12-2016

A journey to understand dual language and the bilingual world: An autoethnography of a bilingual program director in an urban district

Olivia Hernandez
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

A JOURNEY TO UNDERSTAND DUAL LANGUAGE AND THE BILINGUAL WORLD: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY OF A BILINGUAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR IN AN URBAN DISTRICT

A Dissertation

by

OLIVIA HERNÁNDEZ

Submitted to the Graduate College of
The University of Texas of Rio Grande Valley
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

December 2016

Major Subject: Educational Leadership

A JOURNEY TO UNDERSTAND DUAL LANGUAGE AND THE BILINGUAL WORLD:

AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY OF A BILINGUAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR

IN AN URBAN DISTRICT

A Dissertation
by
OLIVIA HERNÁNDEZ

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Francisco Guajardo
Chair of Committee

Dr. Jennifer Joy Esquierdo
Committee Member

Dr. Miguel de los Santos.
Committee Member

Dr. Velma Menchaca
Committee Member

December 2016

ABSTRACT

Hernández, Olivia, A Journey to Understand Dual Language and the Bilingual World: An Autoethnography of a Bilingual Director in an Urban District. Doctor of Education (Ed. D.), December, 2016, 197 pp., 3 tables, 8 figures, 218 references, 98 titles.

This research represents a personalized account of the complexities, interpretations, and reflections on the life-long epistemological development of a bilingual program director currently implementing a dual language program in an urban school district. Using myself as a subject and a researcher in cultural, personal, and professional contexts provided the impetus for this self-study. Through the lens of a mother, daughter, sister, teacher, principal, and bilingual program director, I have chronicled and traced the epistemological conception of the assets that guide my advocacy in the academic realm of bilingual education. As an autoethnography, this study invites the reader to experience the research through the lens of their own personal perspective, finding pieces of themselves in the collective consciousness shared by all inhabitants of the bilingual world. While every individual has their own unique life experience and cultural development, autoethnography encourages an authentic conversation between the researcher and the reader (Davies, 2007; Delamont, 2009; Ellis, 1996, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2006; Preston, 2011). The experiences I have encountered, the challenges I have faced, and the interpretations derived from those experiences strengthen my understanding of where my cultural strengths come from, as well as provide insight into how those strengths allow me to

choose the appropriate pedagogies and navigate the administrative challenges that accompany the position of a bilingual program director in an urban district.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful children, Olivia, Laura Elena, Luis and David, and to my husband, Luis Manuel Rodríguez Cárdenas, for their support, commitment, patience and encouragement to complete my educational endeavor despite the countless days and evenings sacrificed to complete this study. This dissertation is also dedicated to my four beloved grandchildren Hector Guadalupe, David Isaiah, Roman Alexander, and Danika Rae, and to all my future grandchildren and great grandchildren. As I wrote this dissertation, I reflected immensely on my childhood and upbringing with my five siblings, Raquel, Ricardo, Elsa, Elva, and Elena, whom I am so proud of and love so much. I dedicate this dissertation to them as well. I also want to thank friends who took time from their work and personal life to help me achieve my dream in completing this dissertation.

Last but not least, my heartfelt gratitude to my adoring parents whom I dearly miss, Benjamin Hernández Soriano and Olivia Cantú Perez for still supporting me today through their spirit that lives in me. All that I am, and all that I ever will be, is because I was blessed with two loving, caring and dedicated parents, and grew up in a nurturing environment that valued family, culture, and education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Obtaining a doctorate degree is difficult without the support of caring professors who encourage their students every step of the way. I would like to give my sincere appreciation to all the professors in the Educational Leadership Department at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley for my preparation into the next step in leadership.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to my committee chair, Dr. Francisco Guajardo, for guiding me and having patience with me through the entire process. His expertise and skill in developing leaders is something to admire, and I will carry the invaluable tools he has given to me for the rest of my life. I would also like to thank my dissertation committee members: Dr. Jennifer Joy Esquierdo, Dr. Miguel de los Santos, and Dr. Velma Menchaca.

My humblest gratitude is reserved for God, who is always with me and shows me His love every day. I am deeply grateful for my colleagues and close friends, including Martha Garza, Mario Madrigal, Dr. Aida Alanís, Dr. Alba Ortíz, Dr. Pauline Dow, Dr. Beatriz Gutierrez, Janie Stephens, Irma Duran and Eleanor Bernal, who truly inspired me with their emotional and academic support and truly cared that I complete this endeavor. Thank you to all my colleagues and parent advocates for dual language in all the districts where I have worked. Finally, thank you to the brilliant scholars and researchers who I have had the utmost pleasure of working with: Dr. Stephen Krashen, Dr. Virginia Collier, Dr. Wayne Thomas, Dr. Kathy Escamilla, Dr. Leo Gómez, and Dr. Richard Gómez. We never stop learning throughout this life, and I am eternally grateful to you for imparting your knowledge and wisdom with me as I continue to grow.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

My Journey Through the Bilingual World

When my father made the decision to move to Monterrey, Nuevo León, México in the summer of 1969, I knew I would miss the United States. We left Chicago on an early summer morning while it was still dark. I was lying in the back of the station wagon looking up to the sky, thinking that I would be return day. My mom used to talk about the decision to leave the United States in many of our *pláticas* (E. Garcia, 2015). She remembered feeling uneasy about making such a bold move, especially since she and my father had been so happy, had friends, and had beautiful memories raising their children in Chicago. But ultimately my father had made the final decision to move to México. I clearly recall her words…*Tu papá decía, tan buen trabajo que tengo, pero nos tenemos que ir por el bien de estas niñas.* He had a sense that it would be better to bring up his five daughters and son in México, his country of origin, even though he was leaving behind a good job. I reflect about my father's decision today, and I realize how brave he was to move to another country with six children at the age of forty seven. My father's decision demonstrated that keeping the close tie between his family and his culture was always his top priority, and I have benefitted greatly from his guidance as a bicultural parent. I lived in Monterrey, Nuevo León for thirteen years and became an ESL teacher by the time I was sixteen years old. Shortly thereafter, I became a certified elementary teacher in México and later

in my life continued in the field of bilingual education in the United States as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and currently as a bilingual program director. All my experiences in both countries have helped form my identity and strengthen my advocacy as a teacher, principal, and administrator. In this dissertation, I reflect back on and analyze the experiences I have encountered, the challenges I have faced, and the interpretations derived from those experiences to strengthen my understanding of where my cultural strengths come from, as well as provide insight into how those strengths allow me to choose the appropriate pedagogies and navigate the administrative challenges that accompany the position of a bilingual program director in an urban district.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study is that differing ideologies on how to best teach English learners (ELs) are preventing dual language programs from being implemented in a way that aligns with best pedagogical practices for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Dual language education, when it is well implemented, is the only program that can fully close the achievement gap for English learners (Collier and Thomas, 2009, 2014; Thomas and Collier, 2012). Mixed beliefs and ideologies about bilingual education in general are common because, as San Miguel (2004) states, "[Bilingual education] raises questions about how one defines an American in general and the role of ethnicity in American life in particular" (p. 1). Ladson-Billings (1998) advises those involved in educating ethnic minority groups in America to be critical of systemic "institutional and structural" inequity that exists when the dominant cultural institutions make pragmatically derived decisions regarding curriculum and policy that are culturally insensitive (p. 20). These inequities exist, Ladson-Billings (1998) argues, even when students themselves do not experience "a single act of personal racism" (p. 20). Bilingual

education is a tool through which to challenge entrenched patterns of inequality that occur inherently when ELs do not have access to the curriculum in the same manner as students who speak the dominant language (Cummins, 2000). Inequity, especially systemic inequity, isn't always so overt that it is easily identifiable (Solórzano and Yosso, 2001), and therein lies the necessity for me to tell my story. Writing a narrative of my experiences implementing dual language programs and critically reflecting on that narrative has helped me recognize my own real-world versions of setbacks and triumphs I have experienced when implementing those programs. My critical reflection has also allowed me to comprehend how structuralized ideologies of inequity inhibited the progress of the dual language programs that I have implemented. Writing and reflecting critically on my narrative has also helped me pinpoint how the cultural capital (Moll, 1992) I've gained throughout my life has helped me maintain my own resilience and guided all the difficult decisions I've had to make while navigating the obstacles that come with leading the implementation of dual language programs (Guajardo et al., 2016; Ladson Billings, 1998; Nieto, 1996, Trueba, 2004; Valenzuela, 1999; Yosso, 2005).

Inequity within school districts can be difficult to address because the microaggressions that promote it are rooted in subtle ideological and epistemological tendencies of members who have seen hegemonic pedagogical structures be successful in the past and are therefore reluctant to welcome change (Delgado-Bernal, 2002; Perez Huber, 2012; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001). Nowhere is this more evident than with standardized testing trumping dual language in schools, causing deviation from authentic teaching practices within the dual language model to instead "revert to teaching an English-only curriculum" or focus on "teaching to the test" (Cummins, 2000; Escamilla *et al.*, 2014; Thomas and Collier, 2012; Valenzuela, 1999, 2005). These conceptual challenges are by no means lost on practitioners and researchers, and discourse

surrounding the need for equitable, culturally responsive practice in dual language classrooms is plentiful when addressing bilingual education. The difficulty is that far too often this same discourse intuitively places bilingual education in the margins of the curriculum as a supplemental program, subtly maintaining a deeply engrained, discriminatory schism, or "us and them" disposition that inherently favors the dominant culture (Perez Huber, 2012; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001). Minority students represent change as America itself continuously evolves in pace with shifts in population (Murdock, 2013).

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore how and to what degree my personal life experiences as they relate to my bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural disposition have served as the backbone for my advocacy for English learners and how the actions I take as a bilingual program director can best reflect a politic of advocacy for equity in education through the practice of bilingual education. The benefits of this study are, first and foremost, to put an end to the misguided practices that permeate our institutions, organizations, and schools by inspiring current and future advocates for dual language programs to continue moving forward with authentic bilingual education pedagogy, trusting the bilingual programs, and addressing the cultural assets that all students bring (González, Moll and Amanti, 2009). Every bilingual program director must ensure that when bilingual education programs are implemented, they are implemented for the right reasons - that is, to ensure that all students have equal access to a quality education that has been pedagogically proven to address the cognitive, linguistic, and affective needs of students in order to develop bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate individuals who possess the critical skills necessary to be resilient, bold, and successful in an ever-changing world (Alarcón, 2011; Cloud, Genesee and Hamayan, 2000; Freire, 1970; O. Garcia, 2013;

Krashen, 1981, 1982; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Linholm-Leary, 2001, 2006; Mercado-Garza, 2008; Perez Huber, 2012; Thomas and Collier, 2012). Additionally, the purpose of this study is to share the story of my life experiences so that others can interact with them. I'm sharing with others the development of my epistemology as an advocate for bilingual education so that there can be change, so that the importance of the work of advocating for ELs can be put out there, so that others can understand the importance of moving the work forward, and, ultimately, to inspire others to become advocates who are persistent and can work with all the assets that come from their own experiences, the schools they work in, and the communities they serve (Alarcón, 2011; Chávez, 2012; Elenes, 2000; Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011; Guajardo *et al*., 2016). I am a life-long member of the collective community of those involved in bilingual education, and I believe that my engagement with this community through my autoethnography has propelled the motivation to initiate discourse surrounding bilingual education in a manner that addresses the personal, organizational, and communal inequities that continue to systemically push this branch of education into the margins (Bochner, 2012; Chávez, 2012; Garza, 2008; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Rodriguez, 2011).

Research Methodology: Autoethnography

Autoethnograpic research makes traditional ethnographic data collection much more personal by bridging the distinction between the researcher and the researched. Quite succinctly, Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) define autoethnography in this way:

> Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graph[y]) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno) (p. 1).

Although autoethnographies feature stories that depict the writer's personal experience, the focus of autoethnography is not on the writer alone. Authentic autoethnography is reflexive on behalf

of both the writer and the reader; autoethnographers make a connection to the reader by openly reflecting and making meaning of significant life moments in an open and vulnerable way that safely invites critical reflection on lived experiences from both parties (Davies, 2007; Delamont, 2009; Ellis, 1996, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2006; Preston, 2011). Autoethnographic research refers to stories that feature the *self* or include the researcher as a character in order to communicate the deeply rooted aspects of a person's epistemology that can only be adequately expressed through accounts of first-hand experience (Ellis, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2003). According to Ellis and Bochner (2000), recreating the past in this reactionary way represents an, "…existential struggle to move life forward" (p.746). Autoethnographers harness and explore phenomena (lived experiences) to encourage readers to see and feel the struggles, emotions, and strengths of the research participants, propelling the motivation to initiate the dialogue between researcher and researched necessary to proficiently address struggles, setbacks, or even injustices that individuals, organizations, and communities encounter (Bochner, 2012; Chávez, 2012; Garza, 2008; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Rodriguez, 2011).

The narrative study at the core of this dissertation is about how I, as a result of genuine bilingual education throughout my lifetime, began a life-long journey to become a change agent and advocate for social justice and equality in bilingual education. It is the story about how I, because of an amazingly positive experience with bilingualism and bilingual culture throughout my lifetime, have done everything in my power to share that positivity with the world. My autoethnography reflects an in-depth knowledge of the strong bond and frequent interaction with my family, friends, coworkers, and experts who value the importance of being bilingual, bicultural and biliterate, and how that cultural transcendence has generated the authentic cultural power that has been necessary for me to maintain the momentum of my advocacy for bilingual

education through trying events such as changes in political environments, counter-goals within the educational system very focused on standardized testing, and language ideologies that go against multicultural acceptance (Anzaldua, 1987; Chávez, 2012; Kempster and Stewart, 2010; Kennedy and Romo, 2013; Perez Huber, 2009, 2010; Perez Huber and Cueva, 2012). Cultural strength is necessary to address the ideological issues that I, as a bilingual program director, encounter daily while advocating for ELs (Griego-Jones, 1995; Theoharis and O'Toole, 2011).

I have had moments reflecting on my knowledge of bilingual education that take me back to my childhood in Chicago, IL, my teenage years in Monterrey, Nuevo León, my years as an ESL and bilingual teacher in México and the United States, and ultimately my experience as a bilingual program director in an urban school district. As I created my autoethnography, I reflected on the experiences, the victories, and the challenges that I have encountered throughout my life to arrive at the epistemological source of what has strengthened me throughout my lifelong journey so that I can harness the essence of that strength to share with others while simultaneously developing myself further (Alarcon, et al., 2011; Chávez, 2012; Guajardo et al., 2016; Morraga and Anzaldua, 1983; Perez Huber and Cueva, 2012; Reyes and Rodriguez, 2012; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001).

Data Collection

Autoethnography is written in the first person. It incorporates stories, dialogue, photographs, journals, etc. as it implores the "…reader to care, to feel, to empathize, and to do something, to act. It needs the researcher to be vulnerable and intimate…" (Ellis and Bochner, 2006 p. 433; Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011). As such, autoethnography emerges from self-reflective accounts of one's personal life as they relate to epiphany-inspiring moments in one's life (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011); the researcher is the subject, and the researcher's

interpretation of his or her experience (stories) is the data (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011; Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Denzin, 2006). Data collection for my autoethnography followed this precedent. I authored and then critically reflected upon the significant moments of my life that pertain to bilingualism, biculturalism, to collect my data with the following artifacts to guide the composition of my narratives: photographs, personal and anecdotal notes, and samples of my father's writing. Data collection for this dissertation occurred through a critical telling and reflection of my experience growing up in an environment continuously enriched by bilingualism, biculturalism and biliteracy as it relates to my epistemological development through the personal and professional experiences that guide my advocacy for bilingual education (Bochner, 2012; Chávez, 2012; Davies, 2007; Delamont, 2009; Ellis, 2002; Ellis and Bochner, 2000). My personal history is a source of strength and brings understanding to my advocacy at a level that gives me "the necessary agency to act on [my] knowledge," as I have done throughout my career (Ramirez, 2013, p. 272). The narrative methodology of autoethnography allows me to be the researcher and the researched, to be able to share with others the story of my evolution from a little girl growing up in a culturally rich bilingual family to a strong woman leading the implementation of bilingual/ESL programs that transform the lives of thousands of English learners (Bochner, 2012; Delamont, 2009; Drechsler Sharp, Rivera and Jones, 2012; Delgado Bernal, 1998; Elenes, 2000; Ellis, 2004).

Data Analysis

Rhetorical structures for an autoethnography vary, "from formal literary texts to more informal accounts or stories" (Méndez, 2013, p. 281). They also vary in objective, as Anderson (2006) argues that autoethnography can be analytic in its purpose and not solely evocative and emotional (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). Whether analytic or evocative, autoethnography serves a

similar purpose of revealing broader contexts to experiences and social phenomena (Anderson, 2006; Ellis and Bochner, 2000). In keeping with AERA standards for reporting empirical social science research, autoethnography must incorporate placing the self within a larger societal context, as well as be carefully designed to allow for aggregation and disaggregation of data, offer multiple levels of critical analysis while being critically self-reflexive about the selection criteria, and illustrate claims with concrete examples (Hughes, Pennington and Makris, 2012). To facilitate meeting this criteria, I have chosen to analyze the autoethnography produced by this study through the system of inquiry of Guajardo et al.'s (2016) *theory of change*, the foundation of which is driven by the analysis of stories to guide planning and action for agents of change (pp. 41-42). The Guajardo et al. (2016) *theory of change* analytic scaffold based on *the ecologies of knowing* presented in the chart below represents the classification scheme that helped me meet the AERA standards requirement to comprehensibly describe the range of phenomena classified in this study with concrete examples (Durant et al., 2006 as cited in Hughes, Pennington and Makris, 2012, p. 214). The table below (Table 1) helped me organize my analysis to pinpoint how my experiences are couched in the *ecologies of knowing* in order to identify the assets that guide my practice as I have led the implementation of successful dual language programs (Guajardo *et al.,* 2016).

Ecologies of Knowing and Dual Language	Relationships	Assets	Stories	Place
Self	How does my relationship with myself help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	What are my gifts and how do I use them to help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	How do my story and the stories my ancestors passed on to me help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	How has place contributed to my development and identity, and how does this development help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?
Organization	How do relationships within the organization and between organizations contribute to helping lead the implementation of a Dual Language program?	What gifts, resources and capital does my organization bring to the community and how do I use those resources to help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	What are the stories that ground my organizational history and invite its employees and stakeholders to own their work implementing a Dual Language program in an urban district?	What is the public identity my organization has in its geographic context, and how has this public identity of place contributed to building a healthy Dual Language program in an urban district?
Community	Who are my community partners and when and how do I collaborate with them to lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	What are the gifts, strengths and capital(s) community brings to help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	What stories identify and define my community culture, and how do those stories help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?	How do I include participants and stakeholders from the community in my organization's work to lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?

Table 1: Ecologies of Knowing and Dual Language

Research Questions

1. What are the ideological challenges a bilingual program director faces when implementing a successful dual language program, and how do those roadblocks manifest themselves in real-world scenarios?
2. How does a negotiation of the ecologies of self, organization, and community (ecologies of knowing) help strengthen my advocacy for English learners when implementing a dual language program?
3. How does a critical reflection of personal stories, histories and life-long experiences strengthen my effectiveness as a bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in an urban district?

Definition of Terms

Additive Bilingualism

William Lambert in 1973 first introduced the concept of additive or subtractive bilingualism. Additive bilingual programs have always existed, especially for the elite. For example, English native speakers who attend school that includes instruction in Spanish experience an additive program as they add a second language at no cost to their English language, which is supported and nurtured by the broader society, mainly because it is the majority language of power (Collier and Thomas, 2009). Additive bilingual models add a second language to the person's repertoire and both are maintained and developed. Garcia, (2009) represents additive bilingual education as follows: L1 + L2 = L1 + L2.

Autoethnography

Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graph[y]) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)(? (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011).

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)

BICS is the basic language used to communicate, to play, and to socialize and requires "less knowledge of language itself" (Crawford, 2004a; Cummins, 1981, 2000, Garcia, 2011). This surface fluency is most often supported with cues such as gestures, body movements, visuals, asking people to repeat, etc. Cummins (2000) explains that BICS is "contextualized language" supported by paralinguistic cues. These are the "surface" skills of listening and speaking that are typically acquired quickly by English learners.

Bilingual Education

The basic argument in support of bilingual education is that through cross-linguistic transfer, bilingual education can facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge and English language (August and Shanahan, 2006; Collier and Thomas 2009; Ferrón, 2006; Krashen, 2005; Reese et al. 2000; Thomas and Collier, 1997). Through instruction in their home language, emergent bilinguals can continue accessing the curriculum while developing enough English language proficiency to do so in English (Ferrón, 2006).

The Bilingual Education Act (BEA)

The Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 was an entitlement program designed primarily to access federal funding. The Act was, according to James Crawford (1995), "explicitly compensatory, aimed at children who were both poor and educationally disadvantaged because of their inability to speak English" (p.40).

Bilingual Education Program Director

A district level administrator is responsible for providing direction and leadership at the district and campus levels. The bilingual education program director coordinates bilingual/ESL services for identified students and is responsible for program design, implementation, evaluation, staffing, and professional development. The bilingual education program director adheres to state and federal guidelines for the education of English Learners.

Bilingualism

Bilingualism is the capability of speaking and listening in two languages proficiently.

Biliteracy

Biliteracy is the ability to read, write and think in two languages proficiently with grade level comprehension.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is decontextualized language used in academic settings that requires abstract critical thinking, such as writing essays, reading texts with limited pictures, or reading texts about topics students have no prior knowledge of. Most activities that require CALP are "literacy-related" (Crawford, 2004a; Cummins, 2000). Cummins (2000) posits that academic language is associated with higher order thinking skills yet also emphasizes that BICS and CALP develop jointly within a matrix of socialization and contextualization of academic language (Schwieter, 2011).

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) draws from multiple disciplines to challenge dominant ideologies embedded in educational theory and practice, which shapes the way researchers

understand the educational experiences, conditions, and outcomes of people of color (Smith-Maddox and Solórzano, 2002).

Dual Language

Dual language is a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. (Dual Language Education of New México dlenm.org)

Early-exit Transitional Model

The early-exit transitional model provides native language support as a means to transition English learners to an English-only mainstream classroom. The goal is for the student to continue learning content while acquiring English language skills as rapidly as possible.

Emergent Bilingual

Emergent Bilingual, a newer term by Ofelia Garcia (2008), emphasizes the development of bilingual competences in children whose language is other than English. If students perceive themselves as emergent bilinguals rather than students that lack English, they more likely will take pride in their linguistic abilities and adopt identities of competence (Manyak, 2004) which in turns propels students into active engagement with literacy and learning (Cummins forward, 2010).

English as a Second Language (ESL)

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a program model that has as its main goal the acquisition of English. The delivery model is based on grammatical structures and vocabulary in isolation.

English Learner (EL)

English Learner (EL) term used to describe students who require support in the acquisition of the English language.

L1

L1 the student's native language

L2

L2 the student's target language

LEP

LEP a student who is identified as Limited English Proficient

LPAC

LPAC the Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee which is comprised of a campus administrator, a bilingual/ESL teacher, and a parent.

Linguistic Interdependence or Common Underlying Proficiency Hypothesis (CUP)

Linguistic Interdependence or Common Underlying Proficiency Hypothesis (CUP) states the following: To the extent that instruction in Lx is effective in promoting proficiency in Lx, transfer of this proficiency to Ly will occur, provided there is adequate exposure to Ly (either in school environment) and adequate motivation to learn Ly (Cummins, 1981a, p.29).

One-Way Dual Language Program

One-Way Dual Language program is a dual language program model that delivers content instruction in two languages. The students in the classroom are all from one heritage group. For example, all Spanish-speaking English learners.

Pláticas

Pláticas are the sharing of “ideas, experiences, and stories”. In English, *pláticas* mean intimate, genuine, and open conversations that take place in a safe space. (E. Garcia, 2015; Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008, p. 66)

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is awareness on the part of the researcher that acknowledges the intimate connection between the researcher and what is being researched (Davies, 2007). Reflexive ethnography capitalizes on this connection to create deeper understanding instead of attempting to ignore it for the sake of objectivity.

Sheltered Instruction

This technique involves scaffolding or adjusting language of instruction based on the students' linguistic proficiencies in order to make content comprehensible. According to Krashen, "We acquire language when we understand it" (Krashen, 1985, 1994).

Sink or Swim

English Submersion, synonymous to 'sink or swim', offers no support for English learners, neither native language support, nor sheltered instruction techniques (Baker 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Garcia, 2008,). The main goal is English language proficiency, assimilation to the mainstream society, and it is a subtractive educational model (Baker, 2011; Ferrón, 2006).

Subtractive Bilingualism

Lambert (1975) describes subtractive bilingualism as a program which places emphasis on the majority language over the home language. Subtractive bilingual models add a second language while the student's first language is replaced. The result is a student who only speaks the second language. O. Garcia (2013) represents subtractive bilingual education as follows: L1 + L2 – L1 = L2

Transitional bilingual programs

The birth of transitional bilingual programs came about after the enactment of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. This instructional approach provides limited and temporary

native language support until teachers deem students have developed enough English proficiency to function in an all-English mainstream classroom (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Ferrón, 2006; Freeman, 2007; Garcia et al., 2008; Thomas and Collier, 2012). The original purpose of transitional bilingual programs was remedial, and it was regarded as a way to "compensate" for the educational and linguistic disadvantages of poor, non-English speaking children (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004a; O. Garcia, 2008).

Two-Way Dual Language Program

A Two-Way DL program is a dual language program that delivers instruction in the content areas and in reading in two languages. The demographic mix in the classroom is comprised, as much as possible, with 50% of the students being English learners, and the other 50% native speakers of the partner language.

Significance of Study

My autoethnography acknowledges the development of my ideology and advocacy as I have entered into the different phases of my professional career and personal life in order to better understand myself and to share the process of that understanding so that the reader can relate to these experiences and find meaning in their own experience (Davies, 2007; Delamont, 2009; Ellis, 1996, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2006; Preston, 2011). By serving as a vehicle for colleagues and educational peers to similarly reflect on their own experiences, stories and cultural strengths, my autoethnography will help harness the power of our collective consciousness as educators, parents, friends, bilingual program directors, and overall advocates for bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism in order to address the uncertainties and challenges that are constantly present when implementing dual language programs (Davies, 2007; Delamont, 2009; Ellis, 1996, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2006; Preston, 2011). While no two

school districts are identical, and each has its own subculture and identity with various needs, obligations, and challenges, members of those school districts can all benefit greatly from reflecting critically on their own experiences and stories as strengths (Guajardo *et al*., 2016). This dissertation will help value this reflexive process by putting myself out there, initiating the dialogue necessary to begin altering the discourse on bilingual education and helping create strength and support for the cause from the inside out.

Contents of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five major chapters. Chapter I contains an introduction to who I am, as well as a brief rationale for this study, including a statement of the problem, a statement of the purpose, a detailing of autoethnography as my research method, research questions, definition of terms, significance of the study, and contents of the dissertation. Chapter II contains the review of the literature covering the process of advocating through storytelling and autoethnography, a description of bilingual education, the history of bilingual education, demographics of Hispanics and ELs in the United States, leadership in bilingual education, the responsibilities of a bilingual program director, theoretical underpinnings that support bilingual education, prevalent models of instruction for ELs, and dual language implementation. Chapter III contains a review of autoethnography, the methodology for my study. Chapter IV consists of an autoethnographic narrative and critical reflection detailing my life experience as it relates to my epistemological development with regard to bilingual education. An analysis of my narrative and reflection as they relate to *the ecologies of knowing* and implementing dual language programs is included in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum…for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education…"

Lau v. Nichols, 1974

At heart, bilingual education values and uses a student's native language and cultural assets to practice pedagogically sound, socially just education (Cummins, 2000; Garcia, 2009; Collier and Thomas, 2009). The basic rationale in support of bilingual education is that through cross-linguistic transfer, bilingual education can facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge and English language (August and Shanahan, 2006; Collier and Thomas, 2009; Ferrón, 2006; Krashen, 2005; Reese et al. 2000; Thomas and Collier, 1997). The advantage of bilingual education is that ELs do not have to wait to develop enough English proficiency to start developing their content knowledge (Collier and Thomas 2009; Cummins, 2000; Ferrón, 2006; Thomas and Collier, 2012). Through instruction in their home language, ELs can continue accessing the curriculum in their native language while developing enough English language proficiency to communicate that knowledge in English (Ferrón, 2006). However, public opinion has not always reflected this ideology. Opponents of bilingual education frequently view the use of languages other than English in schools as 'un-American,' and many express concerns about

the number of immigrants entering the United States (Crawford, 1992b, Ovando, 2003; Cummins, 2000). Lambert (1973) states that bilingualism and biculturalism generate much emotional and political steam, and this negative political discourse often clouds the positive effects of the program.

Understanding the roots of this opposition when researching bilingual education is significant because reform in bilingual education has been an ongoing developmental process for as long as the program has existed (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Garcia, 2009; Ovando, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). Changes occur gradually, but that cannot deter advocates from continuing to advance bilingual education because there is too much at stake for English learners. In order to understand how bilingual education has progressed, to understand how we got to where we are now, and to understand the path necessary to move forward, a brief chronicle of bilingual education in the United States along with key policy antecedents is woven into this literature review. In addition to addressing this societal disposition on the topic of bilingual education history, a detailing of the manner in which increased research in the field of bilingual education has caused a shift in its perception from a compensatory program to an enrichment program, including the rise in popularity and implementation of dual language programs, is included. An explication of the new leadership demands a bilingual program director faces when implementing a dual language program in accordance with culturally responsive leadership concludes the chapter. Before detailing these facets of bilingual education, however, I must first include a review of literature on autoethnography to outline and provide a theoretical rationale for why narrative is the vehicle through which my instructive, cognitive and epistemological research journey took place.

Autoethnography, Storytelling and Advocacy

The emphasis, objectives, and merit of autoethnography have undergone a myriad of interpretations as empirical researchers continue to struggle to reach a consensus in their validation of qualitative data collection through the documentation of experience by, among other collection techniques, storytelling and reflexive ethnography – "autoethnographers think of ethnography as a journey; social analysts think of it as a destination" (Ellis and Bochner, 2006, p. 431). The confusion, it seems, originates from a long attribution of loose definitions to the term "autoethnography" itself. Quite succinctly, Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) define autoethnography in this way:

> Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graph[y]) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno) (p. 1).

The perceived ambiguity of the definition lies in the vagueness of the term "personal experience" as it relates to qualitative study. Does simply writing the self into research by using the informal "I" qualify a work as autoethnographic? Of course not (Ellis and Bochner, 2006; Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011). Faulty oversimplification of autoethnographic methodology in this regard invites unwarranted criticism of autoethnography as "self-indulgent, narcissistic, and individualized" (Atkinson and Delamont, 2006; Bochner, 2001; Coffey, 1999; Mendez, 2013 p. 283). In truth, the focus of autoethnography is not on the writer alone. Authentic autoethnography is reflexive on behalf of both the writer and the reader – autoethnographers make a connection to the reader by openly reflecting and making meaning of significant life moments in an open and vulnerable way that safely invites critical reflection on lived experiences from both parties (Davies, 2007; Delamont, 2009; Ellis, 1996, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2006; Preston, 2011). While autoethnographic research does refer to stories that

feature the self or include the researcher as a character, this inclusion serves not for self-indulgence but rather to communicate the deeply rooted aspects of a person's epistemology that can only be adequately expressed through accounts of first-hand experience (Ellis, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000, 2003). Autoethnography also promotes a dialogue between the writer and the reader when it is intentionally and simultaneously reactionary, political, and personal (Alarcón, 2011; Chávez, 2012; Elenes, 2000; Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011; Kuby, 2013). According to Ellis and Bochner (2000), recreating the past in this reactionary way represents an, "…existential struggle to move life forward" (p.746). Autoethnographers bind the power of making meaning and creating identity in order to advance culture and the self, especially, but not exclusively, in times of loss or hardship (Ellis, 1999, 2002, 2010). They harness and explore phenomena (lived experiences) to encourage readers to see and feel the struggles, emotions, and strengths of the research participants, propelling the motivation to initiate the dialogue between researcher and researched necessary to proficiently address struggles, setbacks, or even injustices that individuals, organizations, and communities encounter (Bochner, 2012; Chávez, 2012; Garza, 2008; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Rodriguez, 2011). The necessity for autoethnography as method arises not from a lack of statistical or empirical data; autoethnography is a tool with which to displace the concrete notions of measurable deficiencies, and instead create warm empathy to soften the coldness of quantified data alone (Ellis and Bochner, 2006). A statistic such as the measure of the achievement gap for ELs does not hold the same real-life depiction as a first-person account bringing into reality the tearing away of identity and eradication of a native language when decisions concerning language policy in education fail to consider the affective domain of students. (Blanton, 2004; Callahan and Gándara, 2014; Garcia and Kleifgen, 2010; San Miguel, 2004). My autoethnography provides stakeholders in bilingual education with

accounts of my experiences in bilingual education that feature depictions of authentic emotions, such as the insecurity I felt when I was in a sink-or-swim environment while I was attending elementary school in Chicago and the frustration I feel when, time after time, I see how English learners are an afterthought when new programs, initiatives, and resources are being rolled-out in school districts. Presenting this data in a real-world context provides insight on how culturally proficient leaders can lead the implementation of quality bilingual programs in a way that authentically considers the academic and affective needs of English learners.

Autoethnography and the Ecologies of Knowing

For me, autoethnography is a tool for understanding my epistemology, combining the micro (self) and macro (organization) levels of awareness to strengthen my advocacy for English learners through personal reflexivity and discovery (Ellis, 2010; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Ritzer, 1996). The structure of autoethnography is based on sharing carefully selected stories that bring to life significant, epiphany-inspiring moments, much in the same way the Guajardo *et al*. (2016) *theory of change* begins with sharing and reflecting on stories that are carefully selected to encompass the strengths and wisdom inherent within individuals, places, institutions, and communities (p. 50). Guajardo *et al*. (2016) point out the manner in which participants utilizing the *theory of change* model must discover the rhythm of writing with a purpose in order to create transference of learning through their story (p. 89). Therefore, sharing and critically reflecting on personal history (stories) is a powerful tool to help bring about change efforts, but only when these stories are explored and mapped in a very purpose-driven manner. The organization tool with which I made meaning from my story is the *ecologies of knowing*, which are *self, organization,* and *community* (Guajardo *et al.,* 2016).

The processes for engagement and kinetic qualities that exist within these ecologies were invaluable resources for my autoethnography because writing my story using the scaffold of the *ecologies* as a guide revealed to me how my own navigation of ecologies concerning bilingual education govern my personal and cultural belief systems, as well as help me identify and build the assets that are present at each level. I used the *ecologies of knowing* model in conjunction with the manner in which Guajardo *et al*. (2016) utilize discourse surrounding the ecologies with an eye for relationships, assets, stories, and place to create a, cognitive, affective, and relational space where agents of change can understand collective challenges and construct solutions to those challenges (p. 3).

Ecology of *Self*

The *self* is the most micro level of the ecologies, and it allows the researcher to, above all else, make the learning process of sharing and critically reflecting on stories extremely personal and relevant (Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Ramirez, 2013). Guajardo *et al*., (2016) have written on the importance of the *self* as a foundation for learning, explaining how, "As learners, the self is the basis of the world of knowing" (p. 36). However, exploring the *self* through reflexive narrative reveals that the self does not exist in isolation. Everything is connected: *self*, family, place, work, tradition, culture, education, etc. My *self*, as a member of many communities, benefits from having roots in those communities. These communities are both tangible, such as living in geographically defined spaces, and intangible, such as belonging to the universal communities of biculturalism and bilingual education (Guajardo, *et al.*, 2016).

These roots benefit the educational leader, family member, researcher, or any other invested party as a practitioner of change and reform (Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008). A simple, yet poignant example of this notion comes from a chronicle in "Narratives of

Transformation: A Look at an Educational Leadership Process" (2008), in which a student of Francisco and Miguel Guajardo, Patricia Zamora, writes:

> "I will become an educational leader someday. I will remember I come from a migrant family and will encourage others to remember their culture and to use their stories and values instead of policies to run our schools" (p. 8).

Patricia's story reminds us that there exist multiple ways in which the *self* interacts with *organizations* such as educational institutions, and it reminds us that maintaining a foundation in cultural strength is a fruitful way of navigating these spaces. My lifelong memories related to family and culture have strengthened me through my life-long journey in bilingualism and continue to drive my advocacy for ELs in my current position as bilingual program director. I grew up in a home where my parents not only ensured we were exposed to our Mexican heritage and culture while living in the City of Chicago in the 1960s, but also counseled me about the importance of valuing our culture and native language. My autoethnography explored the assets that emerged from this relationship with my family, as well as how those assets have helped me advocate for English learners as I've navigated varying *organizations* and *communities* throughout my life.

Ecology of *Organization*

Organizations, including families, schools, churches, and other social institutions, function as mediating entities between the *self* and the rest of society (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 37). It is through participating in *organizations* that we initially build the conception of how social norms operate because *organizations* serve as the social context through which we develop our values, habits, and views of the world (Ramirez, 2013, p. 53). Nowhere is this more evident than in the *organization* of family. The family is where the *self* originally learns to consolidate the "I" and the "we" as the values and assets of the collective are initially developed

in us by our family upbringing. As we mature, the *organizations* of society continue to shape us, but the process is complex and interactive. Guajardo *et al*., (2016) describe how, "…we grow and develop through our relationships, not only from what we receive, but also from what we give" (p. 36). This reciprocal process is constant and creates a relationship through which the *self* and *organizations* mutually benefit and grow. Take, for instance, the *organization* of educational institutions, which can function as either "forces of social control" or "engines to liberate the human mind and spirit" (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 179). Engaging with schools can serve as a way to learn, but schools can also be a place where change can be brought to *communities* if one becomes a part of that *organization* as a teacher, principal, administrator, etc., and then creates change from within.

Ecology of *Community*

The term *community* encompasses both geographical locations and the people that inhabit those spaces as separate yet intertwining entities. Understanding the strengths that exist in communities can be achieved by engaging both facets of the *community*, mapping their assets by thinking critically about their redeeming qualities (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, pp. 47-48). Engaging *community* members to identify assets involves the process of sharing stories that highlight social capital gained from relationships among community members and relationships between different communities. The geographic location of c*ommunity* also possesses assets that come from the rich history of place, and those, "unique histories and dynamics…need to be understood if efforts to change them are to be successful and just" (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 45). Utilizing the research method of autoethnography facilitates the process of mining the *community* for strengths and assets of place by couching the entire process in "real contexts of real places," allowing authentic reflection and transference of learning to take place (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p.

45). For this study, storytelling is the mediating tool through which I engage with the multiple communities in which I have lived, with which I have interacted, and for whom I have advocated in order to understand their complex and diverse needs as well as their assets and gifts.

Overview of Bilingual Education History and Policy Development in the United States

It is important to understand the historical and political influences that have shaped ideologies on bilingual education because addressing different ideologies from various stakeholders is such a big part of the *lucha diara* that advocates for bilingual education continue facing today. Understanding the history of bilingual education strengthens the position of an advocate for English learners because recognizing the trajectory that bilingual education has had throughout the history of the United States reveals the root of some historical failures the program has had when serving English learners. For example, how inconsistencies in valuing the native language as the means of instruction has had the detrimental repercussion of preventing English learners from being academically successful (Cummins, 2000; Thomas and Collier, 2012). Historically, bilingual education has been a very controversial and misunderstood topic because it raises questions about race, language ideologies, policy and pedagogy (Blanton, 2004; Crawford, 2000; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004). The ideological conflicts concerning bilingual education mirror the back and forth disposition America has also experienced when developing policy for bilingual education (Blanton, 2004; Crawford, 2004a; Cummins, 2000; Garcia and Kleifgen, 2010; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004). The history and development of bilingual education in the Unites States includes important policy enactments that have brought change to the official implementation of bilingual programs for almost 50 years (Baker, 2011; O, Garcia, 2008; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004; Thomas and Collier, 2012). Thus, bilingual education cannot be isolated; it must be linked to the historical context of immigration and

political movements that have taken place in the past (Baker, 2011; Crawford 2004a; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004). This overview provides a fundamental understanding of how bilingual education has evolved in the United States. It describes how language ideologies have been important factors in determining the acceptance or refutation of bilingual education in the country and how dual language programs have developed to become the pedagogically and culturally preferred instructional programs for schooling students through two languages (Callahan and Gándara, 2014; O. Garcia, 2008; Thomas and Collier, 2012).

Bilingual Education: 1900s –1960s

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the U.S. went through a period that included a number of policies that restricted immigration and the use of other languages in the nation (Baker 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Garcia, 2009; Ovando, 2003). Xenophobia was prevalent during this time and led to immigrants from Europe being restricted from entering the nation by means of the foundation of the Immigration Restriction League of the 1890s. The predominant belief during this period was that all immigrants were to assimilate into one culture and speak a common language (Ovando, 2003). The United States was moving away from a 'laissez-faire attitude' regarding multiple languages and cultures prominent during the 1800s – a time where it was common for immigrant communities to promote their language, culture, and religion through public schools without government interference – to a restrictive attitude towards languages other than English (Baker 2011; Callahan and Gándara, 2014 p.18; Crawford 2004a; McCarty, 2011; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004). Furthermore, in 1906 the Naturalization Act required all immigrants to learn English. Substantial federal aid was provided to finance teaching of English to aliens and 'native illiterates' (Higham, 1992, p. 82). "Sink-or-swim", which doesn't provide students native language support while they learn content and acquire a second language,

was common practice, and both students and parents, instead of schools, were held responsible for ensuring students learned English and were academically successful (Crawford, 2004a; Ovando, 2003). The Supreme Court made an effort to change this negative attitude towards bilingualism by overturning the 1919 Nebraska statute that claimed: "…no person, individually or as a teacher, shall, in any private denominational, parochial, or public school teach any subject to any person in any language other than the English language," claiming that the state's ability to impose such restrictions "upon the people" was in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and overstepped the state's role (NCELA, 2007; National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Education Programs, 2007). Kloss (1998) stresses that, regardless of this decision, the U.S. continued to resist implementing bilingual programs; "the English-only mandates became more common with the real intention of maintaining a colonial domination and destroying minority cultures through the public school setting" (Crawford, 1992, p.50). In general, bilingual education during this period was either under attack, ignored or put on the back burner as the nation went through world wars and an economic depression (Garcia, 2009; San Miguel, 2004).

Soon the political climate was to shift in favor of bilingual education. In 1954 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown vs. Board of Education* (347. US 1954) that segregated schools were unconstitutional, leading a new era in American civil rights during the 1960s (Garcia, 2009). *Brown vs. Board of Education* set the precedent for future legislation – including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, The Bilingual Education Act of 1968, and court cases such as *Lau v. Nichols* and *Castañeda V. Pickard* – noting that when referring to education, "same" was not necessarily "equal" (Baker 2011; Blanton 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004; Collier and Thomas,

2009). Change was happening, but it was definitely slow in coming. It wasn't until the enactment of the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 that U.S. schools began to evolve and bring new promise to those who spoke a language other than English by amending school goals, values, and beliefs to greater support bilingualism (Crawford, 2004a; Garcia, 2011; Ovando, 2003).

The Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968

In 1967, Senator Ralph Yarborough introduced the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) as an amendment to the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA). Although the legislation was originally conceptualized to help Spanish-speaking children who were seen as failing in the school system, it eventually was expanded to include all students for whom English was not their native language. When the BEA was officially enacted in 1968, it functioned as an entitlement program designed primarily to access federal funding. The BEA of 1968 was, according to James Crawford (1995), "explicitly compensatory, aimed at children who were both poor and educationally disadvantaged because of their inability to speak English" (p.40). Bilingual education provides English learners academic instruction using their native language as a medium of instruction while they acquire English in school. One of the main characteristics of the BEA of 1968 was that bilingual education programs were now to be part of federal education policy and funds were authorized for its implementation (Baker, 2011; Wiese and Garcia, 2001). Ovando (2003) refers to this period as a time of ample opportunities to develop bilingual education and language policies. However, ideologies against the use of the native language to educate English learners would soon begin to hinder the progress of bilingual education.

The BEA was re-authorized in 1974, 1978, 1984, 1988, and 1994 (Baker, 2011, Garcia, 2009). As the political climate of the country and the ideologies of different presidents in office went back and forth on their agreement of bilingual education as the best method to teach

English learners, the re-authorizations of the BEA reflected a historical pendulum that indicated whether the students' native language was viewed as a problem or a resource (Baker 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Garcia, 2009; Ruiz, 1984). Table 1 (Baker, 2011) summarizes the changes made to the original BEA that reflects the prominent language ideology (problem or resource) based on the president holding office at the time.

BEA Reauthorization Year	Implication	President	Native Language Ideology
1968	Title VII Bilingual Education Act, an amendment to the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)	Johnson	Problem
1974	Native-Language instruction was required for the first time as a condition for receiving bilingual education grants. Bilingual education was defined as transitional (TBE). Grants could support native-language instruction only to the extent necessary to allow a child to achieve competence in the English language. Funding was restricted to TBE; maintenance and dual language programs were ineligible for funding.	Nixon	Problem
1978	Dual Language programs allowed. The term limited English proficient (LEP) introduced.	Carter	Resource
1984	Funding also available for maintenance programs. Funding for "special alternative' English-only programs.	Reagan	Problem
1988	25% more funding provided for English-only Special Alternative instructional (SAIP) programs.	Reagan	Problem
1994	Full bilingual proficiency recognized as a lawful educational goal. Funding for Dual Language.	Clinton	Resource
2002	No Child Left Behind – End of Title VII "Bilingual Education Act' shifted to Title III titled 'Language Instruction for Limited proficient Students and Immigrant Students.	Bush	Problem
2015	Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	Obama	Problem

Table 2: BEA Historical Pendulum (Adapted from Baker, 2011)

Lau vs. Nichols

A landmark in the United States' bilingual education history is the *Lau vs. Nichols* case *(414 US. 563 (1974*)), in which parents of nearly 3,000 Chinese American students in California filed a class-action suit against the San Francisco School District in 1970 (Arias, 2001; Baker, 2011; Blanton, 2004; Garcia, 2009; Gonzalez, 2008). The case posed the legal question of whether or not non-English speaking students received equal educational opportunities when instructed in a language they could not understand. The plaintiffs stated that the school district violated both the 14th Amendment of the Constitution and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The case was rejected by the San Francisco Federal District Court and a court of appeals, but was accepted by the Supreme Court in 1974.

The Supreme Court found the San Francisco District in violation of Title VI. It ruled through their decision in *Lau v. Nichols* that the denial of special support to any English learner was a violation of their civil rights and that the schools had to take "affirmative steps" to help students overcome language barriers impeding their access to the curriculum (Arias, 2001; *Lau v. Nichols*, 1974; Secada, 1990). The key argument, as depicted in the excerpt from the *Lau v. Nichols* case below, was that students have the right to receive a meaningful education and that simply teaching the mainstream curriculum in English is not considered meaningful:

> 'There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.'
>
> Basic English skills are the very core of what these public schools teach. Imposition of a requirement that, before a child can effectively participate in the education program, he must already have acquired those basic skills is to make a mockery of public education. We know that those who do not understand English are certain to find their classroom experiences wholly incomprehensible and in no way meaningful.
>
> Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, *Lau v. Nichols*, 1974

Lau v. Nichols required that school districts provide students support in order for them to be academically on grade level while acquiring English. However the kind of bilingual education needed to achieve a high quality educational opportunity for language minority children was not defined. Following the ruling, the Office of Civil Rights issued a set of guidelines for school districts called the *Lau Remedies*. These guidelines specified proper approaches, methods, and procedures for (1) identifying and evaluating minority students' English language skills, (2) determining appropriate instructional treatments, (3) deciding when limited English proficient (LEP) students were ready for mainstream classes, and (4) determining the professional standards to be met by teachers of language minority children (Secada, 1990). While these remedies created some expansion in the use of minority languages in schools, the national emphasis was still on a temporary, transitional use of the home language for English learners (Arias, 2001; Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Dow, 2006; Garcia, 2009; San Miguel, 2004).

Castañeda v. Pickard

An important court case that complemented the *Lau vs. Nichols* decision was *Castañeda v. Pickard*, (648 F2d 989 5thCir. 1981) which was filed against the Raymondville, Texas Independent School District. Latino children and their parents claimed that the district was discriminating against them because of their ethnicity (Crawford, 2004a; Dow, 2008, Gonzalez, 2008). Although districts were obligated to serve English learners through a bilingual education program according to the *Lau vs. Nichols* ruling, a standard for quality bilingual programs was never established until the final ruling of *Castañeda v. Pickard* in 1981 (Thomas and Collier, 2012). The court found the district was inappropriately using English standardized tests instead of assessing students in their primary language. In addition, the District was ordered to examine its hiring practices to be sure they were not

discriminatory and to improve teachers' ability to serve English learners. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in Texas ruled that "good faith" efforts were insufficient and that districts would be evaluated on whether the program served English learners effectively based of the following three-pronged test:

1. The instructional program implemented must be based on sound theory.
2. The program should be implemented with appropriate practices, staffing, and resources.
3. There should be evaluation and evidence of effectiveness.

The three-part test was adopted by the Office of Civil Rights to monitor compliance nationwide (*Castañeda v. Pickard*). According to Crawford (2004a), although *Castañeda v. Pickard* offers a comprehensive and promising approach to accountability and has had positive results in school districts, it has played a limited role in improving the education for ELs. Crawford (2004a) recommends that *Castañeda v. Pickard* be developed, refined and extended for use in all state accountability plans.

Bilingual Education: 1980s-2000s

The battle against bilingual education began to gain strength during the Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations. In 1981, President Reagan stated:

> "It is absolutely wrong and against American concepts to have a bilingual education program that is now openly, admittedly dedicated to preserving their native language and never getting them adequate in English so they can go out into the job market and participate" (as cited in Crawford, 1994).

During this time, there started to be renewed support for English as the sole language used in classrooms, and, to that end, employment of the practice of sink-or-swim. Furthermore, there was increasing resentment towards illegal immigrants and their culture and language that spilled over to an anti-Latino attitude that was directed to Latinos in general, regardless of their

immigration or citizenship status. In June 1998, California voters approved Proposition 227, which stated that English should be the primary language of instruction for ELs. Ron Unz, who initiated proposition 227, believed that children were staying too long in bilingual programs; he blamed ineffective bilingual education programs for failing to teach children English (Ovando, 2003). In defense of the bilingual program, Krashen (1999) noted that the high Latino dropout rate attributed to bilingual education was instead the result of a complex set of variables. These include poverty, racism, an unempowering school culture, school tracking practices, a scarcity of successfully schooled Latino role models, and a lack of engaging reading materials in home and school environments. In general, this period took the US back to the English-only movement and the melting pot/assimilation philosophy (Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. This new law eliminated the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, shifting the original focus from supporting ELs through the use of native language as a means of instruction in all content areas to a more narrow focus on mandating English language acquisition and English language literacy for English learners (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2008;Wiley and Wright, 2004). No Child Left Behind law focused on holding states, districts and schools accountable for high-stakes testing in content areas and English proficiency, and sanctioned schools for failures to make adequate yearly progress. Valenzuela and McNeil (2001) argue that high stakes testing exemplifies the most detrimental policy for Latinos and ELs, and that there should be local control over assessment. Menken (2005) has shown how mandating high-stakes tests in English for all students has acted as language policy and has negatively impacted bilingual programs and the potential for the development of bilingualism. According to Crawford (2004b), NCLB had a

worthy purpose, yet he predicted it would likely to do more harm than good, leaving English learners behind due to its overly rigid, punitive and unscientific approach to school accountability.

From Compensatory to Enrichment: Dual Language Education

Since the enactment of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, an increasing number of researchers have completed studies and meta-analyses of those studies to develop frameworks for understanding how teaching students in their native language supports ongoing cognitive development, ensures content attainment, facilitates second language acquisition, and affirms students' identities. Numerous studies, both quantitative and qualitative, have contributed to the field of bilingual education by recommending an array of practices to improve the quality of education for ELs that are grounded in multicultural, pragmatic and critical pedagogy (August and Hakuta, O. Garcia, 2008; Cummins, 2000; Banks and Banks, 1993; Frederickson, 1995; Thomas and Collier, 1997; Krashen, 1981, 2003; Giroux, 1999; Igoa, 1999; Nieto, 1996, 1999; Olsen, 1994). We are living in a time when so much research has been done on bilingual education that it is no longer a question of whether or not it works. Bilingual education is being accepted with greater frequency because now, more than ever, it is grounded in theory, research, and practice. Study after study has reported that children in bilingual programs generally outperform their counterparts in all-English programs on tests of academic achievement in English; or, at the minimum, they do just as well (Krashen and McField, 2005). There is more evidence than ever that bilingual education works and that it does a better job in helping students acquire English than English-only programs. These achievements contribute to a shift from the view of bilingual education as a compensatory program to recognizing it as an enrichment program.

The increased popularity of dual language programs across the nation has contributed to this shift in viewing bilingualism as an asset. The popularity of dual language programs is due in large part to the findings of the longitudinal study conducted by Thomas and Collier that has analyzed over 6.2 million student records in numerous districts across the nation for over 30 years to show that dual language programs are the only programs that fully close the achievement gap for ELs compared to English native speakers (Thomas and Collier, 2012). Thomas and Collier's longitudinal study is represented in the graph below:

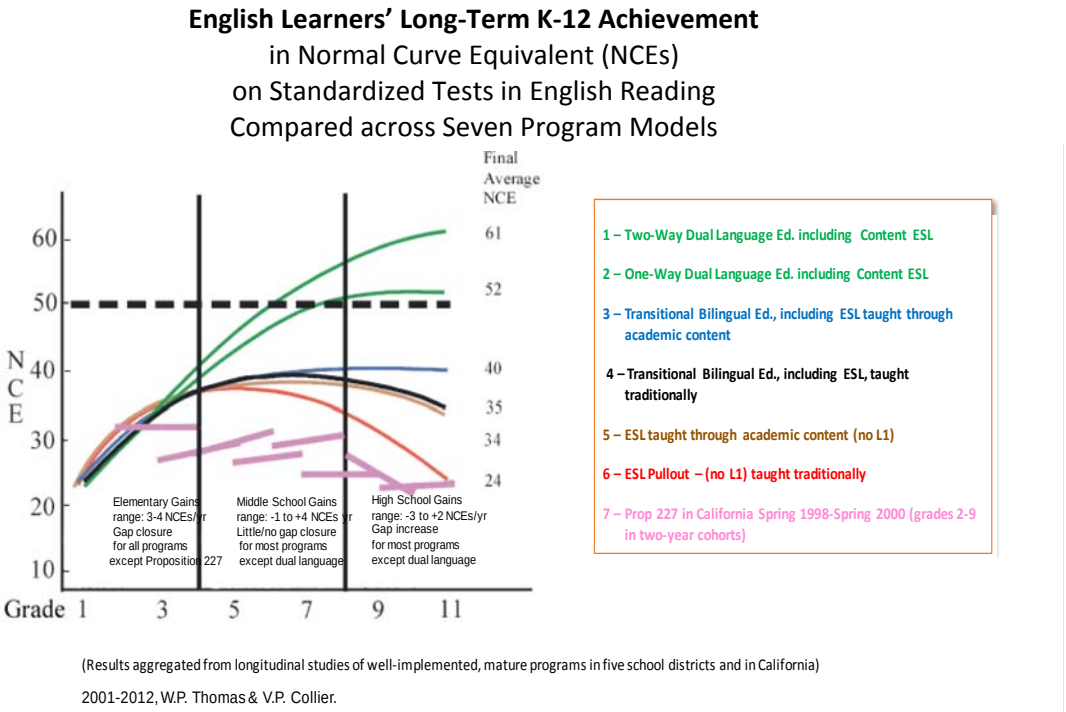

Table 3: Thomas and Collier Graph

The longitudinal study conducted by Thomas and Collier (1997) is considered generalizable because they identified the same patterns over time – in many schools – and the study is

therefore being used to create policy. According to Thomas and Collier (2012), the results of the study show the following:

- The program model (especially the amount of native language instruction) has the strongest effect on achievement for students of low socioeconomic background with no initial English proficiency when they begin schooling in the U.S.
- Dual language programs provide the most first language support along with nonstop cognitive development for English learners. This is the key to the success of dual language programs (Collier and Thomas 2009; Thomas and Collier 2012, 2014)
- English learners in all programs appear to do well in terms of gap closure during grades K-3. Real differences in program outcomes only become evident after instructional testing difficulty increases in the late elementary and middle school years. The level of cognitive demand of the tests and the curriculum becomes much greater in these years.
- Only dual language programs that provide long-term, enriched teaching of all curricular subjects through English learners' primary language as well as acquisition of English as a second language through all curricular subjects completely close the full achievement gap when tested on difficult English norm-referenced tests that show the full extent of the gap.

The benefits of dual language education include:

- Bilingualism (High levels of language proficiencies in two languages)
- Biliteracy
- Cognitive development in two languages (making school an additive bilingual context for all students enrolled in dual language classes)
- High levels of academic achievement in two languages
- Positive cross-cultural attitudes

- High levels of self-esteem

New Leadership in Bilingual Education

Since the enactment of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968 when the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs was established, school districts have hired bilingual program directors to lead the implementation of bilingual education programs (Arias, 2001; Davila, 2013; Trujillo, 1978). Duties of a bilingual program director include: understanding the intricacies of working at the district level in an urban district, evaluating and supervising staff as requested, reviewing student data, identifying the need for program and/or instructional refinement, providing professional development, administering department budgets, and ensuring district compliance with local, state, and federal policy (Arias, 2001; Davila, 2013; Trujillo, 1978). A bilingual program director implementing a quality dual language program needs to implement system-wide mechanisms that facilitate the process for all stakeholders to focus on the linguistic, academic, and affective needs of ELs (Francisca Sanchez in Collier and Thomas, 2014). In this era of state and federal accountability, bilingual program directors can easily fall into the trap of promoting standardized testing culture while failing to promote culturally relevant pedagogy that addresses both the affective and academic needs of minority children, immigrants, children of poverty and ELs. Cummins (2000) proposes utilizing a transformative pedagogy framework that goes beyond what is considered effective instruction to address the affective needs of minority students. He cautions educators not to prioritize practices that focus on performance on standardized tests, and instead use the growing body of theoretical analysis and ethnographic research stemming from the perspective of multicultural education and critical pedagogy that features a set of practices that support culturally and linguistically diverse students (Banks and Banks, 1993; Giroux, 1999; Igoa, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 1996, 1999).

Giroux (1999) articulates that advantageous, culturally responsive education "is grounded in educational leadership that does not begin with the question of raising test scores or educating students to be experts, but with a moral vision of what it means to educate, lead a human life, to govern, and to address the social welfare of those less fortunate than themselves' (p. 59). In addition Nieto (1999) emphasizes that that multicultural school reform must be broad-based to include equity of opportunities in education. Cummins (2000) argues that:

> ...negotiations of identity is a central explanatory construct in understanding the academic achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students, and that transformational pedagogy is a key element in implementing effective instruction and reversing the historical process of underachievement (p. 247).

This transformational pedagogy framework assumes that instruction is never neutral with respect to societal power relations (Cummins, 2000; Freire, 1970). Consequently, leaders that operate under the lens of transformative pedagogy are more likely to have a positive impact in contributing to the advancement of English learners through additive bilingual programs such as dual language (Cummins, 2000; Thomas and Collier, 2012). Effective bilingual program directors seek leadership frameworks that meet the specific needs of minority groups such as English learners, ensuring that their district's view of education is multilingual and inclusive. Skills and attributes such as resiliency, empathy, caring, and understanding the significance of social justice, social practice, equity, and advocacy are crucial to staying the course and ensuring that the programs such as dual language are well funded, well-staffed, equipped with ample resources in both languages, and that bilingual teachers are well trained (Collier and Thomas, 2014; Cummins, 2000, 2004; Fullan, 2007; Garcia, 2009; Trueba, 2004).

Bilingual program directors are often charged with the responsibility to establish or refine dual language programs district-wide. When I was assigned this task, I always grounded

my decisions on the extensive body of research that supports bilingual education, including dual language programs. I utilized research to make decisions regarding which subject would be taught in English or Spanish, whether to have simultaneous literacy or sequential literacy in the program, the selection of instructional resources, the appropriate professional development needed, and how to support parents of students in the dual language program. I had to be knowledgeable in what a well-implemented dual language program entails and how to communicate this to all stakeholders, understanding that the quality of implementation and evaluation of all bilingual programs is critical because if the time and treatment of the dual language program is significantly altered, it can negatively impact student academic, linguistic, and sociocultural outcomes (Collier and Thomas, 2014; McField, 2002; Thomas and Collier, 2012). In order to have a common framework to work from, I utilized Thomas and Collier's (2014) list of characteristics of a 'well implemented' dual language program as my criteria:

- Administrators at both school and district levels fully support the DL program.
- Fidelity to the DL model chosen
- Careful attention to instructional time in EACH of the two languages
- Regular DL program meetings scheduled
- All bilingual and English-speaking teachers work together creatively and collaboratively.
- Thoughtful choices of assessment instruments for BOTH languages.
- High quality ongoing staff development in research-based and effective practices for DL teachers and administrators.

DL teaching includes:

- Not too much teacher-lecturing; but clear instructions for each activity

- Cooperative learning implemented effectively, with lots of varied work groupings: pairs, groups of four, learning centers, whole-class and other appropriate configurations.
- Problem-solving, creative projects, varied activities, high thinking, stimulating learning
- Sensitivity to cross-cultural issues and emotional support for all
- Students engaged and actively participating in meaningful learning
- Active participation of all students whatever the language of instruction (L1 or L2), with lots of clues to meaning (scaffolding) provided by teachers and fellow students

Adapted from Thomas and Collier PPT slide (2014)

Fullan (2007) states that in order to achieve sustainable instructional change and improve instructional practice on a large scale, such as rolling out dual language programs in an urban district, districts cannot move too fast. Starting out by implementing small-scale programs to test the waters and work out any unexpected complications ensures large scale programs have a solid foundation. Furthermore, change is related to the existing cultures and beliefs of schools and school districts. Elmore (2000) argues that change in the organization itself is what is needed for school improvement. Elmore (2004) insists that administrators at the school and district level are responsible for creating nurturing and propelling conditions necessary to support sustained individual and collective engagement in improvement.

CHAPTER III

LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD: THE NARRATIVE METHODOLOGY OF AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

A challenge in sharing my experiences, both written and lived, throughout my journey to become a bilingual program director involved choosing a research method whose purpose is not only to study myself as a member of the bilingual world, such as occurs with indigenous ethnographic research (Whitinui, 2013), but is also fundamentality grounded in addressing the political, cultural, and social inequities in bilingual education that require reform on the macro and the micro levels (Hamilton and Worthinguton, 2008; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Perez-Huber, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1998; Trueba, 2004). The self-reflexive narrative construct of autoethnography allows me to address the problem of deficit ideologies causing deviation from authentic teaching practices within the dual language model, such as "reverting to teaching an English-only curriculum" or focusing on "teaching to the test," by helping create intricate solutions to those challenges as they are guided by my ecologies of *self*, *organization*, and *community* (Chávez, 2012; Ellis, 2002; Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Kempster and Stewart, 2010; Pérez Huber, 2009, 2010; Pérez Huber and Cueva, 2012; Reyes and Rodríguez, 2012). Educational reform is best implemented when guided by the epistemology of advocates through great amounts of inward critical reflection (Chávez, 2012; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Perez Huber and Cueva, 2012). This study will bring the reader on a journey as I explore

the life experiences that have led me to my current position as a bilingual program director, where I advocate for an equitable and meaningful education for English Learners in an urban school district. The road to this point has been profoundly complex. The more time I spend reflecting on my passion for advocacy in the field of bilingual education, the more I question where my personal life ends and where my professional life begins, or if such a binary relationship even exists for me at this point in my advocacy for English learners. Kuby (2013) explains autoethnographic self-inquiry as "[helping] educators embrace the hyphen of personal-professional and to be more explicit about the ways histories influence teaching, learning, and researching" (p. 4). My autoethnography helped me define my journey in becoming a bilingual program director, and also helped me critically reflect on my epistemology to help situate myself as a social and cultural advocate. This type of critical self-reflection allowed me to reinforce the pillars of my activism for English learners by bringing to the surface all the cultural capital I have acquired throughout my life-long journey as a Latina navigating the bilingual world (Anzaldua, 1987; Chávez, 2012; Davies, 2007; Ellis, 1999, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000).

The hybridity of my personal-professional existence as an advocate for bilingual education cannot be separated; I live bilingualism and biculturalism in every facet of my life. Whenever I'd preoccupy myself too much with assimilating into the American way of life, both as a child and as an adult, my father would always give me a quick reminder, *Olivia, no se te olvide que eres Mexicana*. "Unpacking" my stories across time and space helped me make meaning from my experiences with my family, schools in which I've worked, and communities in which I've lived, and in turn make meaning of what the bilingual world truly means for me, my profession, and my advocacy as a teacher, a learner, a researcher, and a transformational educational leader (Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Kuby, 2013, p.6). The tangible and intangible borders

consistently navigated by Mexican-Americans and bilingual program directors who advocate for members outside the mainstream group create a pocket – the margins – in which healing narrative, and counter-narrative, can thrive (Chávez, 2012; Delgado Bernal, 2009; Montoya, 2002; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001, 2009). The narrative I elicited from myself encompassed the epistemological assets of bilingual education I have constructed throughout my life – from childhood through adulthood – to help empower myself, as well as empower marginalized ethnic and racial groups everywhere (Anzaldua, 1987; Ellis, 2002; Guajardo, et al., 2016; Moraga and Anzaldua, 1984). My story is not one of resilience in the face of economic struggle, abuse, or neglect, but it is one of survival, sacrifice, and serving the public good.

I wrote this autoethnography with as much "thick description," or in the most candid, open, and vulnerable way I could, which, I found out, was easier said than done (Ellis, 1999; Ellis, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2006). Draft upon draft of this dissertation started with candid self-exploration through story and reflection, and then slowly I began to subconsciously transition back into the recitation of the theory and pedagogy I have become intricately familiar with in my many years working in bilingual education. After reading and re-reading my drafts, I slowly began to realize that I was communicating *about* bilingual education instead of placing myself *within* its knowledge base. I was playing it safe by not exposing myself. However, this study is supposed to be anything but safe. I wrote the story of my experience not to boast about how successful I have been or how intelligent I am, but to show that I am constantly learning from all the times my inexperience forced me to confront my own doubts about dual language education. This openness, according to the autoethnographic method, initiates the dialogue between writer and reader by creating the "safe space" necessary for these conversational exchanges to exist (Ellis, 2002, 2004; Guajardo *et al*., 2016). My use of this safe space is fundamentally based on

the attribution of my personal epistemological conditioning to culturally rich lived experiences and *pláticas* that have been passed down through the generations of my family to help me make sense of my own reality (E.Garcia, 2015; Guajardo and Guajardo, 2007, 2013). As Guajardo and Guajardo (2008) recall, there is a reciprocal nature to the process of engaging in *pláticas*:

> We learned at a young age that the *plática* was an act of sharing ideas, experiences, and stories. This process was reciprocal as our parents gave us an opportunity to pose questions or just provide the platform to exercise their skills. We recall our older brother, Pepe, using the *plática* space to imitate the play-by-play announcers of the Bravos de Reynosa, the regional team from the Liga Mexicana. …The *pláticas* created the stage for the game of life. Everybody had an opportunity display skills; this display was not about schooling, however; it was about teaching, learning and sharing. …The *plática* (Padilla, 1993) created the knowledge and allowed for the multiple realities to be (re)presented without being ridiculed (p. 66-67).

When I find myself struggling to enter that safe space, I reflect on the openness shared between my mother and me. *Pláticas* between a mother and daughter are invaluable. I was a stubborn daughter and had a stern and loving mother, for which I am very grateful. My *pláticas* with my precious mother were profound and are engrained in my heart more than ever since her departure in 2010. Our *pláticas* helped me comprehend the struggles women go through to find their identities, particularly women like my mother who had so much to give in life but lived during times when Mexican women did not have the opportunity to receive a formal education; they raised families and were loyal to their husbands. She was a rebel for her times and found a great deal of joy and pride in her family. Although she did not have a formal education, she had a career in life and knew exactly what she wanted for herself and her children. Her *consejos* about life, husbands, children, family and education were priceless: "*Fíjate con quien te vas a casar, cuida a tus hijos, y educense porque nunca saben si se van a quedar solas; el amor cambia con el tiempo*.

Through the many *pláticas* I had with my mother, I have a mental image of her life as a child, an adolescent, an adult, and as a wife. She shared with me her intimate feelings about her life, which have been an integral part of my life. Losing myself in the safe space of opening up with my mother was difficult for me because I still miss her so much since her passing; but it is through her that I continue to find my strength. If she were alive today, my mother would be the first to encourage me to follow my passion for serving the public good, that my "cultural intuition," "Chicana feminist epistemology," and "collective knowledge" of the community I represent cannot remain in the shadows as the fate of bilingual education in our country is evolving to meet the needs of ELs in the twenty-first century (Alarcón, 2011; Anzaldua, 1987; Arreguín-Anderson and Ruiz-Escalante, 2014; Delgado Bernal, 2006; O. Garcia, 2013; Perez-Huebner, 2012). The context of Chicano culture allows for my narrative to encompass my perspective as a sagacious matriarchal figure, serving as a strong cultural foundation for identity building and the observation of values within my personal and professional community. I acknowledge my position as a daughter, sister, mother, and grandmother as a testament to my spiritual and matriarchal capacity to create the safe space to share with my reader a *plática* that is simultaneously honest, vulnerable, and strong – something that would make my mother proud (Anzaldua, 1987; Elenes, 2011).

Why Choose Autoethnography?

Autoethnography allows me to value the self and culture as a means of academic inquiry by embracing "subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist" (Ellis, 2011, p. 2). Through writing, reflecting, and re-writing, I zoom in and out between a wide angle view of cultural norms and a focused inward reflection of the vulnerable self in order to blur distinctions between my cultural

self and my personal self, creating authentic, epiphany-inspiring experiences that uncover my epistemological strengths, assets built from relationships, and harnessing the cultural capital which exist beneath multiple layers of consciousness (Ellis, 2004, p. 38; Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011; Guajardo *et al*,. 2016). Studying these personal strengths is significant for me because, apart from helping me create an awareness of myself, they are also the catalyst that allows me to take my ecologies of *community* and *organization* into consideration while creating more intricate solutions to the challenges I face in the realm of bilingual education that, due to the constant ideological roadblocks that inhibit its implementation on a daily basis, is always in need of a campaigner (Alarcon et al., 2011; Chávez, 2012; Crawford, 2008; Ellis, 2002; Gonzalez, 2010; Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ovando, 2003). My autoethnography will encompass the academic influence of narrative research to situate me within the participatory action research base (Chevalier and Buckles, 2013; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Quicke, 2010) of those collectively fighting to advocate for ELs and bilingual programs as they become threatened by oppressive ideologies of standardization in education that favor a dominant culture (Crawford, 2004b; Cummins; 2000; Kohn, 2000; Krashen, 1996, 2005; Ovando, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999, 2004; Walker, 2007). Research has shown that the problems of a community can effectively be solved by those within the community using "community based action" (Chevalier and Buckles, 2013; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Reason and Bradbury, 2008). Gonzalez and Padilla (2009) consolidate the subjective discourse of community into what they call the public good, citing "organic knowledge" (Gonzalez, 1995) as the means by which individuals perceive and get to know the public good. How can a community, or in this case, an advocate for a bilingual community, manifest solutions for communal problems if those problems are not acknowledged in meaningful ways in the first

place? Silence is a powerful oppression (Chávez, 2012). As a life-long member, both formally and informally, of the bilingual education community, I remain cognizant of my writing authority and responsibility to promote the public good for the bilingual community I serve by helping the experiences of the bilingual community become tangible, studied, interacted with, and reflected upon through my writing (Bakhtin, 1990; Delgado, 1989).

Autoethnography and Reflexivity

Autoethnography focuses on the epistemological nature of the research. As expressed by Bochner and Ellis (2006), autoethnography "…shows people in the process of figuring out what to do, how to live and what their struggles mean" (p. 111). Mariza Mendez (2013) adds to this:

> In [figuring these things out] people are not only building meaning in their lives, but through these evocative narratives others may be able to reflect on similar experiences and then be able to do something beneficial for themselves and others (p. 285).

The process of storytelling is organic in that it is guided by *acts of meaning* derived from its application, recollection, interpretation, and ultimately, sharing with others to encourage reflection and growth through relationships (Bochner, 2012). Creating *acts of meaning* through the construction and critical reflection of narrative is a method to "attract, awaken, and arouse readers, inviting them into conversation with the incidents, feelings, contingencies, contradictions, memories and desires that the research stories depict" (Bochner, 2012, p. 158). For example, while reading segments of my autoethnography where I depict my experiences engaging communities of parents to explain why dual language programs are beneficial for students, a mother of an English learner who feels as though she needs to put her son or daughter into the mainstream English classroom because she believes learning English is a staple for success can initiate in a discourse with my story to critically reflect on her decision (Trueba,

2004; Valenzuela, 1999). Teachers can interact with the segments from my autoethnography where I share my real-life experiences facing the day-to-day challenges with my students who are acquiring a second language while simultaneously learning academic content because those experiences are rich with evocative, empathetic content familiar to those involved in bilingual education (Hamilton, Smith and Worthington, 2008). A teacher can begin a discourse with my dissertation when reading about the epistemological journey that has led me to believe that producing bilingual, bicultural and biliterate students who are capable of accepting other cultures and finding strength through their own culture is worth the extra workload – some would say double the workload – inherent in preparing lessons in two languages as part of a dual language classroom (Thomas and Collier, 2012). A bilingual program director reading my dissertation can relate to the challenges that occur when public school systems, school boards, superintendents, etc. prioritize academic achievement in standardized testing over providing a quality education that prepares the whole child for life (Crawford, 2004b; Escamila, 2005**;** Kohn, 2000; Cummins, 2000; Trueba, 2004; Valenzuela, 1999, 2004). Reflection and reflexivity are at the cornerstone of autoethnographic research (Babock, 1980, Davies, 2007; Delemont, 2009; Ellis and Bochner, 2000). Reed-Danahay (2009) channels Bourdieu to acknowledge reflexivity as "a methodological approach in which one critically examines one's own position within the field of academic production—not in order to be more objective or more subjective, but rather to understand the false distinction between these two categories" (p. 30). As an autoethnographer, I was more preoccupied with the process of writing and reflecting as an end unto itself. The process is what is important; it is not a means to arrive at a destination. It is the destination. My writing, my reflections, and my journey, will serve as an example of how to initiate the discourse with my story so that readers of my dissertation can feel encouraged to do the same.

Designing an Autoethnography

For Ellis (1999), the merit of an autoethnographic work's design and execution depends on its verisimilitude, or how much "it evokes in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible, a feeling that what has been represented could be true" (p. 674). By design, my narrative vignettes will align with Ellis and Bochner's (2006) concept of "thick description" to bring about reactionary dialogue from the reader while simultaneously drawing from my epistemological intuition to bring about change and healing by reflecting, recounting, and remembering the past (Anzaldua, 1987; Davies, 2007; Delgado Bernal, 1998; Moraga and Anzaldua, 1984). The design of an autoethnography should ensure that it helps readers communicate with others different from themselves or offer a way to improve the lives of participants (Ellis, 2004). Autoethnography should elicit an emotional reaction, be political, and encourage a dialogue with the reader, who should be inspired to explore his or her own journey and ecological foundations of self (Bochner, 2012; Chávez, 2012; Ellis, 1999). The nature of autoethnography includes a narrative approach to documenting research and analyzing data. My use of narrative vignettes enabled me to tell my story in a genuine way in order to meet the objective of eliciting emotional responses and, by analyzing my story under the matrix of the *theory of change,* also allow me to promote change that comes from deep within (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Westley, Zimmerman and Patton, 2007). I have learned and embraced that one of the most difficult aspects of creating this bond with the reader is the need to open up and be my honest, raw, and vulnerable self. I need to write and show that the struggle is real for everybody, no matter what advantages or disadvantages he or she may or may not have. I need to write on my experiences because I know I am not in this fight for equity alone. We, all of us in the margins, are in this together. To accomplish this highly dialogical

process of coming together to initiate the collective process of change, I must write about my experiences in a balanced, authentic manner. Constructing my narrative is not about always presenting myself in a good light – in charge, competent, controlled, organized and so on, or how I might like to be seen. Rather, my autoethnography is "about writing rich, full accounts including the messy stuff – the self-doubts, the mistakes, the embarrassments, the inconsistencies, the projections that may be distasteful. It is about writing all of it" (Tenni, Smyth, and Bochner, 2001, p. 110). Through my autoethnography, I will have to confront topics that I have actively been avoiding for some time now, such as the passing of my parents, microaggressions I have experienced at work, and my own previous reservations about implementing a dual language program in my school when I was a principal.

Autoethnography and Data Analysis

Autoethnographic, narrative-style qualitative research exists as part of a movement to break away from the standard, Eurocentric ideology of dichotomous research that places exceeding significance on truth, correctness, or authenticity of research results (Anderson, 2006; Babcock, 1980; Davies, 2007; Ellis, 2006;). The writings of Ellis and Bochner (e.g. Ellis, 2004; Ellis and Bochner 2000; Bochner and Ellis 2001) have detailed extensively the process of narrative as research, entirely redefining traditional interpretations of validity. Their work has served not only to increase the validity of narratives as an avenue for informing the cultural condition, but to begin with the phenomenological premise that "there is no single standard of truth," which shifts the objective of research from uncovering facts to understanding and learning from experience (Bochner, 2001, 2012; Ellis, 1999, p. 674, 2004; Ellis and Bochner, 2000). Writing an autoethnography allowed me to free myself from the shackles of traditional empirical research, which seeks to comfortably categorize data into true/false, real/not real,

significant/insignificant, etc. groupings that convey traditionally accepted attributes of validity in research, and instead focus on how my experiences can advance the cause of advocating for ELs (Ellis, 1999, p. 674, 2004, 2009; Davies, 2007). On a similar note, incorporating autoethnography with critical theory in this study frees me from oppressive, dichotomous and hegemonic ideologies that exist in academia when empirical forms of research inhibit the expression of minority voices in academic inquiry (Chávez, 2012; Drechsler Sharp, Riera and Jones, 2012; Ellis, 2002; Garcia, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Perez Huber, 2009; Solórzano and Yosso, 2005). Standardization in research has been argued to inherently embody a form of oppression and inborn *Othering* because it deems one way of thinking, being, acting, studying, living, etc. as inherently "better" than another through hegemonic idealization (Bauman, 1996; Blum and de la Piedra, 2010; Palfreyman, 2007). It also marginalizes the description of any group – in this case English Learners and the variation of labels within that educational group – into oversimplified stereotypes or statistics lacking genuine dimension (Delgado and Stefancic, 1993; Montecinos, 1995).

However, a departure from the dichotomous restriction of traditional research does not imply that autoethnography is not without its merit as a form of empirical study (Hughes, Pennington and Makris, 2012). While rhetorical structures for an autoethnography vary, "from formal literary texts to more informal accounts or stories," they serve a common purpose of revealing broader contexts to experiences and social phenomena (Andershon, 2006; Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Hughes, Pennington and Makris, 2012; Méndez, 2013, p. 281). Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) point out that, "The forms of autoethnography differ in how much emphasis is placed on the study of others, the researcher's self and interaction with others, traditional analysis, and the interview context, as well as on power relationships" (p. 5). As I've described

above, the autoethnography in this study is decidedly interactive and reflexive in its objective; it's goal is undoubtedly to extract meaning from experience, placing it very much within the parameters of the *personal narrative* approach to autoethnography Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) describes as, "stories about authors who view themselves as the phenomenon and write evocative narratives specifically focused on their academic, research, and personal lives" (p. 7). Within the same description, Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) also acknowledge that, "[*Personal narrative* autoethnographies] often are the most controversial forms of autoethnography for traditional social scientists, especially if they are not accompanied by more traditional analysis and/or connections to scholarly literature" (p. 7). Therefore, I chose to commit to theoretical analysis and connect my reflections to scholarly literature in order to help keep my autoethnography in a realm of social science that I am comfortable with, a practice closely in line with the guidelines of *analytic autoethnography* (Anderson, 2006). I guided the construction of my autoethnography as *evocative* while maintaining the integrity of AERA standards for reporting empirical social science research that requires the autoethnography be carefully designed to offer multiple levels of critical analysis, be critically self-reflexive about the selection criteria, and illustrate claims of the explored phenomena with concrete examples (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Hughes, Pennington and Makris, 2012). To facilitate this process, I chose to analyze the narratives produced by this study through the system of inquiry of Guajardo et al.'s (2016) *theory of change*, whose foundation is driven by the analysis of stories to guide planning and action for agents of change (pp. 41-42). The Guajardo *et al*. (2016) *theory of change* analytic scaffold presented in the chart below represents the classification scheme that helped me meet the AERA standards requirement to comprehensibly describe the range of phenomena classified in this study with concrete examples (Durant et al., 2006 as cited in

Hughes, Pennington and Makris, 2012, p. 214). This analysis was then used to answer my research questions, generate findings, and provide recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

STORIES AND REFLECTIONS

The narrative turn moves away from a singular, monolithic conception of social science toward a pluralism that promotes multiple forms of representation and research; away from facts and toward meanings; away from master narratives and toward local stories; away from idolizing categorical thought and abstracted theory and toward embracing the values of irony, emotionality, and activism; away from assuming the stance of the disinterested spectator and toward assuming the posture of a feeling, embodied, and vulnerable observer; away from writing essays and toward telling stories.

Arthur Bochner, "Narrative Virtues" (2001)

Introduction: Where I Come From

Figure 1: My Parents

I cannot begin to utilize narrative and story to explore the epistemological foundations that guide my advocacy for bilingual education without first discussing the two most important people in my life: my parents. When writing of their father's influence on their values, Guajardo and Guajardo (2008) reflect that, "The pedagogy of family and story informs [their] view of the public good" (p. 67). Just as the pedagogy of their family (lessons passed down to them by their father through his stories and *dichos*) informed their ideological foundations of public service, my father's *dichos* have also played a large role in shaping my epistemology as a Mexican-American advocate for bilingual education. My father used to say, *Unos niños nacen con estrella y otros nacen estrellados*. As far as I'm concerned, *Yo nací con estrella, tan solo por ser hija de Benjamín Hernández y Olivia Cantú.* I am a Latina blessed to have been the first born in a family with two loving parents who adored, cared for and dedicated their lives to their six children.

Both my parents grew up in México. My father, Benjamín Hernández Soriano, was born in a *rancho* called *Los Muchachos* in Saltillo, Coahuila, and my mother, Olivia Cantú Perez, was born in a small rural *rancho* named *San Pedro,* which is located in northern México by the San Juan River in the state of Nuevo León. Both of my parents lived in poverty, yet they experienced it differently. My Dad grew up city poor in a small wooden shack where food was scarce and the winter nights were cold. My mom grew up in a *rancho* that my grandfather owned. Food was bountiful, yet she didn't have shoes to wear and only attended elementary school up to third grade. Destiny brought them together as young adults in the city of Monterrey, Nuevo León, a city they called home and loved so dearly. In their own unique way, they each taught me lessons about caring for others, working hard, and valuing education. I have carried these lessons with me throughout my life, and I continue to dedicate myself to serving others through education in a way that would make both my parents proud.

Figure 2: My Father

My Father's Legacy

My father passed away on May 15, 2001, after four long years of health complications that began when he was hit by a car. One afternoon, on a day my parents were taking care of my children while I accompanied my husband on a business trip, my father decided to go to the bank. He would never park his car close to the entrance; he always had to walk. That day, he decided to park his car across the street from the bank. It was a rainy, gloomy day. He crossed the street in the middle of the road, and a car struck him without warning. He wasn't evidently injured, didn't break a bone; but he was taken to the hospital, where doctors prescribed him painkillers before sending him home. The incident triggered a neuropathy in his legs for which he was prescribed Motrin. The Motrin caused my father to develop an ulcer that hemorrhaged and caused him to have a stroke. His health diminished steadily from that point on, but he still

read large print books and magazines every day to keep his mind as sharp as possible. He was a luchador.

Ultimately, a thrombosis in his stomach sent my father to the hospital one final time. He ended up sedated in ICU for a week or two before he passed. My brother, Ricardo, was by his side when my father died of a heart attack.

When my father passed, I, as the oldest child, felt inclined to take it upon myself to take over the difficult task of composing the words of remembrance that would see my father off into the next world. In México, it's not a consistent practice for eulogies to be delivered during funerals, but I felt in my heart that I needed to say something as we buried my father. I'd never written a eulogy before, and, to be perfectly candid, I wasn't exactly enthusiastic about writing this one. The pain of losing my father was unbearable. Still, I dutifully carried out my responsibility, drawing from the happiest memories of my father I could remember to honor his memory as best I could.

As I completed the emotionally draining process of pouring pieces of my memories with my father onto paper, I couldn't help but feel the eulogy would be incomplete without the perspective of other family members whose lives my father also impacted. One by one, I approached my father's siblings to gather their thoughts on how my father touched their lives, writing their words in a simple spiral notebook. While all the responses I received were overwhelmingly positive, I'll never forget the words my youngest uncle, Tio Beto, said regarding my father:

"Gracias a Benjamín, cambió la vida de todos nosotros.," Tio Beto began. "Él tomó el lugar de nuestro padre. Gracias a que él siempre quiso superarse en la vida, pudimos salir adelante. Ayudó a mamá. Ese fue el ejemplo que nos dio y fue el camino que seguimos los demás. Bien pudo haber sido un borracho y ese hubiera sido el ejemplo que hubiéramos seguido. Pero él quiso estudiar y trabajar, y eso fue lo que hicimos. Por esa razón nosotros estudiamos, trabajamos, terminamos nuestras carreras, y cambió la vida de toda nuestra familia."

It was on that day that I learned the extent of my father's influence.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on My Father's Legacy

My father was born on March 27, 1927. His early life was difficult, but because he was fortunate enough to receive an education, his life and the lives of his immediate family – his mother, brothers, and future generations – completely changed. It's because of my father that I have always known the benefits of education and bilingualism. My father attended elementary school in the U.S. where he gained a good command of the English language. A few years later he returned to live in Monterrey, México, and lived a life which exemplified what Callahan and Gándara (2014) call a *bilingual advantage*. Statistical quantitative research on the economic advantage of bilingualism goes back and forth depending on the variables applied within individual studies. In the case of Chiswick and Miller's (2007) study, the conceptual problem and data limitation of clustering Spanish speaking bilinguals in areas where job prospects were limited led to a finding that Spanish-English bilinguals actually earned less than monolinguals (as cited in Porras, Ee and Gándara, 2014, p. 237). López (1999), using the 1992 National Adult Literacy Study in lieu of census data to analyze the monetary advantage bilingualism has in the labor market, found that, "bilingual individuals earn a slight premium compared to English

monolinguals" (as cited in Porras, Ee and Gándara, 2014, p. 238). In their survey of 289 public and private sector employees mostly based in California, Porras, Ee, and Gándara (2014) found that while employees capable of speaking Spanish or Chinese are perceived as more valuable and desirable by employers, there is no clear indicator that they receive greater pay and opportunities for advancement outside the areas of public service and retail (pp. 242-250).

Despite what empirical research has attempted to prove or disprove on the economic advantages of bilingualism, my father's first-hand experience left no doubt within our family that bilingualism is indeed an asset, both monetarily and culturally. Bilingualism allowed my father great opportunities in México. He worked at a dinner plate manufacturing company, *Keramos Monterrey*, where he created the designs that were engraved on ceramic plates. My father would translate when the owners of the company from the U.S. visited for operational inspections because he was one of the few employees fluent in English. He was a hard worker, but it was his bilingualism that really caught the attention of the company owners. They awarded him with a prestigious scholarship to *Tecnológico de Monterrey*, a revered university in Monterrey, Nuevo León, México. Today, the school's merit and reputation can be compared to that of MIT in Boston, Massachusetts. My father graduated from *Tecnológico de Monterrey* with a technical degree in *Mecánico Eléctrico*, or electrical mechanics. Although he did not know it at the time, his endeavors in education would change the destiny of his entire family, including my own. My father's efforts to become successful academically and in life do not exist in isolation; the ambitious, supportive environment he created within our family has directly influenced my personal, academic, and professional success (Davis-Kean, 2005; Gándara, 1982). But the path was not easy, and my father had to overcome a great deal of emotional and physical adversity in his life.

Family Lessons on Loss

The stroke my father suffered in 1997 caused him to lose his peripheral vision on the left side of each eye, and it affected his short term memory. In the four years he lived after his stroke, my father laboriously wrote about different episodes of his life on a typewriter. What follows is one of these writings transcribed in its entirety, without adjustment, and therefore includes any errors that occurred as a result of my father writing in his post-stroke condition. The vignette depicts one of the most difficult episodes my father experienced in his life, the loss of his brother and father within a period of two years when my father was nineteen years old.

Mi hermano carnal, Enrique Hernández Soriano fue, sin duda, un muchacho de mala suerte. Un hermano que fuimos inseparable desde pequeños en Houston y San Antonio, Texas. Es increíble que me haya olvidado de el hasta ahora que estoy escribiendo estos recuerdos. Enrique (le decíamos Lico) era dos años menor que yo. Así es que en 1945, fecha en que nuestro padre falleció, tenia 16 años de edad. El definitivamente tenia mala suerte, o seria buena suerte? Me pregunto esto porque al estar escribiendo un "pedazo de mi vida", me acuerdo de el. En los primeros diez aňos de mi vida, no recuerdo nada de el, porque será? Será que Dios quiso evitarme ese dolor y pena o lo que haya sido? A pesar que fue mi primer amigo que tuve, no lo recuerdo claramente para escribir algo de el en profundo. El día de hoy, 1 de febrero, 1999, me estoy acordando de el. Muy mal hecho de mi parte, no debí dejarlo para el último.

No cabe duda que la vida es un constante caminar, nomás se detiene y se muere la persona. De lo poco que recuerdo fue cuando se enfermó. Nunca pensé que la enfermedad que tenía fuese mortal. Lo que si recuerdo es que fue muy rápido. Fue una sorpresa para mí. Apenas tenia dos semanas de enfermo en la cama, cuando una tarde que llegue a la casa, estaba el doctor jovencito, y muy asustado que se le había ido un paciente. Mi madre lloraba como nunca lo había hecho. Todo por falta de dinero para pagar un hospital. Aun vivía mi padre, pero no recuerdo. Que hizo?

Como reaccionó? Se sintió culpable? Lo único que recuerdo es que el, mi padre, murió al año siguiente. Seria por el dolor de haber perdido un hijo de 16 años de edad.

– Benjamín Hernández Soriano

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Family Lessons on Loss

The stories my father told my siblings and me were full of description and emotions and always had a *moraleja,* or moral. He shared these stories with us regularly. My father had a passion for routine and structure in his work that carried over into routines in our home, such as with our bedtime ritual. My sisters, brother and I would be in bed no later than nine o'clock every night. Pajamas on, every time. And every night, without fail, there would be stories. Stories, especially those that come from the heart of a parent, are powerful tools that carry with them the potential to shape and guide the entire life of a child and are a critical tool for identity formation (Guajardo *et al*., 2012; Guajardo and Guajardo, 2007). Stories embody the spirit, tradition, beliefs, values, and essential foundations that dictate, describe, and elaborate the strength of entire cultures (Alarcón *et al*., 2011; Anzaldúa, 1999; Ellis, 2004; E. Garcia, 2015; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Reed-Danahay, 2009; Yosso, 2005). One of my father's most poignant stories, the story of his brother's passing that is depicted in the vignette above, has resonated with me and influenced my life into adulthood. It was a very emotional story for me, and I just couldn't even imagine what my father and my grandmother felt while experiencing such tragedy.

After the death of my father's father, the household income suddenly became almost non-existent. I heard stories of food being so scarce that a single egg had to be shared between brothers. I was saddened thinking of all the hardship that they gone through, but also inspired by how they came together to survive the experience. My father took on the role of the breadwinner for the household and his mother looked after him, making sure he was able to eat decently with the little food they had. She also made sure he was as well clothed as he could be. My

grandmother sold what she could to bring in any little bit of extra money. Later, my father's brother, Ruben, also helped the family by finding work with the railroad. They lived like this for some years while my father was going to school at *Alvaro Obregón*. When my father graduated, he was able to get a better paying job and take better care of his family. All his money went towards his family.

These types of stories that my father told my siblings and me about overcoming adversity carried with them the weight of my father's entire love, support, and hope for his family. They taught us what it means to be dedicated to your family. The lessons of life, the inherent *consejos* within my father's stories and *pláticas*, what Guajardo and Guajardo (1997) define as, "an act of sharing ideas, experiences, and stories," were of great priority to my father (p. 66). *Pláticas*, Guajardo and Guajardo (1997) explain are, "Stories that have enriched the life of the family" (p. 62). My father wanted his children to learn from talks about life and family; he wanted his children to learn about how we should behave in this world, and he wanted us to learn from him. I have never forgotten those cherished moments of open communication and storytelling such as when my father shared his story of loss and perseverance with me. The experience created closeness between us. It taught me humility and perseverance. These teaching moments he shared with me were very intimate and warm. They influenced me even as I became a parent myself. I did my best to share the same experience of open, sincere communication with my own children when they were living with me. I found or made time to talk openly with them. As I got busier with my career, I didn't have the opportunity to do it as much; but I always set aside time for *pláticas* with my children before going to bed. I'd tell them how much I love them, share stories of our family, pray with them, and try to end the day on a positive note - try to let my children know that they come from a tradition of love that my parents started.

Mi Mamá

Figure 3: My Mother

The one story my mom told again and again and again, even when she struggled with dementia in her later years, was an account of when she almost died had it not been for her father.

My mother always began the story the same way: "Un día mi mamá me dijo, 'Ve a traer leña para la lumbre.' Y fuí. Me acuerdo que fuí al patio a traer la leña y me picó una víbora o un alicantrito, como le decíamos nosotros. Me fuí corriendo a la casa gritando, 'Me picó un alacantrito!' Mi papá en ese momento supo que me había picado una víbora. Sacó su navaja y me hiso unas cortadas en el dedo para sacarme el veneno." At this point in the story she always pointed to the scars on her fingers where she had been

bitten. "Mira, aquí tengo las cicatrices. Mi papá me amarró el brazo con un trapo y me llevó al doctor en un carretón a las Aldamas.

"Para cuando llegamos al doctor en a las Aldamas, ya llevaba el brazo hinchado. Pero me curaron y sobreviví. El doctor comentó que mi padre me había salvado la vida. Mi papá siempre me protegió mucho porque me consideraba la más débil de la familia."

My mom's claim of being "débil" was in no way hyperbole. When she was young, my mother was diagnosed as anemic. She recalled to me how she went to the doctor for treatment and that her mother would prepare special meals for her, including a lot of liver! She always talked about her father as being very protective of her. My mother, in turn, always made sure that her own children were also loved, protected, and well taken care of. When my father spoke of my mother, he spoke of her fondly, "Yo no me equivoqué. Tu mamá fue muy buena mamá. Fue dura y las crió muy bien."

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Mi Mamá

My mother was born June 8, 1929, in a small town in the state of Nuevo León, México named *Los Aldamas*. She grew up on a large ranch that her father owned in a very small town named *San Pedro*. Her memories growing up on that ranch were wonderful. She often told me fond stories of being spoiled by her father, whose adoration for her was immense. Just as her father always loved and cared for her, my mother's pride was always her own children, and she did all she could to bring us all up very well. Throughout all she did, my mother always provided the *ejemplo* that you dedicate your life to the wellbeing of your children first and foremost. Her children and family would always be a priority. As such, my mother was truly altruistic when it came to her children. She was there for the birth of all her grandchildren and helped all her daughters get through their pregnancies. If any of her children were sick, she would not let go

until she saw that we were OK. She made sure we went to the doctor, made sure we took our medicine, and made sure nothing would prevent us from getting better. If that meant she wasn't going to sleep so that she could watch over us from our bedside, then she wouldn't sleep. She would be there right by our bed the entire night. I recall my sister would say, "*Ahí estaba cuando nos enfermábamos hasta que nos aliviábamos*." In the same manner, my mother took care of my father when he was diagnosed with diabetes by making sure he took his medication and was eating well. My mother took care of her own mother during the last years of her life. When one of her brothers underwent back surgery and had a very difficult recovery, my mother visited him regularly and took him meals. She was even very involved in caring for her mother-in-law towards the end of her life by being part of the rotation of family members who would spend the day or the night by her mother-in-law's side. My mother was there to take care of everybody without a single complaint because, above everything else, her family was her life.

It's those simple things in life, dedication and consideration, which carry the greatest significance. I remember my mother would always make it a point to celebrate our accomplishments, from graduations to birthdays. My parents didn't have the money for me to have a fancy *quinceñera*, but my mother pulled together her resources to make sure the event was marked with a celebratory gathering anyway. She set up the house to act as a reception hall. My friends were all invited, and a wonderful, home-cooked dinner was served outside in the back yard. We removed all the furniture from the *sala* to create a makeshift dance floor, where my friends and I danced all night to the sounds of the *cintas* (cassette tapes) coming through the stereo. We danced, and we were happy. My brother and sister, Ricardo y Raquel, who are twins, had a *quinceñera/o* also. We had a dinner inside the house for their celebration mainly because they were born in December and it was cold outside. In addition, *Elsa y Elva*, who are also twins,

and *Elenita*, the baby, all had *quinceñeras* at home with whatever my mother could put together. We all wore new clothes on our *quinceñeras*, invited our friends, and there was cake, music, and a dinner. These were special moments my mother created. She never let limited resources stop her from creating special moments for her children.

Now that she's gone, I don't think I miss her any more or less than my brother and sisters do, but I know my mother and I had a special relationship. She confided so much in me. We were friends. We had *pláticas* about our relationships with our husbands. We shared the good, and we shared the bad. She always appreciated my father's willingness to allow her to visit and support me in times of need. My mom would say, "*Tu papá no se enoja cuando vengo contigo. Es más, él es el que me dice, 'Ve y ayudale a Olivia.'*" We also shared frequently about our children. My mother absolutely adored her children and her grandchildren. She was always sad or regretted that she didn't have everybody together in the same city. Whenever my mother would express her dismay over this, I would say to her, "*Ay mamá que tiene que ver eso, todos estamos bien*." And she would say, "*Es que no sabes cómo quisiera tenerlos todos juntos.*" And the truth is I didn't understand, not entirely. Now that I'm older, though, I'm dealing with the same desire, trying to find a place to live that is close to my children and grandchildren – wanting to have everybody close together. I know now what my mother felt. A lot of the things she did for me and the rest of our family make a lot more sense now. Lately, I've been telling my husband, "*Luis, que tanto nos queda? Vamos a dejarles a nuestros hijos en vida lo que les podemos dejar. Pero más que nada, tenemos que darles mucho amor y apoyarlos en todo.*" When you get older, you realize that's all you're really here for – to support and to serve. If someone is sick, you help take care of them; if someone needs a little bit of money, you help them out within your means; and if your children need you, you help them in any way you can.

That is your legacy. Love is the best thing you can leave behind for your children. That's the legacy my mom left me.

My Mother's Influence on My Success

After marrying my father in 1956, my mother moved to Chicago, Ill. where she eagerly absorbed and learned as much as she could about the American culture and language. She learned English on her own without taking any type of formal classes. She studied the intricacies of her location, learned how to get around on the buses on her own to run errands, formed strong relationships and friendships with the neighbors, and obtained her social security number without any assistance in order to seek employment.

Fourteen years later, she returned to Monterrey, Nuevo León where she exercised her learned experiences from Chicago to help her start her business selling clothing, and then converted that business into a beauty salon. At this time, when I was 15 years old, she encouraged me to go to beauty school over the summer to help with her business endeavors. My mother was always thinking ahead and making sure that I was learning skills that I could use later on in life.

While at beauty school, I learned to dye, perm, and cut hair, as well as do pedicures and manicures. My mother didn't attend beauty school herself, but she hired staff who knew how to provide beauty services, including me when I earned my cosmetology certification. I remember being called in to give haircuts or put rollers in people's hair whenever the salon got really busy. She always found things I could do to help out.

Figure 4: Beauty School

I'll never forget those Saturday evenings when my mother, during her entrepreneurial years, would call out, "Olivia! Es hora de hacer inventario!" As she cooked dinner, I would sit in the comedor with piles of receipts that I would have to use to calculate the sales and expenses for the year. As my mother cooked, she would be checking on me, saying, "Súmale aquí, réstale allá." I would follow her instructions carefully, calculating the difference between how many clothes were bought and sold that year, adding and subtracting totals on the calculator and recording the results on a simple spiral notebook.

I remember dozing off and almost falling asleep the whole time as I filled multiple pages with my calculations. When it came to helping my mom with her clothing business, I had no problem helping out as a salesperson or decorating the display window. In my mom's beauty salon, I would eagerly help her put the rollers in people's hair, sweep the floors, or cut hair. However, I could never get used to doing the finances. Accounting was never my cup of tea.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on My Mother's Influence on My Success

My mother was a leader. Despite her lack of formal education, she never stopped seeking opportunities to learn and better herself every way she could. Every day, my mother would see my siblings and me off to school and then walk to the salon with our dog, Snoopy, following her. Everyone in the neighborhood knew that when Snoopy was coming, *La Señora Olivia* was on her way. Her *ejemplos* of work ethic and her resilience, her ability to not let anything stop her from doing what she wanted to do, have given me the "aspirational capital" that has provided me with the power to dream and achieve possibilities beyond my current position in life no matter what obstacles have been in my way (Yosso, 2005, p. 78). My mother's *ejemplos* shaped my epistemological foundation to *valerme por mi misma*. Gándara's (1982) study of successful Mexican-American professionals revealed that, "…their parents were exceptionally hard-working individuals who set high standards of performance and expected their children to live up to their model of energy and drive" (p. 172). Seeing my mother develop as a woman and a leader in a familial and business setting made it possible for me to dream big and know that I was destined to do great things. Her *ejemplo* has strengthened me as I have had to navigate a world in which there often exists resistance towards Latina leaders on the micro and macro level (Bonilla-Santiago, 1991; Delgado Bernal, 1998; Delgado Bernal, et al., 2006; E. Garcia, 2015; Pizarro, 1998; Pérez Huber and Cueva, 2012; Yosso, 2005).

Although my father was the educated parent in my family, my mother was equally or sometimes even more influential in my professional aspirations because she always had such high expectations for me. Gándara (1982) explains how, "…the great majority of the [professionally successful] women [in her study] saw their mothers as strongly supportive of their educational aspirations, and many commented on their mother's desires that their daughters

be economically independent" (p. 172). As I grew up, my mother always insisted that I finish my education and have a career. She used to say, "*Estudia y recíbete de una carrera aunque te cases, porque nunca sabes si algún día te vayas a quedar sola*." She played a major role in helping me complete my education and develop my career not just by being a role model, but also by being enormously supportive. Additionally, she was there to help me consolidate my responsibilities as a mother and a student by taking care of my children for long periods of time during the summer so that I could finish my college education. She'd either take them to her house in Monterrey or come to my house in the United States to look after them. If I had a test or if I had to study, she would come help me cook, clean the house, and see that the kids were bathed and in bed early while I was in the library. It has been noted by Macias Wycoff (1996) that 70% of female undergraduates and 80% of female graduate students identified as academically successful in her study did not have children, which shows that Mexican-American women with children have a harder time obtaining a college degree, much less a graduate degree. While I am certain that I possess the resilience to have been an academically successful parent without my mother's aid, by helping me take care of my children, my mother substantially increased my chances of academic success while also spending valuable time with her grandchildren. Her selflessness knew no bounds, and I am most definitely in a better place in my life because of her.

Madison Elementary School and Bright School

Figure 5: Kindergarten

My initial formative years in education started in Chicago at Madison Elementary School where I attended one full year of kinder and a partial year of first grade. The Madison School kindergarten class photo above from November 1962, portrays a picture, I believe, of very happy boys and girls, all dressed up for picture day in white shirts, ties, bows and beautiful Sunday dresses. I attended a segregated school because we lived in a segregated African American neighborhood in Chicago, Illinois. I don't know if it was one classroom or two, but the picture shows 37 students, 33 African American and 4 Hispanic students. I am the only Hispanic girl in the picture.

My first recollection of those years includes memories of having fun and drawing a lot. I also recall that in first grade I was pulled out of the classroom to join a group of students in a circle for reading interventions, a clear indicator that I had been identified as being in need of remediation. During these interventions my fellow students and I would repeat

words from flashcards that a teacher showed us. I was shy for the most part, so I did as I was told and didn't really think much of it. I distinctly remember the word "you" and thinking that it sure was spelled very differently than it was pronounced. Somehow I knew I had to memorize that word!

Figure 6: First Grade

In 1963, my parents decided to move to a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood in South Chicago, and I found myself in a different first grade classroom in a new school, Bright School. Even though I wasn't pulled out of my classroom at Bright School, rote pedagogy was a common practice of instruction. Everything my new teacher, Mrs. Cross, would write on the blackboard, students would copy. Mrs. Cross would rarely get up from her desk, yet we all knew what to do. Paper after paper, copying the alphabet and sentences from the board making sure I had a capital letter at the beginning and a period at the end, and that tall letters were tall and small letters would touch the dotted line. It was

easy, and it was lifeless. I was receiving an education that had very low expectations. It was a mechanical type of education with little student engagement. Learning expectations were not very high for a classroom of Mexican-American students.

Meanwhile, at home, my father was working with us on learning how to read in Spanish. I say "us", because by the time I was in 1st grade, I had four siblings – two pairs of twins, Ricardo y Raquel and Elsa y Elva. My father would bring textbooks in Spanish from México, and I would read from them at the kitchen table. I recall reading out loud the stories in Spanish such as La Muñeca, El Soldado, and Mi Mamá me Ama. My father made sure I had the right intonation as I read. I recall reading the stories fluently, paying close attention to the pictures and enjoying the stories. In the process, my father always made cross-language connections by teaching me the sounds different letters make in English and in Spanish. He taught me that the letter "H" is silent in Spanish; he also made sure I rolled the double "RR", and that double "LL" sounded like a "Y". Overall, I recall not having difficulty reading in my native language. It was easy for me and I picked it up quickly. Meanwhile at school, I was introduced to the Dick and Jane readers which were different from my Spanish textbooks. I didn't have difficulty reading in English in first grade because my father set a strong foundation in my native language that supported my literacy in my second language.

One of my favorite memories from this time is when I learned the alphabet in Spanish. Because there is no equivalent song for the English ABC song in Spanish, my father and I created an original song for the Spanish alphabet that I'd later sing with my brothers and sisters as my father pointed to the letters on our blackboard at home. We struggled to fit

the Spanish alphabet to the tune of a song that my father had selected because the flow of the letters didn't quite fit. We opted to switch the order of the "J" and the "I" in order for the song to flow. My father, possibly realizing that learning the alphabet in the wrong order could be confusing later on, clarified by saying, "Vamos a cambiar el orden de las dos letras nada más para la canción." That song, our alphabet, was a bond between us. I will never forget it, and to this day I still feel the Mexican alphabet as belonging a little more to me than the English one does.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Madison Elementary School and Bright School

My memories of first grade at Madison School are few, but writing and reflecting on what I do remember from that time, I realize that my experience was indicative of the "sink-or-swim" mentality that permeated education practices for English learners during the early part of the 1960s, when, "Most educators and policy makers felt that it was up to the language-minority students, not the schools, to make the linguistic, cultural, and cognitive adjustments necessary to achieve assimilation into American society" (Ovando, 2003, p. 6). This lack of consideration for English learners led to the phenomenon Figueroa (2000) describes as, "misdiagnosis of bilingualism as disability" (as cited in Artiles and Ortiz, 2002, p. 33). By the time I was in first grade at Madison School, I began to experience first-hand the common practice of misidentifying students who don't speak English while attempting to solve the perceived "problem" of speaking another language by assigning them to interventions, "based on the assumption that non-English language groups have a handicap to be overcome" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 19; Collier and Thomas, 2014, p. 117). I see this misrepresentation happen even today, as ELs are overrepresented in special education programs, not because of a cognitive deficiency, but simply because of inadequate and inaccurate learning assessments (Escamilla *et al.*, 2014, p. 371). Students get *pulled out* of the

mainstream class because it is assumed that they can't read or have a language or speech problem, when the reality is that they are cognitively capable of performing at high levels in both languages, but only when provided with culturally and linguistically responsive instruction by culturally competent educators (Artiles and Ortiz, 2002; Fenner, 2014).

As an adult writing about my experience in Mrs. Cross's class, I thought to myself, "I wonder how my experience as a first grade student compares to others' experiences." More specifically, I contemplated the idea that perhaps my experience would have been different had I attended a school with a predominantly Anglo population instead of a school that was predominantly Hispanic. Would my education have been more in line with best practice pedagogy if this had been the case? I also wondered what would have been the consequence of my exposure to the rote style of instruction and interventions I experienced had I not had the support of my father teaching me in my native language at home. I very well could have fallen victim to the sink-or-swim model at Bright School, falling behind academically while acquiring English, had it not been for my father providing additional support at home in my native language of Spanish. Cummins (2000), Escamilla *et al.*, (2014), Krashen (1994), and Thomas and Collier, (2012) all point out how developing the students' native language instead of discontinuing it promotes cognitive development and reinforces student identity. Cummins (2000) states, "The research is very clear that for groups that appear to be at risk of school failure promotion of strong L1 literacy makes a powerful contribution to students' academic success" (p. 192). I was fortunate enough to have received support at home to help me navigate my kindergarten and first grade experience without becoming overwhelmed with the American public school goal of assimilating students of minority groups to the American culture (Ovando, 2003, p. 6).

Overall, both my parents fostered a home environment that valued bilingualism and biculturalism, but it was my father who influenced my academic achievement most directly at an early age by providing me with a strong foundation in my native language at home, what Krashen (1996) identifies as, "de facto bilingual education" (as cited in Crawford, 2004, p. 229). The concept of "de facto bilingual education" explains that some EL students are academically successful even without having participated in a formal bilingual education program at school because they are receiving direct support for second language acquisition in their mother tongue at home or through other means (Crawford, 2004). Ramos and Krashen (2013) use Arnold Schwarzenegger as an example; they explain how Schwarzenegger's education in Austria, which included high school in his native language, seven years of English classes, and business classes held in English, directly led to the former governor's accelerated English language development when he immigrated to the United States, not his first-language avoidance and second-language immersion as he claims (p. 221-3). My "de facto bilingual education" came from my father's insistence to conserve the tradition of our language. Although my father was fully capable of speaking English, he spoke Spanish at home all the time. My father knew that I was being immersed in English at school and he wanted me to keep my Spanish. He wholeheartedly appreciated and valued our culture and language and felt that they had to be a part of our family. By speaking Spanish at home all the time, listening to Mexican music, attending Mexican-American events, and speaking to us about the Mexican culture, my father promoted a value for our Spanish language and Mexican culture at home, which in turn made me value and take pride in my Mexican culture (Cummins, 2000, 2015).

The education I received at home with my father was *engaging* and promoted *higher order thinking* skills (Anderson *et al*., 2001; Dewey, 1963; Piaget and Cook, 1952; Vygotzky,

1962). When I learned to read in Spanish, I learned that phonemes make sounds, sounds make words and words have meaning. Most of the letters in Spanish have the same sound in English, which facilitated my learning to read in English. My father gave me a jumpstart to literacy in English by teaching me to first read in my native language using culturally relevant texts (Escamilla *et al.*, 2014; Garcia, 2009; Krashen, 1994). The education I received at home was culturally significant because, as Nieto (1996) explains, cognition is a sociocultural process, and when my father taught my siblings and me the alphabet with our special song, he was in actuality instilling in us the cultural capital of assigning value to learning within the dynamic of our household (p. 38, 45). The desire to learn became part of my identity, and that in turn helped me value the act of learning. My father's work with me inherently ensured that the cognitive constructs and affective constructs of bilingual education functioned together as an interchangeable and inseparable unit. My perception of bilingual education, though more naïve in my youth, continues to carry with it this cognizance of the balanced merit between value added from scholastic settings and assets provided at home. When I was a child, I could not articulate the pedagogical difference in how or what I was learning – I simply understood that education is more than what you learn at school.

Finding Value in My Heritage

> *After second grade at Bright School, my father bought a house in a Jewish neighborhood and I moved to my new school, Luella Elementary. During my second year at Luella Elementary, my fourth grade year, I became more aware of how I fit into my surroundings at school. I wanted to have friends and I wanted to belong, but I was afraid that I wouldn't be accepted because I was different from the other students. I didn't know the term Mexican-American when I was that age, but I knew my ties to México made me*

different. I can remember being extremely self-conscious that my English was not at the same level as the other students in the class. I didn't feel confident to openly speak in English to the teacher. I remember that I didn't want to raise my hand and participate in the classroom because I felt shy and worried I might make a mistake in the way I spoke.

In fourth grade, school became a little more difficult as the curriculum evolved to include more reading and writing. I had a very harsh teacher, Mrs. Gray. I remember when my parents came back from attending an open house at my school, my mom said to me, "Está bien rara esa maestra." My mother had a good point. Mrs. Gray was strange, mostly because she really was gray. By this, I don't mean that she had gray hair, which she did have, or that she was habitually sad. Mrs. Gray was literally gray! She explained the disease to us, though I don't recall the specifics at this time. It had something to do with the pigments in her skin causing her to have a gray-like skin color. As unusual as her appearance was, however, I will always remember Mrs. Gray for an entirely different reason. Mrs. Gray was the first teacher who helped me find confidence in myself at a time when I needed it most.

It all began on a cold January morning when the Chicago Blizzard of 1967 covered the front of our house with so much snow and my family and I were forced to take a detour to exit the house through the basement door. I remember looking out the window seeing my father shoveling snow trying to create a pathway to the street. When the pathway was finished, my father and I walked to the grocery store through the snow with a little red Radio Flyer wagon. The excursion was significant to me because I felt that my father and

I bonded during a difficult time, and that together we were going to be celebrated for bringing food back for the family.

I vividly recall when my dad received a letter from his mother in México two days later letting him know that the snow had reached all the way to Monterrey. On that morning when my father shared with me the news of the snow storm reaching México, I felt a great need to share this story because I was so in awe that the never-ending snow had affected my family in México as well. In a completely uncharacteristic manner for me, I approached Mrs. Gray and asked her, "Mrs. Gray, did you know that it's snowing in México too?" She stopped whatever the class was doing at that moment and had everyone gather around and pay attention. She addressed all the students very carefully, "Everybody, please listen. Olivia just told me something very important. It's not just snowing here in Chicago; it's also snowing in México!"

I don't know if Mrs. Gray realized it, but that moment when she incorporated my Mexican culture into her lesson was incredibly significant for me. The fact that she stopped everything and acknowledged the importance of what I was sharing made me feel accepted and confident. It was the first time something that was such a big part of my home life was recognized at school, and that acknowledgment of my culture and heritage validated my identity. As minute as the entire scenario was, it made me feel like I belonged. From that moment on, my newfound confidence and voice helped me become more successful. It helped me begin to write from the heart. And as strict and even harsh as Mrs. Gray could be, she often selected my writing to be displayed on the classroom

bulletin boards with golden stars as an example of exemplary work. I remember reading more, writing more, and doing more math than I had ever done before after my experience with Mrs. Gray.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Finding Value in My Heritage

Writing is innately reflexive, an automatic tool for self-discovery that develops valid knowledge of social reality (Davies, 2007). As I wrote the previous segment on my experiences in Mrs. Gray's class, I realized that many English learners experience fear, anxiety and insecurity as they continue to develop their second language in an academic setting. This condition, I discovered, manifests itself even in ELs who are on track in their second language acquisition trajectory. When I was in fourth grade, my fifth year in an American school, I was well on track in my second language development, transitioning from BICS to CALP as I moved from solely being able to perform basic conversational skills to being able to listen, speak, read and write at a higher academic level (Collier and Thomas, 2009). Despite being on track in my second language development, progressing successfully through every grade level, and receiving Bilingual *Education de facto* support at home, I still felt insecure and had a perception that I was socially and academically behind compared to my native English-speaking classmates. This paradoxical scenario acknowledges that academic success for ELs requires more than just utilizing instructional techniques that pertain solely to language. Cummins (2014) argues that ELs are better served through a curriculum that enables students to use language for powerful purposes, such as affirming their identity (p. 8). This type of pedagogy, sometimes referred to as inspirational pedagogy, cannot transpire unless students' identity, culture and lives are incorporated into the curriculum in meaningful ways (Cummins, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Nieto, 1996; Thomas and Collier, 2012).

My daily experience in Mrs. Gray's class prior to the incident in my narrative above did not include my culture in the instruction I was receiving; it was simply not common practice in classrooms during the 1960s to provide culturally relevant instruction (Ovando, 2003). Because my culture, background, and language were not part the daily curriculum, my life at school and my life at home existed as two completely separate worlds. The only time I recall different cultures being acknowledged in school was during special events, fairs, national holidays, or the occasional superficial mention within a lesson. These inclusions are not an example of culturally relevant pedagogy, as there is no focus on cultural competence by "utilizing students' culture as [the] vehicle for learning," and instead introduces culture simply as material to be learned (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 161). At home, my father was exposing me to my Mexican culture by taking me to Mexican-American parades, Mexican-American restaurants, and cultural exhibits in museums. He taught me songs in Spanish, played Mexican music at home on his record player console, and taught me how to read and write in Spanish because of his love for his country and his Spanish language. He made me feel proud of my Mexican heritage. School, on the other hand, was indoctrinating me to admire the American culture and language via an Anglo-centric curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Mrs. Gray made a difference in my life on the day she recognized my story in front of my peers because she not only acknowledged my culture and the story I shared with her from my home, but she also integrated it into the lesson. Actions that acknowledge students' culture and language, no matter how simple these actions may be, help students feel validated in the eyes of their teachers and peers (Cummins, 2000, p. 47). This is known as transformative pedagogy (Cummins, 2000).

Cummins (2000) explains that, "…a central principle of [transformative pedagogy] is that the negotiation of identity in the interactions between educators and students is central to

students' academic success or failure" (p. 48). My interaction with Mrs. Gray that day was an example of how a teacher can authentically incorporate culture into the curriculum in a way that aligns with culturally relevant, transformative pedagogy, using micro interactions to promote collaborative relations of power instead of coercive relations of power between teachers and students (Cummins, 2000, p. 44). Coercive interactions between teachers and students produce fear, uncertainty, and anxiety, which inhibit students from confidently participating in class. These coercive relations in the classroom often exist as a reflection of coercive hegemonic struggles that exist in society, including the systemic disempowerment of culturally diverse students through assimilation (Cummins, 2000, p. 44). Coercive relations can also exist as a consequence of following cultural norms. For example, children from Hispanic backgrounds like me are taught not to disobey teachers and to do as they are told, creating a dominant/subordinate relationship between the student and teacher where the student is reluctant to question or provide feedback in the classroom (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992). This type of relationship stifles learning, inquiry, motivation, and communication between students and teachers, as students can become too afraid to communicate and become mentally withdrawn from the learning the process (Cummins, 2000, p. 48). As a nine year old Mexican-American girl approaching Mrs. Gray that morning, I was afraid that I might be yelled at, that I might be told to just sit down, or, even worse, that I might not be acknowledged at all. The fact that Mrs. Gray welcomed my words and asked the students in class *why* it was important that it was snowing in México validated me as having something worth contributing. This episode helped me become a more confident student. I recall beginning to articulate and participate more in the learning process at school from that point on. The experience was one of many in my lifetime that have demonstrated to me the

importance of incorporating students' culture and language into lessons which promotes collaborative relationships that in turn promote academic success (Cummins, 2000, 2015).

Community in México

I moved to México with my family in 1969, and in doing so, I entered a whole new world that would enrich my epistemology with a strong value of community. My family and I moved to the neighborhood of La Colonia Chapultepec, in San Nicolás de los Garza, Nuevo León. It was a typical Mexican neighborhood with family homes made of concrete. Myriads of potted plants shielded the mecedoras from view on nearly every patio. Children continuously chased each other around as adults would small talk, rock back and forth on rocking chairs, or accompany each other on their way to buy milk at La Tienda de Doña Tota, a family-run grocery store neatly camouflaged within the neighboring houses of la Calle Linares.

Doña Tota kept a tab for everyone in the neighborhood. Whether my mother stopped by to pick up some milk, bread, and meat for our dinner, or I would pop in to treat myself to a Gansito Mexican pastry, it all went on the same tab, which my mother paid at the end of every month. We were a strong community with a lot of trust and respect for each other. People helped each other out and looked out for one another.

Friendship and openness were characteristic of the people in La Colonia Chapultepec. The word "neighbor" carried with it great significance. Everybody knew each other on a personal level. Your vecinos become like confidants, close family friends. My mom had close friends in the United States, but they were more inclined to remain in their own

homes. In México, people would openly greet each other and invite each other over for merienda – coffee with pan dulce or a homemade cake. I remember what it was like walking to the farmacia five houses down from my house. If la Señora Michaela was rocking on her mecedora on her patio, I would greet her, "Adioooos, Señora Michaela!" And she would respond, "Adioooos!" Same with la Señora Roble, la Señora Perla, and all the other neighbors along the way. Eventually, I got to know every single neighbor on my block in La Colonia Chapultepec.

Through my interactions with these neighbors, they taught me las "costumbres mexicanas y el valor de la familia." My mom would meet with her friends once a week and they would share their family struggles and successes. They would share how they handled whatever challenges they had in their families. The stories often involved struggles with their sons or daughters either not doing well in school or being in unhealthy relationships with their boyfriends or girlfriends. They also shared about their economic struggles and how they were creative with their budgets. They'd share prices from the different markets and other ways to save money.

By sharing their stories, they were learning from each other and building close relationships. I could see how much my mother enjoyed having close friends. It made me feel good seeing her have a healthy social life outside of the home. It was a different side of my mother that I wasn't so used to seeing. There came a point where even the husbands all got to know each other as well. We had neighborhood meetings and even neighborhood-wide birthday celebrations.

Y que no se muriera alguien. If someone suffered a loss in their family, neighbors brought food and offered their condolences for that family. Neighbors would arrive to the home with a cooked meal and they would spend time there talking and crying alongside the mourning family.

Looking back on it now, I realize how much my time in México shaped who I am as a leader from the time I first moved there. La Colonia Chapultepec indoctrinated me into a world where community serves as a tool for the advancement of the people – where efficacy is built together. That part of México has never left me.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Community in México

The social networks that I encountered in the *Colonia Chapultepec*, the support and sharing of knowledge to improve the lives of everyone in the community, also exists here in the United States among families, especially Mexican-American families. This is significant in communities where access to family-school relationships is limited because of historical, socio-cultural, and socioeconomic reasons. A strong family-school relationship is key to student academic success (Gonzalez, 2012; Hill and Taylor, 2004). Unfortunately, "…the process of engaging with the educational system is bound by rules, language, and values that privilege some people and excludes others" (Delgado-Gaitan , 1994 p. 299). Parents who have never had a formal education themselves already have a disadvantage because many of the rules in the American public school system are foreign to them. Cultural norms for Mexicans and Mexican-Americans dictate an unconditional trust on behalf of parents that the school is acting in their child's best interest, and it is even considered inappropriate for parents to interfere with school

decisions (Garcia, 2009, p. 151). Some parents defer to the discretion of the school or teacher without question when decisions concerning their child's education, including scheduling, rigor of curriculum, and even retention, need to be made. Parents from low-socioeconomic backgrounds often cannot establish face-to-face relationships with their child's school because of lack of language proficiency, immigration status, living locations, and transportation conditions (Williams, 2013). Overall, the perception that Mexican-American families or minority/low-socioeconomic families don't actively pursue a family-school relationship because they are ignorant or lack motivation is not accurate. In fact, most Mexican-American families hold education in high esteem and encourage their children to take advantage of all their educational opportunities (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990, 1992).

For Mexican-American communities, lack of advantages and access to engagement with the education system due to historical, sociocultural, and socioeconomic reasons are alleviated organically through a complex social network system that exists within these same communities (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990, 1992). Parents belong to different social network systems where they access various social resources pertaining to education, such as knowledge of how to register their children in school, where to access health and counseling services, how they can get support to obtain school supplies for their children, and what classes their children need to take to graduate college-ready (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992). The networking process in which this occurs is something that I personally witnessed first-hand when I was living in *La Colonia Chapultepec* in México. I saw how the neighbors and my mother's close friends always helped each other by pointing out where the best social and educational resources were available and how to access them. They shared information on how to navigate the Mexican school system, who the best teachers were, what my mother's friends' aspirations were for their children, and how they were

going to make sure their children achieved their academic goals. This complex support system within the Mexican-American community is a testament of how its members, regardless of their socioeconomic status, cultural beliefs, or historical backgrounds, value education and make an effort to find all the opportunities and resources available to better support their children in reaching their academic goals.

This support system also exists at a micro level, focusing on strengthening the relationship between parents and their children. Parents give their children *consejos,* which are deeper and more nurturing than simple advice because they communicate the family's expectations and elicit emotional empathy, compassion, and inspiration (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). When a parent gives a *consejo,* it's time to listen. Common *consejos* in the Mexican-American community include, *Estudia y prepárate para que no batalles en la vida como yo; Se honesto todo el tiempo, no robes y siempre di la verdad*; *La familia es lo más importante en la vida.* Each one of these *consejos* that come from caring parents conveys important messages that stay engrained in a child's mind as a guide in life. A uniquely beneficial characteristic of *consejos* is that, as non-material resources, they are available for use by anybody, rich or poor alike. Non-material resources, including *consejos*, discipline in the household, organizing the home with a designated area to study or complete school work, and structuring schedules to support educational endeavors, are commonly taken advantage of by Mexican-American families to promote academic success for their children. In *La Colonia Chapultepec*, my closest neighbors, who were also my mother's best friends, cared for me and gave me *consejos* guided by a rich social history of conventional wisdom passed down across generations.

I see the practice of giving *consejos* continue today among parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even teachers in the district where I work. During community meetings, parents of

ELs give other parents *consejos* on the importance of their children maintaining their native language in order for them to be able to continue communicating with their parents, grandparents and other members of the family. They say, *Es bueno que los niños sigan manteniendo su Español para que no pierdan nuestro idioma y el valor de nuestra cultura. Es importante que entiendan de donde vienen.* I have also seen how parents make great efforts to engage in the education system their children participate in, which many times excludes them for the simple reason of not understanding the language or the rules of the American school system. I have seen parents take advantage of ESL classes offered in my district during the day or in the evening so they can better navigate the education system and play a better role in supporting their children in school. I've seen in multiple districts when mothers stay behind after dropping off their children in the morning to share how they experience the education system. As I witness these social networks in action, I am reminded how, as a bilingual program director, I have the opportunity and privilege to support families in these complex networks as they navigate the American education system.

San Pedro de Ruedas by Way of Dr. Arroyo: A Story of Poverty and Education

In the Mexican teacher education system, graduates are assigned a mandatory teaching position at a designated rural school. This placement comes directly from the government, and you can spend years teaching in a rural area unless you know someone of influence in the state education office or in the teachers' union who can pull some strings to change your assignment. I had always heard people say, "Don't get too comfortable when you graduate. When you finish, you're going to be assigned to a school way out in the boonies somewhere." That is exactly what happened to me. When I finished my elementary teacher certification program at *La Normal Miguel F. Martinez*, in Monterrey, Nuevo León, I was assigned to work and live in a rural

elementary school with built-in teachers' quarters just south of *Dr. Arroyo, Nuevo León.* On the morning that I was assigned my placement, I stood in line along with several other anxious new teachers in a damp, air conditioner-less office where I picked up my placement envelope. *Dr. Arroyo* is located at the very southern tip of the state of *Nuevo León, México*. My mother, always incredibly supportive, packed a bag to join me on my bus rides across the state. The journey there contained a stretch where the bus bumped up and down the narrow windy road of the *Sierra de Galeana* mountainside. My mother was near hysterical as the bus circled round and round the mountain. I can still hear her sharp protests that I was never to take this route again. Eventually, the bus stopped at a little plaza where the *inspector* who was in charge of several schools in that area was waiting for us. After a formal greeting with all us teachers, the *inspector* led us down the street to his office, where he explained to me and five other teachers that we would be working in an *ejido*, or communal farmland, in *San Pedro de Ruedas*. My placement papers said I would be working in the town of *Dr. Arroyo*, but the *ejido* I would actually be working at was located 18 kilometers of unpaved road into the mountains from *Dr. Arroyo*. One by one, a few parents and all six of us teachers, five girls and one male, piled into a pair of oversized black bubble cars that drove us down the 18 kilometers of dirt road to *San Pedro de Ruedas*. When we reached the schooling area, I found the layout very similar to that of schools in *Monterrey*. Each classroom had benches, one window, and a chalkboard. There was nothing out of the ordinary. The teachers' living quarters, however, were a little less than desirable. There was one big, two-bedroom housing unit for the six of us, which meant the five female teachers would be staying in one room, and the one male teacher would have a room to himself. There was also a kitchen with two chimneys where we could cook over an open flame. The rest of the living quarters consisted of cement floors and rough white cement walls. Everything was made

of cement except the roof; that was made of *paja*, or straw. The bathroom, an outhouse, was located all the way at the end of school yard. There were no flushing toilets. There was no running water at all. The other teachers and I were young and enthusiastic about trying out this new and adventurous experience. My mother, not so much. "*Estas loca*," she said when I told her that I was willing to stay and teach there. Having known my mother as someone who never backed down from a challenge, I was a little unsettled by her reluctance for me to stay there. However, by this point in my life I had been so indoctrinated into a family lifestyle and culture where we embraced challenges by cultivating our personal and interpersonal power, I was not going to give up on achieving my professional goals so easily. I decided to stay and fulfill my teaching obligation in this third-world style schoolhouse.

Figure 7: *San Pedro de Ruedas*

San Pedro de Ruedas has an incredibly dry climate. It is so dry that I had difficulty sweating under the sun. I can only imagine how that must have been for the all farmers out there harvesting corn up and down rows as far as the eye could see. The *ejido* of *San Pedro de Ruedas* was also severely impoverished. Although I had been exposed to the concept of poverty through

my father's *pláticas*, this was the first time I was witnessing and experiencing those conditions myself. The locals depended almost exclusively on the rain to support their crops and themselves. Their drinking water came from an *estanque*, or pond. Every morning, women would head down to the pond and skim the water off the top, pouring it into one of two old cans once full of *manteca* that they'd balance on a pole all the way back to their homes when full. The water from these cans was emptied into big tanks located at the entrance of each house. The same skimming technique was used when getting water out of these tanks to avoid the sediment collecting on the bottom. However, this wasn't a fool-proof method for acquiring sanitary water. I could see the tadpoles in the water tanks if I looked closely enough, and malnutrition and disease were definitely concerns. Even I was infected with amoebas from drinking the water and eating the food at the *ejido*. I was able to get medical attention, but the sad reality is that health concerns can often have dire consequences in these impoverished conditions. There were many times I witnessed children and their parents sick. Mostly, they suffered from digestive problems because of the water and malnutrition because of the lack of food, especially if there wasn't a good harvest.

In all, I learned about the myriad of disadvantages poverty brings while working at the *ejido* at *San Pedro de Ruedas.* I learned it by seeing first-hand how many children in México don't always have access to a basic education, much less an education after elementary school. I saw how poverty affects education when, come springtime at the *ejido*, our classrooms were basically non-existent because all our students needed to be out in the fields helping their parents harvest crops so that the village could survive by another narrow margin for one more season. Still, this poverty, and the inherent lack of opportunity, in no way affected the kind disposition of the people. They were all as beautiful and amicable on the first day I met them as on the day I

left. On the day we arrived at the *ejido*, we passed a beautiful wedding in progress. People were dancing and drinking: it was quite the celebration. There was a live band playing, and all the locals were kicking up big clouds of dust as their feet stomped rhythmically to the beat of the *huapangos*. This was a severely impoverished place, but this was undoubtedly a happy place. This was also a place that showed great appreciation for everything they had, including the teachers that served their children.

My coworkers and I decided that we would return home to Monterrey every weekend while teaching at *San Pedro de Ruedas*. We had promised our parents that we wouldn't take the route that crosses through the dangerous mountain roads of the *Sierra de Galena* when traveling back and forth from Monterrey to S*an Pedro de Ruedas.* We decided to take a different route that went as far as *Matehuala, San Luis Potosi*, where we would then catch a ride to the *ejido* with *Don Pablo*, a womanizing milkman with many girlfriends along his route. *Don Pablo* would pick us up from the bus station in *Matehuala* in his flatbed truck every Sunday at five in the morning on his way to pick up fresh milk from the cows on the *ejidos* surrounding *Dr. Arroyo*, including the one in *San Pedro de Ruedas* where my fellow teachers and I were keeping residence. We teachers were lucky enough to ride up front in the cabin of *Don Pablo*'s truck; but several people rode in the bed of the truck along with the giant empty milk cans. Along the way, *Don Pablo* let us fill up three of those cans with water from the gas station in town. This was the water my coworkers and I would fill the water tanks at our living quarters with to drink, bathe, or whatever else we needed while living in the *ejido*. *Don Pablo* did this as a favor for us because he held an admiration for our profession.

Figure 8: Don Pablo, El Lechero

Most people in and around the area of *San Pedro de Ruedas* shared this appreciation. In this part of México where poverty reigned over the people, education was still valued as a precious commodity. There was just something so unique about the way we were treated with such respect by both the students and parents. The school where we taught was located on a hill just a bit higher than the rest of the community. I'd look down on all the adobe homes to see the smoke rising from their chimneys as the local women made fresh purple corn tortillas every morning. They would bring us some of those fresh tortillas all bundled up in a warm cloth, a *secador*. They brought them to us, every day, without expectation. As if to say, "Thank you for being here when we know you don't have to." As if to say, "Thank you for giving us hope." I will never forget that.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on San Pedro de Ruedas by Way of Dr. Arroyo: A Story of Poverty and Education

When I went back to Monterrey after my time teaching at *San Pedro de Ruedas*, I was a changed person. I remember looking at the mountains on my bus ride back home and thinking that I would never take them for granted again. Living among that rural community nestled in those mountains helped me not take the life I had for granted. I came back appreciating my

house, my parents, running water and, most importantly, people in general more than ever. Today, when I hear that schools in my district are receiving students from impoverished regions, whether those students are immigrants from third world countries or transfer students from impoverished communities here in America, I think to myself, "I know where they're coming from, physically, mentally, and emotionally." I value all parents and students in the district where I work because they each have their own story. They all have learned lessons in life.

Moll *et al*. (1992) identify the concept of "funds of knowledge" to describe the, "social history of households, their origins and development, and most prominently…the labor history of families, which reveals the accumulated bodies of knowledge of the households" (p. 133). These bodies of knowledge are incredible resources that are passed down and shared through intricate social networks between family members and neighbors to enhance the households' ability to survive and thrive (Moll, *et al*., 1992, p. 133). In *San Pedro de Ruedas*, I had the opportunity to witness these resources of *know-how* being utilized and passed down through practice. When I lived in the *ejido*, I was welcomed as a member of the community. I was living in their world for that brief moment in time. I saw first-hand how hard working everybody was. When I was invited to join families for dinner on the *ejido*, I witnessed the dedication and ability of the mothers. They were hard workers, tending to the fields under the hot sun and making meals for their families over a hot stove. I was always impressed by how quickly they were able to start the fire on their stove. They always had a small amount of ashes that would ignite into a healthy flame with just a wave of their hand and few puffs of air. My father brought my fellow teachers and me a gas stove because our attempts to cook on the *chimenea* usually resulted in a room full of smoke and no fire to cook over.

I did, however, learn to eat off the land. The citizens of *San Pedro de Ruedas* had historically and culturally accumulated the fund of knowledge in ranching and farming necessary for surviving in their harsh living conditions (Moll *et al*., 1992, p. 133). I learned from them how to harvest and eat *nopales*. I also learned to eat *flor de palma*, white edible flowers that are cultivated with care because they are surrounded by the razor sharp leaves of the flowering yucca plant. The *flor de palma*, which is parboiled and then prepared with eggs or *salsita,* has the consistency and taste of cabbage but can become unpalatably bitter if not prepared correctly. I can recall my excitement at seeing the men coming back from working out in the field with a big *rama* of the flower, knowing it would be prepared that evening for dinner. My experience living among the community of *San Pedro de Ruedas* broadened my perspective to genuinely understand the futility of dwelling on "cultural deficits" when considering the culture of households who live in poverty. Today, I see my fellow urban city dwellers place a high value on eating organic, and I see the markets and grocery stores stock organic meat and produce in elaborate displays. In *San Pedro de Ruedas*, however, harvesting food from the land outside your door was all there was. Now when I walk into Whole Foods, a market place in an urban setting, I tell my husband, "*Mira cuanto cuesta traernos el rancho a la ciudad*."

When I was reflecting about my time in San Pedro de Ruedas, I learned that all communities, impoverished or not, have assets that they use to survive and thrive (Gonzalez *et al*., 1995; Moll *et al*., 1992). Also, after reflecting on the poverty I experienced in San Pedro, my advocacy for education was strengthened because, with the vast resources available in the United States, I am fully convinced that it is possible to provide every single child with an equitable and quality education. At the *ejido*, education was a reoccurring topic discussed at the dinner table with the locals. The basic education the children were receiving from my fellow teachers and me,

learning to read, write, spell, and do basic mathematics, was greatly valued because many of the parents didn't even have a basic elementary education. There was also not much opportunity to continue schooling beyond elementary school. I don't know how many of the students I taught made it to *secundaria* (middle school), but I'd be willing to bet it was less than 10 percent. I recently participated in a Biliteracy conference in Puebla, México, where I learned that these conditions are still the same. The closest middle school to San Pedro de Ruedas was in the town of Dr. Arroyo, 18 kilometers away from the *ejido,* so students couldn't attend without going to live there; it wasn't feasible to travel back and forth every day. Witnessing that kind of educational inequity deeply affected me, and it resonates with me whenever I think of the right that children have to be educated in the United States. When I think of immigrants coming from places like *San Pedro de Ruedas*, I understand the possibilities and opportunities they and their families can tap into. There is potential for them to not just survive, but to change the destiny of their family.

There is poverty everywhere, including the United States; but in the United States all children have the right to be educated from kindergarten through high school. In the United States, it is everybody's responsibility to ensure children get educated. According to Henry Trueba (1989), "…failure [for students] to learn cannot be defined as individual failure but rather as systemic failure, that is, the failure of the social system to provide the learner with an opportunity for successful social interactions (as cited in Nieto, 2010, p. 47). As a bilingual program director, I make sure that no English learners are being denied access to a meaningful education based on where they were born, what language they speak, their race, their socioeconomic status, their age, etc. When I worked on the border of the United States and México, I had a supervisor that used to say of illegal immigrants who were reported by the

school, “You know, Olivia, they’re going to find their way back; we might as well educate them. We’re all better off in this world if everybody is educated.” After writing about San Pedro de Ruedas and remembering all the children I taught who would not get an opportunity to continue their education, I realized my colleague was right – everybody deserves to be educated. Darling-Hammond (2010) expressed the sentiment eloquently when she wrote, “Central to our collective future is the recognition that our capacity to survive and thrive ultimately depends on ensuring to all of our people what should be an unquestioned entitlement – a rich and inalienable right to learn” (p. 328). We all need to collaborate and ensure that every single student, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or disability has the right to participate in a quality educational program. That’s their right. Sometimes it doesn’t happen in schools when students are “labeled” and alienated from a rigorous curriculum, causing students to lose interest in education (Artiles and Ortiz, 2002). The future of our country depends on how well we ensure that every single child receives the education that they’re entitled to. Our future will depend on how well every single child in our country is served.

Dual Language and Standardized Testing

I moved to Reynosa, Tamualipas in 1982 after I married. I worked in retail in the United States while I made plans to go back to school. Eventually, I enrolled and received a bachelor’s degree in teaching. While completing my emergency certification, I got a job as a bilingual teacher at Border Elementary, a school located in the small district of Frontera ISD. When I applied, I lied about living in México and used my aunt’s address on all my employment forms. I remember crossing the international bridge between countries every day to and from work, the lines of cars and people crossing alongside me became part of my community – a community of bridge crossers. Some people cannot

imagine taking the time to cross back and forth so often, but to us it was part of our way of life. I was happy living in México, a country I loved so much, while working in America, a country I had grown nostalgic for. I had the best of both worlds.

After working as a bilingual teacher several years, I completed my master's degree and became an assistant principal at the same school in 1996, by this time I was already living in the United States. Two years later, in 1998, I was named the principal of Border Elementary. Little did I know that the next ten years would be setting the foundation for my future in the bilingual world leading dual language programs and serving ELs.

When I was principal at Border Elementary during the 1999-2000 school year, I decided that I would be implementing dual language in my own school. As soon as I committed to implement the dual language program, my bilingual program director started contacting me to send my teachers to professional development to prepare them for the following school year. I was fortunate enough in that the community itself embraced dual language and came together to ensure that everyone was on board. My staff's training came from members of the local university and workshops with experts in the field of dual language and biliteracy.

Throughout the process of preparing to launch our dual language program, there were always teachers who were against it. They truly believed that more English was the answer – that schools really should not be investing more time in teaching students in Spanish. Throughout the trainings, throughout all of the effort to bring such positivism to

the implementation of dual language, such as investing in sending teachers to state and national conferences on dual language and bringing experts in the field of bilingual education, including the poet and renowned expert on children's bilingual literature, Alma Flor Ada, to speak and create enthusiasm for the cause of bilingualism and biculturalism, the concern voiced by several teachers remained the same: that students were not going to be ready to pass their standardized tests…in English.

These concerns continued even after the implementation of our dual language program was well underway.

I remember holding an after-school staff meeting in the library with my teachers where we were desegregating student data and talking about all the engaging activities that we expected to see in our dual language classrooms. During this meeting, a teacher vocalized his concern about consolidating testing and dual language in our school.

He said, "You know, Ms. Hernández, I agree with all the engaging activities that we are planning for our classrooms with dual language, and it can all be done. But you can't seriously expect for us to implement this program without taking a dip in our standardized test scores. Would you be willing to let our scores take a dip so that we can implement dual language?"

I honestly don't remember if I ever gave him a definitive "yes or no" answer to his question, but I do remember the reflective process I went through as I thought about what

I was being asked. As a principal I had to decide what was best for students and also keep the school in good standing. I was trained as a principal with the mentality of ensuring that 100% of the students master the standardized test. That was the goal of No Child Left Behind. But after learning more about the linguistic, academic, cognitive, and cultural benefits of dual language and seeing that many of the standardized state assessments were not culturally relevant, and really just unfair, I decided that a truly culturally and linguistically engaging education for my students was worth more than seeing students bored to death filling out bubbles while teachers were losing the life of what brought them into their profession to begin with.

I don't remember the exact answer I gave my teacher during that after school meeting, but I do remember deciding then and there that I wasn't going to let testing drive our agenda. I wasn't going to let my students lose their joy for learning, and I wasn't going to let my teachers lose their joy for teaching.

And in the end, after implementing the dual language program for almost 10 years, everything turned out well. Our school always met state standards and even exceeded state standards in certain content areas. Most importantly, we were able to provide students with the multicultural and multilingual benefits of dual language instead of making school all about the standardized exam. We didn't let preparing for the exam replace other aspects of our students' learning experience, such as taking electives, participating in fairs and field trips, participating in holiday activities, working on science experiments, engaging in many hands-on activities in the classroom, and spending more time in the library reading for pleasure.

We were preparing our students to take on life, not to take a test.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Dual Language and Standardized Testing

As a principal of a dual language elementary school, keeping standardized testing in mind was always a challenge. Through our professional development in preparation to launch the program, my staff and I learned that dual language schooling was the best form of bilingual education in which our students could receive continuous cognitive development in their first language while also fostering cognitive development in their second language (Howard *et al*., 2007; Freeman, Freeman and Mercuri, 2005; Thomas and Collier, 1997). We were familiar with Thomas and Collier's (2012) notion that, "Dual language is the most powerful school reform model for high academic achievement that [they] have seen in all [their] 28 years of conducting longitudinal studies in [bilingual education]" (p. 6). We knew that providing students a quality dual language education would yield excellent results, and we had learned that both One-way and Two-way dual language programs were the only bilingual programs that would fully close the achievement gap between ELs and native English speakers with time (Thomas and Collier, 1997, 2012, 2014). Despite all of this knowledge, there was still uncertainty and concern about fully committing to implement the program with fidelity because teachers were afraid of deviating from a test-driven curriculum which had yielded results on the state standardized assessment in the past. This reluctance originated from a school and district culture that emphasizes high-stakes consequences for teachers when they don't master a single state standardized assessment – including losing their job, feeling depressed or guilty if their class kept the school from meeting standards, being replaced or moved to another grade level, being consistently monitored by the principal the following school year, etc. (Valenzuela, 2005). These ideological roadblocks, which continued even after the dual language program was already being

implemented in our school, were predominantly based on the pressure of accountability through state assessments that was already monopolizing so much of our teachers' efforts. As Alfie Kohn (alfiekohn.org, n.d.) points out , "It has taken some educators and parents a while to realize that the rhetoric of 'standards' is turning schools into giant test-prep centers, effectively closing off intellectual inquiry and undermining enthusiasm for learning (and teaching) " (p. 1). Even though implementing the dual language program was viewed by my staff as the right thing to do, they remained genuinely concerned about implementing the program because it was going to take a lot of planning time, resources, and extra work, and we were already dedicating a great amount of time to preparing for state standardized assessments because we were being held accountable for high scores by the state, the district, and the community.

Experts in bilingual education agree that focusing academic efforts on a culturally relevant and enriching program such as dual language is more important than focusing on standardized testing because the standardized tests themselves are inequitable to begin with (Cummins, 2000; Escamilla *et al.*, 2014, Valenzuela, 1999, 2005). Standardized tests are created with the mainstream population in mind and only consider the needs of English learners as an afterthought when schools or districts begin to complain about massive number of ELs failing (LaCelle-Peterson and Rivera, 1994, p.66). According to the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) (1997), a variety of appropriate accommodations or alternative procedures based on EL language proficiency levels and number of years in US schools should be utilized to make the assessment of English learners more meaningful; however, these factors are absent from most state policies that are mandated to school districts (Cummins, 2000, p. 145). Having a single test as the primary arbiter is inequitable because it prioritizes a uniform way of knowing that doesn't consider every student's culture or language (Valenzuela, 2005, p.

2). Standardized assessments foster standardized learning because when a single test is used to measure learning, the curriculum automatically aligns itself to the ideology of the dominant culture; therefore, assessments based on standardization foster disrespect for the ways different cultures learn (McNeil and Valenzuela, 2005, p.103).

In the story above, when I decided to make the focus of our school serving the students through a well implemented dual language program instead of catering to the test, there was still an element of faith I had to have that the program would be successful because the amount of research on dual language was still emerging. But today, there remains little doubt that dual language is the best program for all students. Research clearly shows the cognitive, linguistic and cultural benefits this program provides for all students and in particular for English learners. Thomas and Collier (2012) have analyzed over 6.2 million student records of all backgrounds from all over the country and have consistently found the same general pattern of increased academic achievement for ELs (p. 91). Their research has been replicated and confirmed by many other researchers across the world, who have all found that the most powerful predictor of language minority student achievement in second language is the nonstop development of the students' primary language in a well-implemented dual language program (Thomas and Collier, 2012, p. 91). The issue for principals today is that, because the dual language program is complex, it is difficult to stay the course and not give in to the temptation to revert to the test-taking curriculum, which is easier for teachers to implement but, because of the issues discussed in the previous paragraph, is harmful for students. Through my experience leading the implementation of a dual language program, I have learned that when principals continue learning about the dual language program, keeping up with the latest research, and sharing this knowledge with teachers, it helps them work the intricacies of the program to address the

complexities and stay the course while tackling standardized assessments in a way that puts the student first.

A critical decision that needs to be made for EL students in dual language programs is the language of assessment in which they will be taking their standardized tests when they reach third grade and beyond. For ELs the most valid and reliable measure of their academic achievement is the test in their first language, which, unfortunately, is only available in a few states in the country (Collier and Thomas, 2014, p. 96; Cummins, 2000; Escamilla *et al.*, 2014). The longitudinal research on English learners shows that the achievement test in the student's primary language is the truest representation of what that student really knows (Collier and Thomas, 2009; Thomas and Collier, 2012). In states where the standardized assessment is available in the student's native language, principals have to be very meticulous about which students take the test in which language because if students are prematurely tested in English, the results will be artificial and invalid (Collier and Thomas, 2014; Cummins, 2000; Garcia, 2009). Therefore, if a significant number of students are forced to test in English when they are not ready, this will compromise the fidelity of the program (Collier and Thomas, 2014, p. 102). In the dual language program that I implemented in the narrative above, we regularly met to analyze multiple measures of data, such as students' English language proficiency levels, grades, grade level, subject, years in the dual language program, literacy inventories, and teacher and parent input in order to make the most informed decision on the language of assessment. This practice was undoubtedly a key factor in why our students performed well on their standardized assessments while we were implementing the dual language program with fidelity.

When Sides are Flipped

In 2000, during our second year implementing the dual program at Border Elementary, I encountered a difficulty with the dual language program when students reached the first grade level and the classes became more writing intensive. The native English speakers were struggling to write in Spanish during their science and social studies classes. Teachers were giving their students low grades for their Spanish writing. The grades weren't always failing, but students who were accustomed to receiving straight A's were receiving B's. When this happened, parents of native English speakers called to make their case for their sons and daughters. One by one, I received parents in my office with concerns about their children's lack of progress.

"He can't write sentences in Spanish."

"This is too difficult for him."

"This is not fair; he's barely learning Spanish."

"How am I supposed to help my daughter with her homework?"

"This is only holding my daughter back."

"My son used to be an honor student and now he's not because of the dual language program."

"I don't know about this dual language program. It isn't working because he can't even write the sentences."

Their concerns all shared a similar theme: How can you penalize a student for not acquiring a language quickly? It's funny how that type of question becomes so urgent when it involves the native English speaker, but it still remains to be seriously

acknowledged when the sides are flipped and it is an EL student being penalized for not acquiring English quickly.

When I saw the native English speaking students' poor Spanish writing samples, I was also concerned and really didn't know at that time what to do. There were spelling errors, incomplete sentences, and a general lack of Spanish language grammar and syntax. At that time, the first thing that came to my mind to fix the problem was letting go of the dual language program. I remember walking over to my superintendent's office, which was across the street from my school, and showing him some Spanish writing samples of struggling native English speaking students. I explained to him that I believed in bilingual education, and I believed in the goals of dual language with all my heart, but that I doubted whether it was going to work for us at my school because I didn't see the native English speakers acquiring Spanish. I looked at him straight in the eye and said, "Is there any way I can get out of dual language?" I had only been implementing the program one year and I was already requesting to drop it.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on When Sides are Flipped

Bilingual teachers have been taught and trained to help English Learners acquire English while developing their native language in transitional bilingual programs and in One-way dual language programs, in which only English learners are served (Blanton, 2004; Cummins, 1994; Crawford, 2004; O. Garcia, 2013; Krashen, 1994; Lambert and Trucker, 1972). Bilingual teachers learn how to address the needs of English learners by providing them instruction in their native language and helping them acquire English while they learn their content by utilizing strategies in which students learn to make cross-language connections, use scaffolds to advance in their second language acquisition, and practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing in

their second language (Garcia, 2009). Bilingual teachers are trained to focus on the needs of a minority population, English learners, who have historically been denied access to an equitable education (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 2000; Ovando, 2003). Bilingual teachers' goal and passion is to advance English learners in their academic trajectory. That's their training; that's what they learn to do at the university, and that's what they're wired for.

As dual language programs increase across the country, native English speaking students are now participating in Two-way dual language programs along with English learners in the same classroom. All of a sudden, bilingual teachers have a new group of students, native English speakers, participating in their classrooms. This change of context makes the dual language program more complex because bilingual teachers need to ensure that ELs acquire English, and native English speakers acquire a second language, all while both groups are still required to learn their grade level content (Collier and Thomas, 2014; Thomas and Collier, 2012). It's been my experience that bilingual teachers are not always adequately prepared when the roles are reversed and they need to make content in a second language comprehensible for a native English speaker in a Two-way dual language program. Reflecting on this experience now, I can understand how this difficulty for teachers (and also principals) to handle this paradigm shift is a consequence of the inherent expectations that have been historically placed on speakers of minority languages to acquire English and assimilate to the dominant Anglo monolingual culture (Alarcón *et al*., 2011; Arreguín-Anderson and Ruiz-Escalante, 2013; Crawford, 2004; Ferrón, 2011; Fishman, 1982, 1989; Garcia *et al*., 2006; Ovando, 2003). If an EL student has homework that requires writing sentences in English, it isn't seen as a problem; people are used to it. Nobody is going to argue against learning English because it is the majority language, the language of power (Beeman and Urow, 2012; Escamilla *et al.*, 2014; Igoa, 1999). However,

when my school assigned homework for core subject classes in the minority language of Spanish, the practice was met with reluctance. As a minority language, Spanish carries with it a connotation of inferiority, and it is even seen as an inhibitor of progress (Ruiz, 1984).

According to Trueba (2004), "The stories often told in the border about children being punished physically for using their home language are still vivid in the population…The stigma attached to the use of the home language is still with us" (p. 49). I have had parents who were simply adamant that they did not want their children writing in Spanish because they truly believed that Spanish held no value – that teaching in Spanish was a waste of time. Some of these parents, including a teacher at my own school, even withdrew their children from the school to keep them from participating in the dual language program. Until this detrimental language ideology changes, there will always be difficulty implementing dual language programs. However, that does not mean that these negative points of view should be reasons to stop implementing dual language programs altogether. Since that first year implementing dual language as a principal, when I was so close to dropping the program all together, I've learned that no matter what I do there are going to be parents whose goals and ideals do not align with the goals and ideals of the dual language program. I have learned that there are always going to be parents who will decide to remove their children from the program. And looking back, I realize that the number of parents who actually do pull their children out of the program is in actuality very small. I just need to keep in mind that this is OK, that these are all the natural growing pains that come along with making change. And, above all else, I need to keep in mind that the more resilient I am, the more successful the dual language programs I implement will be (Trueba, 2004).

Being Skipped

Implementing bilingual programs is everybody's business.

Toni Griego-Jones (1995)

It was around late August or early September of my second year as a bilingual program director in an urban district. The school year had just begun and the district administrators decided to bring in all the curriculum and program leaders for content areas such as the math, social studies, language arts, science, fine arts, and special education programs into central office. Everybody was gathered in a conference room sitting in chairs laid out in a circle. Three or four district leaders situated in front of the group were announcing their mission to have each and every program leader involved in supporting campuses by working as a team instead of in isolation. The assistant superintendent then addressed everyone in the room.

"We called this meeting today so that we can all collaborate and coordinate our efforts to support campuses across the district. Our role as central office administrators is to support campuses, principals and teachers. Let's start by hearing some ideas from each department leader about how their team is going to support campuses."

They went down the line, starting with the math program, asking everybody to elaborate on their plans for supporting campuses throughout the district. The math program leader detailed his plan to provide teachers with professional development and resources. The science program leader went next, and then the early childhood program leader

followed. Everybody was proudly sharing all the different initiatives and strategies they were planning to use to support campuses district-wide.

Meanwhile, I was eagerly awaiting my turn to speak, going over what I was going to say in my head. My enthusiasm was scarcely contained. I was new to the district and excited to have the opportunity to collaborate and be a part of the process to improve student achievement. I rehearsed mentally on how I could communicate my plan to support principals and teachers in their implementation of dual language and ESL programs. I had many ideas for providing principals and teachers with support, such as providing professional development that would support best practices in teaching and learning for English Learners, supplying instructional resources, bringing in instructional coaches to model sheltered instruction strategies, and holding information sessions to involve parents and other community members in the education of their children. When the moment finally arrived for me to speak, the assistant superintendent said, "Oh you don't need to speak. You're compliance, so let's just move on to the next department." "What?" I thought. "I'm compliance?"

I was in shock at how the fundamental view of the role of the bilingual program director position was misunderstood by those directing my meeting. I had never experienced a situation where the bilingual department was not expected to be involved in providing instructional support to schools.

During my twenty-four years as a teacher, vice principal, and principal on the border, bilingual pedagogy, such as sheltered instruction and biliteracy, were just part of our everyday life because ninety-eight percent of our teachers were certified in bilingual education or ESL. I realized that I had taken this privilege for granted when I experienced the bilingual department being excluded from the discourse of curriculum and instruction in my new district. I knew right then that changing the image that the bilingual department was solely responsible for compliance was going to be my goal; it was going to be my charge from then on. I don't know how or why that ideology of exclusion surrounding the bilingual department came to be in my new district. All I know is that from that moment on, I made it a point to work on communicating that the bilingual program was going to be an integral part of this district's instructional program.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on Being Skipped

I included this story because advocates of bilingual education, as well as advocates of other traditionally marginalized groups, encounter microaggressions, the everyday assaultive comments, behaviors, or images often based on stereotypes of their race, class, gender, or immigration status that negatively affect the advancement of ELs (Solórzano, 1998). For me, these microaggressions occur when the bilingual department is not included in providing schools with instructional support, curriculum development, planning of district-wide professional development, creation of the district's strategic plan, and participation in the selection of principals for schools with high numbers of ELs. When I'm not included in making critical decisions that will impact the education of English Learners, the same systemic inequity that privileges some and excludes others, a marginalizing ideology that permeates the entire

education system, is in effect silencing the voice of thousands of English learners (Alemán, 2009; Delgado-Gaitan, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Palmer, 2007). The popularity of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in the United States began as a consequence of questioning representation of minority (African American) voices in American politics, so it is only natural that I turn to CRT to address the issue of systemic "silencing" that I have experienced (Guinier, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical Race Theory exposes social inequity (racism) that is, "so deeply enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture" (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The microaggressions that I encounter are so deeply engrained in the daily discourse of education that they are often times not brought up, instead identified as, *Just the way things are*. The subtlety of the systemic social inequity I experienced during the meeting detailed in my narrative above, the casualness of my exclusion as simply part of the meeting's procedure, was so quick and "natural" that I just let it happen. It would take me some time before I could even conceptualize what had transpired, let alone begin the process of addressing it. As the voice of the bilingual education department, I knew that I should have been involved in the discussion of supporting schools. I knew that bilingual program directors are expected to have the skills necessary to be involved in curriculum writing, teacher supervision, teacher recruitment, professional development, program design, program evaluation, communication, collaboration with principals, budget development, etc. (Arias, 2001; Davila, 2013; Griego-Jones, 1993; Trujillo, 1980). But in that moment, I didn't want to disrupt the flow of the meeting. In my mind I was faking that I agreed with the decision, but deep inside I knew it was wrong.

Alemán (2009) outlines how, "*niceness* may be utilized as a method of maintaining the status quo covering up institutionalized racism and silencing the experiences of Latino/a leaders"

(p. 308). He argues that educational leaders', "political discourse is shaped by concepts such as 'niceness,' 'respect,' and 'decorum,' which ultimately limits their critique and silences the experiences of students in their communities (Alemán, 2009, p. 290). As a bilingual program director, I have had to disregard my natural inclination to adhere to the civility and politeness of political rhetoric and instead interject when I see that educational policies are in danger of marginalizing English Learners. One of the most common questions that I ask when initiatives, new programs, new resources, textbooks, etc. are being presented in meetings for approval to be used in the district is, "Is it offered in Spanish or in other languages?" There's an innate considerateness among Latino/a educational leaders towards others who are perpetuating systemic inequity – promoting initiatives, programs, or resources that don't take into consideration the minority population – that originates from an idealistic belief that working within the political system without stepping on any toes is going to bring about the most change (Alemán, 2009). When I began working as a bilingual program director, I used to feel uncomfortable on occasions when I was insistent that ELs be included in the discourse of education policy, such as when I'd voice the need to have instructional resources in Spanish available as a hard copy and not just online, even if it meant that the purchase of those materials would be delayed or had to be revisited to look for a different company that did offer a Spanish version that was equitable. This feeling of not wanting to rock the boat comes from being raised in a Mexican-American family where interpersonal communication, building relationships, and getting along with others was revered above all else. In Mexican culture, people are considered *bien educado* (well-educated) when they are well mannered, speak kindly and respectfully to others, and are helpful to those who need help; conversely, they are *mal educados* (poorly educated) if they mistreat others and do not respect others' rights, opinions, and authority

(Delgado-Gaitan, 1992, p. 506). When I exercise my criticalness to challenge and change disadvantaging practices I see taking place in my school district with regards to ELs, my need to be *bien educada* compels me to be cordial; but that cordialness, however engrained in my disposition as it may be, cannot keep me from advocating aggressively for ELs. The systemically marginalizing political arena within the school district already lends itself to "silencing" groups outside the mainstream culture; I cannot silence myself.

The Importance of Collaboration: Dual Language Principal Advisory Groups

I remember as a new bilingual director being asked by my boss to re-write the dual language classroom schedules because she noticed they were lacking in detail. While I was in my office working on the schedules, I received a call from one of my principals who was very invested in the dual language program.

"How are you this morning, Olivia?" he inquired when I answered the telephone.

"I'm busy," I said. "I'm working on creating a framework for the dual language schedules."

He enthusiastically offered his help: "Why don't we create these schedules together in the next principals' advisory committee?"

I paused for a moment to collect my thoughts before deciding whether or not I should accept the invitation. I had only attended one of these meetings before, the one in which I was introduced as the new bilingual program director, so I was not entirely sure how they carried out their collaborative process. In a small district, such as the one I was coming from, I used to design programs, schedules, and even roll out programs myself. That is the process I felt comfortable with. Now that I was working in an urban district, I

intuitively sensed that I was going to have to collaborate more with others and that this was probably a common practice in my new district. I agreed to meet with the group to plan.

"Sure," I replied after what very well may have been a full minute of silence.

And with that I was set to collaborate with principals at my first dual language principal's advisory meeting in my new district. However, I was still not quite ready to abandon my old habits of handling a good portion of the work myself. Although the meeting was to be a collaborative effort, I worked on the schedules independently two weeks before the meeting to provide the principals some kind of options that would expedite the meeting and not start totally from scratch. Doing this prep work was also a way for me to internalize the information. I wanted to go into the meeting already having a framework in my mind. I was a little nervous because I wanted everything to come out perfectly. This was the first meeting with the objective of generating a product, so I was already putting a lot of pressure on myself to facilitate the meeting successfully. I remember leaving my office equally excited and nervous.

"Where is the school located?" I asked my staff as I was heading out.

I was overwhelmed when they replied.
"It's right off of so and so street, between the post office and the corner store."
"Take so and so street, then go down this one highway."

"No, it's faster if you take the Loop and cut around the traffic."

I had no idea where any of these roads were. I was new to the city and I still wasn't using GPS. I was coming from a place I had lived in for 24 years. I never had the need for GPS. What I did have was a map on my phone. So I left armed with that as my source of navigation. The map itself, though electronic, didn't have a navigation system, but it wouldn't have mattered anyway because my phone died five minutes after I left the office and I didn't have a charger. I remember being in quite the panic. Here I was 15 minutes away from the start of the meeting and I was unsure of where I was heading. I stopped at a gas station. Thank goodness I at least remembered the name of the street where the school was located.

When I went in and told the gas station attendant the name of the school and the street it was on, he gave me a weird look.

"That school is just a few blocks away down so and so street," he said, pointing me in the right direction.

I arrived just on time, quickly setting up my easel and chart tablet, and began to greet the principals.

The ordeal of finding the school helped ease my nervousness about collaborating with the principals in my district for the first time, and I quickly realized that my initial worries

about working collaboratively to create the schedules was unfounded. The experience turned out to be a really nice collaborative effort, as they all have been.

We went over how many minutes of English and Spanish instruction should be delivered in language arts, math and science. We created the schedules for all the grade levels. I remember it being a very successful and productive meeting. During some parts, the process did get a little messy, but it was the good messy. There was lots of feedback continuously flying back and forth as we got into the nitty gritty of really creating the schedules. When we finally finished, a wave of pride and satisfaction swept over the entire room. We knew that we had done good work.

To this day, we continue to create other essential documents such as dual language guidelines, policy, and proposals of projects together in these types of meetings. Four years now in my position as a bilingual program director in an urban district, I can't even imagine working on any project without collaborating with principals, teachers and parents.

Researcher's Personal Reflection on The Importance of Collaboration: Dual Language Principal Advisory Groups

Collaboration is a common theme in dual language leadership research. Howard *et al*'s (2007) *Guiding Principles for Dual Language* warns that, "If a [dual language] program relies on one person for leadership, even the most successful program can collapse if that leader is drawn away" (p. 26). It's advantageous to create a *team* that oversees the implementation of the program at a campus level, and not to rely solely on the principal because the principal has a lot

of responsibilities and is always being pulled in many directions. Collaboration for the implementation of dual language programs should take place at different levels – between central office, principals, and teachers. Collaboration creates positive environments that keep the vision of the dual language program alive (Freeman, Freeman and Mercuri, 2005). Freeman, Freeman and Mercuri (2005) posit that, "[They] have seen that implementing a successful dual language curriculum can be overwhelming, but when people work together they create a positive atmosphere that energizes all those involved in the program" (p. 79). I see this concept play out in the principal advisory groups such as the one in my story above. These meetings are regularly scheduled about four to five times a year – where selected principals from the district come together and meet. The purpose of these meetings is for principals to share strategies and learn from each other on how they can best lead the implementation of the dual language program on their campus and how they support teachers so they can implement a quality dual language program that meets the principles that Collier and Thomas (2014) have identified to be characteristic of well-implemented Dual Language programs:

- Administrators at both school and district levels fully support the dual language program.
- Fidelity is defined for the dual language model chosen.
- Careful attention is given to instructional time in each of the two languages.
- Regular dual language program planning meetings are scheduled.
- All bilingual and English-speaking teachers work together creatively and collaboratively.
- Thoughtful choices of assessment instruments for both languages are made.
- High-quality, ongoing staff development is provided for all teachers and administrators.
- Dual language teaching includes:
    - Minimal lecturing by the teacher – direct instruction is intentional and of short duration, and routines and procedures are modeled and consistent.

- Cooperative learning is implemented effectively, with many varied work groupings – pairs, groups of four, learning centers, whole-class, etc. – and consideration of students' language proficiencies.
- The following is evident in the classrooms: problem solving, creative projects, a variety activities, high level thinking, and stimulating learning.
- Teachers are sensitive to cross-cultural issues and provide emotional support for all.
- Students are engaged and actively participating in meaningful learning.
- Students actively participate, whatever the language of instruction (L1 or L2), with intentional and explicit nonverbal and verbal clues to meaning for both content and language provided by teachers and fellow students.

(Collier and Thomas, 2014, p. 98)

The meetings follow an agenda. As every topic on the agenda is addressed, principals speak out and discuss their challenges within that topic. It's essential to give principals a space to come together to talk specifically about what they have found works or doesn't work as they seek to find solutions with the goal to implement a quality dual language program in their schools. In my experience, the collaborative environment of principal advisory groups makes it easier for principals to be honest with each other as they explain their program and put their practice out there for others to comment and provide ideas. Sometimes principals disagree and sometimes they embrace the ideas being presented by their colleagues. It goes both ways, and learning occurs in both situations. The more there is open discourse about the program, the more creative principals become in generating ideas on how to make the dual language program work better with their teachers, students, and parents at their schools. The solutions principals generate are very creative because the principal advisory group allows principals to experiment, venture outside the box and come up with more original solutions to problems which are then discussed among a group of principals who can provide meaningful feedback. An idea presented by a

principal in the advisory group may initially seem unorthodox, but because it is simultaneously analyzed by those with intimate knowledge implementing the dual language program, the best parts of the idea can be extracted and used to generate solutions that are not always immediately apparent (Hunt, 2011; Izquierdo, 2014).

Including teachers strengthens the outcomes of the principal advisory groups because teachers are able to give genuine feedback on whether the ideas generated in the meeting are feasible in the classroom. It is a true check and balance. As administrators are coming up with solutions, they check with the teachers. Teachers are the implementers and are the ones closest to the students. Teachers select the best instructional resources for all content areas and clearly share the various challenges they face in the classroom such as curriculum alignment, lack of resources in both languages, lack of support, and overly intricate schedules to follow. Including the teachers creates a positive energy because their inclusion helps them feel validated as part of the team (Izquierdo, in Collier and Thomas, 2014, p.91). This, in turn, brings a lot of high energy and motivation to continue the work. If teachers are alienated from the collaboration process, they don't own the program and the chances of the program not being implemented with fidelity increase substantially.

Apart from including as many stakeholders as possible in the collaboration process, it is also critical that there be consistency when meetings are scheduled. During the first meetings that take place at the beginning of the school year, principals are full of energy and have a plethora of ideas or topics they are eager to discuss. When the bilingual department and principals meet face-to-face, a relationship is established within a safe space where principals can be honest and feel comfortable sharing how the dual language program is working in their schools. Meeting personally will yield better results than communicating exclusively through

emails and memos. Elmore (2008) says, “[Face-to-face relationships] are more likely than [impersonal, bureaucratic ones] to intensify and focus norms of good practice” (p. 32). Principals open up a lot more about their struggles when we meet face-to-face, and a greater amount of challenges are solved when they are capable of opening up in this way.

CHAPTER V

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter contains my analysis of the data collected in Chapter IV, along with findings and recommendations based on that data. It is divided into the following sections: framework for data analysis: ecologies of knowing; use of data analysis to present research findings; application of findings to answer research questions; and, recommendations based on the research study's findings. The purpose of this study was to explore how and to what degree my personal life experiences as they relate to my bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural disposition have served as the backbone for my advocacy for English learners and how the actions I take as a bilingual program director can best reflect a politic of advocacy for equity in education through the practice of bilingual education. M. S. Chavez (2012) posits that, "autobiographical educational experiences must be used as valid ethnographic research to contribute to existing knowledge around issues of educational equity" (p. 334). I fully embraced this concept as I interrogated my own personal, social, and professional spaces and ideologies through autoethnography, a research method whose reflexive premise favors its use for self-exploration and discovery (Davies, 2007; Ellis, 2004). The research questions that guided this study were: 1) How do I, as an advocate for bilingual education, negotiate the political, cultural and technical spaces to stay the course through changing political climates and professional trials? 2) How does negotiations of the ecologies of self, organization, and community (*ecologies of knowing*) strengthen my advocacy

for English Learners? 3) How does a critical reflection of personal stories, histories and life-long experiences strengthen my effectiveness as a bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in an urban district?

The answers to these questions were derived from a process of authoring and critically reflecting on my personal experience growing up in a bilingual household, living in México and the United States, and working in the field of bilingual education. I concurrently wrote and reflected on the story of my life as it relates to the world of bilingual education, building on the axiom that people closest to issues that affect a community are best suited to address and find solutions to those issues (Freire, 1997; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). I am a life-long member of the collective community of those involved in bilingual education, and I believe that my engagement with this community through my autoethnography has propelled the motivation to initiate discourse surrounding bilingual education in a manner that addresses the personal, organizational, and communal inequities that continue to systemically push this branch of education into the margins (Chávez, 2012; Garza, 2008; Rodriguez, 2011).

Data Analysis Model: Ecologies of Knowing

The "ecologies of knowing" model is a framework that provides a natural way to organize the thinking and learning of experiences at the levels of *self*, *organization*, and *community* (Guajardo *et al*., 2016). Weaving the ecologies with lived experiences, a process which Guajardo *et al*. (2016) describe metaphorically as creating a social DNA with which to base actions of advocacy, facilitates making meaning from experiences cognitively, emotionally, and relationally for human and community development (p. 38). In this dissertation, I explored the foundation of my own epistemology, values, strengths, and understanding which impact my daily duties and decisions as an educational leader, a bilingual program director advocating for

English learners. I used the discourse surrounding the "ecologies of knowing" model in conjunction with an eye for relationships, assets, stories, and place to create a cognitive, affective, and relational space where I could understand what the attributes and practices of a successful bilingual program director look like in the real world, as well as explore what actions made by bilingual program directors have the most significant impact on program success. Namely, I explored the troubles faced when implementing dual language programs and the construction of solutions to those challenges in a manner that creates sustained and empowering action and change (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 3).

Analysis

Ecology of Self

The *self* is the most micro level of the ecologies, and it allows the researcher to make the learning process of sharing and critically reflecting on stories extremely personal and relevant (Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Ramirez, 2013). Guajardo et al., (2016) have written on the importance of the *self* as a foundation for learning, explaining how, "As learners, the *self* is the basis of the world of knowing" (p. 36). However, exploring the *self* through reflexive narrative reveals that the *self* does not exist in isolation. Everything is connected: *self*, family, place, work, tradition, culture, education, etc. The relationships that exist within these ecologies were invaluable resources for my autoethnography because writing my story has revealed to me how my own ecologies concerning bilingual education govern my personal and cultural belief systems in the first place. My *self*, as a member of many communities, benefits from having roots in those communities. These communities are both tangible, such as living in geographically defined spaces, and intangible, such as belonging to the universal communities of biculturalism and bilingual education.

These roots in the community benefit the educational leader, family member, researcher, or any other invested party as a practitioner of change and reform because, as a member of a community, tapping into the assets and gifts that community possesses strengthens the resolve to find solutions that come from and are for that community (Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008). A simple, yet poignant example of this notion comes from a chronicle in "Narratives of Transformation: A Look at an Educational Leadership Process" (2008), in which a student of Francisco and Miguel Guajardo, Patricia Zamora, wrote:

> "I will become an educational leader someday. I will remember I come from a migrant family and will encourage others to remember their culture and to use their stories and values instead of policies to run our schools" (p. 8).

Patricia's story reminds us that there exist multiple ways in which the *self* interacts with *organizations* such as educational institutions, and it reminds us that maintaining a foundation in cultural strength is a fruitful way of navigating these spaces. My lifelong memories related to family and culture have strengthened me through my life-long journey in bilingualism and continue to drive my advocacy for ELs in my current position as a bilingual program director. I grew up in a home where my parents not only ensured I was exposed to my Mexican heritage and culture while living in the city of Chicago in the 1960s, but also counseled me about the importance of valuing my culture and native language. My autoethnography explored the assets that emerged from this relationship with my family, as well as how those assets have helped me advocate for English Learners as I've navigated varying *organizations* and *communities* throughout my life.

Finding the assets of the *self* and then incubating the *self* within the relationships, assets, stories, and place of both the *organization* and the *community* allows a leader to make conscious decisions and actions that are culturally responsive and well-rounded (Guajardo *et al.,* 2016).

This metacognitive thought process has guided the discovery of my epistemological foundation as an advocate and leader in bilingual education. I have become more aware of my own context of being an educational advocate and leader not only by understanding the needs of the community I serve, but also by engaging in the process of understanding myself, which began by reflecting on the story of my family. Guajardo et al. (2016) state that:

> Our individual constructions of self are invariably and essentially informed by our families. It is within our families that our sense of the collective first forms. We learn that others are necessary to meet our needs, and that it is through our relationships with others that we grow, change, and develop. We also learn through family that we grow and develop through our relationships, not only from what we receive, but also from what we give. Family is the original learning exchange for us. It is the context for our learning about self, but also the social world around us (p. 36).

Critical reflection on the *self* has shown me how much my family has influenced my entire disposition as an advocate for English learners. While I continue to learn and grow in my professional life, the foundation provided to me by my parents is a constant that has built my epistemology as an advocate and a leader. When I looked for the occurrence of the word "self" in my autoethnography, I found that the most occurrences of the word were in the sections about my parents. I saw how much of my *self* is attached and tied to them. Although I always knew this to be the case, my reflections revealed to me a closer connection than I ever realized existed.

Self-Relationships. *How does my relationship with myself help me lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

Self-relationships are more than just relationships with the self, as the term would suggest. *Self-relationships* are also a process through which belief systems and values are built, which in turn guides the actions of an advocate. Before advocates and leaders establish relationships with *organizations* and *communities*, they have to deeply understand who they are, what their belief system is, and what their values are so that they can create the space in which

solutions to problems are guided by the filters of experience that identify which assets of the *self* converge with the needs of those communities (Santamaria, 2014). Collective efforts which are strengthened through a common vision and common goals facilitate the creation of work that is efficient, prolific, creative, and determined, providing authentic drive to the endeavors of advocates as they work with communities. Convergence between the values and beliefs of the self, organization, and community occurs more authentically when the relationship with the self is strong because a strong *self-relationship* allows advocates to understand how they fit in, what their function is, and the nature of their capacity within the community. As bilingual program directors are continuously challenged by the hegemonic system throughout their advocacy for a meaningful and equitable education for English learners, a robust self-awareness is the greatest tool for confronting those challenges in a resilient manner (Trueba, 2004).

After much critical self-reflection, I have found my *self-relationship* to be grounded in my epistemology as a proud and confident Latina who values my Mexican and American roots and celebrates my bilingualism. My strong identity as a Mexican-American Latina is due in large part to my father, who ensured that I grew up proud of being bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate; valued my Spanish language while I was acquiring English; and understood my Mexican heritage while I was learning American customs. While I attended elementary school in the United States, my father built the pillars of my Spanish language and my Mexican culture at home because he wanted me to understand where I come from and be proud of my Mexican roots. As evidenced in the following section of my narrative, my *self-relationship* is strengthened as I remain cognizant of the effort my father made to instill in me this strong bicultural identity:

> *One of my favorite memories from this time is when I learned the alphabet in Spanish. Because there is no equivalent song for the English ABC song in Spanish, my father and I created an original song for the Spanish alphabet that I'd later sing with my brothers and sisters as my father pointed to the letters on our blackboard at home. We struggled to fit*

> *the Spanish alphabet to the tune of a song that my father had selected because the flow of the letters didn't quite fit. We opted to switch the order of the "J" and the "I" in order for the song to flow. My father, possibly realizing that learning the alphabet in the wrong order could be confusing later on, clarified by saying, "Vamos a cambiar el orden de las dos letras nada más para la canción." That song, our alphabet, was a bond between us. I will never forget it, and to this day I still feel the Mexican alphabet as belonging a little more to me than the English one does.*

Reflecting on this experience as I wrote my narrative, I became aware of how my father's effort to ensure that my siblings and I valued our Mexican heritage was very much a conscious decision:

> Although my father was fully capable of speaking English, he spoke Spanish at home all the time. My father knew that I was being immersed in English at school and he wanted me to keep my Spanish. He wholeheartedly appreciated and valued our culture and language and felt that they had to be a part of our family. By speaking Spanish at home all the time, listening to Mexican music, attending Mexican-American events, and speaking to us about the Mexican culture, my father promoted a value for our Spanish language and Mexican culture at home, which in turn made me value and take pride in my Mexican culture (Cummins, 2000, 2015).

Having a strong bicultural identity has helped me be an effective leader implementing bilingual education programs, including dual language programs, because my bicultural identity strengthens my value and belief of bilingual education, and having a strong sense of my epistemology in this way supports my resilience as an advocate for English learners (Trueba, 2004). Leaders implementing dual language programs are continuously met with opposition from administrators, parents, teachers, board members, etc. because there are a myriad of contradicting ideologies about how a bilingual student should be schooled (San Miguel, 2004). These ideologies range from promoting assimilation because "these students are in America and they need to learn English" to advocating for providing 90% of instruction in the student's native language because it promotes cognitive development (Callahan and Gándara, 2014; Cummins, 2000; San Miguel, 2004; Thomas and Collier, 2012). When I make decisions about implementing dual language programs, I use my personal and professional experience and my

beliefs and values to ensure that the decisions I make guarantee that our students also value their heritage and their language, and that they are proud of who they are, thus forming a strong identity and addressing the affective domain, which is often overlooked (Cummins, 2000, Thomas and Collier, 2012).

The *self* is the basis of interaction between the ecologies of *organization* and *community* (Guajardo et al., 2016); therefore, I am naturally inclined to project my own experience of benefitting from being bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate into my relationships with the *organizations* I work with and the communities those organizations serve. My experience being brought up in family where my Mexican roots were valued gives me the agency to be a bilingual program director who promotes the value of conserving and developing students' native language and identity by providing an education that addresses the affective needs of English learners and values what they bring from home rather than "fixing" or changing who they are (González, Moll and Amanti, 2009; Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). Implementing the dual language program in this manner instead of solely focusing on the content and the language is essential to the overall social and emotional growth of the child, which gives them the strength to continue learning and reverse historical trajectories of failure for English learners (Howard *et al*., 2007, Thomas and Collier, 2012); and it is through using my cultural strength as a *politic* for my decisions as a bilingual program director that I can continue to implement programs in this way.

Self-Assets. *What are my gifts and how do I use them to help me lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

Self-assets are the gifts that advocates have been endowed with and/or have developed throughout their life. The ecologies of *organization* and *community* influence the development and application of those gifts. As the mediating entities between the *self* and the *community*,

organizations such as those of family, church, school, or place function as didactic entities that instill within the *self* what one's position, role, purpose, or contribution to society will be, which in turn develops the identity of one's assets. *Self-assets* are best identified through a process of self-reflection because the assets that have proven as empowering to the *self* are more likely to be identified as having the capacity to help others. The process of identifying and developing *self-assets* is an empowering experience because it builds a leader's identity as a change agent. Keeping a *self-assets* based disposition, capitalizing and keeping the focus on practices that an advocate does well, builds pride, inspires, and motivates advocates to move the work forward confidently and with passion.

Through the critical reflection process of writing my autoethnegoraphy, I discovered that my greatest *self-asset* as a bilingual program director advocating for dual language programs is not just my propensity for caring, but my understanding that caring exists as practice (Valenzuela, 1999). My cognizance of caring in this manner was developed and strengthened by watching my mother model how to integrate caring into every decision she made and action she took. Caring as action was an integral part of my mother's identity, and I subconsciously integrated the practice into the creation of my own epistemology as I was being raised by my mother. Her actions became a representation of the standard I saw and adopted for myself as the way a woman, and especially a mother, should interact with others. The following section of my narrative is a depiction of what that standard looked like in a real-world context:

> Throughout all she did, my mother always provided the *ejemplo* that you dedicate your life to the wellbeing of your children first and foremost. Her children and family would always be a priority. As such, my mother was truly altruistic when it came to her children. She was there for the birth of all her grandchildren and helped all her daughters get through their pregnancies. If any of her children were sick, she would not let go until she saw that we were OK. She made sure we went to the doctor, made sure we took our medicine, and made sure nothing would prevent us from getting better. If that meant she wasn't going to sleep so that she could watch over us from our bedside, then she

> wouldn't sleep. She would be there right by our bed the entire night. I recall my sister would say, "*Ahí estaba cuando nos enfermábamos hasta que nos aliviábamos*." In the same manner, my mother took care of my father when he was diagnosed with diabetes by making sure he took his medication and was eating well. My mother took care of her own mother during the last years of her life. When one of her brothers underwent back surgery and had a very difficult recovery, my mother visited him regularly and took him meals. She was even very involved in caring for her mother-in-law towards the end of her life by being part of the rotation of family members who would spend the day or the night by her mother-in-law's side. My mother was there to take care of everybody without a single complaint because, above everything else, her family was her life.

Through the following story that my mother told again and again and again, even when she struggled with dementia in her later years, she revealed to us how this disposition of caring originated from the example set by her own parents:

> *My mother always began the story the same way: "Un día mi mamá me dijo, 'Ve a traer leña para la lumbre.' Y fuí. Me acuerdo que fuí al patio a traer la leña y me picó una víbora o un alicantrito, como le decíamos nosotros. Me fuí corriendo a la casa gritando, 'Me picó un alacantrito!' Mi papá en ese momento supo que me había picado una víbora. Sacó su navaja y me hiso unas cortadas en el dedo para sacarme el veneno." At this point in the story she always pointed to the scars on her fingers where she had been bitten. "Mira, aquí tengo las cicatrices. Mi papá me amarró el brazo con un trapo y me llevó al doctor en un carretón a las Aldamas.*
>
> *"Para cuando llegamos al doctor en a las Aldamas, ya llevaba el brazo hinchado. Pero me curaron y sobreviví. El doctor comentó que mi padre me había salvado la vida. Mi papá siempre me protegió mucho porque me consideraba la más débil de la familia." My mom's claim of being "débil" was in no way hyperbole. When she was young, my mother was diagnosed as anemic. She recalled to me how she went to the doctor for treatment and that her mother would prepare special meals for her, including a lot of liver! She always talked about her father as being very protective of her. My mother, in turn, always made sure that her own children were also loved, protected, and well taken care of. When my father spoke of my mother, he spoke of her fondly, "Yo no me equivoqué. Tu mamá fue muy buena mamá. Fue dura y las crió muy bien."*

My *self-asset* of caring has helped me implement a dual language program in an urban district because every decision I make as a bilingual program director is grounded on an ideology that values all stakeholders. An often overlooked component of authentic caring in bilingual education involves taking into consideration linguistic, socioeconomic, sociocultural and

structural barriers that obstruct parents from understanding the American public school system and in particular the dual language program. As a bilingual program director I care that parents are well informed about the dual language program and translate that caring into practice by holding parent sessions and providing a variety of written documents to ensure that parents understand the purpose and benefits of the dual language program, how the dual language program is designed, and what courses their children have an opportunity to take when they continue in the dual language program in middle school and in high school. In addition, parents are invited to participate along with their children in extracurricular programs where they all learn the history of their heritage through culturally relevant pedagogy.

My *self-asset* of caring propels me to go the extra mile to ensure that parents of English learners have ample opportunities to attend these sessions by providing transportation, child care, and assuring that meetings are held at different times of the day so that parents have multiple opportunities to attend. Many times these sessions are conducted in Spanish while native English speaking parents listen to an English translation of the presentation through a headset. I also set up systems to ensure that parents are included in the implementation of dual language programs by providing them with opportunities to provide feedback, ask questions, and express their concerns. Many of these gatherings are set up in small groups to provide a safe space for all parents to participate. By adhering to my belief of caring as practice, I make every effort to ensure that every action I take demonstrates to parents and community members that they are cared about, acknowledged and valued.

Self-Stories. *How do my story and the stories my ancestors passed on to me help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?*

Self-stories, especially those that exist as family history, are powerful tools critical for identity formation (Guajardo *et al*., 2012; Guajardo and Guajardo, 2007). Stories embody the spirit, tradition, beliefs, values, and essential foundations that dictate, describe, and elaborate the strength of entire cultures (Alarcón et al., 2011; Anzaldúa, 1999; Ellis, 2004; E.Garcia, 2015; Guajardo *et al*., 2016; Reed-Danahay, 2009; Yosso, 2005). A story that has become part of my family history, my family lore and oral history, is the story of my father taking on the role of the breadwinner in his family after his own father passed away. My *Tio Beto* told me the story truly from his heart on the day of my father's funeral. I'd heard the story countless times throughout my life, but that day I really had a true sense of how impactful my father was in changing the destiny of his family. I wrote about that day in my narrative:

> *As I completed the emotionally draining process of pouring pieces of my memories with my father onto paper, I couldn't help but feel the eulogy would be incomplete without the perspective of other family members whose lives my father also affected. One by one, I approached my father's siblings to gather their thoughts on how my father touched their lives. While all the responses I received were overwhelmingly positive, I'll never forget the words my youngest uncle, Tio Beto, said regarding my father.*
>
> *"Gracias a Benjamín, cambió la vida de todos nosotros.," he began. "Él tomó el lugar de nuestro padre. Gracias a que él siempre quiso superarse en la vida, pudimos salir adelante. Ayudó a mamá. Ese fue el ejemplo que nos dio y fue el camino que seguimos los demás. Bien pudo haber sido un borracho y ese hubiera sido el ejemplo que hubiéramos seguido. Pero él quiso estudiar y trabajar, y eso fue lo que hicimos. Por esa razón nosotros estudiamos, trabajamos, terminamos nuestras carreras, y cambió la vida de toda nuestra familia."*

My father assuming that role within his family is even more significant because that was an extremely trying time full of loss and poverty for my father's family. My father's father' death came a year after my father's 16 year old brother had also passed away. Disparity permeated the household as my father did his best to support the family. I reflected on this state of affairs and how the story impacted my own life in my narrative:

> After the death of my father's father, the household income suddenly became almost non-existent. I heard stories of food being so scarce that a single egg had to be shared between brothers. I was saddened thinking of all the hardship that they gone through, but also inspired by how they came together to survive the experience. My father took on the role of the breadwinner for the household and my grandmother looked after him, making sure he was able to eat decently with the little food they had. She also made sure he was as well clothed as he could be. My grandmother sold what she could to bring in any little bit of extra money. Later, my father's brother, Ruben, also helped the family by finding work with the railroad. They lived like this for some years while my father was going to school at *Alvaro Obregón*. When my father graduated, he was able to get a better paying job and take better care of his family. All his money went towards his family.
> These types of stories that my father told my siblings and me carried with them the weight of my father's entire love, support, and hope for his family. They taught us what it means to be dedicated to your family.

The family history contained in the story of my father's legacy gave me a sense of responsibility that all my father's work and his dedication to his family cannot go out the window. My father set the standard of living a life dedicated to always striving to progress and improve through education and hard work, a disposition that is engrained in my *self* and guides all my actions. Not only did he believe that people should aspire to live their own life in this way, but he also believed that people had a responsibility to encourage each other to always *hecharle ganas*. Ever since I was a little girl, my father used to tell me, *Tu tienes que poner el ejemplo*. He would tell me this because I was the oldest child and he knew the significance of what it meant to set a good example for my siblings. I didn't quite understand the significance of it until I was an adult and heard my *Tio Beto* reflect on the influence my father had on him the day of my father's funeral. And it wasn't until I truly reflected on how the experience of hearing my *Tio Beto* tell me about how my father impacted the lives of his family that I realized my father's story played an integral role in why I am an advocate for English learners.

I am aware of the value of education because my *self-story*, at its core, is a story of success in rising above poverty, death and, as my father would say, *mala suerte en la vida*. As a

bilingual program director, I have the privilege of helping countless families change their destiny and improve their life through bilingual education. My father gave himself the responsibility of taking care of the family in hard times. He set an example of being responsible for his brothers and his mother. I feel a similar responsibility for playing my part in taking care of English learners and their families through my advocacy for bilingual education. I view my job as a bilingual program director as a social responsibility because the decisions that I make about staffing, funding, curriculum, and professional development will impact thousands of children and families. Therefore, every decision I make about the dual language program is grounded on helping ELs live up to their "full potential," which is more than passing a standardized test. Living to one's "full potential" consists of improving one's quality of life.

Self-Place. *How has place contributed to my development and identity, and how does this development help me lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

The ideology of *self-place* for the purpose of this study is a component of place-based pedagogy that contends that place goes beyond physical geographical location to comprise all of the histories and dynamics of a place that dictate the values, practice, and importance of the interdependent lives of community members, including the *self* as part of that community (Barron-McKeagney, 2002; Guajardo *et al*., 2016). The process of navigating the ontology of *self-place* espouses that a person is shaped by all the history, culture, norms, people, etc. of the places in which he or she has lived. The *self* absorbs a little bit of each place and carries it with them for life. By this same principle, the assets that can be obtained from different places are increased by occupying a variety of spaces and taking in all the valuable assets that each place has to offer. Regardless of whether the *self* occupies a space for a day, a year, or a decade, the

process of absorbing assets of place is continuous and organic, and every place, because of its rich history, stories, and communal wisdom, has assets to give.

In 1957, my mother made the fifteen hundred mile journey from Chicago, Illinois to Monterrey, México so that I could be born in México and she and I could be under the care of my grandparents during her *cuarentena*. Forty days after being born, I returned to the United States to spend the next twelve years of my life in Chicago before my father decided to pack up all our things and move the family with him back down to México. I spent the next thirteen years living in Monterrey before moving to the United States and México border, where I lived on the Mexican side of the border for ten years and on the United States side of the border for twenty years before moving once again to an urban city, where I lived and worked as a bilingual director for the next four years. Each place I have resided in has contributed directly to the formation of my identity. The wide array of perspectives I have gained from experiencing different ways of life has broadened my schema on the meaning of such concepts as community, openness, friendship, trust, respect, and collaboration, which in turn inform the moral commitment that guides my leadership (Sergiovanni, 2000). The following section from my narrative depicts an account of how my epistemology was formed in this way when I moved to México with my family in the summer of 1969:

> *In México, people would openly greet each other and invite each other over for merienda – coffee with pan dulce or a homemade cake. I remember what it was like walking to the farmacia five houses down from my house. If la Señora Michaela was rocking on her mecedora on her patio, I would greet her, "Adioooos, Señora Michaela!" And she would respond, "Adioooos!" Same with la Señora Roble, la Señora Perla, and all the other neighbors along the way. Eventually, I got to know every single neighbor on my block in La Colonia Chapultepec.*
>
> *Through my interactions with these neighbors, they taught me las "costumbres mexicanas y el valor de la familia." My mom would meet with her friends once a week and they would share their family struggles and successes. They would share how they handled whatever challenges they had in their families. The stories often involved*

struggles with their sons or daughters either not doing well in school or being in unhealthy relationships with their boyfriends or girlfriends. They also shared about their economic struggles and how they were creative with their budgets. They'd share prices from the different markets and other ways to save money.

By sharing their stories, they were learning from each other and building close relationships. I could see how much my mother enjoyed having close friends. It made me feel good seeing her have a healthy social life outside of the home. It was a different side of my mother that I wasn't so used to seeing. There came a point where even the husbands all got to know each other as well. We had neighborhood reunions and even neighborhood-wide birthday celebrations.

Y que no se muriera alguien. If someone suffered a loss in their family, neighbors brought food and offered their condolences for that family. Neighbors would arrive to the home with a cooked meal and they would spend time there talking and crying alongside the mourning family.

Looking back on it now, I realize how much my time in México shaped who I am as a leader from the time I first moved there. La Colonia Chapultepec indoctrinated me into a world where community serves as a tool for the advancement of the people – where efficacy is built together. That part of México has never left me.

The lessons that I learned during my time immersed in the Mexican community of *La Colonia Chapultepec* – how communal familiarity functions, how to develop relationships based on mutual sharing of struggles and successes, and how to facilitate the creation of a strong network for the advancement of the collective – carry over to the moral imperative that guides my leadership as a bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in an urban district. Sergiovanni (2007) argues that, "For better or worse, culture influences much of what is thought, said, and done in a school" (p. 29). By this, he is asserting that technical rationality is not a good source for authority in the school system because leadership based entirely on hierarchical bureaucracy does not foster the same level of professionalism among the entire community of a school (or school district) as nurturing a communal environment with a communal purpose. Collaboration creates positive environments that keep the vision of the dual language program alive (Freeman, Freeman and Mercuri, 2005). The seamless network of *La*

Colonia Chapultepec existed on a foundation of "doing the right thing" because there was a vested interest in the collective wellbeing. For a bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in an urban district, generating this type of environment hinges on developing relationships where, much like in *La Colonia Chapultepec*, feedback from multiple stakeholders, including teachers, principals, parents, and other community members is worked with authentically to help them feel validated as part of the team (Izquierdo, in Collier and Thomas, 2014, p.91). This, in turn, brings a lot of high energy and motivation to continue the work. If stakeholders are alienated from the collaboration process, they don't own the program and the chances of the program failing increase substantially. In an American society dominated by individualism and competition, I often reflect back to my assets of *self-place*, specifically the assets I gained concerning collaboration during my time in México, to remind myself what authentic, successful collaboration can and should look like as I implement dual language programs in my district.

Ecology of Organization

Organizations, including families, schools, churches, and other social institutions, function as mediating entities between the *self* and the rest of society (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 37). It is through participating in *organizations* that we initially build the conception of how social norms operate because *organizations* serve as the social context through which we develop our values, habits, and views of the world (Ramirez, 2013, p. 53). Nowhere is this more evident than in the *organization* of family. The family is where the *self* originally learns to consolidate the "I" and the "we" as the values and assets of the collective mindset are initially developed in us by our family upbringing. As we mature, the *organizations* of society continue to shape us through a process that is complex and interactive. Guajardo *et al*., (2016) describe

how, "…we grow and develop through our relationships, not only from what we receive, but also from what we give" (p. 36). This reciprocal process is constant and creates a relationship through which the *self* and *organizations* mutually benefit and grow. However, *organizations* can also be detrimental when the relationship between the *self* and the *organization* becomes limiting or coercive. Take, for instance, the *organization* of educational institutions, which can function as either "engines to liberate the human mind and spirit," such as schools that celebrate students' heritage, culture, and language, or they can function as "forces of social control," such as schools that prioritize hegemonic ideals, values, identities, and standards of success on students (Alarcón *et al*., 2011; Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 179; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Valenzuela, 1999).

When navigated purposefully and responsibly, engaging with institutions of education can serve as a way to bring positive change and validation to *communities*. Dual language programs offer validation for all students by providing a safe space for students to grow cognitively, academically, linguistically, socially, and culturally because dual language programs mold the *organization* of school into a space that accepts students for who they are and celebrates their identity (Beeman and Urow, 2012; Cloud, Genesee and Hamayan, 2000; Collier and Thomas, 2014; Dow, 2006; Escamilla *et al*., 2014; Ferrón, 2011; Freeman, Freeman and Mercuri, 2005; O. Garcia , 2013; Gómez, 2000; Gómez, 2006; Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary and Rogers, 2007; Palmer, Zuñiga, and Jernderson, 2015; Thomas and Collier, 1997, 2002, 2012).

Organization-Relationships. *How do relationships within the organization and between organizations contribute to helping lead the implementation of a dual language program?*

Organization-relationships need to be strong in order for an organization to effectively serve as the vehicle through which advocates enact change for the communities they serve.

When *organization-relationships* are based on mutual *confianza*, the environment of the *organization* transforms into a safe space that creates products, services, and changes that are strengthened by a collective purpose. In the *organization* of an urban school district, transparency between district administrators, principals, and teachers ensures that the *organization-relationship* is authentic, reciprocal, and productive. As a bilingual program director, I use my experience as a principal who has implemented a dual language program to build empathy with principals who are struggling to implement a dual language program on their campus. My knowledge of the complexities of dual language programs and my ability to provide support based on my real world experiences helps me strengthen the *organization-relationships* within my work space because principals and teachers have c*onfianza* in someone with experience. As a bilingual program director, building strong "organization relationships" is significant because weak relationships make it easier for principals not to implement the program with fidelity. Thomas and Collier's (2012) longitudinal study of bilingual and ESL programs has consistently proven that Two-way and One-way dual language programs are the only bilingual programs that fully close the achievement gap between English learners and native English speakers (p. 92-95). Still, principals implementing dual language programs are prone to moments of insecurity and doubt during the first years of implementation because both ELs and native English speakers take 5-7 years to acquire a second language at a high cognitive academic proficiency level, which tests principals' commitment to the program because results are not immediately apparent on standardized assessments. I wrote in my narrative about how I experienced this fear and doubt myself when I was a principal implementing a dual language program for the first time.

> *When I saw the native English speaking students' poor Spanish writing samples, I was also concerned and really didn't know at that time what to do. There were spelling*

> *errors, incomplete sentences, and a general lack of Spanish language grammar and syntax. At that time, the first thing that came to my mind to fix the problem was letting go of the dual language program. I remember walking over to my superintendent's office, which was across the street from my school, and showing him some Spanish writing samples of struggling native English speaking students. I explained to him that I believed in bilingual education, and I believed in the goals of dual language with all my heart, but that I doubted whether it was going to work for us at my school because I didn't see the native English speakers acquiring Spanish. I looked at him straight in the eye and said, "Is there any way I can get out of dual language?" I had only been implementing the program one year and I was already requesting to drop it.*

As I've gained experience implementing dual language programs, I have overcome the anxiousness of wanting to see students at the same literacy level in their second and native language by third grade. I've learned that it is normal for students' literacy trajectory in their second language to trail slightly behind their literacy trajectory in their native language (Escamilla, 2014). As a bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in an urban district, I strive to provide this knowledge to my principals who are having doubts about the program. However, I cannot expect principals to believe the information I am imparting to them with full conviction without first taking the time to establish an "organization relationship" with them that is reciprocal and based on a mutual *confianza*. I achieve strong *organization-relationship* based on *confianza* by, first and foremost, acknowledging the principals' efforts to implement the dual language program, knowing that they already have a lot of pressure to have students reading on grade level and passing their standardized assessments. I assure principals and teachers that they are going to have all of my support in providing professional development and instructional resources, and that the support I give them is not going to be punitive in nature. I take the time to sit down with principals and teachers, listen to all their questions, recommendations and concerns, and together we find solutions to improve the program in a way that they own while building strong *organizational relationships* that are based on communal efficacy. The fastest way I know of for dual language programs to run the risk of failing occurs

when *organizational relationships* are coercive instead of collaborative, causing principals and teachers to merely give the appearance of implementing the program instead of implementing it with fidelity, understanding the program deeply, believing in it, and owning it.

Organization-Assets. *What gifts, resources and capital does my organization bring to the community and how do I use those resources to help me lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

Organization-assets are the gifts, resources, benefits, and capital that an organization brings to the community. *Organization-assets* motivate communities to engage in reciprocal partnerships with organizations in an arena that facilitates building on strengths, supporting each other, and discovering new strengths (Guajardo, *et al*., 2016). *Organizational-assets* are stronger when they address the needs of the self and the community. The *organization-assets* of the dual language program lie in the program's potential to create bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate students who have more favorable attitudes toward being bilingual and bicultural and view their peers that are different from themselves very positively (Thomas and Collier, 2012, p.110). Dual language programs foster cognitive development through two languages and incorporate cross-cultural perspectives that affirm and value students' bilingual/bicultural identities (Thomas and Collier, 2012 p. 110). Bilingualism has been demonstrated advantages in "cognitive domains related to attention, inhibition, monitoring, and switching focus of attention" (Hamayan, Genesee, and Cloud, 2013, p. 8.). For English learners, dual language programs offer nonstop cognitive development through their first language which is needed for full academic gap closure.

Socially, bilingual, bicultural and biliterate students are able to engage in deep communication in two languages with members from organizations such as family who speak in

their native language. The family context is the most important context where cognitive development occurs. When children continue to use the language(s) that the parents know best, they are receiving nonstop cognitive development. Parents and grandparents, are a source of stimulation of thinking skills, when they talk with their children by asking questions, making decisions, discussing daily activities, sharing family heritage, etc. (Thomas and Collier, 2012, p. 86). The ability to communicate with family members in any language creates strong relationships. Communicating with grandparents is empowering because the stories that familial elders share are full of cultural traditions, wisdom, and strength (Guajardo and Guajardo, 2013; Guajardo *et al.*, 2016).These *pláticas* with family members also lead to the discovering of new assets within the self by facilitating the discovery of cultural assets that build pride and motivate students to continue progressing in life. From a more pragmatic perspective, bilingualism has the potential to provide opportunities to secure a better job in today's global society, especially in the field of public service, which often provides stipends for bilingual employees (Agirdag, 2014). In the narrative and reflection of my life story, I wrote about how I perceived the manner in which bilingualism contributed to my father's advancement in his career:

> Despite what empirical research has attempted to prove or disprove on the economic advantages of bilingualism, my father's first-hand experience left no doubt within our family that bilingualism is indeed an asset, both monetarily and culturally. Bilingualism allowed my father great opportunities in México. He worked at a dinner plate manufacturing company, Keramos Monterrey, where he created the designs that were engraved on ceramic plates. My father would translate when the owners of the company from the U.S. visited for operational inspections because he was one of the few employees fluent in English. He was a hard worker, but it was his bilingualism that really caught the attention of the company owners. They awarded him with a prestigious scholarship to Tecnológico de Monterrey, a revered university in Monterrey, Nuevo León, México. Today, the school's merit and reputation can be compared to that of MIT in Boston, Massachusetts. My father graduated from Tecnológico de Monterrey with a technical degree in Mecánico Eléctrico, or electrical mechanics. Although he did not know it at the time, his endeavors in education would change the destiny of his entire family, including my own.

As a bilingual program director, having experienced first-hand how my father benefited from being bilingual solidified within me the notion that bilingualism, without question, is an asset. This knowledge facilitates my conversations about the benefits of the dual language program with parents from different backgrounds because sharing my personal experience validates the benefits of being bilingual, bicultural and biliterate. I approach parents by explaining the *organization-assets* of a dual language program from the perspective of the economic advantages of being bilingual as I have experienced them in my own life and in the life of my father. Another method of creating that validation of bilingualism is by explaining to parents the importance of maintaining their son or daughter's native language because language is such an integral part of identity. The introduction of reading in the child's first language affirms the student's identity as it communicates the importance of the family language and culture (Cummins, 2000, p.193). Native language should never be sacrificed or allowed to be eradicated because of the pressure of the hegemonic system to acquire English as soon as possible; the cost is too high. I also explain to parents whenever possible that the dual language program is an enrichment program that allows students to work at high cognitive levels in two languages and builds cross-cultural competencies (Thomas and Collier, 2012, p.3). Making every effort possible to share the research and rationale for dual language education and explaining the benefits of the dual language program to parents helps a bilingual program director implement a dual language program successfully in an urban district. Ensuring that every family understands the benefits of the program is critical for program sustainability because families are our first and foremost advocates for the dual language program.

Organization-Stories. *What are the stories that ground my organizational history and invite its employees and stakeholders to own their work implementing a dual language program in an urban district?*

Organization-stories form the identity of an organization based on its values, beliefs, and ideologies. This identity is illustrated through real-world accounts of that organization's history by organization members, members of the community, or anybody who is impacted by that organization. The *organization-story* of bilingual education is a story of struggle for equity in ensuring that students have access to the curriculum by providing them instruction and resources in their native language, viewing their language as a resource, and valuing their culture (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Fitts and Weisman, 2009; Garcia, 2009; Ruiz, 1984). At the time when the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was established, it was common that students who spoke a language other than English were submerged in English-only instruction because they were expected to assimilate to the hegemonic mainstream school culture on their own. This practice, later coined as "sink or swim," privileged students who were able to get support at home and left the rest to fall behind and fail. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 leveled the playing field for those students who didn't have the language or educational resources at home to support their schooling by providing these students with native language instruction, instructional resources in their native language, and instruction from teachers trained to be sensitive to the needs of English learners. When all of these factors are considered to support English learners, education is meaningful and equitable. Subsequent court cases, such as Lau v. Nichols (1974) and Castañeda V. Pickard (1978) further define the ideology of equity as it pertains to the values, beliefs, and ideologies of bilingual education by illustrating that, when referring to education, "same" is not

necessarily “equal” (Baker 2011; Blanton 2011; Crawford, 2004a; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004; Collier and Thomas, 2009).

Because equity and access are integral parts of the *organization-story* of bilingual education, there is value in exploring how these concepts are reflected in my epistemology. Personally, I believe that every child should have access to a meaningful and quality education in the United States. All children, regardless of their socio economic status, nationality, color of their skin, or native language should enjoy their right to a quality education that develops in them a desire to learn in life by building on their assets, celebrating their heritage, and validating their identity. While the notion of every child having the right to a quality education is not new, the reality for many children in the United States is that they are denied a meaningful education when they can’t understand what the teacher is saying, their schedules are double blocked so they miss out on electives, they don’t have instructional resources in their native language, culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy is absent, and they are an afterthought when new educational initiatives are being rolled out in a district. My disposition that emphasizes the need to address equity originates from my experience in Dr. Arroyo, Nuevo Leon where I personally saw how so many students did not have access to a basic education because of economic struggles in life. The following excerpt from my narrative details this experience:

> *Also, after reflecting on the poverty I experienced in San Pedro, my advocacy for education was strengthened because, with the vast resources available in the United States, I am fully convinced that it is possible to provide every single child with an equitable and quality education. At the ejido, education was a reoccurring topic discussed at the dinner table with the locals. The basic education the children were receiving from my fellow teachers and me, learning to read, write, spell, and do basic mathematics, was greatly valued because many of the parents didn’t even have a basic elementary education. There was also not much opportunity to continue schooling beyond elementary school. I don’t know how many of the students I taught made it to secundaria (middle school), but I’d be willing to bet it was less than 10 percent. I recently participated in a Biliteracy conference in Puebla, México, where I learned that these conditions are still the same. The closest middle school to San Pedro de Ruedas*

> *was in the town of Dr. Arroyo, 18 kilometers away from the ejido, so students couldn't attend without going to live there; it wasn't feasible to travel back and forth every day. Witnessing that kind of educational inequity deeply affected me, and it resonates with me whenever I think of the right that children have to be educated in the United States.*

Reflecting on the experience of seeing how the children in San Pedro de Ruedas didn't have the choice to continue their education beyond elementary school made me realize how privileged the United States is as a country to have more than enough resources to educate every single child. My experience seeing what true inequity looks like has strengthened my advocacy for bilingual education, including dual language programs, because the *organization-story* of bilingual education, the historical origins of the institution, originates from a movement of educational equity created to prevent the children in the United States from having to go through what I saw the children in Dr. Arroyo go through. That is to say, bilingual education was created to provide English learners with the constitutional right to a meaningful education and for schools to modify their pedagogical practices to ensure that English learners' affective, academic, and linguistic needs are met (Crawford, 2004).

In addition, the discourse surrounding bilingual education has changed the way the United States views education for English learners because bilingual education, "…raises questions about national identity; federalism; power; ethnicity; pedagogy; relationships between federal, state, and local governments; relationships between majority and minority groups; how we define an American in general; and how we should educate immigrant and native children (San Miguel, 2004, p.1). When bilingual program directors know that the main obstacles are ideological, the next natural step is to bring stakeholders together to discuss these ideologies so that at a minimum there exists a mutual understanding of rationales. This elevated discourse, while at times controversial, has opened the door to include more voices in the endeavor of

improving educational opportunities for ELs. As a bilingual program director, I use both ideological and legal strategies to ensure that bilingual programs are being well implemented district-wide. Healthy *organization-relationships* are based on a foundation of reciprocity; therefore, the coercive nature that inherently arises from enforcing a dual language program through punitive measures spawns feelings of resentment and apathy which can lead to teachers or principals meeting the minimal requirements of the program and only implementing it when visited by a supervisor. Diplomacy, therefore, often proves to be a much more effective strategy. Nevertheless, there are times, when enforcing the law is necessary, especially when ideological roadblocks are affecting the education of ELs. A good bilingual program director negotiates to find balance between enforcing the law and coming to consensus on how to implement the program.

Organization-Place. *What is the public identity my organization has in its geographic context, and how has this public identity of place contributed to building a healthy Dual Language program in an urban district?*

Different organizations have different values, priorities, and practices based on their place. Place is more than just geographic location; it involves the history, the values, and the ideologies of a specific location. Discourse that takes place in different *organizations* differs depending on the *place* in which that *organization* is located. As I noted in my narrative, when I arrived to my new urban district, I found that the discourse on bilingual education was different than I had experienced before.

> *During my twenty-four years as a teacher, vice principal, and principal on the border, bilingual pedagogy, such as sheltered instruction and biliteracy, were just part of our everyday life because ninety-eight percent of our teachers were certified in bilingual education or ESL. I realized that I had taken this privilege for granted when I experienced the bilingual department being excluded from the discourse of curriculum and instruction in my new district. I knew right then that changing the image that the*

> *bilingual department was solely responsible for compliance was going to be my goal; it was going to be my charge from then on out. I don't know how or why that ideology of exclusion surrounding the bilingual department came to be in my new district. All I know is that from that moment on, I made it a point to work on communicating that the bilingual program was going to be an integral part of this district's instructional program.*

Because *organization-place* is so intimately connected to the beliefs, ideologies, values, and traditions of the *community* in that place, a bilingual program director must understand the existing ideology regarding bilingual education that exists in a *place* in order to make important decisions regarding the implementation of a dual language program. This includes answering questions such as: How long has the dual language program been implemented in this *place*? How did the students do? How do the teachers feel about it, and is it still being implemented? Forming a relationship with community members and listening to their stories is a good way to understand the relationship status between the *community* and the *151organization* of schools in a *place*. Specifically, it is a fruitful way to intimately know the struggles the community has had to receive equitable education in the form of quality bilingual programs in that *place*. When these ideologies are addressed, dual language programs can more directly meet the needs of the community and therefore be implemented with greater success.

Ecology of *Community*

The term *community* encompasses both geographical locations and the people that inhabit those spaces as separate yet intertwining entities. Understanding the strengths that exist in communities can be achieved by engaging both facets – geography and people – of the *community*, mapping their assets by thinking critically about their redeeming qualities (Guajardo *et al*., 2016, pp. 47-48). Engaging *community* members to identify assets involves the process of sharing stories that highlight social capital gained from relationships among community members and relationships between different communities as well. The geographic location of *communities*

also possesses assets that come from the rich history of place, and those, "unique histories and dynamics…need to be understood if efforts to change them are to be successful and just" (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 45). Utilizing the research method of autoethnography facilitated the process of mining the communities which I have inhabited and worked in for strengths and assets of place by couching the entire process of constructing my epistemology in "real contexts of real places," allowing authentic reflection and transference of learning to take place at a level that empowered and enlightened me throughout my journey (Chávez, 2012; Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 45). For this study, storytelling was the mediating tool through which I engaged with the multiple communities in which I have lived, with which I have interacted, and for whom I have advocated in order to understand their complex and diverse needs as well as their assets and gifts. Understanding how the community (world at the macro level) impacts our daily lives is critical for bilingual program directors to continue the work in implementing a dual language program and ultimately transforming pedagogy for emergent bilinguals because knowing the flow of forces and locations of power in our lives and communities is important in informing work and action plans (Guajardo's, 2015; Garcia, 2009). To know that there is dialogue between the micro and the macro in a reciprocal way is valuable in informing our future actions and questions. It is the relationships within the community that will bring about changes to the community that are nurturing and just.

Community-Relationships. *Who are my community partners and when and how do I collaborate with them to lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

Community-relationships are necessary to create change that is successful and just. These relationships are strengthened by understanding the assets and redeeming qualities of a geographic location and the people that live in that location. To help create successful

educational programs, urban school districts build a plethora of *community-relationships* with a variety of partners, including business partners, government bodies, universities, and non-profit organizations, with the potential to assist in the implementation of dual language programs on all levels. *Community-relationships* with parents, however, are the most critical to the implementation of a successful dual language program because there exists a direct link between parental involvement and student academic success (Gándara, 1982). Parents can make or break a dual language program. In my experience, if parents don't understand the program or they think they can't engage with their children in their studies in the second language, attrition occurs as they remove their sons and daughters from the program. On the other hand, Thomas and Collier (2012) note, "As [parents] come to understand the process their children are going through [in a dual language program], their initial anxieties diminish and they frequently become the program's greatest advocates" (p.3). This parental transition into advocacy occurs organically because the natural inclination for parents from *all communities*, including communities often perceived as "disadvantaged" or apathetic towards education, is to encourage their children to be academically successful (Cummins, 2014; Delgado-Gaitan, 1992). Ethnographic studies have disproven the deficit ideologies claiming students from low SES backgrounds, immigrants, English learners, and minority communities don't care about education, providing counter-narratives of these groups demonstrating a strong appreciation for education, and showing how students from these groups are often pushed by their families to succeed academically (Cummins, 2014; Delgado-Gaitan, 1992). In the authoring and critical reflection of my story, I reflected on how I witnessed this concept enacted among the actions of the parents at my schools:

> I see the practice of giving *consejos* continue today among parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even teachers in the district where I work. During community meetings,

> parents of ELs give other parents *consejos* on the importance of their children maintaining their native language in order for them to be able to continue communicating with their parents, grandparents, and other members of the family. They say, *Es bueno que los niños sigan manteniendo su Español para que no pierdan nuestro idioma y el valor de nuestra cultura. Es importante que entiendan de donde vienen.* I have also seen how parents make great efforts to engage in the education system their children participate in, which many times excludes them for the simple reason of not understanding the language or the rules of the American school system. I have seen parents take advantage of ESL classes that I offered in my district during the day or in the evening so they can better navigate the education system and play a better role in supporting their children in school. I've seen in multiple districts when mothers stay behind after dropping off their children in the morning to share with other parents how they experience the education system and advise each other on what has worked for them while navigating that system. As I witness these social networks in action, I am reminded how, as a bilingual program director, I have the opportunity and privilege to support families in these complex networks as they try to ensure that their children find success in the American education system.

Because parents' aspiration for their children's success is such an engrained part of their disposition, *community-relationships* between schools and parents help strengthen and sustain a dual language program in a district. As a bilingual program director, I build *community-relationships* and ensure that parents grow along with the program by utilizing collaborative techniques such as regular advisory meetings, conferences, and small group *pláticas*, to listen to parents' concerns, review student data with parents, and communicate to parents the specific details about the selected dual language program model for each school. These spaces for collective discourse ensure that parents are among the first groups exposed to the research and rationale for dual language education for students from all linguistic backgrounds. These spaces are significant for the successful implementation of a dual language program because parents who are armed with the tools for advocacy will take action to move the program forward (Thomas and Collier, 2012). When a dual language program is in danger of being eliminated, parents who are very familiar with the benefits of the program are inclined to go to the school board to fight to keep the program alive. Additionally, informed parents are more likely to speak

directly to superintendents and district administrators if they have concerns with policy, fidelity of implementation, lack of resources, and lack of district support for the program.

Strong *community-relationships* with well-informed parents also facilitate the successful implementation of dual language programs because these relationships give them a space where all stakeholders and parents in particular can provide valuable recommendations to improve and enrich the program, such as suggestions on how to ensure that all activities in the district are aligned to dual language programs. I once had a parent who insisted that because her son's school was a dual language school, there needed to be a policy in which students were required to present their science project in both languages. I have also seen parents recommend that school field trips should provide opportunities for students to practice their second language and expose them to different cultures. Some parents in my district have suggested that summer programs be enrichment programs delivered 100% in the second language, which led to the creation of three dual language summer enrichment programs partnered with a Mexican-American museum. Other parents in my district have supported schools by raising funds to provide the school with supplemental instructional resources in the second language that go beyond what the district can offer. In today's technology driven society, I've seen parents take it upon themselves to use social media to promote dual language programs to a broader audience, keeping the community abreast with the latest research and articles related to dual language. These online community groups also advertise a variety of opportunities for children in dual language programs to practice their second language at different events around the city. All these great ideas recommended by parents ensure that the status of the second language is elevated and valued in the school district, ultimately ensuring the successful implementation of a dual language program (Beeman and Urow, 2012).

Community-Assets. *What are the gifts, strengths and capital(s) a community brings to help me lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

Community assets are assets that are found within the cultures of communities. These assets are gifts and resources that community members as a collective have developed and passed down to exist or thrive. When relating community and culture into the paradigm of education, researchers and practitioners often either dwell on *cultural deficits* that promote substandard student orientations that undermine scholastic achievement, or they strive to create *cultural congruence* between school culture and students' home culture (González, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). The latter, which posits community culture as an asset through which equitable education can be further sustained, is more easily grasped by analyzing discourse surrounding the term "culture" to move away from using the term as a uniform categorization of expected behavior and instead apply it to the ethnographic observation of household and community "practice" (Baumann, 1996; Gonzalez, 2005). When I look at the culture of the community with which I work, I focus on assets that are expressed through the actions of the community. Cultural assets are abundant in all communities, including the most impoverished communities, which are often labeled as providing children with poor experiences, "not economically but in terms of quality of experiences for the child" (Moll *et al*., 2005, p. 71). Nowhere did I find that assets exist abundantly in impoverished communities to be truer than during my experience in *San Pedro de Ruedas* in *Dr. Arroyo, Nuevo Leon*.

> *In San Pedro de Ruedas, I had the opportunity to witness [cultural assets] being utilized and passed down through practice. When I lived in the ejido, I was welcomed as a member of the community. I was living in their world for that brief moment in time. I saw first-hand how hard working everybody was. When I was invited to join families for dinner on the ejido, I witnessed the dedication and ability of the mothers. They were hard workers, tending to the fields under the hot sun and making meals for their families over a hot stove.*

The members in the *ejido* were very hard working. They valued their land and they worked it to make sure they had a good harvest. They also modeled to their children hard work, and brought in their children to work with them. This custom of having children construct knowledge through practice is evident in impoverished households even within urban districts in the United States and is similar to the way students construct knowledge in constructivist classrooms (Moll *et al*., 2005, p. 74). This makes students of low socioeconomic communities more than capable of being suited, if not better suited, to engage in the demanding pedagogy of constructivist classrooms, providing a counter-narrative to the deficit ideologies that track students in remedial programs.

Dual language programs are identified as programs that benefit all students – from low SES to high SES, to children with learning disabilities (Thomas and Collier, 2012, p. 92). However, I have seen deficit ideologies of educators and administrators create ambivalence about implementing dual language programs in schools with high numbers of students that come from impoverished neighborhoods and with low scores on their standardized tests. Therefore, as a bilingual program director, my work with *community-assets* must begin by first communicating to all stakeholders in the dual language program that those assets exist in the first place. English learners are as capable as monolingual English speaking students to perform at high cognitive levels. Focusing on the *community-assets* that English learners, immigrants, refugees, low SES students, and special education ELs have gleaned from their environments and bring to school with them creates an asset-based ideology that permeates the dual language program through high expectations for these students. This in turn raises the quality of the program because all students are expected to perform at their highest potential. My experiences at *Dr. Arroyo* have left no doubt in my mind that all students, even those from the most impoverished

neighborhoods, bring assets with them and are capable of not only participating in the dual language program, but can also thrive in it.

Community-Stories. *What stories identify and define my community culture, and how do those stories help me lead the implementation of a Dual Language program in an urban district?*

Stories are the vehicle through which family histories of strength, survival, and inspiration are passed on from generation to generation (Waite, Nelson, and Guajardo, 2007). *Community-stories* similarly transfer communal ideologies from generation to generation, invoking shared humanity to understand and make meaning of the relationships that exist within the community and among communities, organizations, and individuals (E. Garcia, 2015; Kaufman, Ewing, Montgomery, Hyle and Self, 2006; Waite, Nelson and Guajardo, 2007). The positive stories of how the communities I serve have benefitted from their interaction with the education system, the stories of parents who have become successful and escaped poverty through education, are beneficial and encourage and inspire students and their parents to engage with schools. Unfortunately, not every story is a story of happiness, success, and positivity. Some stories that define the relationships between communities and schools are stories of struggle, racism, mistrust, and systemic failures that have historically excluded members of minority communities from educational opportunities via low expectations, exclusion, and segregation (Alarcón, Cruz, Jackson, Prieto and Rodriguez-Arroyo, 2011; Ovando, 2003; San Miguel, 2004). In the authoring and critical reflection of my story, I explored my experience with a community of Hispanics on the border who adhere to the prominent social narrative, or *community-story* that Spanish is detrimental to the academic success of their children (Trueba, 2004). I witnessed such an ideology as I led the implementation of a dual language program:

> Throughout my career implementing dual language programs, I have had parents of native English speakers and parents of English learners who are simply adamant that they do not want their children being schooled in Spanish because they truly believe that Spanish holds no value to help their children be academically successful – that teaching in Spanish is a waste of time. Time and time again, I see parents of English learners lie on their Home Language Survey (HLS), either by their own volition or because they are coached by a teacher, administrator, registrar, or family friend, to indicate that their children speak English at home so that their children can be placed in an all-English classroom. Some parents, including one of my teachers at Border Elementary, even withdraw their children from schools to keep them from participating in the dual language program.

As a bilingual program director, I acknowledge these parents' frustration, but I also welcome the opportunity to interact with their story because having a space designated for developing trust through *plática* enables the beginning of a strong, collaborative, and reciprocal relationship with parents that is necessary to implement a successful dual language program. Sharing stories is a process for healing because when parents share their feelings of wanting their children to conform to the hegemonic system even at the expense of their children's native language, it frees them from the hold of this ideology (Ellis, 2004). Such discourse, however, is not possible without first developing a safe space where mutual *confianza* allows parents to authentically share their story. I build *confianza* with parents by being transparent, demonstrating my empathy for their situation by sharing my own story of not enrolling my children in a bilingual program because I, in my naivety, thought that I would be able to teach them to speak, read, and write in Spanish at home. I open up with parents in an authentic and vulnerable way by admitting that I was unable to follow through with my plan to help my children develop their Spanish due to work and other responsibilities. I admit that I wish I could go back in time to enroll my children in dual language programs so they could have a stronger foundation in academic Spanish and be able to have deep conversations in Spanish with their father, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and other family members who communicate more effectively in Spanish. Openly sharing my

life experience concerning my own children through *plática* helps develop the reciprocal relationship where parents also share their stories with me in open and vulnerable ways. I see parents' emotions come through when they tell stories of how they never learned to speak English well, causing them to struggle in school and drop out. They open up and share how dropping out of school has made it difficult to find a well-paying job. Resentment comes through their voices when parents adamantly insist that their children need to learn English as soon as possible so they don't go through a similar experience. Some parents speak in an angry voice. For others, their voices crack as they get sentimental. Oftentimes, I see parents let out big breaths of relief after they tell their story. Most importantly, I've seen parents become more receptive to accepting the dual language program as an option for their children after the process of sharing our stories is complete.

Community-Place. *How do the geographic location and the people that inhabit that space guide my organization's work to lead the implementation of a dual language program in an urban district?*

The ecology of *community* exists in two central facets – geography and people (Guajardo *et al*., 2016). C*ommunities* have assets that are derived from the ideology, beliefs, values, traditions, hopes, and dreams of *community* members; but the geographic location of a *community*, the *place* in which those members reside, is also rich in assets with similar origins. *Places* are alive; they have their own ideology that lives and grows with the ever-changing collective consciousness of all those who reside within it. I learned to appreciate this organic quality of place when I was at *San Pedro de Ruedas*:

> In all, I learned about the myriad of disadvantages poverty brings while working at the *ejido* at *San Pedro de Ruedas.* I learned it by seeing first-hand how many children in México don't always have access to a basic education, much less an education after elementary school. I saw how poverty affects education when, come springtime at the

> *ejido*, our classrooms were basically non-existent because all our students needed to be out in the fields helping their parents harvest crops so that the village could survive by another narrow margin for one more season. Still, this poverty, and the inherent lack of opportunity, in no way affected the kind disposition of the people. They were all as beautiful and amicable on the first day I met them as on the day I left. On the day we arrived at the *ejido*, we passed a beautiful wedding in progress. People were dancing and drinking: it was quite the celebration. There was a live band playing, and all the locals were kicking up big clouds of dust as their feet stomped rhythmically to the beat of the *huapangos*. This was a severely impoverished place, but this was undoubtedly a happy place. This was also a place that showed great appreciation for everything they had, including the teachers that served their children.

For a bilingual program director, treating *place* as a stakeholder in the dual language program and applying the same techniques he or she would utilize to form a relationship with a stakeholder – giving it the respect he or she would give to a stakeholder – guides the implementation of a dual language program because it gives the bilingual program director feedback. Giving place the consideration that you would a stakeholder and giving it the respect you would a stakeholder goes beyond simply looking at the context of the district by studying data alone. Building that relationship with a *community-place* is similar to building a relationship with a person, establishing a safe space in which both people can share their stories in an open and honest way, where they can share their values and their beliefs and their struggles and their goals in life with *confianza*. The process of sharing each other's stories builds a strong relationship that can propel growth in the endeavor the place is seeking. The values and beliefs and goals of the people can be discovered more readily through relationships that consider population and place as separate, yet interconnected entities. It goes beyond demographics to understand that the true identity of a place – the history, value, beliefs, traditions, and story – can promote change for the betterment of that place.

Findings

Finding 1

A bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in his or her district can strengthen the implementation of the program by developing strong organization relationships with principals and teachers that foster transparent discourse on how to best implement the dual language program to serve English learners.

My analysis showed that *organization-relationships* need to be strong in order for an *organization* to effectively act as the vehicle through which advocates enact change for the communities they serve. Strong relationships are built on a foundation of reciprocity, caring, and validation that generates *confianza* between *organization* members. For a bilingual program director, leading a collaboration group where principals and teachers feel safe enough to engage in transparent discourse about how to best implement a dual language program is facilitated when strong relationships built on *confianza* have already been established. I reflected on what this type of collaboration looks like when I wrote and reflected on the dual language principal advisory groups that I led as a bilingual program director:

> In my experience, the collaborative environment of principal advisory groups makes it easier for principals to be honest with each other as they explain their program and put their practice out there for others to comment and provide ideas. Sometimes principals disagree and sometimes they embrace the ideas being presented by their colleagues. It goes both ways, and learning occurs in both situations. The more there is open discourse about the program, the more creative principals become in generating ideas on how to make the dual language program work better with their teachers, students, and parents at their schools. The solutions principals generate are very creative because the principal advisory group allows principals to experiment, venture outside the box and come up with more original solutions to problems which are then discussed among a group of principals who can provide meaningful feedback. An idea presented by a principal in the advisory group may initially seem unorthodox, but because it is simultaneously analyzed by those with intimate knowledge implementing the dual language program, the best parts of the idea can be extracted and used to generate solutions that are not always immediately apparent (Hunt, 2011; Izquierdo, 2014).

Implementation of a dual language program is strengthened when principals and teachers work together to refine the program because being part of the process of refining the program fosters intrinsic motivation to implement the dual language program with fidelity. Transparent discourse fosters ownership of the program for principals and teachers because their contributions, recommendations, and thoughts are valued and taken into consideration.

Organization-relationships can be weakened when dual language programs are mandated without first consulting all the stakeholders about what the program will entail, the reasoning for implementing the program, and most importantly, how the program is going to affect the campus. Many times, dual language programs are rolled out without instructional resources in two languages, appropriate professional development, appropriate curriculum and assessments, a parent involvement component, and a strong communication plan. When some of these things happen, teachers and principals struggle to implement the program and communication between the school and central office becomes resentful when things go wrong. However, when strong *organization-relationships* have been established and stakeholders' feedback and recommendations have been considered for the program, communication is more cooperative and solutions are professionally constructed.

Finding 2

If the ideologies, beliefs, and values of organization members align with the values of additive bilingual programs such as dual language, then these organization members can more readily avoid prioritizing high stakes testing culture at the expense of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Throughout my reflection on my experiences as a principal of a dual language elementary school and as a bilingual program director in an urban district, I have seen again and again how

high stakes testing always surfaces as an ideological roadblock to the implementation of dual language programs. Principals implementing dual language programs are faced with the difficult decision of ensuring that they lead a quality dual language program that includes culturally relevant pedagogy or drop the dual language program because they believe it will interfere with preparing their students for the standardized test. The following excerpt from my narrative depicts the manner in which teachers expressed their apprehension to me when I was a principal as we were beginning to implement the dual language program on our campus:

> *Throughout the process of preparing to launch our dual language program, there were always teachers who were against it. They truly believed that more English was the answer – that schools really should not be investing more time in teaching students in Spanish. Throughout the trainings, throughout all of the effort to bring such positivism to the implementation of dual language, such as investing on sending teachers to state and national conferences on dual language and bringing experts in the field of bilingual education, including the poet and renowned expert on children's bilingual literature, Alma Flor Ada, to speak and create enthusiasm for the cause of bilingualism and biculturalism, the concern voiced by several teachers remained the same: that students were not going to be ready to pass their standardized tests…in English.*
>
> *These concerns continued even after the implementation of our dual language program was well underway.*
>
> *I remember holding an after-school staff meeting in the library with my teachers where we were desegregating student data and talking about all the engaging activities that we expected to see in our dual language classrooms. During this meeting, a teacher vocalized his concern about consolidating testing and dual language in our school.*
>
> *He said, "You know, Ms. Hernández, I agree with all the engaging activities that we are planning for our classrooms with dual language, and it can all be done. But you can't seriously expect for us to implement this program without taking a dip in our standardized test scores. Would you be willing to let our scores take a dip so that we can implement dual language?"*

One of the reasons why teachers view the dual language program as an interference to preparing their students for the standardized test is a lack of understanding that it takes time to see the benefits of the dual language program. Virginia Collier states that elementary dual language teachers are the heroes of the dual language program because they set the foundation

but don't get to see the full benefit of the program. The accelerated academic advancement of students enrolled in a dual language program becomes clearly apparent in the secondary grades mainly because it takes from 5 – 10 years to acquire a second language and be able to perform in that second language at an academic level. Critical to ensuring that the dual language program yields its benefits is that elementary teachers implement the dual language program with fidelity from PK- 5th grade. The most important element of the dual language program is the nonstop instruction in the students' native language for at least 50% of the instructional day from PK – 5th grade, which supports content attainment and cognitive development. Teachers readily comply with this requirement in the early grades (PK – 2nd), but when teachers are expected to continue teaching 50% of the time in the students' native language in the testing grades (3rd – 5th), it is common for teachers and administrators to doubt the program and start deviating from implementing the program with fidelity in order to prepare students for the standardized test.

Uncertainty and concern about fully committing to implement the program with fidelity occurs in part because teachers are afraid of deviating from a test-driven curriculum which had yielded results on the state standardized assessment in the past. This reluctance originated from a school and district culture that emphasizes high-stakes consequences for teachers – including losing their job, feeling depressed or guilty if their class kept the school from meeting standards, being replaced or moved to another grade level, being consistently monitored by the principal the following school year, etc. – when their students don't master a single state standardized assessment (Valenzuela, 2005). Through the process of composing my narrative and the critical analysis of my study through the ecologies of self, organization, and community, I found that *organization* members will not deviate from implementing the dual language program to focus on preparing students for a standardized test when their ideologies, values, and beliefs are

aligned to the values of dual language. *Organization* members that value culturally relevant pedagogy and value affirming students' identity will not easily fall into teaching a standardized curriculum focused on preparing students for a test that many times is not culturally relevant (Valenzuela, 2005). Organization members that believe in providing students with a quality education that values maintaining and developing English learners' native language in order for them to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural when they graduate and become adults will be reluctant to jeopardize the attainment of such a worthy goal and focus solely on preparing students for a standardized test.

As a principal, I stayed true to implementing the dual language program on my campus and was able to avoid being preoccupied with test preparation to the point of abandoning the implementation of the dual language program for the sole purpose of preparing students for a standardized test. Following is an excerpt from my narrative that shows my thoughts that supported my decision to prioritize a curriculum that was culturally responsive.

> *But after learning more about the linguistic, academic, cognitive, and cultural benefits of dual language and seeing that many of the standardized state assessments were not culturally relevant, and really just unfair, I decided that a truly culturally and linguistically engaging education for my students was worth more than seeing students bored to death filling out bubbles while teachers were losing the life of what brought them into their profession to begin with.*
>
> *I don't remember the exact answer I gave my teacher during that after school meeting, but I do remember deciding then and there that I wasn't going to let testing drive our agenda. I wasn't going to let my students lose their joy for learning, and I wasn't going to let my teachers lose their joy for teaching.*
>
> *And in the end, after implementing the dual language program for almost 10 years, everything turned out well. Our school always met state standards and even exceeded state standards in certain content areas. Most importantly, we were able to provide students with the multicultural and multilingual benefits of dual language instead of making school all about the standardized exam. We didn't let preparing for the exam replace other aspects of our students' learning experience, such as taking electives, participating in fairs and field trips, participating in holiday activities, working on*

science experiments, engaging in many hands-on activities in the classroom, and spending more time in the library reading for pleasure.

We were preparing our students to take on life, not to take a test.

Reflecting critically on why I always leaned towards providing a culturally responsive education through the dual language program as a principal and as a bilingual program director, I found that the decisions I made were influenced by my belief that children should learn to value and be proud of their language and culture. As a principal I fully enjoyed every moment I lived with my students. I cared that they received a quality education that was culturally relevant and that they enjoyed coming to school to learn every day. This genuine desire to provide and care for my students made my life as a principal a true enjoyment and was the basis of my decisions to provide them with a meaningful education that affirmed their identities, valued their culture and family, and taught them to be proud of their language and culture. Moving away from implementing the dual language program to focus more on teaching to a standardized test in English did not make sense or feel ethical in my book.

Finding 3

Districts can strengthen the implementation of a dual language program by designing community meetings that address specific needs of community members in order to provide them with opportunities to feel validated and safe enough to be open and share their thoughts about their ideologies, beliefs and stories.

Writing and reflecting on my story made it abundantly clear that acknowledging *community-assets* contributes to the successful implementation of a dual language program. This concept is most prevalent when discussing the assets that all students bring to the classroom, but it extends to the assets that their parents and other community members can also bring. Empowering parents through validating “parent pedagogy” is important because it brings in

assets from the *community* that are grounded in the cultural strength of their values, beliefs and traditions. The findings in my study confirm that understanding the ideologies, values, beliefs, and traditions of place strengthens the implementation of a dual language program in that place because these ideologies guide the implementation of the dual language program. For example, in a community that views adding a second language as an asset for their children, a bilingual program director can put his or her efforts in addressing the logistics of the program instead of preparing the community to accept the program. Conversely, a community that has been historically neglected requires the bilingual program director to carefully set up small learning sessions and protocols where community members have time to ease into learning the benefits and intricacies of the program before implementing the program fully. These meetings can also be held to provide community members opportunities to express their concerns about the program.

In order to truly understand the ideologies, beliefs, and traditions of a community and place, spaces must be created where community members can share their concerns, questions, wants, and feelings openly. This type of environment can be achieved by conducting meetings that address the specific needs of community members, encourage reciprocal discourse between community members, and place community members in an intimate setting. Addressing the specific needs of a community can be met by holding meetings in the community members' native language and providing translations of all district documents. Reciprocity in sharing can be achieved when the *organization* member leading the meeting initiates the process by sharing their story first. Finally, intimate settings for sharing can be achieved by breaking large groups up into smaller groups where community members only have to open up to a couple of people instead of a large group where they may feel judged. Through a close partnerships, community

members and the district can work together to create a dual language program that is tailored to meet the specific needs of the community.

Research Questions

This research utilized autoethnography, a qualitative research method with a foundation in narrative inquiry, to explore the epistemological foundations of my advocacy. As such, the answers to my research questions are based in real-world contexts of data acquired through the process of authoring my story, reflecting on that story, and analyzing that story through the analytic scaffold of the ecologies of knowing (Guajardo, *et al*., 2016).

Research Question 1

What are the ideological challenges a bilingual program director faces when implementing a successful dual language program, and how do those roadblocks manifest themselves in real-world scenarios?

The process of reflecting critically on my story was guided by an intrinsic need to discover how I was able to overcome ideological roadblocks as I led the implementation of dual language programs as a principal and a bilingual program director. Consequently, the construction of my autoethnographic narrative, though based on a critical reflection of various "epiphany inspiring" moments throughout my life, also reflected a conscious effort to align my reflective thought process with critical race theory that addresses negative ideologies afflicting bilingual education. An increasingly thorough body of research on the benefits of dual language education has rendered argumentative discourse concerning dual language to revolve around differing ideologies on how to educate English learners from a myriad of backgrounds and not necessarily on debating the program's effectiveness to promote academic success for students (Cummins, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Thomas and Collier, 2012).

The ideological roadblocks to dual language education that came to the foreground as I wrote and reflected on my story included deficit thinking concerning language, insistence on maintaining hegemonic power structures, and microaggressions that subtly push bilingual education into the margins as an afterthought when making decisions on curriculum and policy. These issues needed to be grounded in a real-world context before solutions to address the specifics of those problems could be created (Guajardo *et al*., 2016). I have included a succinct description of these ideological roadblocks as they appeared in my autoethnography in the proceeding paragraphs. Deficit thinking, as it pertains to my experience implementing dual language programs, exists when native languages are perceived as a hindrance to academic success. My autoethnography elicited a description of how parents of English learners many times lie on the home language survey when they register their children in schools, indicating that their children speak English, so that their children can be enrolled in an English-only program. Spanish has a negative connotation that continues to denigrate its status in society, causing parents to prefer that their children be schooled in English only programs at the expense of their native language (Igoa, 1999; Ruiz, 1984; Trueba, 2004).

Insistence on maintaining hegemonic power structures in schools was detailed in my autoethnography as the reactions and worries teachers and principals have to the insistence from schools that students show performance on standardized assessments. These reactions included teachers communicating a misguided belief that implementing dual language programs will negatively impact standardized test scores, causing a reluctance to implement the program. Teachers and principals who are not successful under the criteria of success as dictated by the hegemonic assessment guidelines of high stakes testing are subject to monetary repercussions, such as being fired, and/or to emotionally detrimental repercussions, such as experiencing

feelings of depression or guilt due to the shame culture that accompanies standardized testing culture in schools (Valenzuela, 2005). When I was principal, teachers expressed their concerns about not being able to meet the district and state expectations on the standardized assessment. Standardized testing became a large part of our discourse when we considered implementing the dual language program at our campus, which deviated valuable time and resources away from ensuring our dual language program was implemented well. Microaggressions, as they are depicted in the real-world interpretation of my autoethnography, occurred when the bilingual department I worked in was not included as a department that could provide schools with instructional support, develop curriculum, plan district-wide professional development, support in creating the district's strategic plan, and participate in the selection of principals for schools with high numbers of ELs. These exclusions of the bilingual department in decision making are microaggressions because they occur daily through systemically engrained practices that are most of the time considered normal (Solórzano, 2016).

Research Question 2

How does a negotiation of the ecologies of self, organization, and community (ecologies of knowing) help strengthen my advocacy for English learners when implementing a dual language program?

For the purpose of this study, the ecologies of knowing, which are *self*, *organization* and *community*, were used to guide analysis and couch all aspects of that analysis in a real-world context. Using the ecologies of knowing in this manner helped strengthen my advocacy because it created a very conscious and purposeful connection between my *self-assets* and the needs of the *communities* I serve. None of the aforementioned ecologies exists in isolation – the *self* exists with and for the ecologies of *organization* and *community* in a reciprocal relationship that helps

each of the ecologies meet the needs of the others (Guajardo *et al*., 2016). *Organizations* help the *self* by serving as the mediating entity through which the *self* grows to fulfill its purpose. My purpose, as revealed to me through an in-depth analysis of my *self-relationship* and *self-story*, is to care for others and to serve the public good by giving of myself and demonstrate my caring through practice. The epistemological foundation of this purpose was developed in me by my parents. My parents played an important role in forming my identity and heritage, which formed my epistemology on the importance of serving the community and serving children and people in need (Guajardo and Guajardo, 2007). Their *ejemplo* has instilled in me the value of education and the belief that I have a social responsibility to help ensure that all children receive an equitable education.

The *organization* of bilingual education exists as a vehicle for me to realize my intrinsic social motivation to serve others in the way my mother and father taught me is the true measure of living a fulfilling life. The analysis of the data in this study showed a strong correlation between the purpose that drives my *self* and the *organization-story* of bilingual education, whose foundation is in serving the public good through providing English learners with equity in education. The strong correlation between these ecologies has served as an ideological motivation, a strong *politic*, for me to take *actions* that go the extra mile to serve the *communities* that fall within the jurisdiction of my district. These actions addressed my work meeting the needs of parents, such as conducting parent meetings in Spanish to value parents' language and culture; advocating for English learners, such as prioritizing students' culturally proficient education over standardized testing; ensuring bilingual teachers had the necessary instructional resources by ensuring that district-wide textbooks were always were available in English and

Spanish; and speaking up in meetings to ensure that the bilingual department was an integral part of the district's instructional program.

Research Question 3

How does a critical reflection of, personal stories, histories and life-long experiences strengthen my effectiveness as a bilingual program director implementing a dual language program in an urban district?

The findings of this study revealed how epistemologies that are built through a cumulative collection of experiences can be mined to make meaning of those experiences in a manner that reveals assets on a cognitive, emotional, and relational level (Guajardo *et al*., 2016). Reflecting on the stories of my parents revealed to me how my values and beliefs were shaped by my upbringing. Stories are the vehicle through which family histories of strength, survival, and inspiration are passed on from generation to generation (Waite, Nelson, andGuajardo, 2007). Stories are also powerful tools critical for identity formation (Guajardo *et al*., 2012; Guajardo and Guajardo, 2007). I have come to understand how much my parents have shaped my beliefs and values, as well as shaped the person I am today. They have shaped me through their example and the stories they told me and created with me. The identity I discovered from reflecting on my relationship with my parents is one of serving the public, and in particular serving parents and students, by helping them have access to an equitable education. My father shaped my beliefs and values for education. My personal story and experiences involving education with my father include reading in Spanish to him at the kitchen table, regularly visiting museums with him, being taught lessons in Spanish by my father in our makeshift classroom at home, and working on science projects together. These experiences taught me to value education as an enjoyable part of life, as a way to bring us together, and as something to be proud of. My father's personal

story of perseverance through hard work and getting an education taught me to value education as having the capacity to change the destiny of a person's entire family for the better.

Through the critical reflection of my mother's stories, I discovered the value of caring that was passed on to me. The stories of her selflessness and ultimate devotion to the betterment of those around her shaped my epistemology to encompass a need to serve others myself. My personal story and experiences involving how my mother demonstrated caring as practice include all the ways she went beyond simply counseling me on ways to improve myself and instead also went out of her way to actively engage in the process of my personal growth and development. She didn't just have *pláticas* with me about the importance of being self-sufficient; she brought me into her business so I could learn the skills I needed to eventually be successful in my career. She also played an integral role in helping me get my first job as an ESL teacher when I was sixteen years old. Her *pláticas* with me about the importance of being educated were accompanied with offers to help take care of my children while I attended college. Her *pláticas* with me about the importance of caring for your family and making them feel special were demonstrated by her refusal to let a lack of money keep us from celebrating special moments in our lives in creative ways.

My mother also showed me what it was to take care of your family by caring for me and my sisters when we gave birth to our children by coming to spend a couple of weeks with us to help cook, tend to the children, and help with the household chores. All the things that she did were not a burden for her; on the contrary they were an enjoyment for her. She was always happy, smiling, and excitedly moving around the house when she would clean and cook. She was always laughing, playing and smothering the children with praises, kisses and hugs. Reflecting on these examples of caring through practice that were detailed in the story of my mother

revealed to me how my mother passed on this asset to me. In all, the reflection of my personal stories pertaining to my family has strengthened my effectiveness as a bilingual program director because they have revealed to me the assets inherent in my epistemology. These assets are the backbone of my advocacy and strengthen the actions I take as a bilingual program director.

Recommendations for Implementing Dual Language Programs

Recommendation 1

School districts need to provide continuous professional development for teachers, principals, administrators and parents on the purpose, benefits, and best practices for the implementation of dual language programs in order to implement the dual language program well.

The *organization-assets* of dual language, which include promoting bilingualism, biliteracy, high levels of academic achievement, high levels of cognitive development, high levels of linguistic proficiency in both languages, and high levels of cross cultural competencies, positively impact more students in deeper ways when the program is well implemented (Thomas and Collier, 2012). When stakeholders in dual language do not understand the rationale behind the implementation of dual language programs, how it works, or the role that the native language has in advancing the students academically, they are more prone to alter the program to the point that it no longer meets the definition of a dual language program. Oftentimes, they even abandon the dual language program altogether. This phenomenon of wanting to abandon the dual language program due to a lack of knowledge of how the program works was expressed in a real-world context in my autoethnography when I wrote about the time I wanted to drop the dual language program when I was the principal at Border Elementary because the native English speakers were struggling with academic Spanish and their parents were calling expressing their

concerns that the program wasn't working. At the time, because I lacked the knowledge in how the dual language program works, my first reaction to address the initial challenge I faced was to drop the program as soon as possible. I wanted to drop the program before getting myself in over my head and be unable to have control over the situation.

Since then, I have become more knowledgeable in how children learn in dual language programs. I have attended graduate school, where I took courses on the theories that support dual language, and I have learned the intricacies of how children are schooled in two languages. I have attended state and national dual language conferences, and I have had the privilege to work closely with experts in the field of bilingual education as I implemented a dual language program in an urban district. If I had the knowledge about dual language that I have now when I was a principal implementing a dual language program for the first time, I would have been able to come up with a solution instead of simply wanting to abandon the dual language program right away. I would have known that I could address the problem of the native English speakers not picking up Spanish by immersing them into reading and writing in the minority language (Spanish) early on so they could pick up the partner language (Spanish) as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, not everyone is an expert in the field of dual language. Not everybody goes to graduate school to specialize in bilingual education, and not everybody has the experience that comes from leading the implementation of dual language programs for over fifteen years. Therefore, providing continuous professional development for teachers and principals is critical in order for them to know how to support their students as they are being schooled in two languages. When teachers and administrators are continuously learning to refine their practice as dual language educators, they become more and more successful in implementing the dual language program and serving their students.

Recommendation 2

Bilingual program directors should set up systems to involve teachers and principals in decision-making matters regarding the design of the program in order to increase motivation to implement the program.

My study shows that strong *organization-relationships* help the implementation of the dual language program because it encourages principals and teachers to share their concerns; it makes them more open to accept suggestions and more willing to seek support and listen to other perspectives. When there are strong *organization-relationships*, principals reach out to the bilingual director or bilingual department staff to walk through their campus together and assess the dual language program to identify areas that can be improved. As long as strong *organization-relationships* exist, true collaboration between principals, teachers and the bilingual program director can happen with the goal of improving the implementation of the program and better serving students. Furthermore, when teachers and principals share their concerns and recommendations to improve the program and their recommendations and concerns are considered and valued, teachers and principals take ownership of the program and implement it enthusiastically with a high levels of commitment and a passion.

Strong *organization-relationships* must be intentionally developed and not be left to chance. The bilingual program director needs to create systems where principals, teachers and staff from the bilingual department regularly meet to ensure that there is consistent collaboration taking place throughout the school year. The principal advisory groups that I wrote about in my autoethnography provide a real-world example of a type of meeting that promotes collaboration and transparent discourse in which teachers, principals and staff from the bilingual department can openly talk about the implementation of dual language at their campuses. There can be other

form of meetings that promote this safe collaboration such as PLCs, lead bilingual teacher meetings, campus dual language committees, etc. These types of meetings build motivation in teachers and principals to continue implementing a quality dual language program.

Recommendation 3

School districts must always keep students at the forefront of all discourse surrounding the implementation of dual language programs and base all programmatic decisions on what is going to help address the affective, cognitive and linguistic needs of English learners.

My study showed that bilingual program directors who establish healthy *self-relationships*, *organization-relationships* and *community-relationships* build dual language programs that are tailored to the affective, cognitive and linguistic needs of English learners. The *organization* of schools, as I detailed in my study, can be "forces of social control" or "engines to liberate the human mind and spirit" depending on whether or not the relationships established between students and schools are validating, reciprocal, open, genuine, inclusive, and caring (Alarcón *et al*., 2011; Guajardo *et al*., 2016, p. 179; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Valenzuela, 1999).

Even a small inclusion, recognition, or acknowledgement of a student's culture and native language in the classroom can go a long way towards making the student feel motivated and safe enough to participate in the learning process. I depicted my firsthand experience with this feeling when writing about the time my fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Gray, acknowledged my Mexican culture and validated me in front of my peers by sharing my story that it had snowed in México with the rest of the class as part of the lesson. At the time, I was self-conscious about my linguistic proficiency. I would speak to my peers on the playground in English, but speaking English in the classroom with academic vocabulary made me uneasy. When Mrs. Gray validated me, it created the confidence in me to approach her and ask questions and participate more in

class because I discovered that my relationship with Mrs. Gray was a collaborative one, that she was going to listen to me and that my ideas were important.

Bilingual/dual language programs that address the needs of the whole child will promote an *organization-relationship* between the student and the school that is collaborative and grounded in transformative pedagogy (Cummins, 2000). Implementing a dual language program entails making complex decisions regarding time and treatment of the program, such as decisions concerning instructional resources, pedagogical practices, and the separation of languages. When administrators and teachers spend great amounts of time tweaking the program while focusing on these surface details, they can easily lose focus on what really matters, which is ensuring that students' affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs are met in the classroom in a safe and nurturing environment that affirms their identity. Keeping students at the forefront of all discourse surrounding the implementation of dual language programs ensures that these goals are met.

REFERENCES

Agirdag, O. (2014). The literal cost of language assimilation for the children of immigration: The effects of bilingualism on labor market outcomes. In R. M. Callahan and P. C. Gándara (Eds.), *The bilingual advantage, language, literacy, and the U.S. labor market* (pp. 160–181). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Alarcón, W., C. Cruz, L.G. Jackson, L. Prieto, and S. Rodriguez-Arroyo, (2011). Compartiendo nuestras historias: Five testimonios of schooling and survival. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 10*(4), 369-381.

Alemán Jr., E. (2009). Through the prism of critical race theory: Niceness and Latina/o leadership in the politics of education. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, *8*(4), 290-311.

Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 373-395.

Anderson, L.W. (Ed.), D.R. Krathwohl (Ed.), P. W. Airasian, K.A. Cruikshank, R. E. Mayer, P.R. Pintrich, J. Raths and M. C. Wittrock (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (Complete edition). New York: Longman.

Anzaldua, G. (1987). *Borderlands/la frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Arias, (2001). *The perceptions of bilingual education program directors: The importance of specific knowledge and skill requirements*. (Doctoral dissertation).

Arreguín-Anderson, M. G., and J.J. Esquierdo, (2011). Overcoming difficulties, *Science & Children*, *48*(7), 68-71.

Arreguín-Anderson, M. G., and J.A. Ruiz-Escalante, (2013). Una perspectiva crítica racial de la opresión lingüística desde el lente de voces chicanas. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 13*(1), 54-61.

Artiles, A. J., and A.A. Ortiz, (2002). English language learners with special education needs: Identification, assessment, and instruction. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Atkinson, P. and S. Delamont, (2006). Rescuing narrative from qualitative research. *Narrative – A state of the art*, *16*(1), 164-172.

Babcock, B. (1980). Reflexivity: Definitions and discriminations. *Semiotica, 30*(1-2), 1-14.

Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (4th ed.). New York: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. (1990). *Art and answerability: Early philosophical essays* (M. Holquist and V. Liapunov, Eds., V. Liapunov and K. Brostrom, Trans.). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barron-McKeagney, T. (2002). *Telling our stories: The lives of Midwestern Latinas*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Baumann, G. (1996). *Contesting Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Beeman, K. and C. Urow, (2012). *Teaching for biliteracy: Strengthening bridges between languages*. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon Publishing.

Bell, G. C., E.B. Jones, and J.F. Johnson, (2002). School reform: Equal expectations on an uneven playing field. *Journal of School Leadership, 12*(3), 317-336.

Benard, B. (1996). From research to practice, *Resiliency in Action* 1, no. 1: 7.

Benard, B. and K. Marshall, (1997). A framework for practice: tapping innate resilience, *Research/Practice Newsletter* 5, no. 1.

Bilingual Education Act, Pub. L. No (90-247), 81 Stat. 816 (1968).

Black, S. (1994). Lingua franca. *The Executive Educator, 11*(2), 33-36.

Blanton, C. K. (2004). *The strange career of bilingual education in Texas, 1836-1981*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press.

Blum, D. and M.T. de la Piedra, M. T. (2010). Counter-storytelling through service-learning: Future teachers of immigrant students in Texas and California re-tell the "self" and the "other". *International Journal of Progressive Education, 6*(2), 6-26.

Bochner, A. P. (2001). Narrative's Virtues. *Qualitative Inquiry, 7*(2), 131-157.

Bochner, A. P. (2012). On first-person narrative scholarship: Autoethnography as acts of meaning. *Narrative Inquiry, 22*(1), 155-164.

Bochner, A. P. (2014). *Coming to narrative: A personal history of paradigm change in the human sciences (Writing lives)*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press.

Bochner, A.,and C. Ellis, (2001). *Ethnographically speaking: Autoethnography, literature, and aesthetics*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.

Bonilla-Santiago, G. (1991). Hispanic women breaking new ground through leadership. *Latino Studies Journal*, 2, 19-37.

Bransford, J. D. A.L. Brown,, and R. R. Cocking,. (Eds.) (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

Callahan, R. and P. Gándara, (2014). *The bilingual advantage: Language, literacy and US labor market* Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Chávez, M. S. (2012). Autoethnography, a chicana's methodological research tool: The role of storytelling for those who have no choice but to do critical race theory. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45*(2), 334-348.

Chavez, R. C. and J. O'Donnell, (Eds.). (1998). *Speaking the unpleasant: The politics of (non)engagement in multicultural education terrain*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Chevalier, J. M. and J. D. Buckles, (2013). *Handbook for participatory action research, planning and evaluation.* Ottawa: SAS2 Dialogue.

Chiswick, B. and P. Miller, (2007). *The economics of language: International analyses*. London: Routledge.

Cho, K. S. and S. Krashen, (1994). Acquisition of vocabulary from the Sweet Valley Kids series: Adult ESL acquisition. *Journal of Reading, 37*(8), 662-667.

Christian, D., C. L. Montone, K. J. Lindholm, and I. Carranza, (1997). *Profiles in two-way immersion education*. McHenry, IL: Delta Systems.

Cloud, N., F. Genesee, and E. Hamayan, (2000). *Dual language instruction: A handbook for enriched education*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle.

Coffey, A., (1999).*The ethnographic self: Fieldwork and the representation of identity*. London, SAGE Press

Collier, V. P. and W. P. Thomas, (2009). *Educating English learners for a transformed world*. Albuquerque, NM: Dual Language Education of New México – Fuente Press.

Collier, V. P. and W. P. Thomas, (2014). *Creating dual language schools for a transformed world: Administrators speak.* Alburquerque, NM: Dual Language Education of New México – Fuente Press.

Crawford, J. (2000). *At war with diversity: US language policy in an age of anxiety*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Crawford, J. (2004a). *Educating English learners: Language diversity in the classroom* (5th ed.). Los Angeles: Bilingual Education Services.

Crawford, J. (2004b). *No child left behind: Misguided approach to school accountability for English language learners*. Washington, DC: Center on Education Policy.

Crawford, J. (2008). *Advocating for English learners: Selected essays*. Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. (1977). Cognitive factors associated with the attainment of intermediate levels of bilingual skills. *The Modern Language Journal, 61*(1/2), 3-12.

Cummins, J. (1978). Immersion programs: The Irish experience. *International Review of Education / Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft / Revue Internationale de l'Education, 24*(3), 273-282.

Cummins, J. (1981). *Bilingualism & minority language children*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Cummins, J. (1994). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language-minority students. In C. F. Leyba (Ed.), *Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework* (pp. 1-49). Los Angeles: California State University Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. (2014). Beyond language: Academic communication and student success. *Linguistics and Education, 26*, 145-154.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Davies, C. A. (2007). *Reflexive ethnography: A guide to researching selves and others*. New York: Routledge.

Davila, M. A. (2013). *An analysis of bilingual education programs and directors in Texas education service center region two school districts*. (Doctoral dissertation).

Davis-Kean, P. E. (2005). The influence of parent education and family income on child achievement: The indirect role of parental expectations and the home environment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *19*(2), 294-304.

Delamont, S. (2009). The only honest thing: Autoethnography, reflexivity and small crises in fieldwork. *Ethnography and Education, 4*(1), 51-63.

Delgado Bernal, D. (1998). Using a Chicana feminist epistemology in educational research. *Harvard Educational Review 68*(4), 555–582.

Delgado Bernal, D., C.A. Elenes, F.E. Godinez, and S. Villenas, (Eds.). (2006). *Chicana/Latina education in everyday life: Feminista perspectives on pedagogy and epistemology*. New York: SUNY Press.

Delgado Bernal, D., E. Alemán, Jr., and A. Garavito, (2009). Latina/o undergraduate students mentoring latina/o elementary students: A borderlands analysis of shifting identities and first-year experiences. *Harvard Educational Review*, *79*(4), 560-585.

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1992). School matters in the Mexican-American home: Socializing children to education. *American Educational Research Journal*, *29*(3), 495-513.

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1994). "Consejos": The power of cultural narratives. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *25*(3), 298-316.

Denzin, N. K. (2006). Pedagogy, performance, and autoethnography. *Text and Performance Quarterly, 26*(4), 333-338.

Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the national literacy panel on language-minority children and youth. (2006). Mahwah, New Jersey: August & Shanahan.

Dewey, J. (1963). *Experience & education*. New York: Collier.

Dow, P. (2006). *Dual-language education: A longitudinal study of students' achievement in an El Paso County, Texas school district*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

Dow, P. (2012). Education policies: Standardized testing, English language learners, and border futures. In *Social justice in the U.S.-México border region*. (pp. 217-229). New York, New York: Springer.

Drechsler Sharp, M., J. I. Riera, and S. Jones, (2012). Telling our stories: Using autoethnography to construct identities at the intersections. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *49*(3) 315-332.

Elenes, C. A. (2000). Chicana feminist narratives and the politics of the self. *Frontiers*, *21*(3), 105-123.

Elenes, C. A. (2011). *Transforming borders: Chicana/o popular culture and pedagogy*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Ellis, C. (1996). *Composing ethnographic alternative forms of qualitative writing*. Langham, MD: Rowman Altamira Press.

Ellis, C. (1999). Heartful autoethnography. *Qualitative Health Research, 9*(5), 669-683.

Ellis, C. (2002). Being real: Moving inward toward social change. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 15*(4), 399-406.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Ellis, C. (2009). Fighting back and moving on: An autoethnographic response to critics. *International Review of Qualitative Research, 2*(3), 371-378.

Ellis, C. (2010). *Final negotiations: A story of love, and chronic illness*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Ellis, C. and A. Bochner, (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Research as subject. *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* 2d ed., edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, 733-68. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ellis, C. and A.P. Bochner, (2006). Analyzing analytic autoethnography: An autopsy. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 429-449.

Ellis, C., T.E. Adams, and A.P. Bochner, (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12*(1).

Elmore, R. F. (2000). *Building a structure for school leadership*. New York: The Albert Shanker Institute.

Elmore, R.F. (2004). *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice, and performance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press

Elmore, R. F. (2008). Leadership as the practice of improvement. In B. Pont, D. Nusche, and D. Hopkins (Eds.), *Improving school leadership: Volume 2: Case studies on system leadership* (pp. 37-67). Washington, DC: OECD Publishing.

Escamilla, K. (2005). Rethinking the "gap": High-stakes testing and Spanish-speaking students in Colorado. *Journal of Teacher Education, 56*(2), 132-144.

Escamilla, K. (2006). Monolingual assessment and emerging bilinguals: A case study in the US. In Garcia, O., T. Skutnabb-Kangas, and M. Torres-Guzmán, (Eds.), *Imagining multilingual schools: Languages in education and globalization* (pp. 186-199). Clevdon, U.K.: Multilingual Matters.

Escamilla, K., S. Hopewell, S. Butvilofsky, W. Sparrow, L. Soltero-González, O. Ruis-Fuigeroa, and M. Camilla, (2014). *Biliteracy from the start: Literacy squared in action.* Philadelphia, PA: Carlson, Publishing.

Esquierdo, J. and M.G. Arreguín-Anderson. (2012). The "invisible" gifted and talented bilingual students: A current report on enrollment in GT programs. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 35*(1), 35-47.

Estrada, V., L. Gómez, and J. Ruiz-Escalante, (2009). Let's make dual language the norm. *Educational Leadership, 66*(7), 54-58.

Fenner, D. S. (2014). *Advocating for English learners: A guide for educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Ferrón, M. (2011). *Educational effects of implementing a K-12 dual language instruction program in a community with a high percentage of Hispanics and Hispanic English language learners*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

Fishman, J.A. (1978). *Advances in the study of societal mutilingualism*. The Hague: Mouton.

Fishman, J. A. (1989). *Language and ethnicity in minority sociolinguistic perspective*. Clevedon, U.K.: Multilingual Matters.

Fishman, J. A. and G.D. Keller. (1982). *Bilingual education for Hispanic students in the United States*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Fitts, S. (2006). Reconstructing the status quo: Linguistic interaction in a dual-language school. *Bilingual Research Journal, 30*(2), 337-365.

Fitts, S., L. Winstead, E. Weisman, S. Flores, and C. Valenciana, (2008). Coming to voice: Preparing bilingual-bicultural teachers for Social justice. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 41*(3), 357-371.

Fitts, S. and E. M. Weisman. (2009). Exploring questions of social justice in bilingual/bicultural teacher education: Towards a parity of participation. *The Urban Review, 42*(5), 373-393.

Frederickson, J. (Ed.) (1995). *Reclaiming our voices: Bilingual education critical pedagogy and praxis*. Ontario, CA: California Association for Bilingual Education.

Freeman, Y. S., D. E. Freeman, and S. P. Mercuri, (2005). *Dual language essentials: For teachers and administrators*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Freire, P. (1973). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder

Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership and sustainability: System thinkers in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gándara, P. (1982). Passing through the eye of the needle: high-achieving Chicanas. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *4*, 167–179.

Garcia, E. G. (2015). *Courageous feats: Stories of ontology, plática, and pedagogy*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

García, O. (2008). Teaching Spanish and Spanish in teaching in the U.S.: Integrating bilingual perspectives. In A. Marie de Mejía and C. Helot (Eds.), *Integrated perspectives towards bilingual education: Bridging the gap between prestigious bilingualism and the bilingualism of minorities* (pp. 31-57). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

García, O. (2013). *Bilingual education in the 21st Century: A global perspective*. Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

García, O., R. Peltz., H. Schiffman, and G.S. Fishman. (2006). *Language loyalty, continuity and change: Joshua A. Fishman's contributions to international sociolinguistics*. Cleveland, OH: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.

García, O. and J. Kleifgen. (2010). *Educating emergent bilinguals, policies, programs, and practices for English language learners*. New York: Teachers College Press.

García, O., N. Flores, and H. Chu, (2011). Extending bilingualism in U.S. secondary education: New variations. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 5*(1), 1-18.

García, S. B. and P.L. Guerra, (2004). Deconstructing deficit thinking: Working with educators to create more equitable learning environments, *Education and Urban Society, 36*(2), 150–168.

Garza, E. (2008). Autoethnography of a first-time superintendent: Challenges to leadership for social justice. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 7*(2), 163-176.

Genesee, F. (2001). Bilingual first language acquisition: Exploring the limits of the language faculty. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 21*, 153-168.

Giroux, H. (1999). The war against cultural politics: Beyond conservative and non-enlightenment left 'oppositions': A critique. In C.J. Ovando and P. Mclaren (Eds.), *The politics of multiculturalism and bilingual education: Students and teachers caught in the crossfire* (pp. 22-49). Boston: McGraw Hill.

Gómez, L. (2000). Two-way bilingual education: Promoting educational and social change. *Journal of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education*, *5*(1), 43–54.

Gómez, L., D. Freeman, D., and Y. Freeman, (2005). Dual language education: A promising 50-50 model. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *29*(1), 145–164.

Gómez, R. (2006). Promising practices: Dual language enrichment for ELL students K–12. *Journal of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education*, *9*(4), 46–65.

Gómez, L. and R. Gómez. (2015). *Dual Language Training Institute: 3-Day Initial Training on the Gómez & Gómez DLE Model*.

Gonzales, C. F. (1982). *Leadership behaviors of selected California bilingual program directors.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO.

González, M. L. (2010). The critical role of all educators in the school success of Latino children. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 9*(4), 479-494.

González N. and L. C. Moll, (2002). Cruzando el puente: Building bridges to funds of knowledge. *Educational Policy*, *16*(4), 623–641.

González, N., L. C. Moll, M. F. Tenery, A. Rivera, P. Rendon, R. Gonzales, and C. Amanti, (1995). Funds of knowledge for teaching in Latino households, *Urban Education, 29*(4), 443–470.

Griego-Jones, T. (1995). *Implementing bilingual programs is everybody's business*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Guajardo, M. A. and F. J. Guajardo. (2004). The impact of Brown on the brown of South Texas: A micropolitical perspective on the education of Mexican Americans in a South Texas community. *American Educational Research Journal, 41*(3), 501-526.

Guajardo, M. and F. Guajardo. (2008). Two brothers in higher education: Weaving a social fabric for service in academic—A model of interdependence. In R. Padilla and K. Gonzalez (Eds.), *Latino perspectives on higher education for the public good: An intergenerational approach* (pp. 60-81). Herndon, VA: Stylus.

Guajardo, M., F. Guajardo, and E. Carmen del Casaperalta, (2008). Transformative education: Chronicling a pedagogy for social change. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 39*(1), 3-22.

Guajardo, M.A. and F. J. Guajardo, (2013). The power of plática. *Reflections Journal. 13*(1), 159-164.

Guajardo, M., F. Guajardo, M. Militello, and C. Janson, (2016). *Reframing community partnerships in education: Uniting the power of place and wisdom of people*. New York, NY: Routledge Press.

Guinier, L. and G. Torres. (2002). *The Miner's Canary – Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy – (The Nathan I. Higgins Lectures).* Harvard University Press.

Hamilton, M. L., L. Smith, and K. Worthington, (2008). Fitting the methodology with the research: An exploration of narrative, self-study and auto-ethnography. *Studying Teacher Education, 4*(1), 17-28.

Hamayan, E., F. Genesee, and N. Cloud, (2013). *Dual language instruction: From A to Z*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinle & Heinle.

Henderson, N. and M. M. Milstein, (2003). *Resiliency in schools: Making it happen for students and educators*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, Inc.

Hill, N. E. and L. C. Taylor, (2004). Parental school involvement and children's academic achievement. *The American Psychological Society*. *13*(4), 161-164.

Howard, E. R., J. Sugarman, D. Christian, K. J. Lindholm-Leary, and D. Rogers, (2007). *Guiding principles for dual language education (2nd ed.)*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Hughes, S., J. L. Pennington, and S. Makris, (2012). Translating autoethnography across the AERA standards: Toward understanding autoethnographic scholarship as empirical research. *Educational Researcher, 41*(6), 209-219.

Hunt, V. (2011). Learning from success stories: Leadership lectures that support dual language programs over time in New York City. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *11*(2), 187-206.

Igoa, C. (1999). *Language and psychological dimensions: The inner world of the immigrant child*. Montreal, Canada: Education Research Association.

Kempster, S. and J. Stewart, (2010). Becoming a leader: A co-produced autoethnographic exploration of situated learning of leadership practice. *Management Learning, 41*(2), 205-219.

Kennedy, K. D. and H. D. Romo, (2013). All colors and hues: An autoethnography of a multiethnic families strategies for bilingualism and multiculturalism. *Family Relations*, *62*, 109-124.

Kohn, A. (2000). *The case against standardized testing: Raising the scores, ruining the schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kohn, A. (alfiekohn.org, n.d.). Rescuing Our Schools from "Tougher Standards." Retrieved from http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/standards.pdf

Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practices in language acquisition*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Laredo Publishing Company.

Krashen, S. (1993). *The power of reading*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Krashen, S. (1994). Bilingual education and second language acquisition theory. In *Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework* (pp. 47- 78). Los Angeles: California State University Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center.

Krashen, S. (1996). *Under attack: The case against bilingual education*. Culver City, CA: Language Education Associates.

Krashen, S. (2008). The fundamental principle: No unnecessary testing (NUT). *The Colorado Communicator, 32*(1), 7.

Krashen, S. (2011). *Free voluntary reading.* Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

Krashen, S. and G. McField, (2005). What works? Reviewing the latest evidence on bilingual education. *Language Learner, 1*(2), 7-10, 34.

LaCelle-Peterson, M. and Rivera, C. (1994). Is it real for all kids? A framework for equitable assessment policies for English language learners. *Harvard Educational Review*, 64(1), 55-75.

Kuby, C. R. (2013). Personal histories and pedagogical decisions: Using autoethnographic methods to unpack ideologies and experiences. *Teaching & Learning, 27*(1), 3-18.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, *31*, 465–469.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into Practice, 34*(3), 160-165.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education*? International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 11*(1), 7-24.

Lambert, W. E. (1975). Culture and learning as factors in learning and education. In A. Wolfgang (Ed.), *Education of immigrant students: Issues and answers*, (pp. 55-83). Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Lambert, W. E. and G. R. Tucker, (1972). *Bilingual education of children: The St. Lambert experiment*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J. (2001). *Dual language education*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

López, F., and J. Iribarren, (2014). Creating and sustaining inclusive instructional settings for English language learners: Why, what, and how. *Theory into Practice, 53*(2), 106-114.

Lopez, M. H. (2009). *Latinos and education: Explaining the achievement gap*. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center.

Macias Wycoff, S.E. (1996). Academic performance of Mexican American women. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *24*, 146-155.

Manyak, P. (2004). "What did she say?" Translation in a primary-grade English immersion class. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *6*(1), 12-18.

McCarty, T. (Ed.), (2011). *Ethnograpju amd Language Policy*. New York: Taylor and Francis.

McField, G. P. (2002). *Does program quality matter? A meta-analysis of select bilingual education studies*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

McField, G. and D. McField, (2014). The consistent outcome of bilingual education programs: A meta-analysis of meta-analyses. In McField, G. (Ed.), *The Miseducation of English Learners: A tale of three states and lessons to be learned (*pp. 267-299). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

McNiel, L. and A. Valenzuela. (2001). The harmful impact of the TAAS system of testing in Texas: Beneath the accountability rhetoric. In M. Kornhaber and G. Orfield (Eds.), *Raising standards or raising barriers? Inequality and high stakes testing in public education* (pp. 127-150). New York: Century Foundation.

McNiel, L. and A. Valenzuela. (2005). Faking equity: High stakes testing and education of Latino youth. In Angela Valenzuela (Ed.), *Leaving children behind: How "Texas style" accountability fails Latino youth* (p. 103). New York: State University of New York Press.

Mendez, M. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Columbian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *15*(2), 279-287.

Menken, K. (2005). *When the test is what counts: How high-stakes testing affects language policy and the education of English language learners in high school*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

Mercado-Garza, R. (2008). *From being considered at-risk to becoming resilient: An autoethonography of abuse and poverty*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

Miguel, G. S. (2010). Embracing Latinidad: Beyond nationalism in the history of education. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 10*(1), 3-22.

Moll, L.C. (1992). Bilingual classroom studies and community analysis: Some recent trends. *Educational Researcher*, *21*(2), 20-24.

Moll, L.C., D. Amanti, N. Neff, and N. Gonzalez, (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect home and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 2, 132-141.

Montoya, M. (2002). Celebrating racialized legal narratives. In F. Valdes, J. McCristal Culp, and A. Harris (Eds.), *Crossroads, directions and a new critical race theory* (pp. 243-250). Philadephia, PA: Temple University Press.

Morraga, C. and G. Anzaldúa, (Eds.). (1983). *This bridge called my back*. Latham, NY: Women of Color Press.

Motecitos, C. (1995). Culture as an ongoing dialog: Implications for multicultural teacher education. *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Difference*, 291-308.

Murdock, S. (2013, October 2). *Texas in 2050: It's All Over for Anglos* [Video File]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekQV7KDBo-E

Nieto, S. (1996). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education.* White Plains, New York: Longman.

Nieto, S. (2010). *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*. *10th anniversary edn.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 6319 (2008).

Olsen, L. (2010). *Reperable harm: Fulfilling the unkept promises of education opportunity for california's long term English learners.* Long Beach, CA: Californians Together.

Ortiz, A. A. (1997). Learning disabilities occurring concomitantly with linguistic differences. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *30*, 321-332.

Ortiz, A. A. and M. I. Kushner, (1997). Bilingualism and the possible impact on academic performance. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North Amermica*, *6*, 657-679.

Ovando, C. J. (2003). Bilingual education in the United States: Historical development and current issues. *Bilingual Research Journal, 27*(1), 1-24.

Ovando, C. J., V.P. Collier and M.C. Combs, (2005). *Bilingual and ESL classrooms: Teaching multicultural contexts, 4th Edn,* Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Education.

Palfreyman, D. and D. McBride (Eds.), (2007). *Learning and Teaching Across Cultures in Higher Education*. UK: Palgrove McMillan.

Palmer, D. (2007) A dual immersion strand programme in California: Carrying out the promise of dual language education in an English-dominant context. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bliingualism*, 10(6), 752-768.

Palmer, D., C. Zuñiga, and K. Jernderson, (2015). A dual language revolution in the United States? From compensatory to enrichment bilingual education in Texas. In W. Wright, S. Boun and O. Garcia (Eds.), *Handbook of Bilingual and Multilingual Education* (pp. 449-460). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Palmer, D. (2011). The discourse of transition: Teachers' language ideologies within transitional bilingual education programs. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 5*(2), 103-122.

Patton, M. Q. (2004). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Pérez Huber, L. (2009). Disrupting the apartheid of knowledge: Testimonio as methodology in Latina/o critical race research in education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *22*(6), 639-654.

Pérez Huber, L. (2010). Beautifully powerful: A latcrit reflection on coming to an epistemological consciousness and the power of testimonio. *Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law*, *18*(3), 839-851.

Pérez Huber, L. and M. C. Cueva, (2012). Chicana/Latina testimonios on effects and responses to microaggressions. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, *45*(3), 392-410.

Petrzela, N. M. (2010). Before the Federal Bilingual Education Act: Legislation and lived experience in California. *Peabody Journal of Education, 85*(4), 406-424.

Piaget, J. and M. T. Cook, (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York, NY: International University Press.

Pizarro, M. (1998). 'Chicano power!' Epistemology and methodology for social justice and empowerment in Chicana/o communities. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *11*(1), 57-80.

Porras, D. A., J. Ee, and P. Gándara, (2014). Employer preferences: Do bilingual applicants and employees experience an advantage? In Callahan, R. M. and P. C. Gándara (Eds.), *The Bilingual Advantage: Language, Literacy and the US Labor Market* (pp. 236-262). Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Preston, A. J. (2011). Using autoethnography to explore and critically reflect upon changing identity. *Adult Learner: The Irish Journal of Adult and Community Education*, 110-125.

Quicke, J. (2010). Narrative strategies in education research: Reflections on a critical autoethnography. *Educational action research*, *18*(2), 239-254.

Ramirez, D. E. (2013). Towards implementing culturally relevant curriculum: How 17 words inspired research. *National association for Chicana and Chicano studies annual conference*, Paper 16. http://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/naccs/Tejas_Foco/Tejas/16

Ramos, F. and S. Krashen, (2013). Arnold's advantages: How Governor Schwarzenegger acquired English through de facto bilingual education. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 7*(3), 220-229.

Reason, P. and H. Bradbury, (2008). Introduction. In P. Reason and H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice* (pp. 1-10). London: Sage Publications.

Reed-Danahay, D. (2009). Anthropologists, education, and autoethnography. *Reviews in Anthropology, 38*(1), 28-47.

Reyes, K. B. and J. E. Curry Rodríguez, (2012). Testimonio: Origins, terms, and resources. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 45*(3), 525-538.

Ritzer, G. (1996). *Sociological theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Rodriguez, T. L. (2011). Stories of self, stories of practice: enacting a vision of socially just pedagogy for Latino youth. *Teaching Education, 22*(3), 239-254.

Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in language planning. *NABE Journal*, 8, 15-34.

San Miguel, G. (2004). *Contested policy: The rise and fall of federal bilingual education in the United States, 1960-2001*. Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press.

Santamaria, L. J. (2014). Critical change for the greater good: Multicultural perceptions in educational leadership toward social justice and equity. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *50*(3), 347-391.

Schwieter, J. (2011). Migrant Hispanic students speak up: Linguistic and cultural perspectives of low academic attainment. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education: An International Journal*, *5*(1), 33-47.

Secada, W. G. (1990). Research, politics, and bilingual education. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, *5*(508), 81-106.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2000). *The lifeworld of leadership: Creating culture, community, and personal meaning in our schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sergiovanni, T.J. (2007). *Rethinking Leadership: A Collection of Articles.* California: Corwin Press.

Sharp, M. D. (2012). Telling our stories: Using autoethnography to construct identities at the intersections. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *49*(3), 315-332.

Solórzano, D. G. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experiences of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *Qualitative Studies in Education* 11(1), 121–36.

Solórzano, D. G. and T. J. Yosso, (2001). Critical race and LatCrit theory and method: Counter-story telling. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 14*(4), 471-495.

TEA Texas English Language Learners Portal. (www.elltx.org/snapshot.html)

Tenni, C., A. Smyth, and C. Boucher, (2001). The researcher as autobiographer: Analysing data written about oneself. *The Qualitative Report*, *8*(1), 1-12.

Texas Association of School Boards. (2012) *Policy Service News, February 29, 2012—Update 93 to the Policy Reference Manual*. Retrieved August 08, 2012, from http://www.tasb.org/services/policy/news.aspx

Theoharis, G. and J. O'Toole, (2011). Leading inclusive ELL: Social justice leadership for English language learners. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 47*(4), 646-688.

Thomas, W. P. and V.P. Collier, (1997). *School effectiveness for language minority students*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Thomas, W. P. and V.P. Collier, (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Santa Cruz, CA and Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Thomas, W.P. and V.P. Collier, (2012). *Dual language education for a transformed world*. Albuquerque, NM: Dual Language Education of New México – Fuente Press.

Trueba, E. T. (2004). *The new Americans: Immigrants and Transnationals at work*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Trujillo, A. (1983). *A study of the status, roles, and functions of Title VII ESEA bilingual program directors.* (Doctoral Dissertation).

Valencia, R. R. and D. G. Solórzano, (1997). Contemporary deficit thinking. In R. R. Valencia (Ed.), *The evolution of deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice* (pp. 72–95). London: Falmer Press.

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S. Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Valenzuela, A., (Ed.). (2005). *Leaving children behind: How Texas style accountability fails Latino Youth*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1962) *Thought and Language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT press.

Walker, M. (2007). Action research and narratives: 'Finely aware and richly possible'. *Educational Action Research, 15*(2), 295–303.

Westley, F., B. Zimmerman and M. Q. Patton, (Eds.). (2007). *Getting to maybe: How the world is changed*. Toronto, Canada: Vintage Canada.

Whitinui, P. (2013). Indigenous autoethnography: Exploring, engaging, and experiencing the "self" as a "native" method of inquiry. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *43*(4), 1-32.

Williams P. (2013). *Investigating the barriers that prevent low-socioeconomic families from becoming more involved in their children's education*. (Doctoral Dissertation).

Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 8*(1), 69-91.

Yosso, T. J., W. A. Smith, M. Ceja, and D. G. Solórzano, (2009). Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate for Latina/o Undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review*, *79*(4), 659-690.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Olivia Hernández was born in Monterrey, Nuevo León, México on February 13, 1957. She moved with her mother to Chicago, Ill. when she was 40 days old to join her father, Benjamin Hernández Soriano. In Chicago she attended elementary school from Kinder through sixth grade. In the summer of 1969, her father decided to move his family to Monterrey, México, where she attended *La Normal Miguel F. Martínez* to become an elementary teacher in 1977. She worked as an elementary teacher and taught ESL classes before marrying and moving to Reynosa, Tamps. México in 1982. For the next 30 years, she lived on either side of the U.S. and México border, in Reynosa and McAllen. Olivia Hernández worked in Hidalgo ISD as a bilingual teacher (1988-1996), an assistant principal (1996-1998), principal of a dual language elementary school, (1998–2008) and a principal of a middle school (2008-2012). From 2012 to 2016, she worked as the bilingual program director in Austin ISD, where she led the implementation of dual language programs in over 50 schools. She joined San Antonio ISD in 2016 as the Assistant Superintendent for Bilingual/ESL and Migrant program. Olivia Hernández completed her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Bilingual Education in 1990. She attended the University of Texas-Pan American between August 1995 and May 1997 earning a Master of Education with a minor in Administration. Olivia Hernández recently earned her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in December 2016. She lives at 3501 Daffodil, McAllen, Texas and her email is hdzolivia@gmail.com.