unit in which they analyzed language use practices in their families. My focus in this chapter was that of a researcher rather than a curriculum developer or classroom assistant. I did not incorporate Anna's voice into this chapter. The focus was on interpreting the students' experiences, family stories, and perspectives. I hope that the attention paid to their perspectives gives other teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers insight into the realities of bilingual language development. In the following chapter, I conclude the study by tying these two analytical



chapters together and referring back to the literature in order to provide some pedagogical implications.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusions and implications

*“Ultimately only life educates, and the deeper that life, the real world, burrows into the school, the more dynamic and the more robust will be the educational process” (Vygotsky, 1997, p. 345, as cited by Moll, 2013, p. 121)*

### Sustaining language and culture in the classroom

Anna and I began our curricular journey with a shared agenda, to confront the loss of home language that Anna saw playing out in many of the families at East Mesa Academy. We approached this task by implementing the Language Box project in Anna’s classroom, a project that used students’ and their family members’ language use practices as curricular material. My primary goal in carrying out this dissertation was to document the process we went through in planning, designing, implementing, and reflecting on our work- including the mistakes and limitations of what we did. There were days that we felt defeated or confused, and there were certainly lessons that went poorly. This dissertation is just a snapshot of the Language Box project. Anna and I have both moved away from New Mexico for different family reasons, but the project continues to be taught at East Mesa Academy as a part of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities curriculum. The teachers there will likely adjust and refine the project according to the students in their classroom and their own learning and development over time.

We found that the experiences of families and students are wonderful sources for curriculum development (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017), engaging students in writing activities that focus on their own home and community experiences. Yet this finding should be approached with caution. As Subero et al. (2015) note, asking students to talk or write

about their home experiences may also bring up trauma for some individuals. I doubt that the project would have been possible in Anna's classroom, much less successful, if she had not constantly been praising her students for their vulnerability in sharing their home lives publicly. Her students were, indeed, trusted experts. Anna believed that relationships with students were integral to creating a positive classroom environment. A teacher who did not invest in forming relationships with her students, as Anna did, would have found less success implementing a project that focused so heavily on student experiences.

Much of the classroom activity prioritized collaborative group work, such as the station activities, during which time Anna and I would circulate the room and assist students when they signaled to us they needed it. The four dialogue lessons were set up to give students the freedom to take the conversation in whatever direction they wished. The students took the lead. I noticed that students were accustomed to this dynamic in Anna's classroom. This was not the first time they had participated in classroom dialogue, or challenged the information provided to them (in the case of the lesson on U.S. Census Data), or shared parts of their personal lives in class. Anna had incorporated these practices into the culture of her classroom from the beginning. Many years ago, Ladson-Billings (1995) found that the ideological base of her theory of culturally relevant pedagogy was the way that teachers thought about themselves, their teaching, and their students. *Caring* and *sociocultural consciousness* were her prerequisites to enacting a pedagogy that sought to empower students to be active citizens, experience academic achievement, and grow into competent and confident multicultural, multilingual individuals (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Morrison et al., 2008; Valenzuela, 1999).

### **Transformative experiences**

We hoped that students would recognize the active role that they played in intergenerational home language transmission, and that they would see themselves as agents of change, not passive recipients of the language passed down to them from their family members or taught to them at school. As the curriculum was carried out in the classroom, it took on diverse forms and played different roles in Anna's students' understanding of the way that language use affected their family histories, their present lives, and their futures. Our original goal in addressing Spanish language loss was achieved in cases such as Nicole's, who wrote eloquently and passionately about regaining the Spanish that was being lost in her family. Several students mentioned an increased appreciation for linguistic diversity in their written reflections near the end of the unit- evidence that suggests our second pedagogical goal of expanding students' understanding of linguistic diversity was achieved, at least in part. And though we had not planned it, some of Anna's students came to a new understanding of the important role they were playing in their family by acquiring English. Anna recalled that Hugo was especially impacted by this new understanding during a specific class discussion. Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) conceptualizes home and community practices as assets to be honored and sustained in school (Paris & Alim, 2017). Importantly, home and community practices are not just "tools" that are useful in bridging home and school cultures. These practices should be advanced and nurtured in school, not simply acknowledged or celebrated (Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, 2017; Irizarry, 2017). By using home language experiences as the source of a research project, we hoped to honor the experiences and histories of students, while also promoting the maintenance and even the revitalization of the home language in cases where it was being lost.

We anticipated transformative learning experiences, but our intentions did not guarantee that all students experienced what we had hoped (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Spanish maintenance and/or revitalization was not important to all of Anna's students. One student, a monolingual English speaker who had Hispanic heritage, was very vocal about this in class. This student was not a participant in the study, so more details about their negative comments cannot be provided. But Xena's experience illustrates this same point. She openly acknowledged that she was lazy and frustrated by Spanish. She did not anticipate passing it on to her children in the future. Andrés, the most extreme case of language loss, neither wrote nor said anything suggesting that he had been positively impacted by the project. Their experiences problematize our efforts to facilitate transformative experiences for students to make changes and to realize their active role in Spanish language maintenance or loss. How can students embrace their active role in Spanish language maintenance when they perceive they have no power in the process? Anna worried the project may have done these students a disservice. Now everyone in the class was even more aware of who was bilingual and who was not.

### **The Common Core**

When assessing whether students in Anna's class had opportunities to experience academic success, scholars of CSP would look more to what kinds of conversations and activities students were engaged in during the Language Box project rather than whether the project increased the students' likelihood at scoring high on a standardized test. Kinloch (2017), in her analysis of writing as resistance, frames Cristina, an 18- year old Afro-Jamaican female, and her writing in terms of "academic possibility" (p. 32) rather than failure, as her writing does not conform to the conventions of Dominant American English

(DAE), but embodies a different kind of success as she verbalizes her dreams for her future along with the realities of living in her neighborhood. Viewed through the lens of prescriptive grammar, few of Anna's students would appear academically successful, yet their engagement in the project and the analytical and reflective thinking required to write their final projects demonstrate exemplary work for many of these students.

Anna's creative use of family language experiences to develop a project that still adhered to Common Core standards was remarkable, and is evidence that there are teachers who can and do integrate both academic standards and home experiences into learning opportunities in the classroom. Developing cultural competence in the classroom does not have to come at the cost of academic achievement (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Sleeter, 2012). Sleeter & Flores-Carmona (2017) assert that this kind of innovative curricular work is critical in the present culture of high-stakes testing. While the project creatively adhered to CCSS, it also highlighted where the standards fail to acknowledge all of the skills that students do acquire at home and at school. A theme that emerged in classroom conversation and interview data was the role that students play as English translators and teachers in their families. Yosso's (2005) concept of community cultural wealth includes translation, as well as storytelling practices and proverbs, as important forms of Linguistic Capital found in Latinx communities. The CCSS do not tap into these valuable community resources. It is left up to teachers to find ways to not only integrate these skills and practices into classroom learning, but help students further develop and value those resources. This study provides one example of how teachers can and do find creative ways to integrate home experiences and the CCSS. This was, however, an extremely time and labor-intensive endeavor. Anna put in countless hours of work to create this project. I met with her and the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade

teacher during planning hours or after school to discuss, reflect, and plan. Anna had this project approved by the administration at the school, and they were in strong support of implementing it. The time it took to implement the Language Box project meant that other Humanities curricula had to be cut. Anna, together with the other 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, decided to replace the Revolutionary War with the Language Box project. This kind of decision should not be taken lightly. Ultimately, teachers must make choices about what to incorporate or leave out of the curriculum according to the specific needs and strengths of their particular classroom community (Sleeter & Flores-Carmona, 2017).

There are several examples of what culturally sustaining pedagogy looks like (see Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2017), but it was difficult for me to make a value judgment on my own work and say whether it too, was an example of culturally sustaining pedagogy. Rather than thinking of CSP as something that happens or doesn't happen, or thinking of it in terms of concrete examples, I have found it more useful to think in terms of *practice* and *process*, as a set of skills and ideological orientations that develops over time. Anna took on the task of developing the Language Box project because of her experience in a graduate course, her previous experience teaching bilingual students, and the particular needs she saw at East Mesa. She was developing her own culturally sustaining practices, even as the Language Box project was being carried out. I too, learned more about what it looks like in a particular context to sustain language and culture at school. If we had another opportunity to implement this project at East Mesa, we could have undoubtedly made changes to strengthen the project and address the limitations of our work. Culturally sustaining teaching practices must be viewed as skills that develop over time and with experience. However, the necessary prerequisites, as Ladson-Billings (1995) pointed out, are caring for students,

forming positive relationships with them, and a socio-cultural consciousness that acknowledges the resources and gifts that students bring to school. Though these may also develop over time, it is impossible to even attempt to enact culturally sustaining teaching practices if students' language and culture are not seen as being worthy of sustaining in the first place.

### **Realities and possibilities of bilingual language development**

The second set of research questions investigated students' analyses of language use practices in their families, and their perceived opportunities to develop bilingualism. I addressed these questions by focusing on eight student cases. Each of these eight students wrote about Spanish language loss or English language acquisition in their final projects. I connected their final project analyses to other data sources, such as written reflections, worksheets, interviews, and field notes from class observations. My own analysis is based intentionally on students' analyses. That is, I did not assume which students were experiencing Spanish language loss or English language acquisition. I took what students wrote at face value and treated their analyses as legitimate and insightful. Students' perceived language exposure ranged significantly and did not necessarily correlate to their analyses of language loss or acquisition. In other words, a majority of English language exposure did not necessarily mean that a student perceived that Spanish language loss was taking place. Adán reported that he was only exposed to 25% Spanish at home and school, yet he felt comfortably proficient in both English and Spanish. In contrast, Nicole reported a majority of Spanish language use at home (75%) but still felt that Spanish was being lost. Adán, Ernesto, and Nicole all described themselves as balanced bilinguals, despite the fact that they wrote about language loss and language acquisition. When I first began to analyze



the data, I feared that this meant we had not explained the concepts of language loss and acquisition sufficiently, but their insight proved just the opposite. Students saw beyond the quantitative language use data presented in their Language Box graphics, and because they were experiencing these linguistic processes firsthand, they were able to analyze the ways that Spanish and English were developing in their families across time. Analyzing students' interpretations of their language exposure was key to truly understanding their perspectives.

All eight of the student cases had some exposure to Spanish and English, as did all eight of the parents that they interviewed for the project. All eight of the students found their roots in Mexico and/or New Mexico. All students agreed that bilingualism was valuable and important, and they told me in interviews that their parents agreed. The reasons they gave for valuing bilingualism depended on their context and the different language use practices that they engaged in. Hugo and Adán believed bilingualism would benefit them in the future with a better job, and that it also allowed them to help others by translating. This is a direct reflection of their experiences working with and translating for their fathers. Their participation in different language practices impacted their ideas about the importance of bilingualism, just as the importance ascribed to bilingualism impacted their continued use and development of English. Hugo and David knew that reaping the benefits of bilingualism required more time and dedication to developing their English. Their stories also demonstrate that past traumatizing experiences can be remediated; a students' trajectory is not fixed and can be positively impacted by appropriate, meaningful, and compassionate teaching. David even commented that he still feels stressed when he speaks English, but the help from his friends and teachers supports him enough to make him continue. These students were invested in developing bilingual identities, and they were willing to take risks

to achieve that goal. Their persistence also speaks to the relative social power of English in the United States where it is seen as a necessary tool. Though Spanish was also viewed as culturally valuable, developing Spanish, especially if there was little support to do so, did not present the same urgency as English language development.

Socioculturalists assert that children learn and develop within their sociocultural-historical context. They learn to participate in their community and adapt necessarily to the requirements of their community. However, these adaptations may also signify power shifts within a family. Adán, Hugo, and David all spoke about translating for their parents, which put them in relative positions of power as the more bilingual individual. Hugo said it made him feel “good” but sometimes “weird” when he did not know all the words, and David explained that translating made it falsely appear like he knew more than his dad. These adaptations- learning and using English- are, as Rogoff (2003) describes, necessary adaptations when immigrating to a new country. However, they may disrupt or change the family dynamics in significant ways and can cause discomfort in the least, and may have even more drastic effects in some families. The strength of sociocultural-historical theory is the emphasis placed on the social and historical context of individuals, and the way that home and community practices are lived out in the actions of individuals and groups. However, it fails to pay significant attention to power dynamics, and how power may shift within and across generations in a community.

Socioculturalists also assert that children inherit the beliefs and values of their community (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Schechter & Bayley, 2002). This holds true in the present study, as all thirteen participants indicated strong positive attitudes toward bilingualism and Spanish language maintenance or revitalization. However, the findings of

this study illustrate that not all children have equal access to the community practices that would allow them to live out these values. This is clearly seen in the cases of Andrés, Xena, and Nadine, who did not speak Spanish at school, despite cultural and familial ties to the Spanish language and positive attitudes toward bilingualism. These three students understood that there were clear benefits of Spanish language development, including better paying jobs in the future and a wider range of communication with family members and others. However, they did not participate in Spanish language use at school for fear of being made fun of and because of their low levels of oral proficiency, which inhibited them from speaking in Spanish class. They all had limited or no access to Spanish language use at home. Researchers have found that heritage speakers are often reticent to acknowledge their proficiency in the heritage language in academic settings, and that many of them have negative experiences using the language with more fluent family members or friends (Beaudrie et al., 2009; Ducar, 2012; Krashen, 1998). Xena and Andrés were not invested in Spanish language use. They were unwilling to risk being made fun of or pronouncing words poorly to speak Spanish at school. Nadine was somewhat invested in Spanish language use, as she practiced Spanish at home with her younger sister, though she also refrained from using Spanish at school. The three heritage learners of Spanish were the only study participants who did not conceptualize bilingualism as readily attainable or realistic due to the social barriers that impeded their use of Spanish. Their family histories, negative emotions associated with Spanish language use, feelings of frustration and laziness, and low levels of proficiency relative to their peers all influenced their investment in Spanish language development. As Norton (2013) and Potowski (2004) note, close proximity to fluent speakers of the target language does not always mean that learners have opportunities

to use the target language meaningfully. Furthermore, there are many reasons why a learner chooses to engage or not engage in language use, as the experiences of the students in the study illustrate. By analyzing their experiences and perspectives in terms of investment (Norton, 2013), which takes into consideration the learner's histories and social context, I hoped to illustrate the complexity of bilingual language development.

To my knowledge, there are no qualitative studies that investigate the perspectives of young adolescent Hispanic New Mexicans as this study has done. Furthermore, the social barriers they describe to using Spanish shed light on the difficulties that heritage learners face in developing their heritage language, even in a school like East Mesa where the use of Spanish abounds. The data in this dissertation reveal that the most significant barrier to Spanish revitalization in the lives of the heritage learners is their resistance to using Spanish at school with fluent peers, and additionally in Xena's case, the fact that she also does not speak Spanish at home with her father. Norton (2013) notes that the onus to communicate in the target language is put completely on the learner. There is little, if any, emphasis put on the native speaker to *listen* to the learner. If heritage language development is seen as a community endeavor, then there should be just as much effort put forth by fluent family members and peers to encourage heritage learners to practice and develop the heritage language. Future research should explore how to nurture more linguistically empathetic classroom communities for heritage learners.

When I was proposing this research project, I was hoping to add to the literature on heritage language maintenance, specifically the case of Spanish in New Mexico. Because of the design of the curriculum, most students only documented two generations of language use in their families. It was not possible for me to interview parents. I had little information

on students' long-term historical ties to New Mexico and I was unable to make a strong case from the data about Spanish language maintenance. However, all three of the Hispanic New Mexicans had parents who had not been taught Spanish as children, pointing to a common pattern noted in the literature (MacGregor-Mendoza, 2010). The real question, however, is how best to nurture the Spanish language back into the families of these students.

Other interesting patterns arose in the data that deserve mention and support findings of other researchers. First, fluent fathers did not appear to have as great an impact as fluent mothers on a child's language development (Hammer & Rodríguez, 2011). For example, both Ernesto and Xena had one fluent Spanish-speaking parent and one English dominant parent. Ernesto's mother was a fruitful source of Spanish language use in his home, whereas Xena's father was not, supporting previous findings that maternal language use is a greater indicator of bilingual language development (Hammer & Rodríguez, 2012). Nadine was the only study participant who spoke directly about the connection between skin color and perceived language proficiency. A further exploration of perceived skin color linked to language proficiency would be interesting. No study participants reported a home language situation in which the parents spoke only Spanish and the children spoke only English. I know that these cases did exist in the student population because I heard students who were not participants in the study describe this situation during class, and Anna also mentioned several cases to me. A few study participants wrote about translating for their younger, English-speaking siblings when they wished to communicate with parents, but I was unable to document a case like this from a study participant directly. Future research should seek to include data from this demographic.

### **Pedagogical implications and further research**

In this study, I found that writing and dialoguing about language use experiences, interviewing family members, and discussing language use data from the census, all appeared to be highly engaging activities for most students, and even transformative for some of them. There is strong evidence from this case study that Common Core State Standards are not a barrier to incorporating these kinds of activities into the curriculum. Anna was particularly impacted by the school mapping activity in which students created a map of the school that represented their language use in each classroom and other school spaces. During the pilot study, Anna was surprised to find that some of her students had created maps that indicated they were exposed to much more Spanish than English in her classroom, despite her intended role as an English model for the students. This created an opportunity for her to adjust her own language use practices, and she began using more English in her classroom. The following year, when students once again created maps of the school, she was happy to see that students indicated they were exposed to mostly English in her classroom.<sup>22</sup> Observing how her students perceived language use at school was insightful for her own practice. Other teachers of language learners will also benefit from any kind of activity that reveals to them their students' perceptions of language use at school, at home, and in their community (Martinez & Montaña, 2016). Teachers should not make assumptions about their students' perceived language use, and instead should seek to find opportunities to learn more about what their students think and feel about their experiences with language at home and at school. Creating opportunities for students to tell their stories, and then listening carefully to

---

<sup>22</sup> To be clear, Anna never enforced "English Only" policies, but instead dedicated herself to English language use. Students were free to use Spanish, English, Spanglish, or whatever language they wished in her class.

what they have to say, will have specific implications for practice in each unique classroom community.

In the Language Box project, we failed to spend much time discussing the larger social context of the United States. Though we spent some time discussing the U.S. Census Data, we did not discuss English as a colonizing language in detail (there was brief mention of it), nor did we discuss the particular historical context of New Mexico and the historical repressive language policies of local schools. This critical piece was missing from our work and would have likely given students many opportunities to connect their own family histories to broader historical and social events. Morrison et al. (2008) found that the most common aspect of the resource pedagogies missing from case studies was that of critical consciousness, and I believe that this may have been the weakest area of the Language Box project as well. Though students had many opportunities to engage in critical conversations about their own language experiences, we did not explicitly teach about the way that non-English languages have been marginalized in the United States, and so they had limited, if any, opportunity to understand how their experiences fit in to the “bigger picture.”

I have used the concept of investment to explain some of the possible reasons why Andrés, Nadine, and Xena did not use Spanish with fluent friends and family members. Further research in this area could be illuminating, especially in the case of adolescent heritage language learners (Potowski, 2004). Understanding where and why students do *not* use language is just as important as understanding where and why they *do* use language if educators are intent on facilitating bilingual language development and aiding students in realizing their language goals. Analyzing the family histories and social contexts of the heritage learner participants explained their language use choices more fully, and was more

insightful than understanding each student simply as “motivated” or “lazy.” In contrast to the heritage learners, the students who were developing English- Hugo and David- were not impeded by the same social barriers, and they perceived that their teachers and their peers were resources to aid them in developing their English. Though they too had negative experiences using and learning English, they were in relative positions of power at home, where they were English translators and teachers. Their investment in English was certainly tied to these experiences at home, where English was a necessary tool.

More valuable insight for language learners comes from the student participants themselves. At the end of each interview, I asked them the following question: *“If you were going to give another kid your age advice about learning or maintaining a language, what would you tell them?”* The following comments are some of their responses to this question:

1. *I would say never give up because you will have better opportunities and you will teach that language to others and it will be getting passed [on].* (Monica, Interview, 11/27/17)
2. *Don’t give in like I did and keep practicing it, learn more about it, ‘cuz it’s special to know a different language.* (Xena, Interview, 11/13/17)
3. *I would tell them to like try not to lose the language, ‘cuz when you grow up you’ll regret it, and if they learn a new language I’d say it’s awesome, it’ll be cool for to communicate with other people.* (Nicole, Interview, 11/15/17)

### **Limitations and delimitations**

The strength of a case study is its ability to provide rich, in-depth description and detail of a particular phenomenon. However, its limitation is that it can tend to exaggerate or oversimplify that phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, research endeavors that



anticipate emancipatory or transformative results do not guarantee that the efforts of the research team will be successful (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). I limit the scope of my study to one curriculum implementation in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities classroom. I did not collect data in other classrooms or other spaces at school. I only collected data during the Language Box project, so I did not know too much about other projects students were working on in this class or any other. I had to rely on Anna and her students in order to know anything about other school activities outside the classroom. Furthermore, I focused my study on the *perspectives* of students in regard to their linguistic proficiency and language use practices, as well as their perceived opportunities to develop Spanish and English. I did not measure their language use or proficiency.

The data I collected were all the result of a curricular implementation, except for one-on-one interviews that I conducted with students and with the teacher. It is very important to note that students' understandings of language use practices were impacted by what we read and discussed in class. We gave them specific concepts to use to analyze their own experiences with language in their final projects. We shaped, and to some extent controlled, what they wrote and talked about. For example, students had the choice to write about four different analytical themes in their final projects. This was a necessary scaffold, in Anna's opinion. Two of the themes they could choose to write about were language loss and language acquisition. They could also choose to write about language attitudes or the way that "place" has affected their language practices (I discuss these in more detail in chapter four). Perhaps if we had also included the theme "reversing language loss," students who had experienced historical language loss in their families might have been impacted

differently, perhaps even more positively. This is a limitation of the study as well as an important pedagogical insight for future iterations of this project.

### **Researcher reflection**

This project, as are all curricular efforts, was situated within a sociocultural and political context that impacted how it was carried out and what impact it made on students. Anna's students were navigating different kinds of home lives- some were undocumented or had undocumented family members; some were caring for younger and sometimes older siblings, or were working after school or on the weekends with parents who needed their help translating. At school, there were issues of bullying, fights, travelling for sports and not getting enough sleep, and skipping class. Regardless of their home life, they were asked to learn and use academic vocabulary, reflect, analyze, write, share, use credible sources, and interview adults; they talked about their personal experiences and family histories, and compared and contrasted with their peers. They shared their plans for the future: David wished to return to México and use his English to help others; Genesis wished to move to South Korea and become fluent in Korean. Language is directly tied to these dreams and aspirations.

Over the course of this research project I became a parent. Life and death took on new meanings for me when my first and third pregnancies ended in miscarriages during this time. These losses were difficult to bear, but if I had been forced to endure them at some other point in my life, I know my research would have been different. Anna's friendship was a lifeline for me during this time. What's more, our shared experiences with miscarriage allowed me to step into her classroom as a trusted friend during a difficult time for both of us. Though the focus of my time in her classroom was pedagogical, it didn't always feel that

way to me. Because we both had days that were hard, physically or emotionally, being able to share that with each other, was for me, an essential component of becoming a mother and a researcher. Glesne's (2016) empathetic approach to research was inspirational and comforting to me, especially on the days when I wondered whether I was doing something wrong by involving myself personally in Anna's life in such an intimate way.

In conclusion, curriculum is not stagnant (Joseph, 2011). It is a living, breathing phenomenon that can be a transformative process for students and teachers alike, even when it does not all go as planned. Teachers adapt and change as they must, depending on the students, the school, the community, and the national social and political realities of the time, as well as their own developing interests and understandings. Though Anna and I planned activities, researched, found resources, wrote and re-wrote instructions, translated, reflected, and dialogued, we could never fully predict what direction the students would take what we prepared. I learned that when teachers trust that their students are capable, when they consider their possibility rather than their limitations, and when they see classroom learning as an opportunity to tap into that capability and possibility, curriculum becomes an exciting, creative, and even an empowering endeavor.

**Appendices**

Appendix A: Anna's classroom

Appendix B: Matrices

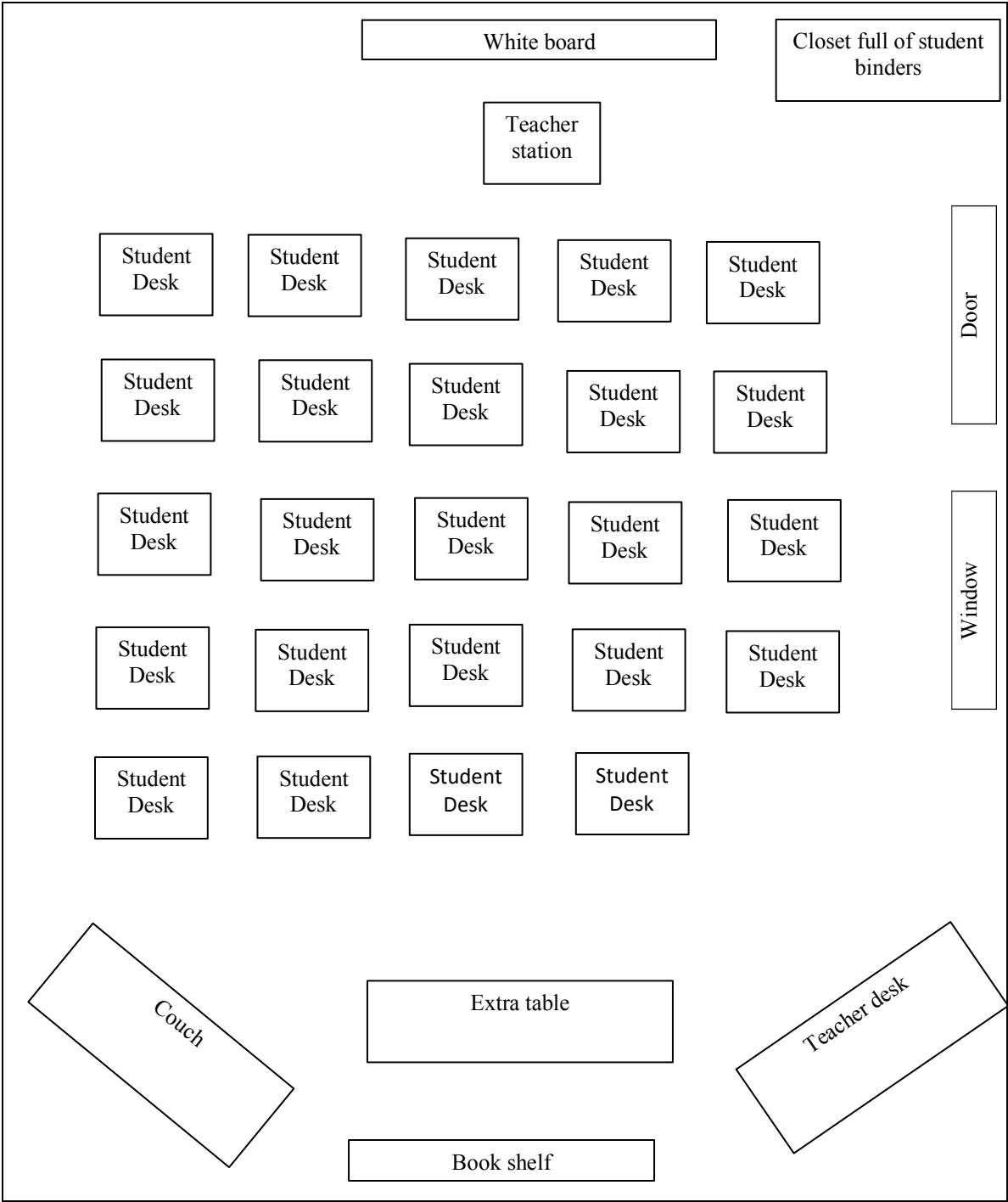
Appendix C: Language Box activities

Appendix D: Final project materials

Appendix E: Student final projects

Appendix A

Anna’s classroom



## Appendix B

### Analysis Matrices

#### Spanish language loss matrix

|               | <b>L1</b> | <b>Spanish proficiency</b>  | <b>Attitude toward bilingualism</b> | <b>Affect toward Spanish</b>                   | <b>Opportunities to speak/learn Spanish</b>   | <b>Future plans</b>                    | <b>Parent's L1</b> |
|---------------|-----------|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------|
| <b>Andres</b> | English   | None, only monolingual  | "no opinion"                        | Sad, frustrated, left out                      | None-English spoken at home, friends at school will make fun of him                 | To learn Spanish and another language  | English/English    |
| <b>Xena</b>   | English   | Low, but some; was more proficient in elementary, perhaps passive bilingual | Good-economic value                 | Lazy, frustrated                               | At home with dad, with grandparents, but a little nervous to speak in Spanish class | Probably not going to speak Spanish    | English/Spanish    |
| <b>Nadine</b> | English   | Passive bilingual   | Good-economic value                 | "my attitude is I get lazy and then I give up" | At home and at school, but not as much as Nicole                                    | Unclear                                | English/English    |
| <b>Nicole</b> | Spanish   | High  | Great                               | Great  | At home, at school, everywhere  | Regain the Spanish her family has lost | Spanish/Spanish    |

**English language acquisition matrix**

|                | <b>First language</b> | <b>Birth country</b> | <b>Parent language use</b>         | <b>School language use</b>                            | <b>Attitude toward bilingualism</b> | <b>Experience learning English</b>                                     |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Ernesto</b> | Spanish               | Mexico               | English with dad, Spanish with mom | Uses both socially and academically                   | positive                            | None- no memory of learning English                                    |
| <b>Adán</b>    | Spanish               | U.S.                 | Spanish                            | Uses both socially and academically                   | Positive-jobs, money                | Nervous at first, but good experience learning English                 |
| <b>Hugo</b>    | Spanish               | U.S.                 | Spanish                            | Struggles in English, but has help from teachers      | Positive,                           | Cultural value to Spanish<br>Negative, bad experience learning English |
| <b>David</b>   | Spanish               | Mexico               | Spanish                            | Stressful using English, help from peers and teachers | great                               | Strong Mexican identity, stressful to learn English, still stressful   |

## **Appendix C**

### **Language Box project resources**

Most of the materials in this appendix were designed by Anna, but some were designed with my help. I have made some small alterations: 1) I give individuals pseudonyms (for example, teacher names represented on the school map activity). 2) I reduced the spacing between questions on some worksheets to save space, 3) I include as many sources as I could, but some had to be omitted due to issues of copyright.



### Lesson 1: Mapping language at school

**Directions:**

1. Observe the map of our middle school on the back of this paper. Think about which languages (Spanish, English, Portuguese, Arabic, an African language, a Chinese language, etc.) that you are **exposed** to during school.
2. Color each place on the map listed below to show the percentages of languages you hear.
  - a. English = Blue
  - b. Spanish = Red
  - c. Other = Green

For example, if you are exposed to 90% Spanish and 10% English in Mr. R's room, you would color 90% of the classroom red (for Spanish) and 10% of the classroom blue (for English). If you use green, make sure to label which language you are exposed to.

**Color the following places:**

1. Gymnasium/Cafeteria (before morning meeting and during lunch)
2. Kitchen
3. Bathrooms in the Gym
4. Bathroom Portables
5. Mrs. A's Classroom
6. Ms. B's Classroom
7. Mrs. C's Classroom
8. Ms. D's Classroom
9. Mr. E's Classroom
10. Ms. F's Classroom
11. Your advisor's Classroom
12. The Social Work Office
13. The Field
14. The Parking Lot

\*\*\*If you never go to one of the places listed above, don't color it in.

\*\*\*If you have extra time, fill in your language exposure to any of the spaces on the map that wasn't listed above.

## Lesson 2: Analyzing language boxes

### **Language Box Gallery Walk**

#### **E, F, M at age 6, M at age 27**

1. Explain F's home section of the language box. What is it showing?
2. E is F's daughter. What language did not pass on to his daughter?
3. M's language exposure changed a lot between the ages of 6 and 27. What changed? What may have caused this change?

#### **A, E, J, T**

4. Out of all four women, who lived the longest ago? How do you know?
5. Which language was A exposed to at school?
6. Which languages was E exposed to at home?
7. E is J's mother. By comparing and contrasting their language boxes, how did the exposure of language(s) change at home over time?
8. Theresa is E's granddaughter. What percentage of Spanish is T exposed to at home? Why do you think this is?

#### **V and R**

1. Which languages was Virginia exposed to in her community?
2. Robert is Virginia's son. Which languages was Robert exposed to in his community?
3. What does the international section of Robert's language box show?
4. Write a question you have about one (or both) of these language boxes.

#### **Student A**

1. Where is this student exposed to Japanese?
2. What is a synonym for the word "Nation"? What nation do you live in?
3. How is your exposure to language similar to Student A's? Different?

### Lesson 3: Language history stations

#### **Green Station: U.S. Maps**

1. List 2 states that are named in a Native American language. What is the meaning of each name? Do you think it's strange that not many people know the meanings of their state's name? Why/Why not?
2. Read the "Most Commonly Spoken Language Other Than English or Spanish" map. Which language in which state surprises you? Why do you think this language is still strong in that state?
3. Native American languages used to be the ONLY languages spoken in the United States. What happened to weaken them? What happened to strengthen English over history? Spanish?
4. Write 2 questions you have after reading these maps.

#### **Red Station: Interviews**

<http://www.npr.org/2013/06/18/193135997/when-a-language-dies-what-happens-to-culture>

Read and/or listen to Interview #1, #2, OR #3. Write a summary of what you learned. Include information about what endangered language the interviewee(s) speaks and how they're trying to preserve the language.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

#### **Blue Station: Gullah Geechee Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0DGijYiGQU>

1. Who are the ancestors of the Gullah Geechee people? Where do the Gullah Geechee live?
2. What does "geographic isolation" mean? How did geographic isolation contribute to the Gullah language?
3. Theresa Jenkins Hilliard says that the enslaved people had to create their own language to communicate. Why do you think they couldn't communicate with each other already?
4. Why is Theresa Jenkins Hilliard's generation special?
5. Do you agree that it's important to know "whose back you're standing on"? Why/why not?

### Yellow Station: Reversing Language Loss

As a group, read the article “Reversing Language Loss” aloud. Then, answer the following questions to help you critically think about what you read:

1. If one of the languages you speak was endangered, would you try to teach it to others? Why or why not?
2. According to the article, how can an endangered language be revived?
3. According to the article, what are “sleeping languages”?
4. According to the article, what is difficult about reviving an endangered language?
5. Provide two examples of languages that have been successfully revived.

#### “Reversing Language Loss”

by Erin Haynes, University of California, Berkeley

Adapted by Ms. M

Although language loss can be shattering to a community, it doesn’t need to be permanent. Many dedicated people throughout the world are committed to reversing language loss in their communities.

In the United States, hundreds of programs exist to revive indigenous languages. For example, some communities create bilingual classes in schools or meet at one another’s homes to practice speaking. In some cases, when only one or two elderly speakers of a language survive, they team up with a learner to prevent the language from going extinct. In other cases, no speakers of a language remain, but there is enough of the written language for people to piece the language together until it can be spoken again. These languages are called *sleeping* languages.

Language revival programs face a number of challenges, mostly related to lack of resources. For example, it is impossible to pick up a textbook for Kiksht (an endangered language of the Northwestern United States), so people have to design all of their own books and learning materials. It is also very difficult to find teachers of endangered languages, since there are so few speakers.

Despite these challenges, there have been a number of exciting success stories throughout the world. Perhaps the most famous is Hebrew, which went from being nearly extinct to being a national language with the rise of the state of Israel. Catalan, a language of Spain that was outlawed under the rule of the Franco regime, has gained tremendous ground since Franco’s death in 1975. In New Zealand, the indigenous Māori language has experienced a reawakening through *te kōhanga reo* (“language nests”), in which the youngest generation of children learn from remaining elderly speakers.

Success can be measured in a number of different ways, from being able to say a prayer in a language that has not been spoken for many years, to producing a new generation of native speakers. What these and the many other heritage language programs throughout the world show us is that language loss is not permanent with the dedicated effort of a community of speakers and learners.

Exit Ticket: Provide an example of a language that has been weakened over time, and explain why.

---

---

---

Explain how this language could be strengthened.

---

---

### Lesson 4: Home Language Exposure Reflection

Before beginning to color in the Home section of your Language Box, take a few minutes to reflect on the languages you're exposed to at home, and the situations you tend to hear or speak these languages. This paper will also help you when you're writing your explanations later.

3. Describe the languages your family uses to communicate with each other. What languages do you speak with your family at home? Do you sometimes speak different languages with different family members? Do other family members use a different language to communicate with each other?
4. Describe the languages you read and hear at home. Consider everything you read and hear while doing your homework, reading, watching television, using the internet, listening to music, using your phone, etc.
5. Estimate percentages: how much are you speaking, hearing, and reading each language at home?

English = \_\_\_\_\_ %

Spanish = \_\_\_\_\_ %

\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ %

\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ %

### Lesson 5: What is a researcher?

#### **I'm a Researcher!**

A researcher is a person who discovers \_\_\_\_\_.

I am a researcher because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

#### **What does a researcher do?**

1. Asks lots of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Takes lots of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ notes.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ listens to others.
4. Practices \_\_\_\_\_ when interviewing others.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ people who are primary sources.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ data.
7. Acts \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Looks people in the \_\_\_\_\_ and sits up \_\_\_\_\_.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ new information.
10. Practices \_\_\_\_\_.

I will be practicing the character trait curiosity by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Observing an Interview:**

What do you notice about the body language of the *interviewer* or the *interviewee*?

1.

2.

3.

What do you notice about the words of the *interviewer* or the *interviewee*?

1.

2.

3.

Language Box Project  
Parent/Guardian Interview

Student Directions:

- Read the script for your interview and write down your parent's words as they answer. Make sure **YOU** write down the answers. You are the researcher!
- Remember to ask each question by speaking slowly and clearly. Repeat the question, if needed. Practice patience and curiosity.
- Copy down everything you hear your parent say. Try to copy down their exact words. Record your parent's words in the language they spoke them to you.

Script for Interview

I am going to ask you some questions about your language exposure when you were my age. Language exposure means \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. I am really interested in knowing your opinion, so please give as much information as possible.

1. Where did you live when you were my age?
2. Who did you live with when you were my age?
3. What languages were spoken in your home by the people you lived with? What percentage?
4. What languages did **YOU** speak at home? With who? What percentage?
5. What was the name of your middle school?
6. What languages were spoken at school? By who? What percentage?
7. What languages did you speak at school? With who? What percentage?
8. In what city (community) did you live when you were my age?
9. What languages were spoken in your city? By who? What percentage?
10. What languages did you speak in your city? With who? What percentage?
11. What country did you live in when you were my age? What languages were most commonly used in that country?
12. What has changed about your language exposure between now and when you were my age? Why do you think it has changed?



13. Choose and **circle 2 questions out of the 4** to ask your parent. Answer them below.

- What is your experience learning a new language?
- How has immigration affected your language exposure?
- Do you think it is important for me (your child) to be bilingual? Why?
- Does language loss exist in our family? How does that feel?

[illegible]

These are some questions I created and would like to ask you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Is there anything else you would like to share about your language exposure?

Thank you for speaking with me. I appreciate hearing your thoughts and the time you spent with me. I'll be creating your language box and sharing it with you at Exhibition. I'm excited to discover more about our family!

### Lesson 6: U.S. Census Data

#### Language Box: Community Section

Directions: For the “Community” section of your Language Box, we’ll all be using the most recent U.S. Census Data about Albuquerque, NM. Color in about 75% English, 24% Spanish, and 1% Navajo/Diné

#### Language Box: Nation Section

Directions: For the “Nation” section of your Language Box, we’ll all be using the most recent U.S. Census Data from 2011. Use a calculator to figure out the percentages for each language spoken. Then color in the “Nation” section of your Language Box appropriately.

**\*HINT\*** Divide the population that speaks the language by the Total U.S. Population

#### 2011 United States Census Data

Total U.S. Population surveyed: 29,152,409

| <b>Language Spoken</b>                              | <b>Population</b> | <b>Decimal Answer</b> | <b>% of Total Population</b> |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Spoke only English at home                          | 23,094,707        |                       |                              |
| Spoke Spanish (or Spanish Creole) at home           | 3,757,978         |                       |                              |
| Spoke a Chinese Language at home (such as Mandarin) | 298,249           |                       |                              |

#### Exit Ticket

1. Compare and contrast the predictions you made at the beginning of class.
2. What did you learn today that was unexpected or surprising to you?
3. What thoughtful questions do you have about language in Albuquerque? In the United States?

## Lesson 7: Analysis Stations: Language Loss, Acquisition, Attitude, and Place

### **Red station: Language Loss**

As a group, read the excerpt from the book *Hunger of Memory* aloud. Then, answer the following questions to help you critically think about what you read:

1. Richard mentions “a powerful guilt” in his writing. What does he feel guilty about?
2. Have you (or someone you know) ever felt similarly to Richard? Explain.
3. Have you ever felt the same way about speaking English that Richard felt while speaking Spanish?
4. How do you think Richard lost his Spanish?
5. Do you think Richard can gain his Spanish back again? How?
6. If you were Richard’s friend, how would you treat him when he struggled with his Spanish?
7. How is the language someone speaks, connected to their identity?

### Excerpt from *Hunger of Memory*. By Richard Rodriguez

As I grew fluent in English, I no longer could speak Spanish with confidence. I continued to understand spoken Spanish. And in high school, I learned how to read and write Spanish. But for many years I could not pronounce it. A powerful guilt blocked my spoken words; something was missing whenever I’d try to connect words to form sentences. I would be unable to speak freely. I would speak, or try to speak, Spanish, and I would manage to utter halting, hiccupping sounds that showed my discomfort.

When relatives and Spanish-speaking friends came to the house, my brother and sisters seemed nervous to use Spanish, but at least they managed to say a few words before being excused for speaking English. I never managed so gracefully. I was cursed with guilt. Each time I’d hear myself spoken to in Spanish, I would be unable to respond with any success. I’d know the words I wanted to say, but I couldn’t manage to say them. I would try to speak, but everything I said seemed to sound like English. My mouth would not form the words right. My jaw would tremble. After a phrase or two, I’d cough up a sound. And stop.

It surprised my listeners to hear me. They’d lower their heads, trying to grasp what I was trying to say. They would repeat their questions in gentle, loving voices. But by then I would answer in English. No, no, they would say, we want you to speak to us in Spanish. But I couldn’t do it. *Pocho* they would call me. Sometimes playfully, using the tender nickname – *mi pochito*. Sometimes not so playfully. *Pocho*.

My mother’s brother came up from Mexico one summer with his family. He saw me for the first time. After listening to me, he looked away and said what a disgrace it was that I couldn’t speak Spanish, ‘*su propio idioma*’. He made that remark to my mother; I noticed, however, that he stared at my father.

### **Blue Station: Language acquisition**

Observing a video

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Km9-DiFaxpU>)

Directions: while you watch the video, answer the following questions

1. Tim Doner is a polyglot who lives in New York City. Define polyglot
2. What are Tim's parent's attitudes toward language?
3. List 3 ways Tim acquires languages
4. List 3 reasons why Tim thinks speaking multiple languages is beneficial.

### **Green station: How place affects language**

Analyzing maps and other resources

**Use the maps and other sources to answer the questions. You may answer the questions in any order**

1. Why are the names of so many places in Michigan in French?
2. What happened between 1750 and 1800? (Hint: Why did the Northeast change from being labelled "British" to "United States"?)
3. The United States bought France's territory in North America in 1803. What do you think happened to the French people that lived there?
4. List 5 states that are named in a Native American language.
5. What is the most common Native American language spoken in New Mexico? In what other states is this language spoken?
6. What happened between 1800 and 1840? (Hint: Why did the Southwest change from being labelled "Spain" to "Mexico"?)
7. Mexico surrendered about half of its territory to the United States in 1848. What states did this territory include? (Hint: find the Mexican Cession)
8. How many years has Spanish been spoken in New Mexico?
9. Looking at the U.S. maps from 2014, does any language spoken in a state surprise you? Why?

**Directions: After you have taken a look at all the sources, answer the following reflection questions.**

1. How has Michigan been affected by language? How would it be different if another language (rather than French) was more dominant there? Provide an example.
2. How has the United States been affected by language? Provide an example.
3. How is the place we live in, Albuquerque, connected to language? Provide an example.

### **Yellow station: Attitude toward Language**

Critically thinking: Sharing your personal opinions

Activity #1 Directions: After each statement that expresses an attitude, draw one of the following emojis to express your feelings about the attitude and thought on language. Remember, attitudes are personal beliefs. People have attitudes about language in general, their language they speak, and the language(s) of other people.



I love it! I totally agree



I agree!



No opinion



This is so sad



What?! Err!

### **Statements of people's attitudes toward language:**

1. I feel embarrassed when I speak my language to others
2. A language that isn't written is not a real language
3. People can only know one language at a time. It is not possible to be fluent in two languages.
4. English is the best language to help you get a job.
5. Our children should forget the language they grew up speaking when they immigrate to a new country. They should learn the other language spoken in their new country.
6. The best chance at improving our child's future is by having her learn the dominant language of a country.

Now that you have drawn your emojis and expressed how you feel about other's attitudes, go back and explain in words why you chose to draw the emoji. You only need to choose three statements to give a reason for.

Activity #2 Directions: Most of the time, attitudes cannot be seen immediately. Attitudes are shown through behavior over time. Draw an emoji after each statement about how attitude toward language is shown.

1. People avoid people that speak other languages
2. People walk towards and meet people that speak other languages
3. People go to college to learn another language
4. People do not try to learn another language
5. A person who speak English speaks Spanglish to communicate with a person who only speak Spanish.
6. A person refuses to speak Spanglish to communicate with someone who only speaks Spanish.

Activity #3 Directions: Express your unique, honest opinion to answer the following prompt. Remember to restate the prompt. Provide an example from your real life.

What is your attitude toward bilingualism?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Exit slip: Once you have completed all 4 stations, use the information you learned from the stations today to answer the Exit Slip questions.

1. What is the difference between language loss and language acquisition? Provide an example of each.
2. What is your attitude toward bilingualism? How can your attitude help you in the future?
3. How did you practice curiosity today? Be specific. What did you learn because of practicing this character trait?
4. Why are we learning these themes? How does learning about language help us in our lives?
5. Which theme will you focus on for your Language Box analysis? Why?

### Lesson 8: Language Box Analysis Discussion

Directions: Independently and quietly, observe the language boxes you have made about your family's linguistic history. Choose 7 questions to answer. Be prepared to discuss your answers with a partner and the rest of the class.

1. How is your language box different from your parent's language box? Why?
2. Is your family losing language over time? How do you know this? Why is language loss occurring?
3. Is your family adding language over time? How do you know this? Why is language loss occurring?
4. How would you like your language box to look when you are 30 years old?
5. Make a prediction for what your child's language box will look like in the future.
6. Do you feel you need to make a change for you and your future family's language exposure? What is the change? How will you make the change happen?
7. According to your language boxes, does place have any effect on your language exposure? Explain.
8. Has your attitude toward language changed because of this project? How?
9. Does anyone in your family have a negative attitude about language? Explain.
10. Has your experience learning English been different than your parent's experience? What about with Spanish? Explain.

Lesson 10: Reflecting through Dialogue

Socratic Seminar Assessment Rubric

|                  | Not yet meeting expectations | Meets expectations   |
|------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Preparation      |                              | Preparation notes are complete and referenced during seminar   |
| Active listening |                              | Student uses SLANT for the entire duration of the seminar  |
| Participation    |                              | <p>Student participates by doing at least two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Builds on the thoughts of others by using appropriate transition words and phrases</li> <li>○ Disagrees with the thoughts of others respectfully</li> <li>○ Asks thoughtful questions</li> <li>○ Quoting specific evidence from the text to support the point</li> </ul>                          |
| Leadership       |                              | <p>Student demonstrates leadership by doing at least 2 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Student provides opportunity for all students to participate</li> <li>○ Student creates supportive and comfortable environment for discussion</li> <li>○ Student appropriately asks questions</li> <li>○ Students respectfully reminds peers to meet preparation expectations</li> </ul> |

**Self- assessment**

Grade:

Why did you earn this grade? (2 sentences)



## Socratic seminar preparation notes

### Learning targets:

I can participate in a Socratic Seminar by sharing thoughtful responses to my peer's questions.

I can ask thoughtful questions that create conversations with my peers.

### Guiding questions:

1. How do languages strengthen and weaken? (This can be answered according to one person, one family, or one larger group of people.)
2. How does my language history affect me now? In the future?

### Some thoughtful questions I can ask during the seminar are...

*Remember, thoughtful questions cannot be answered in 1 word and will help you learn something new about your classmates.*

Question: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Question: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Please answer at least 6 of the questions below:

1. Do you think it is important to understand your language exposure? Why or why not?
2. How can you support people who have weaker language skills than yourself?
3. How does it feel to have weaker language skills than other people?
4. What resources are available in our community to help people acquire languages?
5. Why is the census data for Albuquerque and the U.S. the way it is? How would you like to see it changed for the next generation? How could that change happen?

6. Is EMA a special school because of the way language exposure here compared to other schools in Albuquerque? Why or why not?
7. Do you think language exposure could be more diverse here at EMA? How?
8. What do you think your younger siblings' language box will look like when they are in 7<sup>th</sup> grade? Does this make you happy? Sad? Frustrated? Why?
9. Why don't people around the world speak the same language?
10. Is it hard to learn a language? Why? How?
11. Why would people have negative attitudes about learning a new language?
12. What change are you going to make in your life regarding your language exposure?

## **Appendix D**

### **Final project materials**

This appendix contains the final project rubric, which Anna used to assess whether students' projects were completed and ready to present at the community exhibition. There is also a blank copy of the final project materials that students used, including the Language Box graphics, sentence frames, and prompts that guided their writing.

### Final project rubric

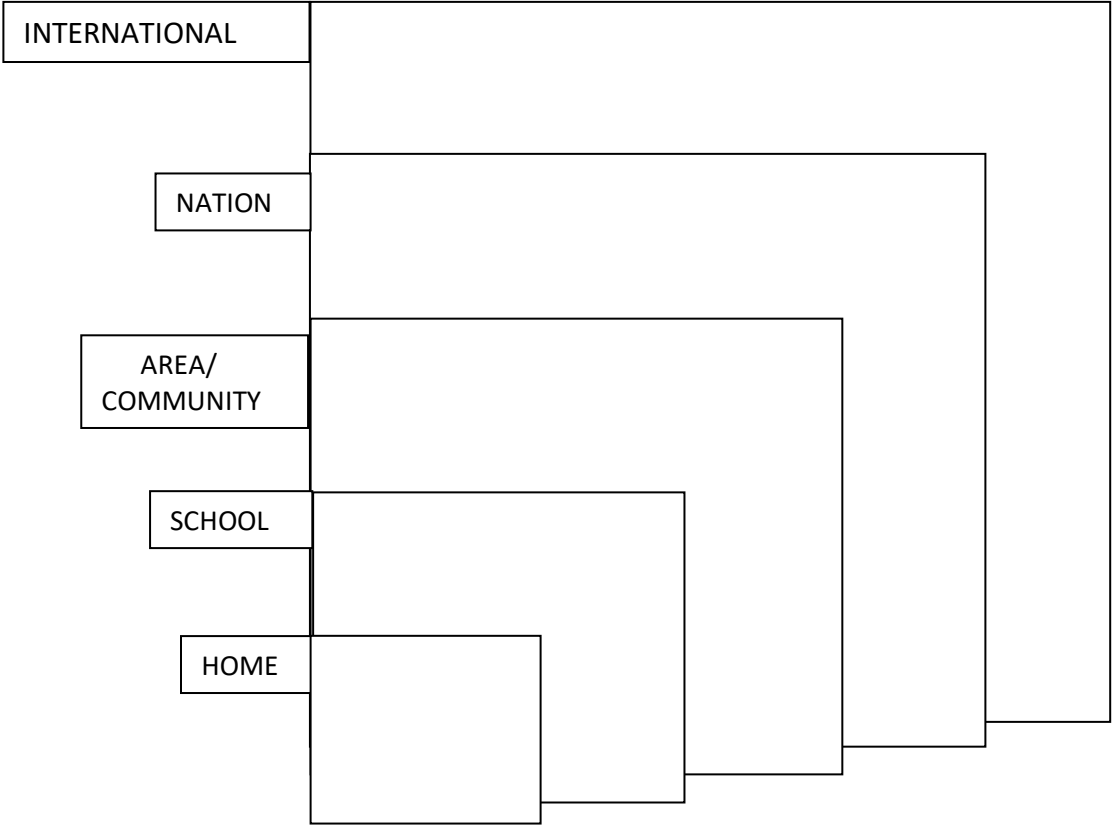
**Learning Target:** I can support my claim with relevant evidence from a credible source, so it is clear and concise for my reader. (Quarter 2 Essential Skill)

| Part of Project                    | Meets Expectations   | Exceeds Expectations  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| School Map                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map is colored to reflect student's language exposure at school</li> </ul>  |   |
| Personal Language Box              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All sections of language box are colored</li> <li>Language box looks neat and organized</li> </ul>  |   |
| Personal Language Box Explanations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 explanations are complete</li> <li>Language exposure percentages are included in each explanation</li> <li>The Who, What, and Why are answered in each explanation</li> </ul> |   |
| Interview                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All required interview questions are answered</li> <li>Obvious student conducted a professional interview with parent</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducts interview for grandparent</li> </ul>                      |
| Parent Language Box                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All sections of language box are colored</li> <li>Language box looks neat and organized</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates language box for grandparent</li> </ul>                    |
| Parent Language Box Explanations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 explanations are complete</li> <li>Language exposure percentages are included in each explanation</li> <li>The Who, What, and Why are answered in each explanation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates language box explanations for grandparent</li> </ul>       |
| Analysis                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 1 theme is focused on in analysis</li> <li>Rough draft is peer edited</li> <li>Final draft shows revisions from rough draft</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grandparent's language exposure is included in analysis</li> </ul> |
| Exhibition Reflection              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes thoughtful and honest responses</li> </ul>   |   |

**FINAL PROJECT**  
**Language Box**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English<br>Language 1<br>Language 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish<br>Language 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/><br>Language 4                       | <input type="checkbox"/><br>Language 5         | <input type="checkbox"/><br>Language 6 |



## Personal Language Box Explanations

### **My Language Exposure at Home**

The home section of my Language Box shows...

---



---

This is my language exposure at home because... *(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

### **My Language Exposure at School**

The school section of my Language Box shows...\_\_\_\_\_

---



---

This is my language exposure at school because... *(Remember to include who, what, and why.)* \_\_\_\_\_

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

### **My Language Exposure in my Community (Albuquerque, New Mexico)**

The community section of my Language Box shows...

---



---



---

This is my language exposure in my community because... *(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---



---



---



---



---

---

---

---

---

**My Language Exposure in my Nation (United States)**

The nation section of my Language Box  
shows... \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

This is my language exposure in my nation because...*(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





This was my parent's language exposure at home because... *(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### **My Parent's Language Exposure at School**

The school section of my Parent's Language Box shows

...

---

---

---

This was my parent's language exposure at school because... *(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### **My Parent's Language Exposure in their Community** ( )

The community section of my Parent's Language Box shows...

---

---

---

This was my parent's language exposure in their community because... *(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**My Parent's Language Exposure in their Nation (\_\_\_\_\_)**

The nation section of my Parent's Language Box  
shows...\_\_\_\_\_

---

---

This was my parent's language exposure in their nation because...*(Remember to include who, what, and why.)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Language Box Analysis

**Learning Target:** I can support my claim with relevant evidence from a credible primary source, so it is clear and concise for my reader.

Choose and circle a theme to focus on within your analysis:

- Attitude
- Language Loss
- Language Acquisition
- Place

**Prompt: How does \_\_\_\_\_ impact me and my family's language exposure?**

[illegible]

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What plans do you have for your future language exposure? Why?**

(For example: reversing language loss, acquiring a new language, teaching my child a language, moving to a new community, etc)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Appendix E**

### **Student Final Projects**

This appendix contains eight student final projects which I analyze in chapter five. The following student projects can be found in alphabetical order: Adán, Andrés, David, Ernesto, Nadine, Nicole, and Xena. In order to save space and facilitate more easily reading what students wrote, I copied their written final projects and did not alter their spelling, grammar, or punctuation. When needed, I clarify spelling or grammar using my own words in parentheses. The two graphics that each student created for themselves and a parent is also included.

### Adan's Final Project

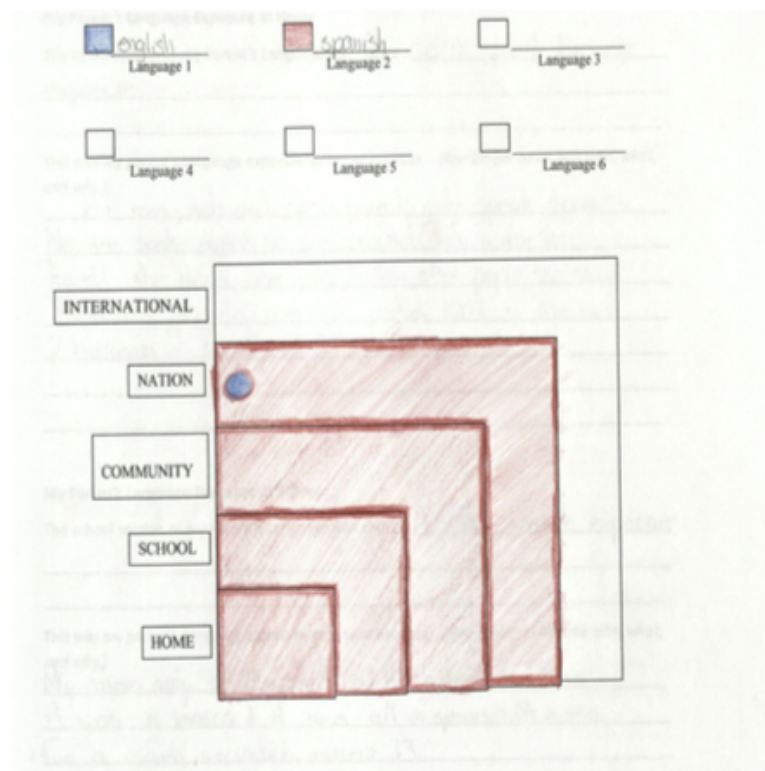


Figure E.2: Adan's mom, age 13, Nicolas Bravo, Chihuahua, Mexico, 1996

The home section of my parent's language box shows 100% spanish language. My mom, aunts, and grandparents only speak spanish. No one spoke english no one around. Only when she traveled she would hear english from other people she said "Hablabamos español con mis padres 100% y con mis 2 hermanos el 100%" [We spoke Spanish with my parents 100% and with my two siblings 100%]. The school section of my parent's Language Box shows 100% spanish exposure. My mom only spoke spanish at her school because it was in Mexico it was all in spanish. Mi mama fue a escuela secundaria numero 13 [My mom went to High School #13]. The community section of my parent's Language Box shows 100% spanish exposure. My mom lived in a small town where everyone talked spanish. She would only hear english when other kids came during vacations. The nation section of my parent's Language Box shows 10% English 90% spanish exposure. My mom would only speak

spanish but some times herd some english wene she travold. She said she spok spanish and hered spanish in her pueblo.

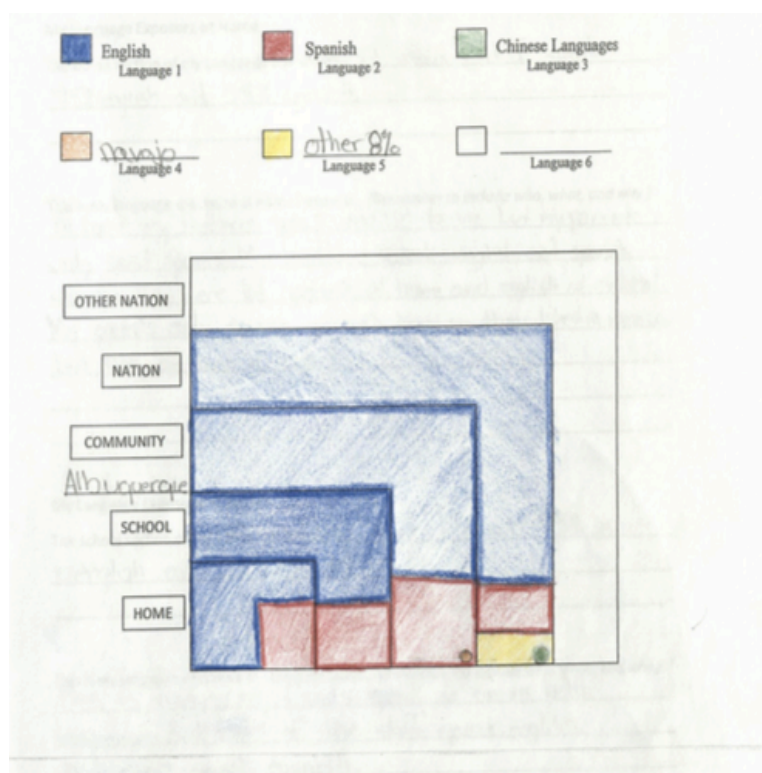


Figure E.3: Adán, age 13, Albuquerque, NM, 2017

The home section of my language box shows that I speak 75% English and 25% Spanish. At home my brother's speak english to me but my parents only speak Spanish. My brothers speak English and Spanish because they were tot spanish at home and english at school. My parents only speak Spanish because they lived in Mexico but they are learning english. the school section of my language box shows that I speak 75% in english and 25% in spanish. This is because my friends speak to me in both languages. And most of the staff speak english but some speak spanish. The community section of my Language Box shows 75% English, 24% Spanish, 1% Navajo/Diné language exposure. These are the results of the most reasant census data. 75% of the people in Albuquerque speak english because they were tought that by there parents or school. 24% of the people speak spanish because they have

immigrated from spanish-speaking countries. Lastly, 1% of the people speak Dine because Navajo Nation is in New Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 79% English, 12% Spanish, 1% Chines, 8% other languages. These are the reasons of the most reasen census data. 79% of the people in the USA speak english because maybe english travold over her first. 12% is spaish because maybe Mexico is just next door from the US. 1% is chines because people fame from china. 8% other languages because people come from different countrys.

Language acquisition impacts me because we can all get better Jobs. If I could not acquire a language it would be harder to communicate and travel. My parents always told me that I can have a better future if I know english and spanish. As my mom said in my parent interview, That if we know two languages I can improve my and my family members future. In conclution language acquisition improves my family and I because by getting money to help pay stuff. In the futre I would like to acquire a language and then teach it to my kids. It is important to teach to show what we know so other people can improve on what they do not know. For example, a new born doesnt know How to talk so other people haveto start to speak with him/her so they can learn.



### Andrés' Final Project

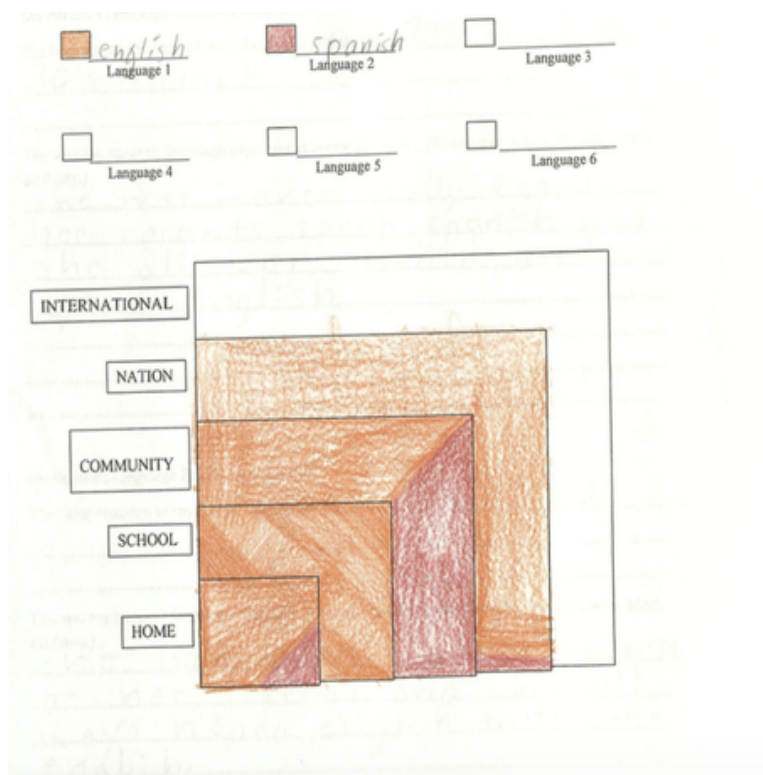


Figure E.4: Andrés' mom, age 12, Albuquerque, New Mexico

The home section of my parent's language box shows 70% english, 30% spanish. She was never really heard her parents speak spanish and she all way's hear and spoek english. The school section of my parent's language box shows 100% english. she had never heard spanish at her school's and she all way's heard english and spoke english. The community section of my parent's language box shows 50% engilsh, 50% spanish. She heard a little bit of spanish and a little bit of english and she manly spoke english to every one. The nation section of my parent's language box shows 99% english, 1% spanish. She only heard like 5 or 10 people speak spanish and all the other people spoke english.

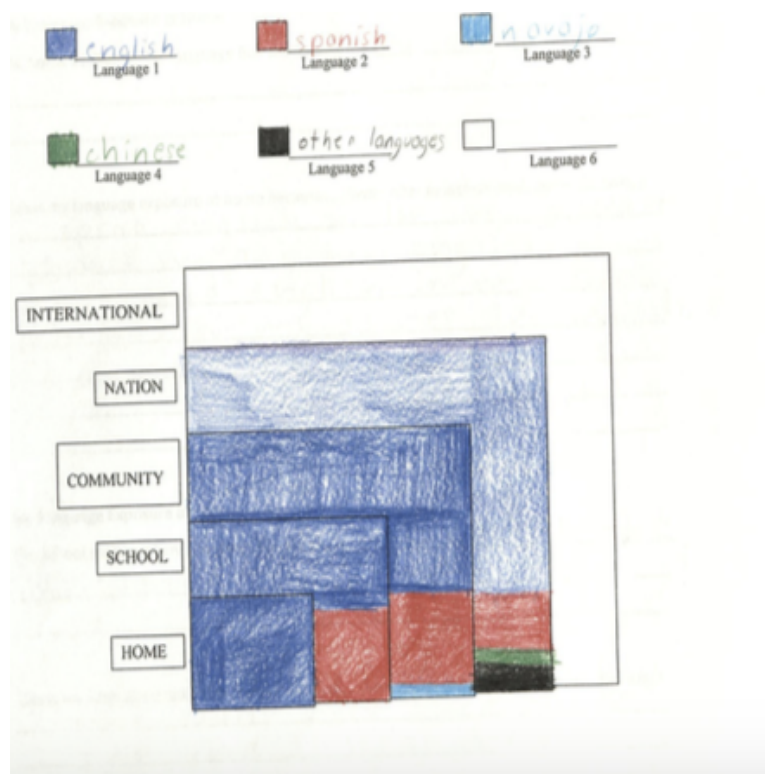


Figure E.5: Andrés, age 12, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 2017

The home section of my language box shows 100% english. I speak english with my parents because we only now english. I also read english in my room. I also play my games in english. the school section of my language box shows 80% english and 20% spanish. I don't really here that much spanish and I hear more english. The community section of my Language Box shows 75% english, 24% spanish, and 1% Navajo/Diné language exposure. These are the results of the most current census data. 75% of the people in Alduquerque speak english because they were taught it by their parents or school. 24% of the people speak spanish because they have immagreted from spanis speaking countres. Lastly, 1% of the people speak Diné becaue Navajo nation is in New Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 74% english, 12% spanish, 1% Chinese, and 8% other. Immagrants

come from all over the world and teach their language to us. We now Chinese because people with Chinese ancestors came and share their language with us. We now spanish because we get immigrants from spanish speaking countries.

Language loss impacts me and my family by my mom not getting taught spanish. According to my mom in the interview “Yes, it exists because her parents can speak spanish but they didn’t teach it to her and her sister, it upsets and frustrates her because she feels left out and can’t communicate in that language.” This quote shows how frustrating it is to be left out of a language. In conclusion my mom still feels sad that she wasn’t taught spanish

I want my future language exposure to have one more language than spanish and english. I would want it to have more languages because I want to travel and speak to the people that know that language

### David's Final Project

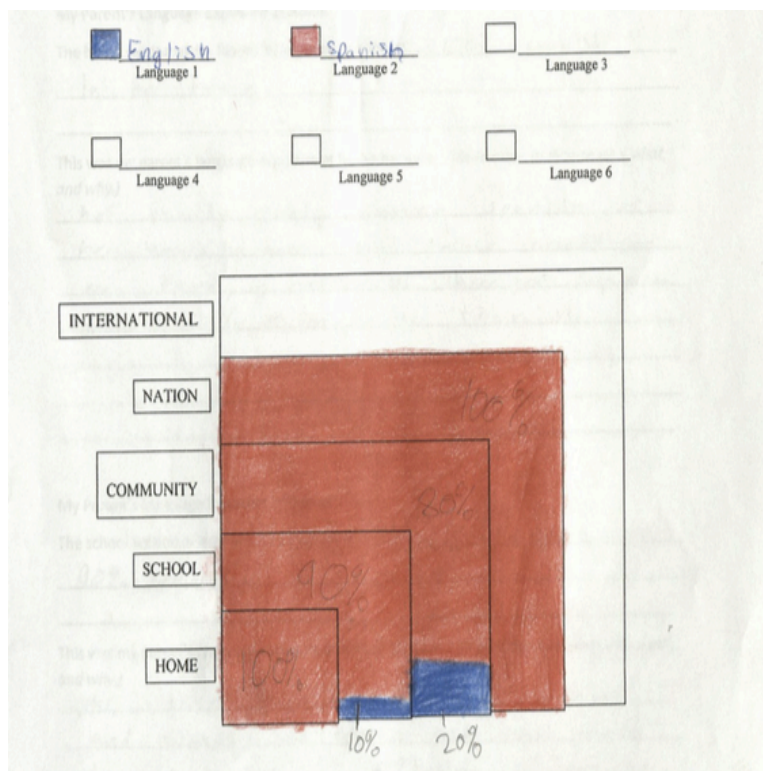


Figure E.6: David's mother, age 13, Ciudad Juarez, Juarez, Mexico, 1994

The home section of my parent's Language Box shows 100% spanish in her home. Her family only spoke spanish at her home. My mom said "hablaba español con mi mama y hermanos" [I spoke Spanish with my mom and siblings]. Therefore my mom was 100% exposed to spanish. The school section of my parent's Language Box shows 10% english and 90% spanish. She spoke spanish with her teacher and friends and english with the english teacher. My mom said "hablaba español con mis compañeros, y maestros, y poquito ingles con un maestro" [I spoke Spanish with my classmates, teacher and a little English with one teacher]. Therefore my mom spoke 10% english and 90% spanish at her school. The

community section of my parent's Language Box shows 100% spanish in her community<sup>23</sup>. My mom only spoke in her community spanish with her friends, family, and her clients. My mom said "hablaba en mi ciudad español con mi familia, amigo, y clientes" [I spoke Spanish in my city with my family, friends and clients]. Therefore my mom only spoke 100% spanish in her community. The nation section of my parent's language box shows 100% spanish in the nation. She live in Mexico an she only hear spanish. According to my mom "vivía en México y el idioma era español"[I lived in Mexico and the language was Spanish]. Therefore my mom only heard 100% spanish.

---

<sup>23</sup> David writes in the explanation of his mother's community language exposure that she was exposed to 100% Spanish, but a look at the notes that David recorded when he interviewed his mother reveal that she told him there was some English spoken in her community: "Español e ingles lo hablaba la comunidad porque es frontera y algunos negocios requerian hablar ingles. 80% español, 20% ingles" [The community used Spanish and English because it's on the boarder and some businesses required speaking English. 80% Spanish and 20% English] (David's mother, Artifact, Parent/Guardian Interview). This language exposure is what is represented in the graphic that David created for her.

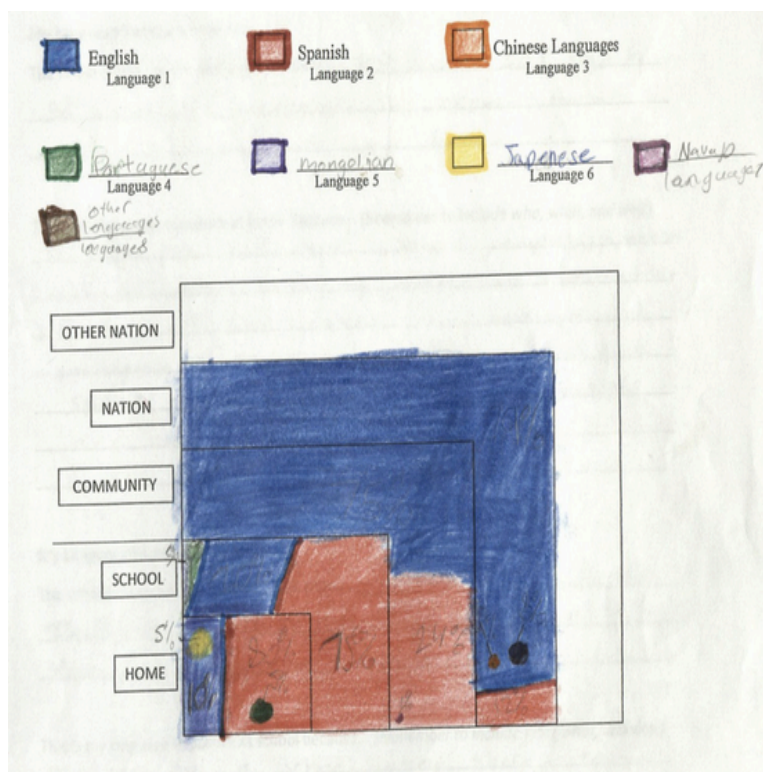


Figure E.7: David, age 13, Albuquerque, NM, 2017

The home section of my language box shows 70% spanish, 20% english, 5% Japanese, 5% Portuguese. Im expose to all of this languages in my home. I speak, hear and read spanish, english, japanese and portuguese with my parents and brother. this is because I see videos in spanish, english, portuguese and japanese at home and I talk spanish and english with my parents and brother. The school section of my language box shows that im exposed to 75% spanish, 20% english, 5% Portuguese, and 5% Mongolian language exposure. I go to a school where theres not only one language it's multilingual. 75% spanish because I speak with my friends and some teachers in spanish. 20% english because of the teachers in classes, and some friends. 5% portuguese because some teachers know how to speak it. 5% Mongolian beause Ms C. knows how to speak it. The community section of my Language Box shows 24% spanish, 75% English, and 1% Navajo/Diné language exposure. Albuquerque participated in a census. This is the census data. 75% of the people in the city

speak english because they are mostly expose to English. 24% of the population speak spanish because their familys immigrated from spanish-spoken countrie. They could also learn it from schools. 1% of the people speak Diné because Navajo Nation is in New Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 74% Engilhs, 12% Spanish, 1% Chinese, and 8% other languages. This is the census data for the nation. 74% speak English because the people who started the U.S. spoke English. 12% Spanish because peple from another speaking spanish states immigrated to the U.S and they teach Spanish in school. 1% Chinese because Asian people immigrated to the U.S for a better life. 8% other languages because when they U.S started was English but other people came from other states that didn't speak English.

Language acquisition impact's me and my family because it helped us when we came to the U.S and it's a great tool. According to my mom and my parent interview "Porque es una herramienta para poder expresarse y comunicarse con personas o comunidades dentro o fuera del país" [Because it's a tool to be able to express yourself and communicate with people or communities within or outside the country]. This quote shows how language acquisition is a great tool an that it can be helpful to communicate with other communitys or nations. Therefore language acquisition is a great tool and I feel great to add a new language. In the future my plans are going to be to add a new language. Moving to another community that speak spanish and english so my kids don't lose neither of those languages. I want to teach my child's new languages, to go abough and beyond. They can be free choosing their languages. They steel need to know spanish.

### Ernesto's Final Project

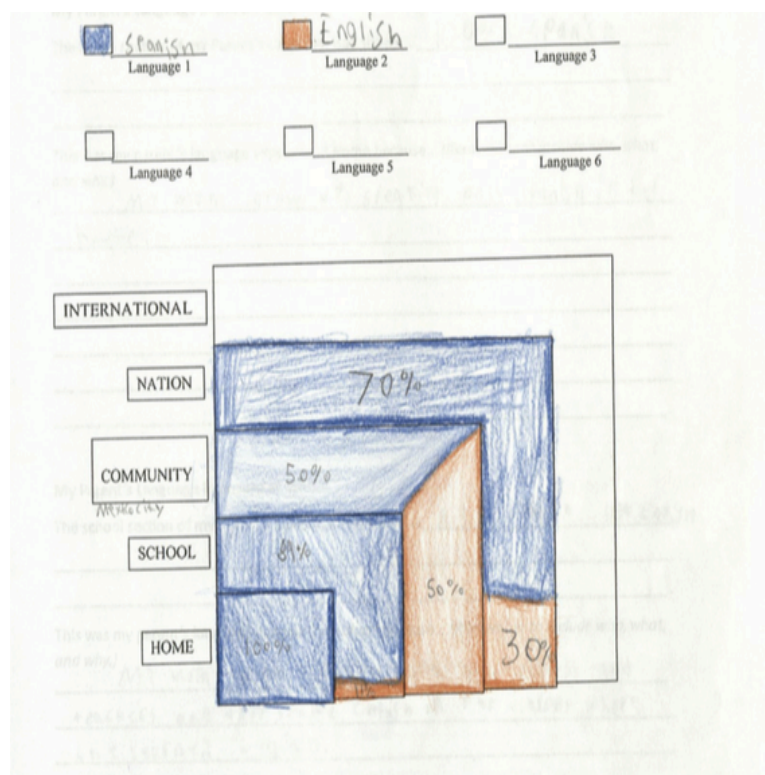


Figure E.8: Ernesto's mom, Mexico City, Mexico, 1985

The home section of my parent's Language Box shows 100% Spanish. My mom grew up speaking only Spanish in her house. The school section of my parent's Language Box shows 89% Spanish 11% English. My mom spoke Spanish with her friends and teachers and only spoke English in the classes where she learned English. The community section of my parent's Language Box shows 50% Spanish 50% English. I[t] was Mexico and it was lots of spanish but people that spoke English would come or people would learn English. The nation section of my parent's Language Box shows 70% spanish, 30% English. Mexico is mostly a Spanish speaking nation but the U.S is right next to Mexico so there is English.



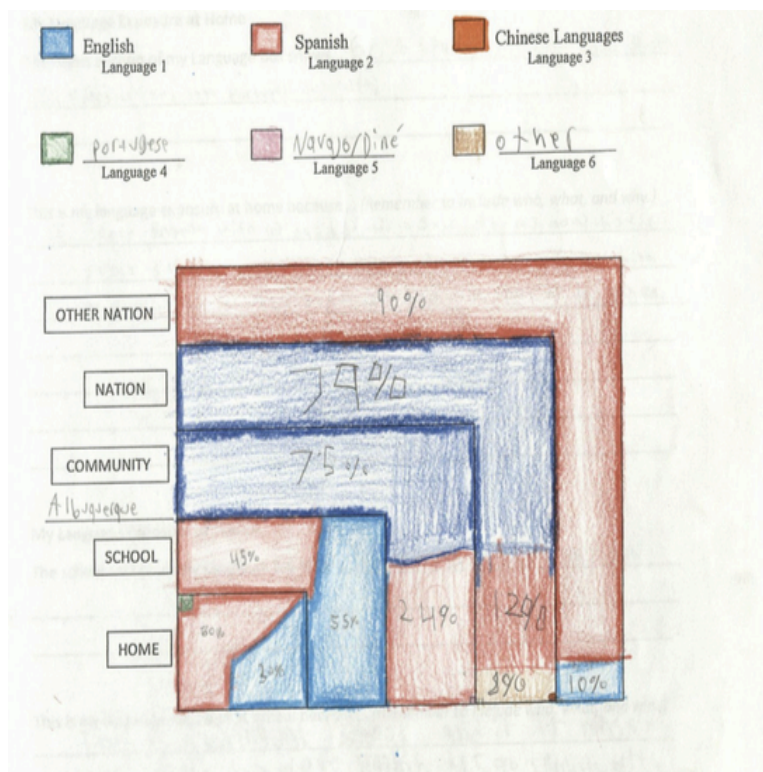


Figure E.9: Ernesto, age 12, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 2017

The home section of my language box shows 60% Spanish exposure, 30% English exposure and 10% Portuguese exposure. I speak English with my dad at his house. At my mom's house I speak Spanish and english with the person we share the house with. I am exposed to Portuguese because my mom will speak it and teach me. The school section of my Language Box shows 45% spanish and 55% English. This is a bilingual school and if it wasn't you would see more English. 45% Spanish with the teachers and friends. 55% with the teachers and friends. The community section of my Language Box shows 24% Spanish 75% English 1% Navajo/Diné exposure. Albuquerque participated in a census. This is the census data. 75% of the people in the city speak english because they are mostly exposed to english. 24% of the population speaks spanish because their families immigrated from spanish speaking countries. they could also learn it in school. lastly, 1% of the people speak

dine because Navajo Nation is in NM. The nation section of my Language Box shows 79% english, 12% spanish, 1% Chinese and 8 % other languages exposure. The census data is giving us these results. 79% of the population speaks english because it is like the main language. 12% of the population speaks spanish there are immigrants from Mexico. 1% Chinese because people from china might have traveled here. 8% other lanugages

Language acquisition impacts me and my family by helping us expand our language knowledge. According to my language box I have more English exposure than my mom. I think it is like that because when she was my age she wasn't in an English speaking country. She grew up in Mexico where was only taught English in school. Therefore I have gained English. I will try to get at least 3 more languages. I want to learn more languages so I can teach other people.

### Hugo's Final Project

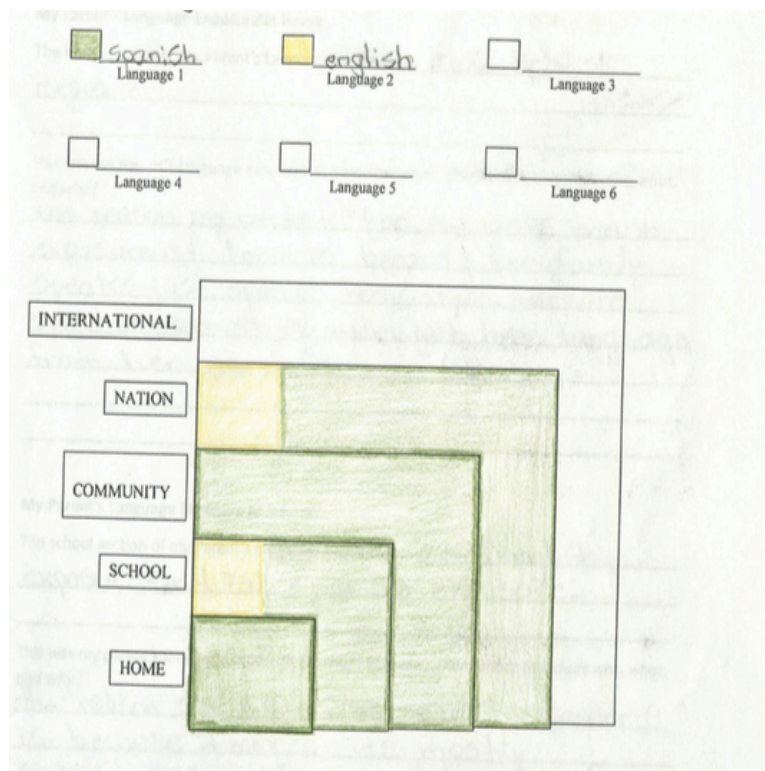


Figure E.9: Hugo's mother, age 12, Mexico, 1985

The home section of my parent's language box shows 100% spanish exposure. The reason my perent has a 100% spanish exposure at home is because her family speaks just spanish her sisters everyone speaks spanish, my mom got her language from her parents. The school section of my Parent's Language Box shows 25% english exposure and 75% spanish exposure. The reason she has a 75% spanish exposure is because it Mexico its mostly spanish. 25% english exposure because she said in english class they speak 25% english and 75% spanish. The community section of my parent's language box shows 100% spanish exposure. Everyone in her community spoke spanish including grandma mom dad her 6 sisters and 1 brother, my mom doesn't use very much english because she doesn't need it in her community. The nation section of my parents language box shows 25% english exposure

75% spanish exposure. The reason she said 25% english is because she said some times in school people swich like some Mexican exchange to the us and that's why some people speak engilsh spanish because most people speak spanish their.

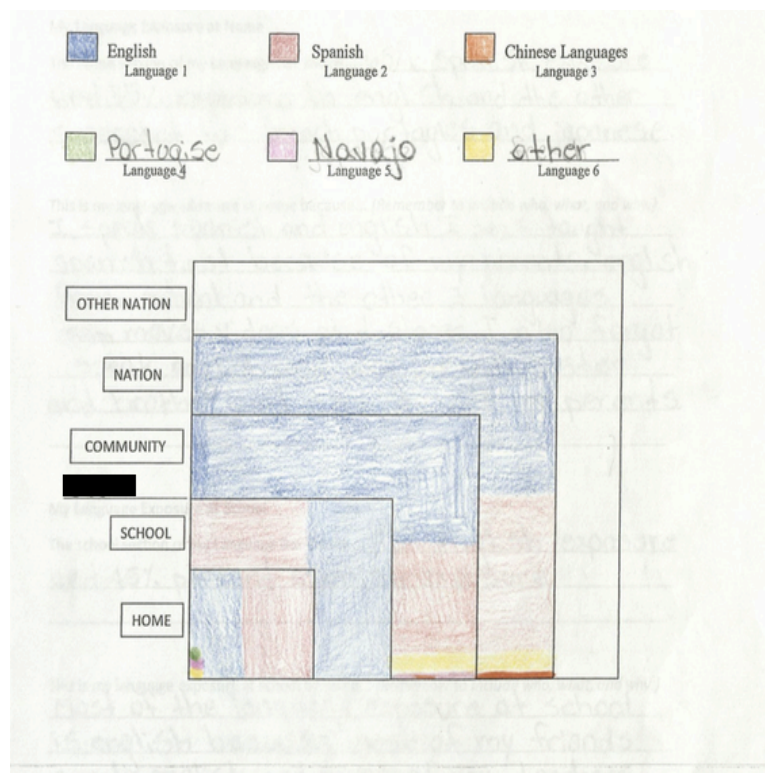


Figure E.10: Hugo, age 12, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 2017

The home section of my Language Box shows 65% spanish exposure and 35% exposure to english and the other 5% for French, portugies and Japanese. I speak spanish and english I was taught spanish first because of my perents. English from school and the other 3 languages from movies videos and stores. I also forgot I speak english and spanish with sister and brother, just spanish with my perents. The school section of my Language Box shows 55% english exposure and 45% percent spanish exposure. Most of the language exposure at school is english because most of my friends speak english and most of my teachers speak

english. spanish is from my other friends and other teachers. The community section of my Language Box shows 75% English, 24% Spanish, and 1% Navajo/Danie language exposure. These are the results of the most current census data. 75% of the people in Albuquerque speak english because they were taught it by their parents or school. 24% of the people speak spanish because they have immigrants from spanish-speaking countries lastly 1% of the people speak Dina because Navajo Nation is in new Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 79% english, 12% Spanish, and 1% Navajo and Danie and 8% other languages. These languages are the most spoken ones. 79% english because most people in the world speak it. 24% spanish and 1% Navajo 8% other languages.

The way language acquisition impacts me and my family is by I have learned a new language for my family. The way that new language impacted me and my family is now we need the language english is mostly popular in the united states. As you can see the language box I created has more english than my mom's language box but now she is hearing more english in the house community nation a quote I got from her interview is it important to be bilingual to get a better job better future. Over all this proves how language acquisition impacts me and my family. I want to acquire more language so I can communicate with more people teach my children more language have a better job.

### Nadine's Final Project

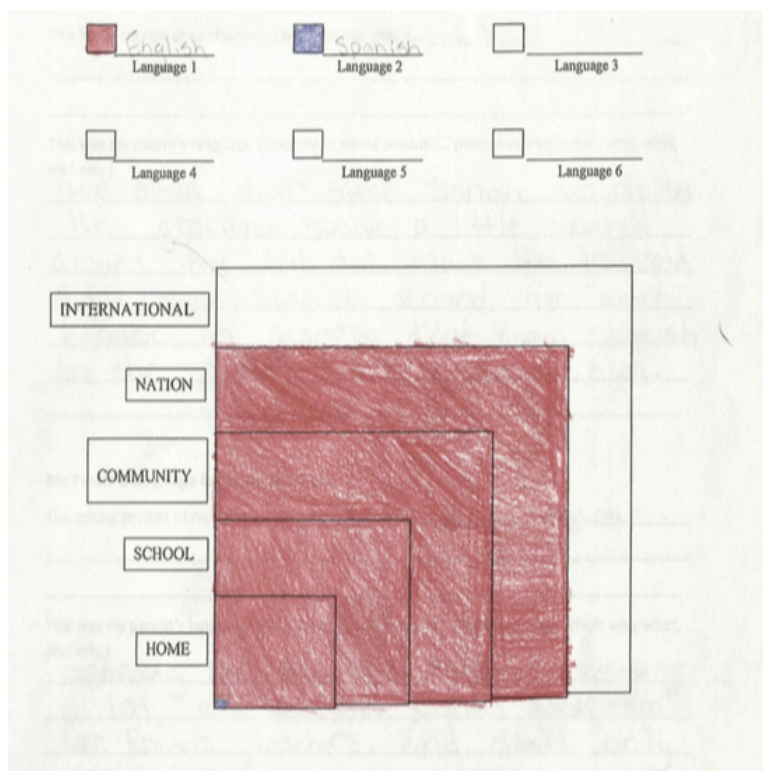


Figure E.101: Nadine's mother, age 13, Los Lunas, NM, 1999

The home section of my parents language box shows English 98%, Spanish 2%. Her mom didn't speak Spanish around her. Her grandma spoke a little spanish around her but not much. Her grandma didn't speak Spanish around her much because her grandpa didn't know spanish so she couldn't speak it around him. The school section of my parent's language box shows 100% english. according to my mom "there wasn't a lot of spanish spoken back then." Her friends, teacher, and staff only spoke english. The community section of my parent's language box shows 100% english. back then they didn't speak much spanish. She didn't hear or speak it with any of her friends. Only english. the nation section of my parents language box shows 100% English. well my mom never left the state. But she only spoke English and heard English. with family and friends.



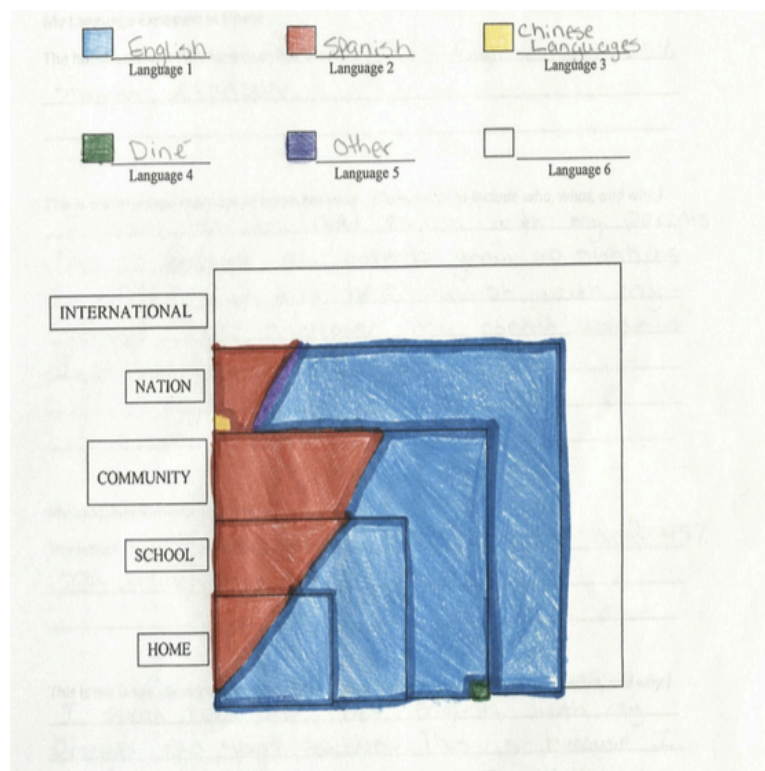


Figure E.111: Nadine, age 13, Albuquerque, NM, 2017

The home section of my language box shows 75% english and 25% spanish exposure. I speak hear and read english with my parents. This is because my parents grow up speaking English. I speak and hear Spanish with my siblings. This is because my parents want us to speak it with each other. The school section of my language box shows 55% english and 45% spanish exposure. I speak, hear, and read english with my friends and some teachers. This is because I don't know that much spanish. I speak, hear, and read spanish with some friends and staff. This is because we got to a bilingual school. The community section of my Language Box shows 75% English, 24% Spanish, and 1% Navajo/Diné language exposure. These are the results of the most current census data. 75% of the people in Albuquerque speak English because they were taught it by their parents or school. 24%. Of the people speak Spanish- speaking countines. Laslty, 1% of the people speak Diné because Navajo

Nation is in New Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 79% English 12% Spanish 1% Chinese languages 8% other languages These results are from the most current census data. 79% of people speak English in the US because that is the language they were taught. 12% of people in the US speak spanish because our nabor is Mexico. 1% of people in the US speak Chinese because of immagrations. Lastly, 8% of people in the US speak other languages because also of immorgration.

Language loss has impacted me and my family by not being able to know that language. My family loss Spain Spanish due to marriage. Acording to my mom's language box she only had English with no much Spanish. In conculion my mom wasn't exposed to Spanish. Only some in her home.



### Nicole's Final Project

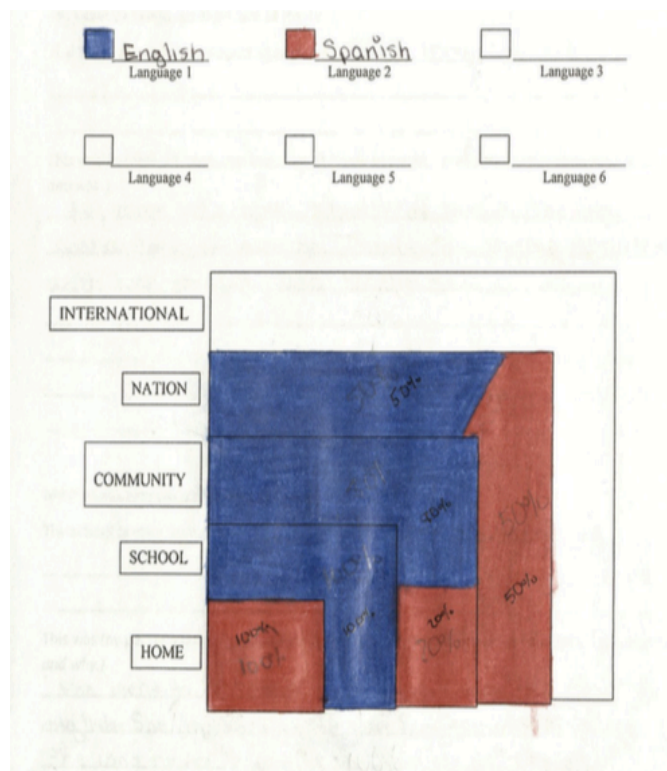


Figure E.123: Nicole's mom, age 12, Albuquerque, NM, 1997

The home section of my parent's language box shows 100% Spanish. My mom only spoke Spanish at home. She only spoke Spanish with her family. She spoke Spanish with her parents and brothers. The school section of my parent's language box shows 100% Spanish [means English]. She went to a school where they were exposed to English. She spoke English with friends and teachers. She was never exposed to Spanish at school. The community section of my parent's language box shows English 80%, Spanish 20%. She was exposed to Spanish and English. According to my mom she said, "English 80% and Spanish 20%" but she could not remember with who. The nation section of my parents language box shows English 50% and Spanish 50%. My mom would speak these languages with her family and friends. Also because Spanish and English were most common.

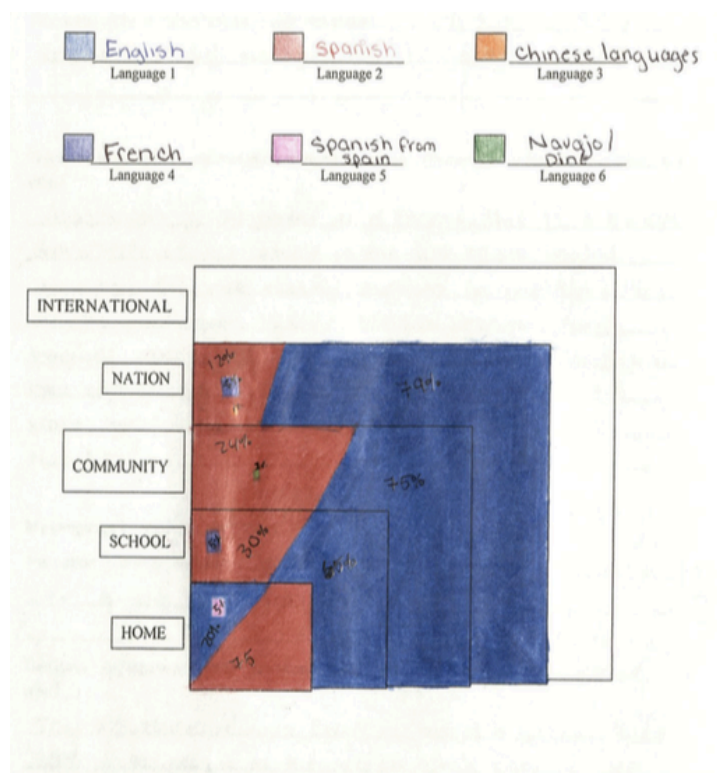


Figure E.14: Nicole, age 12, Albuquerque, NM, 2017

The home section of my language box shows I am exposed to 75% Spanish, 20% English and 5% Spanish from Spain. I am exposed to Spanish most of the time I am home. I am exposed to Spanish because my whole family speaks Spanish. I am exposed to Spanish with my dad, mom, and sisters. I am exposed to English with my mom and sisters. I am also Exposed to Spanish from Spain by watching a youtuber that speaks Spanish from Spain. The school section of my language box shows I am Exposed to 65% English, 30% Spanish, and 5% French. I go to a school where people speak different languages. 65% I am exposed to English because I speak it, read it, hear it, and write it. 30% I am exposed to Spanish because I hear it, talk it, read it and write most of the time. 5% I am exposed to French because 2 of my friends speak it. The community section of my Language Box shows 24% Spanish, 75% English and 1% Navajo Diné language exposure. Albuquerque participated in a census. This

is a census data. 75% of the people in the city speak english because they were mostly exposed to english. 24% of the population speak Spanish because their families immigrated from Spanish speaking countries. They could also learn it in school. Lastly 1% of the people speak Diné because Navajo Nation is in New Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 79% English, 12% Spanish, 1% Chinese languages, and 8% other languages. The U.S. surveyed in a Census. This is a census Data. 79% of the people in the nation speak english because they have family members that only speak english. 12% of the population speak Spanish because they are mostly exposed to spanish. 1% of the people speak Chinese languages because they are from places were they speak Chinese languages. Finally 8% of the population speak other languages such as French, German, Vietnamese, etc. because they either learned or were born in places where they speak other languages.

Language Loss impacts me and my family by the language. The language we learned first is getting lost in my family. Spanish is getting lost because they are speaking more English and Spanish. According to my language box my spoke more Spanish than I did and I spoke more English than my mom did when she was my age. In other words Spanish is getting lost in my family by ys speaking more English than before. Therefore I really want my family to gain that Spanish back.

In the future I want my family to continue speaking Spanish. I also want my children in the future to know Spanish perfectly as well as English but I don't want them to lose a language like my family has. I would really like my language exposure to change by me being exposed to more Spanish.

### Xena's Final Project

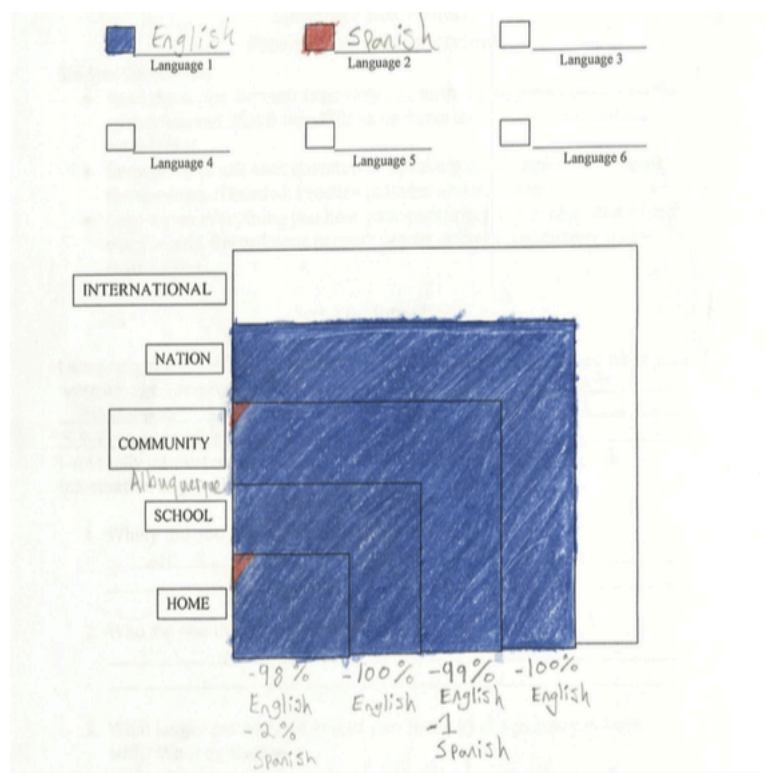


Figure E.135: Xena's mom, age 12, Albuquerque, NM, 1982

The home section of my parent's language box shows 98% English and 2% Spanish. My mom only spoke English at home and heard 2% Spanish. She spoke English with all her family and friends. The school section of my Parent's language box shows 100% English. My mom spoke and heard English by her teacher, herself, and Friends. According to the interview my mom said "I spoke English with all friends and teachers." That shows that my mom only spoke and heard English at school. The community section of my parent's language box shows 99% English and 1% Spanish. As far as she knew at her age, she thought everyone spoke english beause she only heard english at her age. The nation section of my parent's language box shows 100% English. As far as she knew at her age, she thought everyone spoke English because she only heard English.

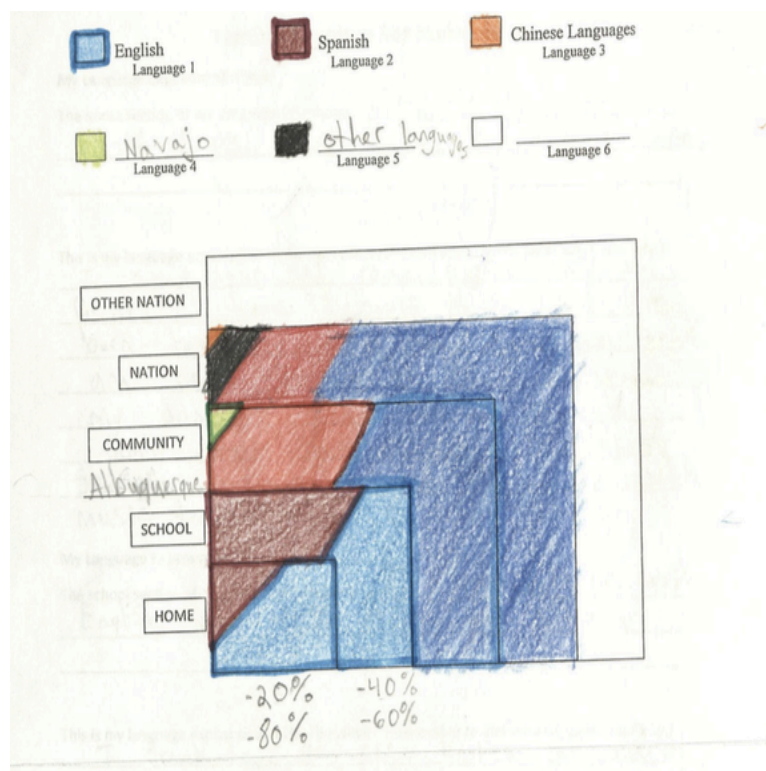


Figure E.16: Xena, age 12, Albuquerque, NM, 2017

The home section of my language box shows I'm exposed to 80% English and 20% Spanish at home. I speak, hear and read English with my parents at home because that's what I've been taught. I hear and sometimes speak and read Spanish at home because my dad is from Mexico and his family comes over and they only speak Spanish. Sometimes my dad listens to Spanish music too. The school section of my language box shows I'm exposed to 60% English and 40% Spanish at school. I speak, hear, and read English at school. Most of the teachers only speak English and some speak Spanish. I speak English with friends and classmates. I hear and read 40% Spanish at school because most of the kids speak Spanish. The community section of my Language Box shows 75% English, 24% Spanish, and 1%

Navajo, Diné. These are the results of the most current census data. 75% of the people in Albuquerque speak English because they were taught it by their parents or school. 24% of the people speak Spanish because they have immigrated from Spanish speaking countries. 1% of the people speak Diné because Navajo Nation is in New Mexico. The nation section of my Language Box shows 79% English, 12% Spanish, and 1% Chinese (Mandarin), and other languages are 8%. These are the results of the most current United States census data. 79% of people in the U.S. speak English because they were taught by their parents. 12% people speak Spanish because they immigrated from Spanish speaking countries. 1% of people speak Chinese because they immigrated from a different country. 8% people speak other languages because they immigrated from different countries.

Language loss impacts me and my family by how my mom doesn't know Spanish and my dad knowing Spanish. According to my mom and my language box, she was only exposed to 1% Spanish and 99% English. This shows that her parents didn't know or didn't teach her Spanish. My language box shows about 20% Spanish and 80% English. Overall this shows that I'm exposed to Spanish at home because my dad knows Spanish and taught me a little because he's from Mexico. That is why my language box is different from my mom's. If my dad never knew Spanish, I wouldn't have known some Spanish. If my mom knew Spanish, I probably would be fluent in Spanish. That is how language loss impacted me and my family. I want to acquire a new language so I can speak secretly with family or a friend. I would want to learn German because not a lot of people know German in Albuquerque.

## References

- American Civil Liberties Union of Washington (Accessed November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018). Timeline of the Muslim Ban. Retrieved from: <https://www.aclu-wa.org/pages/timeline-muslim-ban>.
- Alim, S. (2005). Critical language awareness in the United States: Revisiting issues and revising pedagogies in a resegregated society. *Educational Researcher*, 24-31.
- Beaudrie, S., Ducar, C., and Relaño-Pastor, A. M. (2009). Curricular perspectives in the heritage language context: Assessing culture and identity. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 22(2), 157-174.
- Benjamin, R., Pecos, R., and Romero, M. E. (1996). Language revitalization efforts in the Pueblo de Cochiti: Becoming “literate” in an oral society. *Indigenous literacies in the Americas: Language planning from the bottom up*, 115-136.
- Bialystok, E. (2009). Bilingualism: The good, the bad, and the indifferent. *Bilingualism: Language and cognition*, 12, 1, 3-11.
- Bills, G. D. and Vigil, N. A. (2008). *The Spanish language of New Mexico and southern Colorado: A linguistic atlas*. UNM Press.
- Bloomberg, D. and Volpe, M. (2016). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bogdan, R.C. and Biklen, S.K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson.
- Bucholtz, M., Casillas, D., and Lee, S. (2017). Language and culture as sustenance. In D. Paris and H.S. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 43-57). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

- Cammarota, J. (2007). A social justice approach to achievement: Guiding Latina/o students toward educational attainment with a challenging, socially relevant curriculum. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 40, 87-96.
- Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (2003). *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research*. Routledge.
- Carreira, M. (2000). Validating and promoting Spanish in the United States: Lessons from linguistic science. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 24(4), 423-443.
- Carreira, M. (2007). Spanish-for-native-speakers matters: Narrowing the Latino achievement gap through Spanish language instruction. *Heritage Language Journal*, 5(1), 147-171.
- Carreira, M. and Beeman, T. (2014). *Voces: Latino students on life in the United States*. Praeger.
- Carvalho, A. (2012). Code-switching: From theoretical to pedagogical considerations. In S. Beaudrie and M. Fairclough (Eds.) *Spanish as a heritage language in the United States: The state of the field*. (pp. 139-157). Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Cho, G. and Krashen, S. (1998). The negative consequences of heritage language loss and why we should care. In S. Krashen, L. Tse, and J. McQuillan (Eds.) *Heritage Language Development* (pp. 31-39). Culver City, CA: Language Education Associates.
- Choi, Y. (2013). Teaching social studies for newcomer English language learners: Toward culturally relevant pedagogy. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 15(1), 12-18.



Coles-Ritchie, M. and Lugo, J. (2010). Implementing a Spanish for heritage speakers course in an English only state: A collaborative critical teacher action research study.

*Educational Action Research*, 18(2), 197-212.

Collier, V.P. and Thomas, W.P. (2009). *Educating English learners for a transformed world*.

Albuquerque, NM: Fuente Press.

Common Core State Standards. (Accessed October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018). English language arts

standards: Students who are college and career ready in reading, writing, speaking,

listening, and language. Retrieved from: [http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/introduction/students-who-are-college-and-career-ready-in-reading-writing-speaking-listening-language/)

[Literacy/introduction/students-who-are-college-and-career-ready-in-reading-writing-speaking-listening-language/](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/introduction/students-who-are-college-and-career-ready-in-reading-writing-speaking-listening-language/)

Cummins, J. (1976). The influence of bilingualism on cognitive growth: A synthesis of

research findings and explanatory hypotheses. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, 9, 1-44.

Domonoske, C. and Gonzales, R. (2018, June 19). What we know: Family separation and

‘zero tolerance’ at the border. Retrieved from:

<https://www.npr.org/2018/06/19/621065383/what-we-know-family-separation-and-zero-tolerance-at-the-border>

Ducar, C. (2012). SHL learners’ attitudes and motivations: Reconciling opposing forces. In

S. Beaudrie and M. Fairclough (Eds.) *Spanish as a heritage language in the United*

*States: The state of the field*. (pp. 161-178). Washington D.C.: Georgetown

University Press.

- Espinoza, A. (1975). Speech mixture in New Mexico: The influence of the English language on New Mexican Spanish. *El Lenguaje de los Chicacons: Regional and Social Characteristics used by Mexican Americans*, 99-114.
- Feinauer, E., and Whiting, E. F. (2012). Examining the sociolinguistic context in schools and neighborhoods of pre-adolescent Latino students: Implications for ethnic identity. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 11(1), 52-74.
- Fenner, D. (2013). Implementing the Common Core State Standards for English learners: The changing role of the ESL teacher. A summary of the TESOL International Association Convening. *TESOL International Association*, 1-22.
- Fernández-Gibert, A. (2010). Ideologías lingüísticas en el Nuevo México territorial: Lenguaje *nacional* vs. lengua ancestral, 1880-1912. *Spanish in Context*, 7(1), 46-77.
- Fishman, J. (1997). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to language threat*. Multilingual Matters.
- Fishman, J. (2001). 300- plus years of heritage language education in the United States. In J.K. Peyton, D.A. Ranard, and S. McGinnis (Eds.), *Heritage languages in America: Preserving a national resource* (pp. 81-97). Washington DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Flores, A. (2017). How the U.S. Hispanic population is changing. Pew Hispanic Center. (Accessed March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019). <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/18/how-the-u-s-hispanic-population-is-changing/>
- Fraser, L. (2016). Mackey box discussion across three generations. Unpublished class project in LLSS 556: *First and Second Language Development within Cultural Contexts*.

- Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, College of Education, University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, NM.*
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Seabury Press.
- García, O. (2009). Emergent bilinguals and TESOL: What's in a name? *TESOL Quarterly*, 43, 322-326.
- Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, practice and research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(2), 106-116.
- Gay, G. (2015). The what, why and how of culturally responsive teaching: International mandates, challenges and opportunities. *Multicultural Education Review*, 7(3), 123-139.
- Gagliano, J. (2016). Language shift to language loss: Mackey box discussion across four generations. Unpublished class project in *LLSS 556: First and Second Language Development within Cultural Contexts. Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, College of Education, University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, NM.*
- Geertz, C. (1994). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In M. Martin and L. C. McIntyre (Eds.) *Readings in the philosophy of social science* (pp. 213-231). Cambridge, MA: MIT press.
- Getz, L. M. (1997). *Schools of Their Own: The Education of Hispanos in New Mexico, 1850-1940*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson.

- González-Berry, E. (2000). Which language will our children speak? The Spanish language and public education policy in New Mexico, 1890-1930. *The Contested Homeland; a Chicano History of New Mexico*, 169-189.
- González, N., Moll, L., and Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Gutiérrez, K. and Rogoff, B. (2003). Cultural ways of learning: Individual traits or repertoires of practice? *Educational Researcher*, 32(5), 19-25.
- Hammer, C.S. and Rodríguez, B. (2012). Bilingual language acquisition and the child socialization process. In B.A. Goldstein (Ed.) *Bilingual language development and disorders in Spanish-English speakers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 31-46). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing.
- Haq, F. (2015). Language shift to language loss: Mackey box conversation across three generations. Unpublished class project in *LLSS 556: First and Second Language Development within Cultural Contexts*. Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, College of Education, University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, NM.
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Iglesias, A. and Rojas, R., (2012). Bilingual language development of English language learners. In B.A. Goldstein (Ed.) *Bilingual language development and disorders in Spanish-English speakers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 3-29). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing.

- Irizarry, J. (2017). "For us, by us": A vision for culturally sustaining pedagogies forwarded by Latinx youth. In D. Paris and H.S. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 83-97). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Joseph, P. (2011). Conceptualizing curriculum. In P.B. Joseph (Eds.), *Cultures of Curriculum* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 3-22). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R. (2005). Participatory action research: Communicative action and the public sphere. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 559-603, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Kids Count Data Center. (Accessed October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018). Children, ages 0-17, living in poverty. Retrieved from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/3894-children-ages-0-17-living-in-poverty?loc=33&loct=2#detailed/2/any/false/870,573,869,36,868,867,133/any/18233,8250>
- Kinloch, V. (2017). "You ain't making me write": Culturally sustaining pedagogies and Black youth's performances of resistance. In D. Paris and H.S. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 25-41). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Krashen, S. (1998). Language shyness and heritage language development. In S.D. Krashen, L. Tse and J. McQuillan (Eds.) *Heritage Language Development* (pp. 41-49). Culver City, CA: Language Education Associates.
- Krogstad, J.M, and Flores, A. (2017). Use of Spanish declines among Latinos in major U.S. metros. Pew Hispanic Center. (Accessed March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019). Retrieved from:

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/10/31/use-of-spanish-declines-among-latinos-in-major-u-s-metros/>

- La Velle, L. B., McFarlane, A. and Brawn, R. (2003). Knowledge transformation through ICT in science education: A case study in teacher-driven curriculum development- Case study 1. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 34(2), 183-199.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, (32)3, 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: Aka the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 74-84.
- Lee, S.J. and Walsh, D. (2017). Socially just, culturally sustaining pedagogy for immigrant youth: Possibilities, challenges, and directions. In D. Paris and S. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 191- 206). New York, NY: Teacher's College Press, Columbia University.
- Lopez, M.H., Krogstad, J.M., and Flores, A. (2018). Most Hispanic parents speak Spanish to their children, but this is less the case in later immigrant generations. Pew Hispanic Center. (Accessed March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019). Retrieved from:  
<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/02/most-hispanic-parents-speak-spanish-to-their-children-but-this-is-less-the-case-in-later-immigrant-generations/>
- MacGregor-Mendoza, P. (2010). Aquí no se habla español: Stories of linguistic repression in southwest schools. *The Bilingual Research Journal: The Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education*, 24(4), 355-367.
- Mackey, W. (1970). A typology of bilingual education. *Foreign Language Annals*, 3(4), 596-608.

- Mahn, H. (2008). Periods in child development: Vygotsky's perspective. In A. Kozulin, B. Gindis, V. Ageyev, S.M. Miller (Eds.), *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context* (pp. 119-137). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Martinez, D. C. and Montaña, E. (2016). Toward expanding what counts as language for Latina and Latino youth in an urban middle school. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, 1-17.
- Mason, J. (2006). *Qualitative researching* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- McCarty, T. and Lee, T. (2014). Critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Review*, 84(1), 101-124.
- McKernan, J. (1996). *Curriculum action research: A handbook of methods and resources for the reflective practitioner* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London, UK: Kogan.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Meyer, L. (2007). Methods, meanings and education policy in the United States. In J. Cummins and C. Davison (Eds.) *International Handbook of English Language Teaching*, Part I, (pgs. 211-228). NY: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Meyer, L. (2012). Fishman's cultural autonomy as an approach to sociolinguistic power-sharing. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 213, 127-142.
- Meyer, L. (2015). The Mackey Boxes project guidelines. Unpublished instructions distributed to graduate students enrolled in *LLSS 556: First and Second Language*

- Development within Cultural Contexts. Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, College of Education, University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, NM.*
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A.M, and Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Moll, L. C. (2013). *LS Vygotsky and education*. Routledge.
- Morrison, K. A., Robbins, H. H., and Rose, D. G. (2008). Operationalizing culturally relevant pedagogy: A synthesis of classroom-based research. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 41*(4), 433-452.
- Muncey, D. E., Payne, J., and White, N. S. (1999). Making curriculum and instructional reform happen: A case study. *Peabody Journal of Education, 74*(1), 68-110.
- National Center for Educational Statistics. Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools. (Accessed October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016). Retrieved from:  
[http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_cge.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp)
- New Mexico Public Education Department (Accessed October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017). 2017 District Report Cards. Retrieved from:  
<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/accountability/district-report-cards/>.
- Nieto, S. (1999). *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Norton, B. (2000). *16 Investment, acculturation, and language loss*.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Multilingual Matters.



- Olsen, L. (1997). *Made in America: Immigrant students in our public schools*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- Oh, J. S. and Fuligni, A. J. (2010). The role of heritage language development in the ethnic identity and family relationships of adolescents from immigrant backgrounds. *Social Development, 19*(1), 202-220.
- Otcu, B. (2010). Heritage language maintenance and cultural identity formation: The case of a Turkish Saturday school in New York City. *Heritage Language Journal, 7*(2), 112-137.
- Paradis, J, Genesee, F., and Crago, M. (2011). *Dual language development and disorders* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Baltimore, MA: Paul H. Brooks Publishing.
- Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher, 41*(3), 93-97.
- Paris, D. and Alim, S.H. (2014). What are we seeking to sustain through culturally sustaining pedagogy? A loving critique forward. *Harvard Educational Review, 84*(1), 85-100.
- Paris, D. and Alim, S.H. (2017). What is culturally sustaining pedagogy? In D. Paris and S.H. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 1-21). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Perara-Lunde, M. (2015). The Mackey box: Linguistic and cultural practices across three generations. Unpublished class project in *LLSS 556: First and Second Language Development within Cultural Contexts*. Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, College of Education, University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, NM.

- Phinney, J., Romero, I., Nava, M., and Huang, D. (2001). The role of language, parents, and peers in ethnic identity among adolescents in immigrant families. *Journal of Youth and Adolescents*, 30(2), 135- 153.
- Portes, A. and Hao, L. (1998). E pluribus unum: Bilingualism and the loss of language in the second generation. *Sociology of Education*, 71(4), 269- 294.
- Portes, A., and Hao, L. (2002). The price of uniformity: Language, family and personality adjustment in the immigrant second generation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25(6), 889-912.
- Potowski, K. (2004). Student Spanish use and investment in a dual immersion classroom: Implications for second language acquisition and heritage language maintenance. *The Modern Language Journal*, 88, 75-101.
- Potowski, K. (2012). Identity and heritage learners: Moving beyond essentializations. In S. Beaudrie and M. Fairclough (Eds.) *Spanish as a heritage language in the United States: The state of the field*. (pp. 179-199). Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Potowski, K. and Rothman, J. (2011). Preface. In *Bilingual Youth: Spanish in English-speaking societies* (pp. 3-6). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamin Publishing.
- Reilly, K. (2016, August 31). Here are all the times Donald Trump insulted Mexico. (Accessed October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018). Retrieved from: <http://time.com/4473972/donald-trump-mexico-meeting-insult/>
- Relaño Pastor, A. M. (2007). Competing language ideologies in a bilingual/bicultural after-school program in southern California. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 7(1), 4-24.

- Rodriguez, R. (1983). *Hunger of memory: The education of Richard Rodriguez: An autobiography*. Bantam.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. Oxford University Press.
- Romo, V., Stewart, M., and Naylor, B. (2017, September 5). Trump ends DACA, calls on Congress to act. (Accessed October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018). Retrieved from:  
<https://www.npr.org/2017/09/05/546423550/trump-signals-end-to-daca-calls-on-congress-to-act>
- Rosa, J. and Flores, N. (2017). Do you hear what I hear? Raciolinguistic ideologies and culturally sustaining pedagogies. In D. Paris and S.H. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 175-190). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- San Pedro, T. (2017). "This stuff interests me": Re-Centering indigenous paradigms in colonizing school spaces. In D. Paris and S.H. Alim (Eds.) *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 99-116). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Santa Ana, O. (2004). *Tongue-tied: The lives of multilingual children in public education*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publications.
- Sanz-Sánchez, I. (2014). Como dicen los americanos: Spanish in contact with English in territorial and early statehood New Mexico. *Spanish in Context*, 11(2), 221-242.
- Schechter, S. and Bayley, R. (2002). *Language as cultural practice: Mexicanos en el norte*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.
- Schechter, S. and Bayley, R. (2004). Language socialization in theory and practice. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 17(5), 605-625.

- Suarez, D. (2002). The paradox of linguistic hegemony and the maintenance of Spanish as a heritage language in the United States. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 23(6), 512-530.
- Sleeter, C. (2012). Confronting the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy. *Urban Education*, 47(3), 562-584.
- Sleeter, C. and Flores- Carmona, J. (2017). *Un-standardizing curriculum: Multicultural teaching in the standards-based classroom* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Spronken-Smith, R. A., Walker, R., Dickinson, K. J. M., Closs, G. P., Lord, J. M., and Harland, T. (2011). Redesigning a curriculum for inquiry: An ecology case study. *Instructional Science*, 39, 721-735.
- Stake, E. R. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 433-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Tannenbaum, M. and Berkovich, M. (2005). Family relations and language maintenance: Implications for language educational policies. *Language Policy*, 4, 287-309.
- Tatum, D. (1997). *Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?* New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Tse, L. (2000). The effects of ethnic identity formation on bilingual maintenance and development: An analysis of Asian American narratives. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 3(3), 185-200.
- Tse, L. (2001). Resisting and reversing language shift: Heritage-language resilience among U.S. native biliterates. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(4), 676-709.

- United States Census Bureau. *Language Statistics*. Accessed October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/data/tables/2013/demo/2009-2013-lang-tables.html>
- Valdés, G. (1992). The role of foreign language teaching profession in maintaining non-English languages in the United States. *Languages for a Multicultural World in Transition*, 29-71.
- Valdés, G. (2000). Bilingualism and language use among Mexican Americans. *New Immigrants in the United States: Readings for Second Language Educators*, 99-136.
- Valdés, G. (2001). *Learning and not learning English: Latino students in American schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Valdés, G. (2011). Ethnolinguistic vitality. In K. Potowski and J. Rothman (Eds.), *Bilingual youth: Spanish in English-speaking societies* (pp. 114-146). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamin Publishing.
- Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: US-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. New York, NY: Suny Press.
- Vergara Wilson, D. (2006). How do we fight history? Language trauma, historical factors, and linguistic consequences. Paper presented at The Politics of Language, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006.
- Villa, D. and Rivera-Mills, S. (2009). An integrated multi-generational model for language maintenance and shift: The case of Spanish in the Southwest. *Spanish in Context*, 6, 1, 26-42.
- Wiley, T. and García, O. (2016). Language policy and planning in education: Legacies, consequences and possibilities. *The Modern Language Journal*, 100(16), 48-63.

- Windschitl, M. and Joseph, P.M. (2011). Confronting the dominant order. In P.B. Joseph (Ed.), *Cultures of Curriculum* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 219-243). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Wong-Fillmore, L. (2000). Loss of family languages: Should educators be concerned? *Theory into Practice*, 39(4), 203-210.